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* Foto: Mit einer Siegesparade feiert Tokio die London 2012 Olympiade; 20 August 2012

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Year of Change for World Sport

We approach the midway point of 2013 with a mix of excitement and anticipation.

Never before has world sport faced the sweeping changes it confronts this year: new presidents for the IOC and WADA, the possibility of a first Olympic Games in an Islamic country, changes to the Olympic sports program and the growing influence of women in sport, among others.

SportAccord, the organization, also faces the significant change that comes with growth. New, multi-sport events are being developed to highlight all of its members; along the way, these events will help redefine what organized sport means today. The World Urban Games, announced earlier in May and expected to begin in 2015, is the latest addition to a lineup that also includes the World Artistic Games, Beach Games, Combat Games and Mind Games.

There also will be a new president and a new vision for the 91 international federations and 16 associated organizations under its umbrella. For the first time ever, the election set for May 31 will be contested. The organization may even have a new name.

The evolution of SportAccord is one of the single most important stories of the year. You can expect the same high quality of reporting on the subject that you’ve come to expect over the last 20+ years Around the Rings has covered the Olympic Movement.

It’s fitting this year’s SportAccord Convention is hosted in St. Petersburg. With the upcoming IAAF World Championships in Moscow, the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi and the 2018 FIFA World Cup throughout Russia, it’s certainly accurate to call the country one of the cradles of world sport.

We’re pleased to be here again as official partners of the SportAccord Convention. We’re proud of our position as one of the event’s original media partners.

SAC is one of the most important gatherings of the year, and that’s why we have our biggest team ever to cover this event. Editor Ed Hula fields one of the deepest editorial backfields in the business: European Editor Mark Bisson, Associate Editor Matthew Grayson and Assignment Editor E.B. Hula III.

Follow their coverage online, where it’s been found since 1996 at www.aroundtherings.com, and live on Twitter and other social media.

On the business side, Publisher Sheila S. Hula is joined by Brian Baker, ATR’s Partnership Development Director. Please stop by stand 40B to discuss how we can help promote your organization and its goals. You also can contact any member of the team via SportAccord Convention’s NetWorker Tool.

We would like to thank our hosts here in St. Petersburg. From the city and local organizing committee to the Russian Olympic Committee, everyone has been helpful and hospitable. We have no doubt many more prestige events will be hosted here in the future.

We’d also like to extend a big THANK YOU to our partners, online and in this magazine. Their support makes our coverage possible. Let them know you’ve seen their ad on Around the Rings.

Ed Hula, Founder and Editor
Sheila Scott Hula, Publisher

Ed Hula, Editor and Sheila Scott Hula, Publisher
Throughout its history, the Russian Olympic Committee has pursued its goal of building a peaceful world by spreading the core values of Olympism. As the steward of the Olympic Movement in Russia, the ROC is committed to supporting and promoting sport from grassroots to elite level. The ROC believes in sport, culture and education as powerful tools to promote friendship, solidarity and fair play.

To find out more visit:

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SportAccord Director General Vincent Gaillard tells Around the Rings the first World Urban Games in 2015 is part of his organization’s ongoing commitment to develop multi-sport events.

Written by Mark Bisson

Gaillard and his team are currently developing the Games concept while accelerating plans for the first Beach Games and inaugural Artistic Games.

“It’s about skills, about urban sports that are practiced or developed in the streets. We really want to combine them with grassroots sports and the community,” he tells ATR.

Skateboarding and 3x3 basketball are among a raft of potential events under consideration. Cycling trials, billed by the International Cycling Union as one of its “most exciting and spectacular” disciplines, is also a possibility.

In the months ahead, SportAccord’s multi-sport events department will seek to formalize the Games concept and the sports program. A host city willing to stage the event in a little over two years’ time must also be found.

Asked why SportAccord is developing the World Urban Games as its latest multi-sport project, Gaillard says: “There is a growing need from many of our federations to reach out to new audiences with a different demographic … an Urban Games is a suitable concept for new and upcoming disciplines.”

He adds: “There’s also a growing need on the side of the host city to regenerate some urban areas to make them more lively, to bring in entertainment and events. This is also a response to that … a sports event that is flexible and agile and doesn’t require a lot of infrastructure.” The aim would be to limit expenditure for the host city “and link the Games to the community, schools and under-privileged areas … to look at the social legacy and give it a true meaning,” says Gaillard.

The Combat Games and World Mind Games are now established competitions. This year’s Combat Games in St. Petersburg in October is the biggest yet with the addition of fencing and wushu expanding the program to 15 sports.

Improving the sponsorship, marketing and communication strategies around these events is planned to boost their prominence on the global stage and offer a greater return on investment for host cities. Better cooperation with schools, universities and grassroots organizations is also integral to SportAccord’s multi-sport event strategy in the coming years, according to Gaillard.

The concepts and sports programs for the Beach Games, earmarked for Brazil, and Artistic Games, set for a Central American country, are currently under development.

Gaillard is also steering other SportAccord initiatives, including developing “services, solutions and programs” for the 107 members to aid the fight against illegal betting and match-fixing as well as combating doping issues. This extends to providing education programs for coaches and athletes in those areas.

Commenting on the Sports Hub, now in operation for more than a year, Gaillard tells ATR the next push is in “trying to monetize opportunities for our members”.

As SportAccord welcomes a new president, he adds: “I’m hoping for a continuation of all the great work that has been done over the last few years and at the same time to look at new opportunities to add further value, to give new and better services to our membership.”
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Who Will Lead SportAccord?

In electing a new president of SportAccord, the organization’s 107 members must choose between one candidate with a radical vision and another who offers to build on Hein Verbruggen’s achievements.

Written by Mark Bisson

Marius Vizer, 55, president of the International Judo Federation since 2007, was first out of the blocks in his bid for the prestigious job – and claims his bold ambitions carry plenty of support.

He wants to scrap the SportAccord name in favor of branding more relevant to federations. And Vizer, an Austrian, believes he has the backing of the majority of Olympic and non-Olympic members for his United World Championships. The quadrennial event would incorporate the world championships of every Olympic sport – and others – into one giant festival in one or more countries.

“I have had positive feedback with some suggestions, ideas and proposals,” he tells Around the Rings.

Vizer’s vision is to use the United World Championships as a platform to globalize some of the lesser known sports and drive up revenues. The mega-event forms part of his globalization strategy for SportAccord, which he will present in St. Petersburg this week.

“A lot of the Olympic and non-Olympic sports are supporting the idea of having a global strategy for sporting development and sports events,” he adds.

His rival in this week’s election, Bernard Lapasset, 65, chairman of the International Rugby Board since 2008, believes his more modest proposals to take SportAccord to the next level have strong backing.

His vision in four points: to place SportAccord at the heart of the values of the sport movement; to support a strong vision of the practices of international sport; to reinforce the unity of international sport families while maintaining their diversity; and to guarantee a stable economic environment as federations face new economic challenges.

Lapasset’s strategic priorities include promoting the positive dimension of sport in society, stepping up the fight against doping as well as match-fixing and illegal betting, and improving services to federations to help improve their governance.

The IRB chief from France proposes launching a SportAccord Academy to “develop expertise and innovate in the federations’ field ... and contribute to debate and participate in the evolution of international sport”. He also wants to introduce a SportAccord Festival “to connect together different sport cultures and to see included other forms of activities adapted to a diverse audience”.

“My aim is to make SportAccord an indispensible partner for your federations, working with them to develop and grow,” Lapasset said in his mission statement. Verbruggen steps down Friday after leading SportAccord since 2004.

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Expectations for Next SportAccord President

Leaders of international federations Olympic and otherwise tell *Around the Rings* the next president of SportAccord will have his hands full.

Compiled by Matthew Grayson

**Adham Sharara, President, International Table Tennis Federation**
A president that has experience as an IF president and that understands the needs of IFs. The SportAccord president should be able to find agreements and cooperation with ASOIF, IOC and other international sports partners. The president should have extensive experience in chairing large meetings, as well as have sufficient time to manage the staff and the council meetings. Ideally, the president should be a prominent sports figure in order to give SportAccord a high profile in the sports community.

**Rene Fasel, President, International Ice Hockey Federation**
Just like all of the former SportAccord (or back then GAISF) presidents, the new man or woman on the helm of SportAccord needs to have the fine skill of uniting International Federations and other major sport governing bodies into a common force for the worldwide development and growth of sports participation.

But the new president must also have a clear plan to jointly battle the current problems sport is facing, such as match-fixing and doping. He or she must also think about the further development of multi-sport games. In any case, I have no doubt that SportAccord's current 91 full, 16 associate and plenty of aspiring members, as well as its thriving annual convention, will keep the new person in charge busy right from the beginning!

**Jean-Marie Ayer, Secretary General, World Taekwondo Federation**
The most important thing for the WTF is that the future SportAccord President continues the great work and progress that the convention has encouraged every year so far. Our ideal President would, of course, be passionate about all areas and levels of sport; the President would continue to support the needs of all sporting federations equally; and would uphold SportAccord's mission to “unite and support” with the belief that sport has the ability to drive positive change throughout the world.

**Marco Maria Scolaris, President, International Federation of Sport Climbing**
The IFSC is a young federation knocking at the doors of the Olympic Games. We wish the new SportAccord President could lead the association in the following directions:

1. Sharing experience and knowledge among IFs (especially with those established since a long time)
2. Set a strong strategy in order to stabilize (reduce) anti-doping costs
3. Give more voice to the athletes
4. Improve the media support, including the sport assignment
5. Improve and strengthen the legal department, in support of the IF needs
Sabatino Aracu, President, International Federation of Roller Sports

Many are the qualities that the President of an organization of such magnitude as SportAccord should have. However, beyond the usual considerations of circumstance, I am sure that it is vital to protect the affiliated Federations by avoiding or restricting the recognition of new international Federations in those disciplines that are already under the aegis of member Federations.

Ary Graca, President, International Volleyball Federation

I am looking for an experienced leader who has the determination and vision to be able to harness the combined potential of all the sports federations in a way which benefits every single federation and most importantly the athletes, fans and the sporting community.

N Ramachandran, President, World Squash Federation

For the World Squash Federation the key attributes of the new President of SportAccord will be breadth of vision to encompass such a broad spectrum of stakeholders from the IOC to the massive diversity of the Membership and high quality inter-personal skills. The role is clearly becoming increasingly important in World Sport hence also the ability to make this position a priority in terms of allocating the time required is of considerable importance.

Nenad Lalovic, Acting President, International Federation of Associated Wrestling Styles

The president must have a good knowledge and working relationship with the international federations and an understanding of what we need. SportAccord has become an important force, not only for the international federations but for those involved in sports throughout the world who do business with us and help promote our cause.

Marisol Casado, President, International Triathlon Union

The next SportAccord president should be someone who upholds the universal sporting ideals of fair play, respect and equality. It should be someone with a strong understanding of both sports governance and sports business that can not only recognize the challenges and opportunities each sector presents, but that also has a vision of how the two must grow and work together for the benefit of each other’s mutual success.

Pat McQuaid, President, International Cycling Union

SportAccord and its President play a pivotal role in bringing together the world sports community. As a united umbrella organization we can use the great depth of experience of our members to add value to the lives of the billions who practice and support sport. The consolidation of the structure of sport worldwide, and protection of its universal values, is a great vector of change. The President must therefore be a leader, a communicator, a listener and a colleague.

Ivo Ferriani, President, International Bobsleigh & Skeleton Federation

Sport Accord represents over 100 International Federations which means that the responsibilities of the new President are quite challenging. I expect that the elected president understands the issues each IF is facing for their sport’s development whilst providing solutions to concerns such as doping, betting, athlete’s reconversion. I also believe that the Sport Accord community represents a valuable amount of human assets and knowledge which can benefit all the sports.
Istanbul, Tokyo Tied in Race for 2020 Olympics

In this third edition of the Around the Rings Olympic Bid Power Index, Istanbul picks up the pace to run even with Tokyo, which has led each of the previous rankings.

Written by Ed Hula

Istanbul and Tokyo both score 78 out of 100 points, Madrid with 72.

The big news is the surge for Istanbul based on the improvements in accommodation, finance, legacy, security and transportation. Madrid lost ground in bid operation and marketing while gaining strength with its venue plan.

Tokyo loses a mark in bid operation but picks up a point with its venue plan and in public support.

This latest edition of the Power Index includes the experience of visits to each city by the ATR team during the tour of the IOC Evaluation Commission in March. The written assessment from the commission is expected sometime in June.

The index, now in its ninth year, is a measure of the relative strength of the cities seeking the Olympic Games. The index is based on first-hand visits to the bid cities, interviews with bid leaders and experts.

The bids are rated across 11 categories, nine of them worth 10 points each, two worth five each due to their more subjective nature (ambience and last Olympics hosted).

Istanbul’s better score takes into account the experiences of the IOC commission visit. The visit demonstrated the allure of the city as a destination, with scenic views unmatched by the rivals. The strength of the Turkish economy and the commitment of the government to host the Games has provided confidence missing from the past four Istanbul bids. At the same time government leaders will need to avoid cockiness or saying the wrong things, such as “Istanbul deserves the Olympics”.

Major improvements to the city’s transport are in progress but even with the new projects, Istanbul’s venues are less compact than Madrid or Tokyo. While a ceremonies stadium in the redeveloped port on the Asian side of the Bosphorus seems to be an exciting concept, the journey for athletes will be long from the village.

Security issues bear watching with the border of Syria a potential flashpoint, while positive steps are being taken to end the Kurdish separatist conflict. Turkey is also in the spotlight for press freedom issues.

Tokyo led off the three-city IOC tour delivering a precise example of the organization with which it would deliver the Games. The compact nature of the bid was emphasized with short travel times to venues for the IOC team as well as media. Of the three, it offers the best venue for golf, but the course is 90 minutes from the Olympic Village.
Comments from Tokyo Metropolitan Governor Naoki Inose in April about Istanbul led to an apology from him, but the bid still will have to be on guard against further impolitic communications. The national government continues to raise hackles in China and Korea over historical disputes, another possible distraction for a Tokyo bid. Finally, the unresolved remediation of the Fukushima nuclear plant and relief efforts for tsunami victims is still a side issue affecting the image of Japan.

Despite this, public support for the Tokyo bid has surged since first polling indicated that barely half the public supported the Games. And like Istanbul, the Tokyo bid benefits from positive economic numbers that would support an Olympic Games.

Economics continue to be a drag on the Madrid bid. Latest unemployment figures above 27 percent and a contracting national economy would seem to be risk factors the IOC would avoid. It’s also a challenge to see how such malaise will make it possible to meet revenue targets for marketing to help finance the Games.

Still, among the three bids, Madrid offers a plan for the Games that may be closer to ready than its two competitors. An Olympic Village is the major outstanding project, but much of the venue structure is in place. Traveling from cluster to cluster in March, the IOC commission had to be impressed with the quick travel times, even for trips across the city.

Too bad for Madrid that it fumbled press operations for the IOC Evaluation Commission visit. While recovering somewhat, it’s symptomatic of a larger communications deficit for the bid on the international level.

On the other hand Spain is the only bid with three IOC members, two of them presidents of international federations.

But to be taken seriously by the IOC, a Madrid bid will need to have Spanish anti-doping laws strengthened and on the books by the time the IOC votes for 2020 in September. Not fixed, this deficiency could cost the race for this third consecutive bid.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Istanbul</th>
<th>Madrid</th>
<th>Tokyo</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ambiance (5)</td>
<td>5 (5)</td>
<td>4 (4)</td>
<td>4 (4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>8 (7)</td>
<td>8 (8)</td>
<td>9 (9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bid Operation</td>
<td>7 (7)</td>
<td>6 (7)</td>
<td>7 (8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>8 (7)</td>
<td>6 (6)</td>
<td>8 (8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last Games (5)</td>
<td>5 (5)</td>
<td>4 (4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legacy</td>
<td>8 (7)</td>
<td>6 (6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>7 (7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Support</td>
<td>9 (9)</td>
<td>8 (8)</td>
<td>7 (6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>7 (6)</td>
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<td>Transportation</td>
<td>7 (6)</td>
<td>8 (8)</td>
<td>9 (9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Venue Plans</td>
<td>7 (7)</td>
<td>9 (8)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>POWER INDEX TOTALS</strong></td>
<td><strong>78 (73)</strong></td>
<td><strong>72 (73)</strong></td>
<td><strong>78 (77)</strong></td>
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The Categories Explained
10 points for each category, except Ambiance and last Games, which are scored 5 points each, due to more subjective aspects of these categories. This results in a total possible score of 100 points across the 11 categories.

**Accommodation:** Quantity, quality

**Ambiance:** Is the city comfortable, tourist-friendly, a pleasure to visit?

**Bid Operation:** Leadership, strategy and public relations

**Games Cost and Finance:** Projected bill for the Olympics and infrastructure, unusual finance risks. Higher scores indicate lower costs, strong financials.

**Last Games in the Country:** Years since last summer or winter Olympics. The higher the score, the longer since the last Games.

**Legacy:** Impact of the Olympics in a city; sustainable venues

**Marketing:** The size and impact of marketing programs

**Government & Public Support:** The commitment of government and population to a Games

**Security:** Reputation and quality of security, perceptions of risk

**Transportation:** Ease of travel, multiple transport options, airports, quality of public transit, taxis
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STRENGTH IS THE POWER TO CHANGE.
Out of Many, Few Will Bid Possible Candidates for 2022

The race for 2022 will soon take shape, both because the IOC demands haste and because its 2020 decision will weigh heavily on future bid plans.

Written by Matthew Grayson

The 2020 host city will be chosen Sept. 7 at the 125th IOC Session in Buenos Aires. The first deadline for 2022 comes less than six weeks later.

**LIKELY TO BID**

Poland/Slovakia

A joint bid was formalized back in March with the support of both prime ministers. Plans call for the Games to be held in the Polish resort of Zakopane and the Slovak city of Poprad with the Tatra Mountains spanning both locales. Krakow would play host to other events, and Slovakia would stage the ice hockey tournament.

Ukraine

Lviv is keeping a low profile in this early stage of bidding for 2022. While feasibility studies are complete, city leaders and the Ukraine NOC are waiting on the outcome of the IOC vote in September. But Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich could push forward a bid even if a European candidate wins the 2020 Olympics, such is his zeal for the Games.

Norway

Oslo hosted the 1952 Winter Games and would use mostly legacy venues from Lillehammer 1994. Officials estimate the Olympics could cost as much as $3.6 billion this time around. City government must offer its guarantees for the bid in May, and a referendum is scheduled for September.

Germany

Munich is moving closer for 2022 after the DOSB announced its involvement with the Bavarian city and winter sports federations to improve on the failed 2018 bid. Discussions include relocating biathlon and cross country skiing from Garmisch-Partenkirchen to an existing venue in Ruhpolding. A decision would only be made after the IOC vote in September as well as federal and state elections that same month.

**DEPENDS ON 2020**

**Ukraine**

Lviv is keeping a low profile in this early stage of bidding for 2022. While feasibility studies are complete, city leaders and the Ukraine NOC are waiting on the outcome of the IOC vote in September. But Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich could push forward a bid even if a European candidate wins the 2020 Olympics, such is his zeal for the Games.

**LONGSHOTS TO BID**

Barcelona

The host of the 1992 Summer Olympics sent representatives to the 2012 Lausanne Summit on behalf of a possible winter bid. Ceremonies and Indoor sports would be staged in Barcelona while ski resorts in the Pyrenees would play host to outdoor events. Obviously, there's no chance for 2022 if Madrid wins the 2020 Games.
**Kazakhstan**

Astana and Almaty teamed up to stage the 2011 Asian Winter Games and may do so again for the 2022 Olympics. IOC President Jacques Rogge encouraged a bid during his 2011 visit to Kazakhstan. Almaty failed to advance past the applicant stage for the 2014 Olympics but was later awarded the 2017 Winter Universiade.

China

The vice mayor of Zhangjiakou says his city has confirmed plans for a joint bid with Beijing despite little interest from Chinese authorities. The resort boasts a strong ski infrastructure but would face a tough challenge to win the 2022 Olympics given PyeongChang’s hosting rights for 2018. China last tried for the Winter Games in 2010 when Harbin failed to become a candidate city.

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<table>
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<th>TIMETABLE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Late May/Early June</strong> – IOC invites NOCs to nominate applicant cities</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sept. 7</strong> – IOC members elect 2020 host in Buenos Aires</td>
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<td><strong>Nov. 14</strong> – Applicant city nominations due from NOCs</td>
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<td><strong>Dec. 4-6</strong> – Applicant City Seminar in Lausanne</td>
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<td><strong>Feb. 7-23, 2013</strong> – Applicant cities observe Sochi 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>March 14, 2014</strong> – Application files and guarantee letters due at IOC</td>
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<td><strong>July 2014</strong> – IOC EB decides on candidate cities</td>
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<td><strong>January 2015</strong> – Bid books due at IOC</td>
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<td><strong>February-March 2015</strong> – IOC Evaluation Commission visits</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>May-June 2015</strong> – Evaluation Commission report and Candidate City Briefing to IOC members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>July 31, 2015</strong> – IOC members vote in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia</td>
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As the newest Olympic sports, golf and rugby have patiently waited for Rio 2016 to find a home for them at the Games.

Written by Mark Bisson

Now that venue plans are starting to become reality, the two international federations can finally begin to focus on the presentation of their sports and legacy.

Construction work is beginning on the golf course following the approval of all necessary permits, Rio 2016 President Carlos Nuzman confirmed recently. Olympic organizers will work closely with course designer Gil Hanse and the International Golf Federation to deliver the project at Reserva de Marapendi in the Barra Zone, about 5km from the Olympic Village.

Post-Games, it will be the first publicly accessible golf course in Rio de Janeiro. Rugby Sevens is all set to be accommodated in Deodoro Zone. Since Rio won the Games in 2009, Olympic organizers have expanded the scale of plans for the site, a journey of about 40 minutes from the Olympic Village. It’s now the second biggest venue cluster of the Games.

Around the Rings is told that rugby is the driving force behind a meeting of the eight sports grouped at the Deodoro Zone scheduled for Wednesday in St. Petersburg. The aim is to brainstorm initiatives to help them benefit from their remote location away from the main Olympics hub. Rio 2016 officials will attend to listen to ideas from the federations.

“IRB continues to work in collaboration with Rio 2016 and the IOC to further discuss the venue options. We are confident that the options on the table will be great for the Games, great for the Rugby Sevens event and great for the profile and development of rugby as a truly global sport,” an International Rugby Board spokesman tells ATR.

Hockey was the latest to relocate to the Deodoro Zone following initial concerns from the International Hockey Federation that the location would marginalize the sport at the Olympics and leave a limited legacy.

The Deodoro Zone also will host equestrian, cycling (mountain bike and BMX), modern pentathlon, shooting, canoeing (slalom) and fencing. It will stage three Paralympic competitions — shooting, equestrian and wheelchair fencing.

“That cluster is so large, it’s an Olympic Park,” says Andrew Ryan, director of the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations, adding that the meeting of federation presidents would “look at constructive ways of exploiting that”.

“Instead of operating individually, they can cooperate with each other with the goal of exchanging their experiences [of sports staging, branding],” Ryan tells ATR. Ryan says the federations plan to work with Rio 2016 to better present their sports and enhance legacy plans.

While transport infrastructure — most notably modernization of the city’s airport and upgrades to rapid transit systems — remains an IOC concern, Rio 2016’s venue plans appear to be accelerating.

The Maracana, venue for the Brazil 2014 World Cup final and Olympic opening and closing ceremonies, was tested for the first time last month with an exhibition football match between teams led by Brazilian legends Ronaldo and Bebeto. The inauguration followed a persistently delayed renovation spanning nearly three years. It’s one of the host venues for June’s FIFA Confederations Cup.

Amid repeated IOC warnings to speed up preparations across the project, ATR understands Olympic Games Executive Director Gilbert Felli and Coordination Commission Chair Nawal El Moutawakel were in Rio earlier this month for one of their regular project visits.

The pair received updates on a wide variety of topics, including Rio 2016’s structure and management, sports and international federations, venue management and development, test events, sustainability and spectator experience.

“There are no fresh concerns at this stage,” an IOC spokesperson tells ATR.

“The visit was a good opportunity to reassess where preparations stand and despite continuing to work under a tight schedule there has been much progress made since the last IOC visit. One positive development is the new Rio 2016 headquarters, which is greatly helping to facilitate work and bolster integration and preparations.”

IAAF general secretary Essar Gabriel also had some encouraging words for Rio organizers on a site visit last month. João Havelange Stadium will be home to track and field. “I’m impressed because we see in the new headquarters that there are more than 400 people now at work,” he said.

“We have gone through the different functions, from transport and accommodation to competition. It’s pretty much on track from what I am seeing.”
The success of its reform in 2007 has now brought the International Boxing Association to manage global boxing programs by developing all forms of competitions including AIBA Pro Boxing. The motto “We are Boxing” now demonstrates AIBA’s will and determination to represent the pride and passion of being associated with the noble art. AIBA embraces all boxers, coaches, referees & judges, officials, members and national member federations with care and commitment to provide the best benefits. AIBA respects the ideals of the Olympic Movement and contributes to its unforgettable success.
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Inside St. Petersburg

St. Petersburg is an open city. We say that Peter the Great opened a window to Europe and founded the city on the shore of the Baltic Sea.

Written by Mikhail Radko, CEO of St. Petersburg 2028

And now we meet here from the open sea ships with passengers and their cars from Finland, Sweden, Estonia and Germany.

Peter the Great showed to all our compatriots for years to come an example of openness, inviting the greatest architects and artists from Italy and the Netherlands to build the city. Thanks to them, our city is called “Venice of the North” and is often compared to Amsterdam. By the way, Amsterdam we hope will be bidding to host the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games, too – just like St. Petersburg.

Saint Petersburg can be imagined as a huge yacht. You know that the best yachts are distinguished not only for their beautiful decoration, but also for the comfort of all guests, including people with disabilities. Today, St. Petersburg is open to each of its residents and guests. It’s also a multicultural city, taking the best qualities from other wonderful cities of the world, combining them inside our region and showing other cities an example by doing so.

During your visit to St. Petersburg, you will see many hidden details. You will see how we strive to make St. Pete more comfortable and secure, with understandable, accessible and affordable infrastructure for everybody. We invite you to help! It’s a great honor for us to collaborate with such...
professionals as Jan Gehl from Copenhagen. He had the courage to change the capital of Denmark a lot. Now we change St. Petersburg to make the city more comfortable for pedestrians, and we want your input, dear readers!

Now let’s delve a bit deeper inside the hidden St. Petersburg. Here are some places in the city where guests are unlikely to come during their short business trips or competitions. For us, it’s very important to always combine culture, education, sports, architecture and business aims all together.

Nevsky district – Here would host the marathon of St. Petersburg 2028. An area which requires investment, many children and elderly people need our help and participation. Until recently, here were fields, dotted with syringes, condoms and cigarette butts. Today, that is changing – there are children’s camps as well as more skaters, joggers and cyclists. We are going to increase the number of cyclists in the city to 60,000 this year by activation of various projects. With the help of foreign investment, we can change the situation faster.

A park named after Russian revolutionary Ivan Babushkin – You can check the skills and passion of your children here thanks to a rope complex with obstacles in height and other entertainment.

Dynamite indoor sports center – You have a unique opportunity to play beach sports the whole year: beach volleyball, football, tennis, etc.

Bonch-Bruevich St. Petersburg State University – This institution cooperates with 80 international universities and is well-equipped with modern facilities, ready to welcome foreign students to study abroad. The university provides staffing to the Russian telecommunications industry. At the Olympic Games in Sochi, you will probably encounter plenty of graduates working as specialists.

Enjoy “Alegria” by Cirque Du Soleil in the Ice Palace and other concerts there, but what is more important for us – we’ve got the Circus of Slava Polunin (you know him by “The Snow Show”). A variety of other shows, festivals and concerts are everywhere: in the streets, in parks, and inside venues, too. Do not miss these performances!

My team and I sincerely wish you a wonderful visit to St. Petersburg and invite all interested parties to consider a long-term collaboration because St. Petersburg is an open city, welcome to all your views and suggestions.

The next global sporting event in Russia after the SportAccord Convention is the 2013 Summer Universiade kicking off July 6 in Kazan. See you again soon!
IOC Director General Christophe de Kepper tells Around the Rings the evidence the IOC can collect indicates London 2012 to be free from illegal betting and match-fixing.

De Kepper says the Olympics were “completely clean as far as the licensed operators were concerned,” clarifying the IOC’s analysis is limited to betting services monitored and regulated by governments.

“What we can never assure is all the illegal betting offers that are on the market will not affect sports competition and the Olympics,” he cautions.

Prior to London 2012, the IOC signed agreements with betting agencies and U.K. authorities to help preserve the integrity of the Games.

That said, de Kepper does note that initial research indicates the Olympics are not necessarily a primary target for illegal betting.

“The Olympics are under such a wide scrutiny that match-fixing in Olympic competition seems to be a lot more risky than doing it on other kind of competition,” he explains.

De Kepper did warn that other “prime events” have been the targets of corruption and that the IOC cannot rest easy.

During his tenure at the IOC, stamping out illegal betting has been a key project for the Belgian.

For the London Olympics, the IOC took three key steps to ensure the Games would be as clean as possible.

According to de Kepper, strong rules were enacted forbidding any accredited individual from betting on events.

Starting at the Youth Olympic Games level, the IOC has launched an education initiative warning of the dangers of illegal betting, and the IOC also implemented an extensive monitoring program.

The IOC, de Kepper claims, is not just working to protect the Olympic Games.

“We cannot just live in an Ivory Tower,” he tells ATR.

“We have a responsibility in our Charter. It is our responsibility to help the Olympic Movement to address these issues by putting the experts around the table and the necessary resources to help everybody to be more efficient and more prepared in the fight against illegal betting.”

He also points out that the insidious nature of sports betting makes the threat too large for just the sports world to tackle alone.

“The big message that the sports movement would like to explain is that this is a matter we do not underestimate. This is as much a threat as doping. One of the reasons is that the potential means of betting syndicates, the fact that certainly you have mafia wings behind these match issues and the economics makes it far too big,” he explains.

“We will get nowhere without the support of the governments.”

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