

we write about the things we build and the things we consume

 written by Rita Lopes on 26 August 2016 in MetaBroadcast, people

my 2016 olympic experience

I can't believe the Rio 2016 Olympics are behind us, already! I say "already" fully knowing that for many it's more of a "finally!" feeling, but I'm a huge fan of the Olympic Games, so it always feels like it's over too quickly.

For the most part, this kind multi-discipline event is a good way to see competitions for sports I wouldn't normally watch. Truth is, I often don't have good enough ways to keep track of them, or they aren't televised. The Olympic Games are a nice way to see those competitions while the performing athletes are (usually) the best ones around at that time.

I'll be honest: I get pretty wrapped up in the Olympics while they're happening. And although Portugal isn't exactly a medal hoarder country, I'm usually pretty interested in knowing how our athletes are doing when they're up. The advantage of now thinking London as my home is that I feel for Team GB, too ?

This isn't a new passion, either. Since I've been in London I was lucky enough to *live* one edition of the Games in close proximity, including being in the Olympic Park.

But when I couldn't, London 2012 looked a bit like this to me:

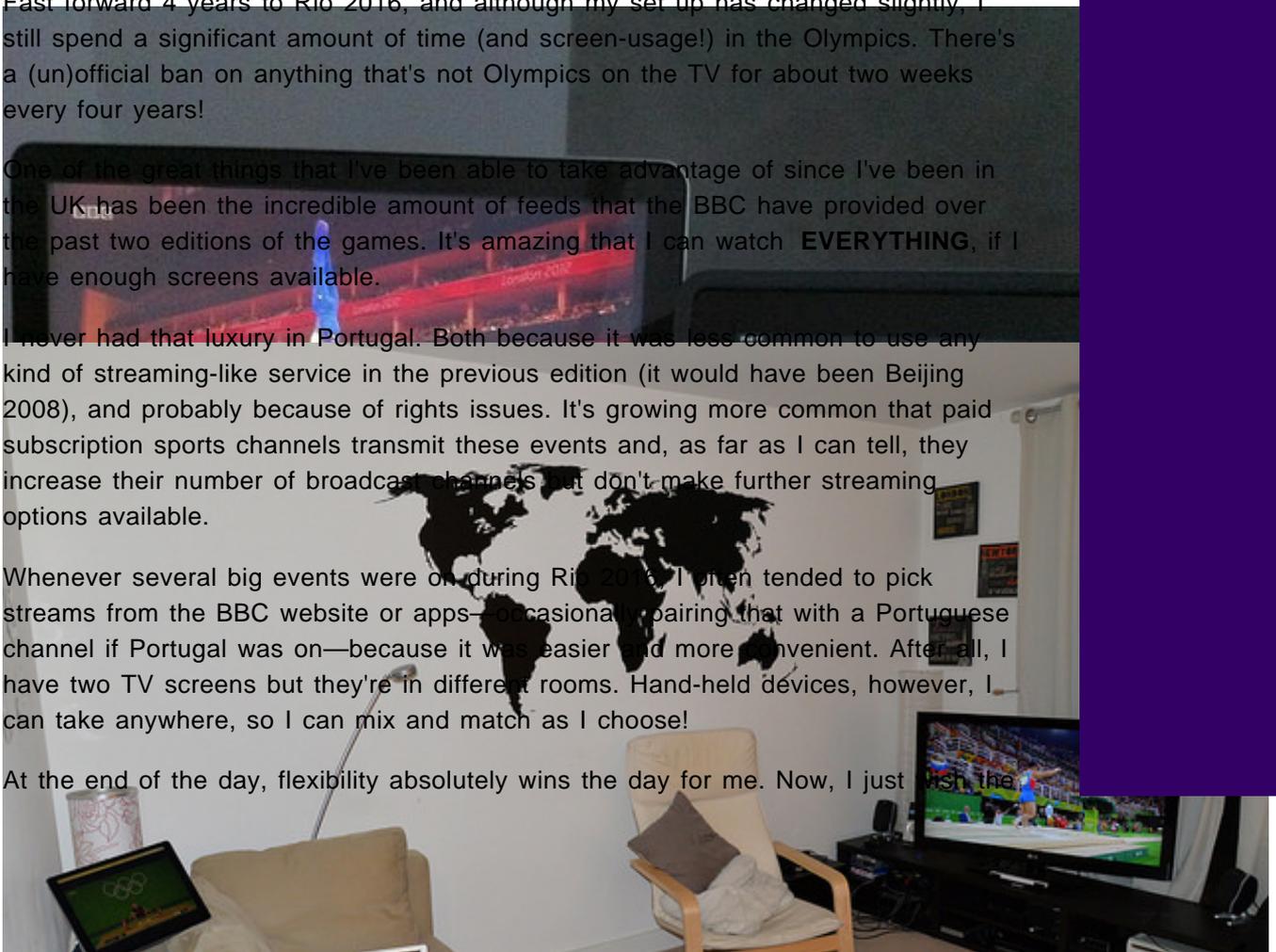
Fast forward 4 years to Rio 2016, and although my set up has changed slightly, I still spend a significant amount of time (and screen-usage!) in the Olympics. There's a (un)official ban on anything that's not Olympics on the TV for about two weeks every four years!

One of the great things that I've been able to take advantage of since I've been in the UK has been the incredible amount of feeds that the BBC have provided over the past two editions of the games. It's amazing that I can watch **EVERYTHING**, if I have enough screens available.

I never had that luxury in Portugal. Both because it was less common to use any kind of streaming-like service in the previous edition (it would have been Beijing 2008), and probably because of rights issues. It's growing more common that paid subscription sports channels transmit these events and, as far as I can tell, they increase their number of broadcast channels but don't make further streaming options available.

Whenever several big events were on during Rio 2016, I often tended to pick streams from the BBC website or apps—occasionally pairing that with a Portuguese channel if Portugal was on—because it was easier and more convenient. After all, I have two TV screens but they're in different rooms. Hand-held devices, however, I can take anywhere, so I can mix and match as I choose!

At the end of the day, flexibility absolutely wins the day for me. Now, I just *live* the



BBC's Olympic section within their website is about 10 times better by the time we reach Tokyo 2020, because, believe me, the way it was done this year was a pain! If you were using the website, Rio 2016 wasn't as highlighted as the broadcast seemed to suggest. And once you found the Olympic section, figuring out what were all the available live streams was harder than it needed to be. Eventually, the schedule section was what worked best for my use case.

Regardless, I'm one of the privileged people who did get to enjoy the access to all these resources! My favourite moments throughout these two weeks included witnessing several amazing sporting achievements, but also... the funny unscripted moments that you get with massive live events ?

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