

Which will be the leading sports nations in 2013 and beyond?

by Jon Coxeter-Smith and Mike Laffin

The world of sport is changing and a new order is emerging as the impacts of the Beijing 2008 and London 2012 Olympic Games recede into the past and Russia enters a golden era of hosting major events, starting with the Summer Universiade and World Athletics Championships this year and reaching a peak with the 2014 Winter Olympics and soccer's 2018 Fifa World Cup.

Russia's main challenger, as it seeks to establish itself as a leading destination for sport in the long term, is likely to be China, which has built on its grand Olympics of five years ago with other showpiece games and continued to attract prestigious world championships, albeit at a slower rate, in various sports.

In the first edition of Sportcal's Global Sports Nations Index, published in November 2012, China was in first place and Russia third, with the two superpowers separated by the United Kingdom, which was basking in the warm afterglow of a highly-rated Olympics. This article will examine the claims of the three countries for the top position in the next edition of the Index, and analyse how the landscape will continue to shift over the next few years.

Behind the leading trio, Italy and Canada continue to eye the podium, while the likes of Germany, France, Brazil, USA, the Netherlands, Spain and Korea vie for places in the top 10.

The Global Sports Nations Index 2012 was developed by analysing data from over 700 major world sports events between 2007 and 2018 (the Global Sports Impact Index period), including 'Mega Events' like the Olympics and Fifa World Cup, major multi-sports games and world championships in over 90 internationally recognised sports.

The Top Three

China

China's position is based on a solid platform of 42 major events, the highest number of any country in the period studied, including the 2008 Olympics in Beijing, the 2010 Asian Games in Guangzhou, the 2011 Summer Universiade in Shenzhen and a whole host of world championships.

Top 10 major events hosted by China 2007-18

Olympic Games 2008
Paralympic Games 2008
Asian Games 2010
IAAF World Championships 2015
Summer Universiade 2011
Youth Olympic Games 2014
FINA World Championships 2011
Winter Universiade 2009
World Table Tennis Team Championships 2008
World Table Tennis Championships 2015

In just the first two years covered by the GSI Index, China hosted 13 major events, including the 2007 Fifa Women's World Cup, the 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Games, two multi-sports games and eight world championships.

The trend continued from 2009 to 2012, with 19 events, including the Asian Games, the Summer Universiade and 16 world championships or finals. The total of 32 events in the first six years equates to an average of more than five events per annum, peaking at seven in 2008.

However, there is a stark contrast with the period 2013 through to 2018, in which only 10 major events have been secured, the most notable of which are the 2014 Youth Olympic Games in Nanjing and world championships in athletics, in Beijing, and table tennis, in Suzhou, both in 2015, with none listed after that year.

With the Chinese government apparently switching its focus from bidding for global events to grassroots participation, is the impetus created by the country in hosting a large-scale Olympics and the momentum that carried it forward in subsequent years finally running out of steam? Will China re-emerge as a force to be reckoned with in major events or has its appetite now been sated?

United Kingdom

As would be expected, the UK's position of second place on the list was built on the widely acclaimed London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Between 2008 and last year, the country hosted 21 major events, including some in non-

Olympic sports such as cricket's ICC World Twenty20 and 16 world championships and finals.



Top 10 major events hosted by the United Kingdom 2007-18

Olympic Games 2012
Paralympic Games 2012
Commonwealth Games 2014
IAAF World Championships 2017
IRB Rugby World Cup 2015
ITU World Triathlon Series Grand Final 2013
ICC World Twenty20 2009
Artistic Gymnastics World Championships 2009
Artistic Gymnastics World Championships 2015
FINA World Championships (25m) 2008

UK Sport, the national body responsible for high performance sport, has published its World Class Events programme for 2013 to 2019 with the stated goal of establishing the country as one of the world's leading host nations by using the event experience assets created and/or brought up to date by the London Olympics and next year's Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

With eight major events scheduled for this year onwards, there is much evidence to suggest that the UK's planning has already moved far beyond 2012. The post-Olympic era begins in earnest with the Commonwealth Games and continues with World Cups in rugby union in 2015 and cricket in 2019 and world championships in gymnastics in 2015 and athletics, at London's Olympic Stadium, in 2017.

Hopes of a global soccer event in the UK's much-heralded 'golden decade of sport' were dashed when England's bid for the 2018 World Cup was comprehensively rejected in favour of Russia, but Glasgow is aiming to build on the 2014 Commonwealth Games by bidding to host the Youth Olympics four years later.

Russia

Russia's lofty status is also based on having attracted Mega Events and major games but the volume is much less than China's, with only 30 prominent events in the GSI Index period.

Top 10 major events hosted by Russia 2007-18

Fifa World Cup 2018
Olympic Winter Games 2014
IAAF World Championships 2013
Summer Universiade 2013
FINA World Championships 2015
IRB Rugby World Cup Sevens 2013
Paralympic Winter Games 2014
IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship 2016
World Table Tennis Team Championships 2010
World Judo Championships 2014

From 2007 to 2012, Russia hosted 17 major world championships but no Mega Events or multi-sports games. However, with 13 major events between 2013 and 2018, it is more than compensating for this. The country will host three such events this year alone, namely the Summer Universiade, in Kazan, and the World Athletics Championships and the Rugby World Cup Sevens, both in Moscow.



These will be followed by the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, which have required significant investment in infrastructure, swimming's World Championships in 2015, ice hockey's World Championship in 2016 and the Fifa World Cup, to be held at 12 largely-new stadia in 11 cities, in 2018.

The impact of these future events should help Russia rise still further in the Global Sports Nations Index and we can expect that it will soon be challenging China for the top position.

Medal Contenders

Italy

Italy is a regular host of world championships and, less frequently, major games. Having staged the Winter Olympics in Turin in 2006, which is outside the GSI Index period, it can lay claim to 40 leading events in a variety of sports.

During the period 2007 to 2012, Italy hosted 29 major events, including the Winter Universiade in Turin in the first year, swimming's World Championships in Rome in 2009 and eight separate world championships in 2011.

In 2013, Italy has staged or will be staging five major events, including the Winter Universiade in Trentino, the World Masters Games in Turin and world championships in Nordic skiing, road cycling and triathlon.

However, it is clear that the severe economic conditions have forced Italy to take a step back from certain high-profile sports events. This was highlighted by Rome's withdrawal from the bidding process for the 2020 Olympics, after the Italian government declined to provide funding, and it will be interesting to see whether the country continues to target major events and returns to the table when bidding begins for the 2024 Olympics.

Canada



The reputation of Canada as one of the world's leading global sports nations has been built through regularly winning the right to host major winter sporting events, including the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, World Curling Championships every year to 2016 and elite skating and ice hockey championships.

Canada has secured the most future events of the top nations, with 14 on the calendar for 2013 to 2018. The highlight will be the 2015 Pan American Games in Toronto, complemented by the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup and world championships in figure skating and short-course swimming.

The Vancouver Winter Olympics did much to restore confidence at home in Canada's capacity and capability to successfully bid for and host major events. In April 2012, the Canadian Olympic Committee and the Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance announced a memorandum of understanding strengthening the relationship between the two organisations as they drive the country's bidding and hosting strategy.

COC board member Charmaine Crooks said: "In 2010, Canada demonstrated our great skill at hosting the world at the Vancouver Olympic Winter Games. This partnership will strengthen Canada's ability to successfully compete and, ultimately, host even more major international sport events, putting us at the top of the list of preferred destinations for world-class sport events."

Germany

Germany, one of Europe's leading sporting nations, has attracted the second-highest number of major events, behind China, with 41 in the GSI Index period. However, like the Asian powerhouse, many are in the past and it is lacking in multi-sports games, resulting in a lower ranking than might be expected.

Germany had a very successful hosting period up to 2006, when it hosted the Fifa World Cup, drawing considerable

Global Sports Impact Project

The Global Sports Impact Project is an initiative to establish a common methodology for measuring the impact of major sporting events.

Currently there is no internationally recognised method of analysing the benefits of hosting major sporting events.

The GSI project sets out to advance the debate and develop the foundations for the development of a methodology through consultation with a global network of stakeholders and experts in sport. This group includes:

- Academics
- Architects
- Bid Committees
- Cities
- Consultants
- Governing Bodies
- Government Agencies
- Olympic Committees

The outcome of the first phase of the project was the analysis of over 700 events against a series of indicators across a range of criteria including:

- Economic
- Financial
- Sporting
- Media
- Social
- Environmental

From this analysis an index was produced on the hosting of major sporting events by cities and nations. (See Global Sports Nations Index)

The Global Sports Nations Index has been adopted by UK Sport, one of the founding partners of the project, and the UK Government to measure one of UK Sports' four Key Performance Indicators (KPI).

The second phase of the GSI project will be undertaken in several stages and will feature further development of the events analysis and the issue of further editions of the GSI Cities and Nations Indices.

The key themes of the second phase will be:

1. Working in partnership with a number of expert academics and institutions, refining the methodology of the analysis, re-examining the indicators for each family of criteria and the data that sits behind those indicators.
2. Expanding the events data set to include a wider range of events including World Series and continental events and collecting more in-depth data for each event thus expanding the depth and quality of the data used to calculate the indexes.
3. Creating a rolling 12-year timescale, measuring the current year plus the five preceding years and then projecting 6 years forward.
4. Working with partners and stakeholders to support the academic work and to provide input and guidance on the project development.

The first stage of this work will be marked by the release of the 2013 edition of the Global Sports Nations Index and the GSI Report 2013.

To coincide with the summer 2013 release, Sportcal will launch its new Global Sports Events premium market intelligence service allowing subscribers to access the data underpinning the GSI Indices.



praise in the process. It continued that trend in 2007, with eight world championships, and in 2008, with a further six.

However, in the period 2013 through to 2018, it has failed to attract any significant world events, as evidenced by Munich's well supported, but ultimately unsuccessful, bid for the 2018 Winter Olympics, which went to PyeongChang in Korea.

With only 10 events, including world championships in karate (2014) and women's handball (2017), scheduled for this year onwards, Germany is likely to see a decline in its position in the Global Sports Nations Index.

Potential Climbers

France

Like its European neighbour Italy, France owes its high position to the regular hosting of world championships in various sports.

From 2007 to 2012, France hosted 20 major events, including the Rugby World Cup in 2007. However, with Paris having lost out to London in the race for last year's Olympics and Annecy coming a distant third in the bidding for the 2018 Winter Olympics, it is left without a major games in the GSI Index period.

It has landed eight major events for the period 2013 to 2018, including this year's World Individual Table Tennis Championships, the 2014 World Equestrian Games, the 2015 World Rowing Championships and the 2017 Men's World Handball Championship.

The launch this April of the French Committee of International Sport (CFSI), an international sports relations strategy co-ordination group acting on behalf of the sports ministry and the national Olympic committee, in a move that could lead to a new Olympics bid, shows that the country is adapting to the increasingly competitive environment in major events bidding.

Brazil

With seven major sports events, including two Mega Events, scheduled for the period 2013 to 2018, Brazil is very much in the ascendancy in hosting terms.

The focus is on next year's Fifa World Cup, which will incorporate matches in new and redeveloped stadia in 12 cities, and the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, the first time that the games will be held in South America.

In the same timescale, Brazil will host world championships in sports such as canoe sprint and judo and we can expect Brazil to win hosting rights to other similar events as it builds towards the Rio 2016 Olympics and Paralympics, and strengthens its reputation.

USA

The USA's hosting palmarés shows that, as in the case of Italy and France, the country's position in the top 10 of the Global Sports Nations Index is based on the regular hosting of world championships, with 26 of the 28 major events attracted being of this nature.

Following the failure of campaigns by New York for the 2012 Olympics and Chicago for the 2016 games, the United States

Olympic Committee stepped back from bidding, leaving the country without a major games in the Index period.

There was no US bid for either the 2018 Winter Olympics or 2020 Olympics, but an apparent barrier to a future bid was lifted in May 2012, when the USOC finally signed an agreement with the International Olympic Committee to resolve a long-running dispute over the share of Olympic revenues it receives.

Having resolved its differences with the Olympic Movement and with a period of rapprochement under way, will USA again be in the running to host an Olympic Games? With 10 major world events between 2013 and 2018, including the recent World Baseball Classic, the Special Olympics Summer World Games in 2015 and world championships in road cycling, alpine skiing, weightlifting and wrestling, the country is building momentum ahead of the next Olympic cycle.

The Netherlands

Despite its small size, the Netherlands, in common with other European nations, has established itself as a prominent host of world championships. This is set to continue with 11 such events scheduled for 2013 onwards in sports including beach volleyball, cycling, field hockey, rowing, softball, speed skating and triathlon.

However, there have been setbacks, with Rotterdam eliminated from the race to host the 2018 Youth Olympics. Concerns over financial guarantees were thought to be the driving reason behind the decision of the IOC's executive board to drop the Dutch city from its shortlist.

Although the challenging economic climate will have influenced thinking, there is continued talk that the Netherlands will come forward with a bid for the 2028 Olympics, a century on from the last time the country hosted the games, in Amsterdam.

Other Top 10 Contenders

Spain

Spain was just outside the top 10 places in the 2012 Global Sports Nations Index, but after an even spread of major events over the last six years and 12 secured for the 2013-2018 period, including world championships in swimming and handball this year, road cycling, sailing and shooting in 2014, and the Winter Universiade in Granada in 2015, the future looks relatively bright.

It was thought that, in light of the continuing economic crisis in Spain, Madrid could be forced to withdraw its bid for the 2020 Olympics, its third successive campaign, but the capital remains in the race and, if successful, the games would provide a strong platform to bid for other future events.

Korea

Korea is very much an emerging force in event hosting, as shown by Daegu's successful staging of the 2011 World Athletics Championships.

The country has secured nine major events for 2013 to 2018, including world championships in rowing and shooting, the Asian Games in Incheon in 2014, the Summer Universiade in Gwangju in 2015 and the Winter Olympics and Paralympics in PyeongChang in 2018.

Japan

Japan has a good recent track record in hosting major events, having organised 18 world championships, including the 2007 World Athletics Championships in Osaka, in the last six years.

It has already landed the 2017 Asian Winter Games, to be held in Sapporo, and the 2019 Rugby World Cup, and could start the next decade on a high if Tokyo is successful with its bid for the 2020 Olympics.

Turkey

Turkey, in the shape of Istanbul, is also bidding for the 2020 Olympics and has been developing its event hosting experience with a wide variety of world championships in the last few years in sports including archery, athletics, basketball, fencing, judo, swimming, weightlifting and wrestling.

It will host the Mediterranean Games in Mersin in 2013 and world championships in women's basketball and rhythmic gymnastics in 2014.

Summary

The Global Sports Nations Index shows that the landscape for hosting major sports events is becoming more competitive and countries are increasingly purposeful in their motivations for staging events as the range of benefits is better understood.

We observe that nations are becoming more strategic in their bidding and hosting plans, with key initiatives and appointments announced in Canada, France, the UK and the USA. Some countries are following the example of upwardly mobile Denmark, which made the top 20 of the 2012 index, in creating centralised sports events groups responsible for co-ordinating bidding strategy.

Matters will not stand still as in each month new bidding opportunities will emerge and the hosts of future editions of major sports events will be decided. Later this year, two of the most high-profile current bidding contests will reach a conclusion, as in Lausanne in July the IOC will name the host city for the 2018 Youth Olympics and in Buenos Aires in September, the destination of the 2020 Olympics will be decided.

Which bids will emerge victorious? And what will be the effect on the standings in future editions of the Global Sports Nations Index? Follow www.sportcal.com/gsi to find out.



Global Sports Nations Index

Part of the GSI project has involved the development of an index looking at how successful nations have been at attracting major sporting events. Each event is given a weighting based on our research and the combination of each weighting gives a city and nation a score.

At this stage the Global Sports Nations Index is only covering major world events that can be hosted in different continents and by a wide variety of countries. Certain major events have been excluded because the bidding process is not open to all countries or there is no formal bid process.

We have also excluded certain events that are either regarded as too small to include or where data has been difficult to obtain for them.

The period we are studying for the second edition of the Index is from 1st January 2008 through to 31st December 2019. We have analysed more than 700 events for the Index from over 90 sports covering all Olympic and recognized sports.

Sportcal Events

Sportcal Events is the essential guide to all major global sports events past, present and future, including bidding opportunities, for over 90 Olympic and internationally recognised sports.

Events Guide – Key Features

- In-depth guide to past and future events
- Organiser details and contact information
- Past event analysis with attendance and coverage
- Future projections and venue requirements

Bidding Guide – Key Features

- Detailed list of bidding opportunities
- Bid timetable and process
- Features on bids in progress
- Bid news and announcements