

# Rio gets ready to spend with \$11bn facelift for greatest show on earth

## The first South American Olympic city faces big challenges in staging the Games, says Tom Phillips

Residents of South America's largest country often claim that God is Brazilian and, if you believe the propaganda, the 2016 Rio Olympics will be nothing short of heavenly. The city's Olympic bid document is riddled with superlatives – "vibrant" neighbourhoods, "bucolic" suburbs, "breathtaking" scenery and "legendary" sports stadiums – and yesterday thousands upon thousands of elated locals clai in Brazil's green and yellow colours crowded on to Copacabana beach to celebrate what local authorities were calling a historic victory.

Residents of Rio, or "Cariocas" as they are better known, have had their fingers

crossed for months about the decision, viewing the Olympics and the 2014 World Cup as a chance to revive their flagging city. Since the Brazilian capital was transferred to Brasilia in 1960, Rio's fortunes have declined; most of the city's 1,000-odd shanty towns are now controlled by heavily armed and very violent drug gangs, and many businesses have abandoned the city in search of safer and more profitable places to set up shop.

Despite this the so-called "Marvellous City" remains one of the most beautiful cities on earth and the prospect of watching Brazilian athletes performing before a home crowd has had sports lovers here salivating. Among those who fans will hope to see at Rio 2016 are Mayra Aguiar, an 18-year-old judo champion who was the youngest member of the Brazilian Olympic squad two years ago in China, Manchester United's young Brazilian twins Fábio and Rafael da Silva, and Marta, currently the world's top female footballer, who at 23

## How they voted

After each of the three rounds, the city with fewest votes is eliminated

**First round**  
Rio de Janeiro 26  
Madrid 28  
Tokyo 22  
Chicago 18  
**Eliminated Chicago**

**Second round**  
Rio de Janeiro 46  
Madrid 29  
Tokyo 20  
**Eliminated Tokyo**

**Final round**  
Rio de Janeiro 66  
Madrid 32  
**Winner Rio**

says she hopes to make an appearance in seven years' time.

Off the playing field, Rio's Olympic committee built its campaign around the city's reputation for healthy living and happiness, employing the slogan "Live your passion". But money and transparency, as well as joie de vivre, will be needed if Brazil's former capital is to live up to the hyperbole of its bid.

"If we leave it to some people the focus will only be put on the spectacle itself," warned Chico Alencar, an MP from the Socialism and Freedom party. "These Games have to be about society. We will all have to be Olympic athletes in the sport of how best to use public money."

Rio's governors have promised to inject a massive \$11bn (£7bn) into this increasingly dilapidated seaside city in the lead-up to the 2016 Games. A six-lane motorway is planned to link two of the major event sites, a private beach will be cordoned off for visiting athletes and a

replica downtown street, complete with bars and cafes, is set to be constructed at the heart of the Olympic village in western Rio. The city's mayor, meanwhile, hopes to give the rundown port district a multi-million dollar facelift with the help of the private sector.

Rio's governor, Sergio Cabral, says residents stand to "gain more metro lines, more trains, more sewage treatment, more in terms of the environment, social services, in terms of sport and culture. The legacy for the city and the state will be extraordinary." The plans centre on Barra da Tijuca, a beachside suburb in western Rio, famed for its nouveau riche residents, its golden beaches and its increasingly polluted waterways. Half the Olympic events, including badminton, boxing, weightlifting and table tennis, will be held here, around the Olympic village.

Other events, such as equestrianism, fencing and shooting, will be held in Deodoro, another suburb of western Rio. The

city's southern beach zone will host beach volleyball and rowing, and the sports complex around the Maracanã football stadium in the city's north zone will be reserved for track events and the opening and closing ceremonies.

Rio's Sambadrome ("home to the greatest show on earth" according to the city's official bid and which usually houses elaborately costumed samba dancers and deafening carnival drum troupes) will be set aside for the archery competition.

The local government describes the Games as a "bridge towards a new era", pushing the idea that the Olympics can

**"If we leave it to some people the focus will only be put on the spectacle itself"**

help restore Rio to its former glory, days when the city was known for its bossa nova and beaches rather than bullets and gun battles. But amid all the celebrations there are widespread doubts about the event's power to transform Rio, reinforced by the distinctly underwhelming legacy of the Pan American Games, held here in 2007. "The event was marvellous for the 12 days that it lasted," said Alencar, the Rio MP. "But the before and the after were complicated."

Alencar claims the Pan American Games have brought virtually no long-term benefits to the city, despite the budget ballooning from R\$500m (£176.5m) to R\$5bn. "Rio has many poor areas, hundreds of favelas, and we had hoped that, after the games, equipment, resources and sports projects would be redirected towards these areas," he said. "This didn't happen. The games ended and we went straight back to our routine of inequality and neglect."

In the Rio newspaper O Dia this week, the film director Moacyr Góes confessed he was "haunted by the fear of corruption, the poor use of public money and the electoral use" of the Olympic Games. The Olympics should only take place in Rio, he concluded, "if they are good for those who live ... in the areas controlled by drug traffickers or paramilitaries, for education, for those who spend their lives on board a hellish transport system."

Speaking to foreign correspondents in Rio last month the Brazilian sports minister, Orlando Silva, rejected the idea that security issues would hamper a successful Rio 2016. He said security was "a permanent challenge for all countries in the world".

That may be true. But in Rio de Janeiro, where the roads grow more congested by the day and where there were officially 5,717 homicides last year in the state as a whole, there is much still to be done. Even with a Brazilian God on Rio's side.



Pelé along with Brazil's president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, left, and the president of Rio de Janeiro's bid committee, Carlos Arthur Nuzman, celebrate with supporters in Copenhagen as their city won the right to host the 2016 Olympic Games Charles Dharapak/Getty Images

## Rio bravo



Games on Rio de Janeiro has planned a number of developments including, clockwise from top, the Maracanã football stadium and Maracanãzinho volleyball hall; the Copacabana beach volleyball venue; the Olympic village; and the Rodrigo de Freitas Lake canoeing venue



# London's tenacious campaigner Lee makes it back-to-back triumphs in the complexities of bidding

## Owen Gibson Copenhagen

Mike Lee, the man who helped deliver the Olympics for London, has now made it two out of two. Lee, a former director of communications at Uefa, saw his stock soar after working closely with Sir Keith Mills to win the 2012 Games for London.

The road to 2016 did not start so smoothly for Lee. His campaigning company Vero worked on behalf of the Doha campaign that barely got out of the starting blocks before he was contacted by the Rio campaign to adapt the London template for the Brazilian city.

Rio's bid leader, Carlos Nuzman, deter-



Mike Lee followed his work with

2012 bid when it did not make it through to the final four, left nothing to chance.

The relentlessly pugnacious spin doctor helped construct a long-term strategy that slowly saw it erode Chicago's early lead and turn Brazil's second largest city from an outside bet to a realistic prospect. While the emotional pull of Rio was plain, the challenge was to make the technical details stack up and reinforce its solid financial backing.

In President Lula, he had the advantage of a globally recognised statesman who bought into the campaign from the beginning and saw it as Brazil's opportunity for a coming-of-age party as a global superpower. A team of former athletes,

officials was augmented by guest stars like Pelé. And the trick that London pulled by distilling its message into a compelling short video was repeated with "Passion Unites Us", a film by the City of God director, Fernando Meirelles.

"Great campaigns are built on great narratives. Everything you do has to fit in with that narrative," said Lee earlier

**Rio played heavily on its young. Two beautiful videos tugged the heartstrings of the IOC**

this week before yesterday's spectacular denouement. Vero, which works with sports clients including the International Association of Athletics Federations, the International Rugby Board and UK Athletics, can expect a queue to form shortly among prospective bidders for 2020.

The challenge of taking the Games to South America for the first time was very different from that of delivering them to London. But there were also similarities. Just as London promised to inspire the world's youth through sport, so Rio played heavily on its young people. Another key part of Rio's final presentation was two beautifully realised promotional videos that tugged the heartstrings of the IOC.

Paul Deighton, chief executive of Lon-

## Key selling points in the winning bid

**Economic guarantees**  
Rio's budget was the highest of the four cities at \$11.6bn but insisted it could guarantee funding

**A powerful legacy**  
The regeneration of the city has been linked to putting on the 2016 Games

**Infrastructure**  
More than half of the proposed Olympic venues are built and hosting the 2014 football World Cup has kick-started other construction

**Location**  
The four main venues have spectacular backdrops and incorporating Brazilian culture was a cornerstone of the bid

**Access for athletes**  
Around 46% of athletes will be based within 10 minutes of their competition or training venue

**Affordability**  
Tickets for prime events will cost just \$15 to \$30 to ensure the Brazilian public can attend

don 2012, said that once the celebrations had died down the hard work would begin. Many of the team behind Rio's bid worked together on the 2007 Pan American Games but the level of scrutiny will be of a different order of magnitude. "Generally the first bit of advice is to say that seven years is, in some respects, quite a long time. So, for the first year, be quite thoughtful about what the big issues are and the things you really need to deal with," he said.

"Also, in the early days you need to recognise that delivering a Games is a very different challenge from winning a campaign. You need to stop and have a look at the team that is involved and ensure that the team you put in place is the right one to take it through to the next stage."