Olympic Success: Built, Born, or Bought?

Jacob Ney  
*College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University, JNEY001@CSBSJU.EDU*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/ur_cscday](https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/ur_cscday)

Part of the [Environmental Studies Commons](https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/ur_cscday)

**Recommended Citation**
[https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/ur_cscday/10](https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/ur_cscday/10)
Olympic Success: Built, Born, or Bought?

By: Jacob Ney

Is a ranked medal count a fair representation of Olympic Success? To balance how this success is measured, factors such as a country’s participation, population, and GDP should be considered. Using data from the all time summer Olympics, these maps attempt to normalize the playing field.

2: How many people, as a proportion of the larger population, do countries choose to send? If each country had a population of 100,000 people, this is how many participants each has sent to the Olympics.

3: How does the overall GDP of a country affect their medal count? This map compares how many medals a country has earned to how many would be expected based on their GDP.

Results indicate that countries with large populations typically send less participants proportionally—only their very best athletes. Countries with high GDPs spend more on athletics to earn more medals, while others perform with more variance comparatively. Looking at Olympic success rate is a fairer measure of performance, but GDP and population should also be considered when measuring how a country fares.

Data from: ArcGIS Online Map Service, worldbank.org, sports-reference.com