



Can the BRICS Games replace the Olympics?

UDC 796.093+796.03

PhD, Associate Professor **A.V. Shvetsov**

Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation, Moscow

Corresponding author: shvedcov2004@yandex.ru

Received by the editorial office on 15.01.2025

Abstract

Objective of the study. The purpose of this work is to study the results of the participation of Russian athletes in the V BRICS Games, as well as to assess the contribution of these competitions to the formation of an alternative model of international sporting events.

Methods and structure of the study. To achieve this goal, an analysis of information materials related to Olympic issues was carried out.

Results and conclusions. The study found that in March 2022, Russian and Belarusian athletes were excluded from most international competitions on the recommendation of the IOC Executive Committee. The reason for this decision was a special military operation conducted by the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine. After two years of restrictions, Russia has demonstrated its ability to organize large-scale competitions by successfully hosting the V BRICS Games. This event can serve as a starting point for the development of a new international competition system independent of the IOC.

Keywords: *Russian athletes, V BRICS Games, alternative model, international sports events, Olympic issues, exclusion of athletes, international competitions, restrictions, organization of competitions.*

Introduction. BRICS is an interstate association of five states: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, the first letters of which in English form the abbreviation BRICS. BRICS Sports Games (hereinafter referred to as BRICS Games) – a multi-sport event that takes place in the country that chairs the association. The history of the BRICS games dates back to 2016, when only football was played at the trial Games in Goa (India). The programs of the next games included from three to five sports. The first Games in Guangzhou (China, 2017) included basketball, volleyball and wushu; II Games in Johannesburg (South Africa, 2018) – volleyball, football and netball. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, no games were held for three years, and the third games in 2022 were held in online format (breaking, chess and wushu). Awards in swimming, badminton, table tennis, tennis and beach volleyball were awarded in four days at the IV Games

in Durban (South Africa, 2023). On October 22-24, 2024, the Russian Federation hosted the BRICS Summit. Anticipating this event, the country organized and hosted the V BRICS Sports Games, which were held from June 12 to 23, 2024 in Kazan, the capital of the Republic of Tatarstan.

Objective of the study. The purpose of this work is to study the results of the participation of Russian athletes in the V BRICS Games, as well as to assess the contribution of these competitions to the formation of an alternative model of international sporting events.

Methods and structure of the study. To achieve this goal, an analysis of information materials related to Olympic issues was carried out.

Results and conclusions. According to the corresponding member. RAO O.V. Matytsina the main goals of the games were: "...comprehensive strengthen-



ing of friendly sports ties based on the principles of equality, non-discrimination and equal admission of athletes to competitions, the development of new formats of interstate sports events" [1].

For the first time, the games were held in an open format, that is, with the participation of non-BRICS countries. Invitations to the games were sent to more than 70 countries, but in the end, representatives of 56 teams competed in Kazan. Undoubtedly, the number of teams would have been higher, and the levels of preparation of foreign athletes and, consequently, the competition at the Games would have been higher, if not for three reasons. Firstly, due to the timing of the Olympic Games in Paris (July 26-August 11), it was initially clear that the strongest foreign athletes would not attend the BRICS Games, for whom the OI-24 is the main start of the quadrennial. Secondly, the organizers had to refuse to pay for travel for the foreign teams.

Previously, this was a mandatory point for all major tournaments in Russia. Now, everyone who got to the BRICS Games did it at their own expense. Thirdly, there are political risks. The very fact of the arrival of foreign (and even more so elite) athletes in Russia at the present time was a sufficient reason for the IOC to impose sanctions on these teams and athletes. Therefore, many delegations brought non-core teams, as they did not want to risk the training and career of their leading athletes. Despite all the difficulties, Russia organized and hosted the V BRICS Games at a high level.

Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Chernyshenko called them the most exciting competitions of the summer and even called the sanctions a "gift": "Despite serious external threats, Russian sports is developing dynamically. Russia has once again proved that it sets trends, including sports ones. The sanctions of un-

friendly countries were a gift to us. They have given us opportunities, and we will develop new innovative formats" [2].

For Russian athletes, these games have become the main start of the season in terms of competition with foreign athletes and numerous fans in the stands. The competition was broadcast live on the state TV channel "Match!TV", which sent seven mobile television stations to Kazan. 4,600 athletes from 56 countries competed in the V BRICS Games. Athletes from 38 countries won medals at the Games, and 16 became champions. 387 sets of awards in 27 sports, 19 of which were Olympic, were awarded at 17 sports venues in Kazan.

The BRICS V Games team medal standings, unlike the OI [3, 4], were official, and the results of the first six leading countries in the team medal standings are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. TOP-6 of the V BRICS Games team medal standings

A country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
Russia	266	142	101	509
Belarus	55	85	107	247
China	20	24	18	62
Uzbekistan	17	39	58	114
Brazil	8	20	23	51
Iran	4	12	20	36

Russia won 266 gold medals (68.7%) and a total of 509 medals (43.8%). The Belarusians who finished second have almost five times fewer wins (55) and 247 medals. China is in third place, with 20 gold and 62 awards in total, respectively. Uzbekistan's athletes demonstrated a high level of preparedness for the competition, with 114 medals in total. Russia's confi-

Table 2. Russian multi-medalist athletes of the V BRICS Games

Sportsman	Type of sport	Medals	Prize money
Alexander Maltsev	synchronized swimming	4+0+0	1 433 600
Doroshko Maya	synchronized swimming	4+0+0	1 433 600
Artemyev Vladislav	chess	3+1+0	1 254 400
Daniel Marinov	athletic gymnastics	2+1+2	1 111 000
Svetlana Kolesnichenko	synchronized swimming	3+0+0	1 075 200
Tulupova Agnia	synchronized swimming	3+0+0	1 075 200
Yesipenko Andrey	chess	3+0+0	1 075 200
Lagno Ekaterina	chess	3+0+0	1 075 200
Nikita Schleicher	diving	3+0+0	1 075 200
Kalmykova Anna	athletic gymnastics	2+2+0	1 075 200



dent victory in the team competition is a direct result of weak competition from other teams, as well as encouraging Russians with prize payments from the Ministry of Sports: 358.4 thousand rubles for gold.; 179.2 – for silver and 107.5 – for bronze.

The Russian athletes who distinguished themselves most at these Games and their prize money are shown in Table 2.

The competition program also influenced the number and quality of awards won (and the amount of prize money for Russians). For example, 11 sets of awards were awarded in synchronized swimming, while only two were awarded at the Olympic Games. Therefore, among the most successful Russian athletes there are four representatives of this sport, three more chess players, two gymnasts and a diver. Among the foreign athletes, representatives of Belarus distinguished themselves – V. Kravets (5 victories in rowing) and I. Shimanovich (4 victories in swimming).

In terms of the organization of competitions, the number of sports and awards being awarded, the number of fans in the stands and the coverage of the BRICS Games in Kazan in Russian media, they made a huge leap compared to their predecessors and set the bar high for the organizers of future competitions of this project.

However, the main sporting event of 2024 and the quadrennial anniversary were the XXXIII Olympic Games in Paris, which were attended by 10.7 thousand athletes from 206 teams, and at which 329 sets of awards in 36 sports were awarded. 63 teams became the champions of OI-24, and 85 became the winners. This sports forum once again confirmed that modern olympic games have become a symbol of sports and a global phenomenon that attracts thousands of the best athletes from all over the world, millions of tourists, fans and billions of TV viewers.

But increased interest in the Olympic Games began to form from the second half of the last century, when representatives of the countries of the socialist camp entered the Olympic arenas and there was a sharp increase in scientific and technological progress and the development of sports science. All these factors contributed not only to the rapid spread of the ideas of Olympism on all continents, but also to the professionalization and commercialization of Olympic sports. This has led to the fact that the ideas of Olympism have become attractive in terms of making a profit for multinational corporations and television companies (chap.

mainly from the USA and Anglo-Saxon countries), with which the IOC cooperates on an ongoing basis. Currently, television is the main source of funding for the Olympic Games and Olympic sports. Thus, the IOC's revenues for 2017-2021 amounted to \$ 7.6 billion, of which the sale of television broadcasts accounted for 61%, sponsorship and partnership (mainly the TOP program) – 30%, ticket sales and licensing – 5%, other revenues – 3% [5].

Therefore, Olympic sports is increasingly moving away from the original ideas of Coubertin and his supporters, and the Olympic Games have become a big business project dependent on the activities of the same sponsors and television companies. And already the IOC, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and many international sports federations (IF), in order to please the countries of the Anglo-Saxon bloc, are making decisions that contradict the main provisions of the Olympic Charter and violate this document. In many ways, these decisions are aimed at weakening the influence of the Russian Federation not only in the Olympic movement, but also in world politics and the economy.

Now Russian athletes are in complete discrimination. At first, they were disqualified on the basis of collective responsibility (because of the "state doping program" identified by WADA), and for the last 2.5 years, Russians have not been allowed to participate in international competitions on national and political grounds (because of their own). As a result of such sanctions and restrictions on the OI-24, Russia was represented by only 15 athletes competing in the team of independent neutral athletes (AIN). Naturally, the current political situation forces Russia to take retaliatory actions, including holding international competitions of a new format – without the participation of the IOC and WADA.

Conclusions. The results of this study can be considered as follows:

1. Russia won the medal standings of the V BRICS Games in Kazan with a huge advantage. The balance of power in the team competition and the level of competition were largely influenced by the difficult geopolitical situation in the world and the IOC sanctions aimed at isolating Russia from Olympic sports, due to which foreign delegations did not bring the main national teams.

2. The BRICS sports games have created an image of a successful major sports forum in their less than ten-year history and difficult political



conditions. It is obvious that the BRICS Games in Kazan are the first real attempt to create normal alternatives in sports without sanctions for political reasons, without any preferences for transgender people and without the dubious anti-doping fight by the IOC and WADA. In the medium term, the BRICS games will not become an alternative to the Olympic Games, but they can take their rightful place in world sports.

3. In the coming years, Russia has almost no chance of fruitful cooperation with the IOC, WADA and many IFAS. Therefore, in conditions of isolation from Olympic sports, further state and corporate support for physical culture and sports, as well as the holding and participation of Russian athletes in international competitions of a new format, which include the BRICS Games, the CIS Games, the "Games of the Future", etc., is more relevant than ever for the Russian Federation.

References

1. Matytsin O.V. MOK zanemog? <https://rt-online.ru/mok-zanemog>. Date of access 25.09.2024.
2. Chernyshenko D.V. Sankcii nedruzhestvennyh stran byli nam podarkom. <https://www.gazeta.ru/2024/04/25/22873093> Date of access 27.09.2024.
3. Shvetsov A.V. Obshchekomandnyj medalnyj zachetsov remennyh Olimpijskih igr. Sport – doroga k miru mezhdunaro dami. Proc. VII nternat. scientific and practical conf. M., 2022. pp. 208-213.
4. Shvetsov A.V. Olimpijskie zimnie igry: etapy razvitiya strany-lidery obshchego medalnogo zacheta. Gumanitarnye nauki. Vestnik Finansovogo universiteta. 2023. T. 13. No. 1. pp. 41-49.
5. Shvetsov A.V. Zimnie Olimpijskie igry-2022 narossijskih gosudarstvennyh telekanalah. Gumanitarnye nauki. Vestnik Finansovogo universiteta. 2024. T. 14. No. 1. pp. 126-133.