

The Lillehammer 2016 legacy mapping project building the legacy narrative

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Introduction – aim of paper

The Youth Olympic Games (YOG) creates memories and identities. For the participants, for the volunteers, for the organizing committee, for the sport in general – especially the youth in sport. Just like the YOG themselves, the “raison d’être” of Lillehammer 2016 was the youth.

But it is more than just memories and medals.

Over time, several organizers of major and mega sport events have realized that memories and medals from a few day of competition is not enough to justify the resources used to organize the event. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is one of the organizations that have come to that conclusion (Thøni 2014).

The IOC states that “The Olympic Games have the power to deliver lasting benefits which can considerably change a community, its image and its infrastructure. As one of the world’s largest sporting events, the Games can be a tremendous catalyst for change in a host city with the potential to create far more than just good memories once the final medals have been awarded.” (IOC: Olympic Legacy 2013). In this brochure IOC give five categories of legacies: Sporting legacies, Social legacies, Environmental legacies, Urban legacies and Economic legacies.

There are several definitions of legacy, and there is an ongoing discussion on the term. Preuss define legacy as: “Irrespective of the time of production and space, legacy is all planned and unplanned, positive and negative, tangible and intangible, structures created for and by a sport event that remain longer than the event itself.” (Preuss 2007 according to Thøni: 2014)

This paper aims to describe the process of building a “Legacy Narrative” of the Youth Olympic Games in Lillehammer in February 2016. The project period started May 2015 and ended April 2016. The main objective of the paper is to describe project and to share some experiences.

Pratice description: building a legacy narrative

YOG is a relatively new event from the IOC. The Lillehammer Youth Olympic Games in February 2016 was the second winter Youth Olympic Games. The project was born out of a need to deliver something special and sustainable for the youth of Norway, using the catalyst and inspiring power of sport and of Olympic values. As such, Lillehammer 2016 nicely illustrates the true essence of YOG: inspiring and engaging youth to play an active role in their communities.

Through the Legacy mapping project the many legacyrelated initiatives and activities was uncovered, categorized and described. These initiatives came from different stakeholders (local sport clubs, the local university college, high schools, the municipality, the county and so on), and there was a need to get an overview. Creating this Legacy Narrative was one way to showcase what the YOG is all about.

Context description, actors involved:

Legacy mapping – presenting the impact

On this background, we did a mapping of all initiatives and activities of the Lillehammer Youth Olympic Games (LYOG). These initiatives and activities could come from the organizing committee (OC) or from other stakeholders. The objective of the project was to identify, collect, organize, maximize, monitor and share the many Games-related initiatives meant to/expected to deliver legacies for local, regional and national youth. All such initiatives, programs or activities cover a number of themes such as sport, education, leadership, health, etc.

All the initiatives are described according to Lillehammer 2016 five initial legacy commitments: 1) Leave a legacy of physical infrastructure and equipment, 2) Make an impact in the life of the athletes, 3) Contribute in the 10 years plan for the development of Norwegian youth sports, 4) Give the region renewed competence and enthusiasm and 5) Contribute to the development of Lillehammer Olympic Legacy Center.

Stakeholders/actors involved:

A major sport event like YOG have several actors involved. In this “legacy mapping”, we aimed to find the different actors and their contribution and collaboration. We cooperated with the IOC, the organizing committee, the Norwegian sport federation and several other actors. Other actors was the local authorities, the local high schools, the local universities, the regional hospital etc.

The main objective of this work was threefolded: To maximize the impact of all the legacy-related activities, to communicate the activities and to Share knowledge expected from LYOGOC.

Implications and learning

When talking about legacies from major sport events, we usually talk about impact years after the event. In the legacy mapping project, we aimed to find potential legacies and impacts before and during gamestime. For each initiative, activity, project or program that contributes to the Lillehammer 2016 YOG legacy, we systematically collected information, facts and content.

Every initiative or activity were categorized into one of the 5 legacy commitments with a short description including: objective, target group, stakeholders involved and potential legacy impact. One central learning point here is that a systematic mapping of all initiatives can give a tool to maximize the impact of the initiatives. The mapping document was also useful when describing what the YOG 2016 is really about – to media and other stakeholders. This can be further developed and used as a tool for future organizers future OC’s and for other sport event organizers.

Sum up

With an increasing focus on legacies in mega and major sport events, it is interesting to work in a project that aims to find, develop and maximize potential legacies before and during the actual event. Where legacies often considered as something you can discuss three, five or ten years after the event, this project tried to map most of the potential legacies before and during the event. This give some interesting possibilities – both regarding how to maximize the impact of the initiatives, and how to communicate the success of an event.

This can be an interesting tool to communicate more than economic impact of major and mega sport events to different stakeholders. As a lot of large events requires financial support, governmental support, support from local authorities and other

stakeholders, a documentation of all activities and its possible impacts and legacies can be a useful tool.

When understanding legacy as all “planned and unplanned, positive and negative, tangible and intangible, structures created for and by a sport event”, there is a need to systemize and describe all activities and initiatives that will result in the legacy of an event. In the case of YOG 2016, there were several stakeholders, and several target groups, with different goals. Building the Legacy Narrative gave an opportunity to describe the roles of the different stakeholders, and to uncover the potential legacy of the different initiatives and activities.

References

- Thöni, E (2014) “The legacy of the Innsbruck Winter Youth Olympic Games 2012” in D.V. Hanstad, M. Parent and B. Houlihan: The Youth Olympic Games (2104), Routledge.
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