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Story Headline: One year on after the Olympic Games Rio 2016: What is the legacy?

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STORY SCRIPT

Twelve months on from the Olympic Games Rio 2016 and Agberto Guimaraes the Executive Director of Sport for the Brazilian Olympic Committee says “give us a little more time” before evaluating the true legacy.

The Olympics Games Rio 2016 were the first to be held in South America and when they were awarded to Rio in 2009, Brazil was the region’s great economic success. Unfortunately, in the seven year period before the actual staging of the Games, the country suffered economic, political and social challenges, many of which remain today.

The act of hosting the Olympic Games did, however, provide plenty of positives.

After an absence dating back to 1904, the sport of golf made its return to the summer Olympic Games in the format of women’s and men’s singles events.

It proved to be a hugely successful inclusion. Although it was located in a



protected area, approximately 70 per cent of the golf course site was degraded before the Olympic Games. Now, thanks to the Games, the land's biodiversity has increased as there is 55 hectares of natural vegetation. Moreover, young kids have access to the course to play golf regularly.

Carlos Favoreto, the director of the Olympic Golf course, insists that having such a facility in the city is encouraging young people into the sport. "The great legacy is that any citizen, rich or poor, can come here and get in contact with the sport. This is the true legacy of the Olympic Golf Course, the access to everyone"

Diego Matias Hypolito, a Brazilian Gymnastics silver medallist, is also optimistic about the lasting impact that the Olympic Games Rio 2016 will have on his sport.

A two-time World Champion on the floor, he was the first male Gymnast from South America to win a World title in 2005. Rio was his third Olympic Games, and gave him his first Olympic medal when he took silver behind Max Whitlock of Great Britain.



The bronze medal was won by another Brazilian, Arthur Mariano, and Hypolito believes that the hosting of the Games has provided the city with a world class facility that is already aiding future Brazilian gymnasts.

"After the Olympic Games, I think it is very much on par with other facilities around the world. It has all the infrastructure that you need around the Arena. This is having a really positive impact on our results. It's very similar to how it was during the Olympic Games. I was very glad when it reopened because it gives children an opportunity to dream, and gives athletes a chance to dream and to reach their goals thanks to being able to use better facilities."

The Olympics Aquatics Stadium hosted 34 swimming events, 17 each for men and women, and witnessed some superb performances, not least US swimmer Michael Phelps bringing the curtain down on his record-breaking career by winning his 23rd gold medal.

Five temporary Olympic training pools have been dismantled for reuse elsewhere.



Mountain Bike champion and Coach Nicolas Siegenthaler expects the Olympics to have had a positive impact on the number of people taking part in cycling, both for competitive and recreational reasons.

“They are so motivated and so beautiful people that I expect that they can use all this legacy to become better and to use that not only for the sport but also for the social development for Brazil”

After a period of approximately 40 years of degradation, Rio de Janeiro finally saw its port area undergo a complex renovation process. The long expected improvements were triggered by the preparations for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games. Rio’s long-term planning strategy was inspired by the successful improvements realized by previous host cities showing determination in organizing Games with a sustainable urban legacy.

“Porto Maravilha” is considered by specialists an icon of sustainable long-term benefits that’s goes beyond sport. Through the largest public-private partnership in the country and R\$ 10 billion (approximately U\$ 2.9 billion) on investments, it revitalized an area of five million square meters (sqm) and became a strategic residential, cultural, business and tourism hub.

The revitalization process completely transformed the port region of Rio de



Janeiro, clearly due to the infrastructural innovation. There were the construction of two museums, the largest aquarium in South America and an outdoors graffiti art gallery which are increasing considerably Rio's cultural life.

Judo in Brazil is another sport already feeling the benefits of having hosted the Rio 2016 Games.

Brazilian gold medallist Rafaella Silva believes that the facilities now available can only lead to improved performances and in her case, make it more likely that she can stay on track to defend her title at Tokyo 2020.

"This facility, the Brazilian team's training centre, is very important for all the high-performance athletes. Where I trained before, there wasn't space to do weight-training, physical training, technical training. So this space, where we have the tatame and this training area, for physical training, it's helping me a lot to stay on the circuit until 2020"

The Rio 2016 Transforma education program, which promoted mutual respect, non-discrimination and other Olympic values to 8 million Brazilian children in 16,000 schools, is set to be re-launched this month with additional financial support from the IOC.



Edgar Oliveira, a former Brazilian middle distance runner and a volunteer supporting athlete of the Transforma initiative believes the Rio 2016 Games have already inspired the next generation.

“The Games [were] a very good opportunity for them (young people) to see athletes on the real field of play and for them it was unforgettable, that moment.”

The urban mobility plan proposed for Rio de Janeiro, which guaranteed the city's candidacy as host of the Olympic Games 2016, brought innovations that helped to give cariocas a better quality of life, reduce traffic problems and move towards a transport system with lower negative impacts on the environment.

In 2011, 1.1 million daily trips were made in Rio using the high-capacity system. The usage rose to above 2.3 million daily trips in time for the Olympic Games Rio 2016. The increased access to high-quality public transport was a result of the integration of transport systems, the modernisation of stations of the suburban rail, the new BRT exclusive corridors and the arrival of metro line 4 to Barra da Tijuca.



Christophe Dubi, the Olympic Games Executive Director admits that it can take time to fully appreciate the legacy of a Games.

"Repurposing an Olympic venue or park and moving from Games use to post-Olympic use takes time. Look at the example of Sydney, of Homebush Bay. Look at the example of East London, or Sochi. It often takes years to repurpose the venues, and that's what we're going to see in Rio. In a few months, some venues will be ready for post-Olympic use, others will take longer, and that's perfectly normal. The time needed for redevelopment is something that we've seen in the past, and it is something that we will also see in Rio. "

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