

Robby Ackles
Sports 1 Marketing
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Article: Medal-rich teams draw even more funding from USOC in 2016
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The United States Olympic Committee recently released data on the amount of funding that was directed towards each of its sports last year, and the distribution is quite uneven. The decision made by the USOC is seemingly based off of a reward system for winning when one views the breakdown of funding in 2016. Swimming and track & field take the top two spots with 33 and 32 medals from the Rio Olympic Games respectively, but the latter sport received about \$500,000 more than swimming. Rounding out the top three is another popular American sport, gymnastics, which earned \$2,973,099, an increase of 9.7% from the amount of funding it was after the London Games in 2012. Surprisingly (at least to me), shooting was gifted \$2,229,798, which was more than sports such as volleyball and water polo.

It is not simply a coincidence that the more successful sports earned more cash, nor should it be a surprise. Under CEO Scott Blackmun, the committee is gradually adopting a system that has been established to generate as many Olympic medals as possible. Because Olympic medals enable the USOC to earn more revenue, this approach makes a lot of sense. For example, American cyclists brought home more medals from Rio (5) than wrestling, volleyball, and diving, among others, so cycling was rewarded with a 27.5% increase in funding. This increase was the third largest when stacked up against other U.S. sports, only trailing rugby's 78.7% jump and 37% more funding for the triathlon. Because the United States Olympics teams and programs are not federally funded but rather accommodated and paid for by the USOC, athletes sporting stars and stripes are put at a severe disadvantage when compared to other international powerhouses.

The sports that are able to sustain themselves and the United States Olympic Committee should be supported for their efforts. On the other hand, sports that are floundering under the pressures of economic success should be cut, for the U.S. should continue to develop Olympic programs that can actually bring home victorious athletes (and Olympic medals). This is not to say that any sport outside of the top three should be eliminated immediately, but the success of athletes taking part in each sport should certainly be considered. There is no use for the USOC to be spending millions of dollars on triathletes and sailors if they cannot keep up with the demand for prosperity and triumph over other nations every four years. The only exception to the rule and correlation between medals and funding should be applied to sports like basketball and baseball, which only offer one to two medals during the Olympic Games.

The USOC is doing its best to ensure that the U.S. is successful on the global stage, but it needs to continue to take a closer look at which sports have the most long-term potential.