



Dow Jones Reprints: This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use only. To order presentation-ready copies for distribution to your colleagues, clients or customers, use the Order Reprints tool at the bottom of any article or visit www.djreprints.com

[See a sample reprint in PDF format.](#)

[Order a reprint of this article now](#)

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

WSJ.com

OCTOBER 2, 2009, 1:11 P.M. ET

Rio Wins 2016 Olympic Games

By **MATTHEW FUTTERMAN** in Copenhagen and **DOUGLAS BELKIN** in Chicago

Rio De Janeiro will host 2016 Olympics, the International Olympic Committee announced, bringing the Olympic Games to South America for the first time and besting a Chicago bid that was strongly backed by President Obama.

Rio won in the third round, after Chicago was eliminated in the first round and Tokyo, earlier considered the weakest candidate, was eliminated in the second round.

Two hours after Mr. Obama brought his star power to Copenhagen Friday morning, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil pleaded with the IOC to embark on new territory and bring South America into the Olympic fold after more than a century of holding the Games in Europe, North America, Asia and Australia. The Olympics have never taken place in Africa. There have been 30 Olympic Games in Europe, 12 in North America, five in Asia and two in Australia.

After IOC President Dr. Jacques Rogge announced Rio as the winner, the leaders of the bid erupted in screams hugging President Da Silva who waited throughout the afternoon for the results of the vote. The celebration for Rio broke out even before the final outcome was announced, since it was deemed unlikely that the IOC would choose Madrid, the other finalist, and hold the Olympics in Europe three consecutive times. The 2012 Summer Games will occur in London, and the 2014 Winter Games will take place in Sochi, Russia. The 2010 Winter Games will take place in Vancouver.

Chicago's early exit was a shock, as President Obama lent the full force of the White House to the effort and flew to Copenhagen overnight to deliver a seven-minute speech to the International Olympic Committee Friday morning. In addition, Michelle Obama spent much of this week in Copenhagen personally lobbying IOC members.

Chicago's boosters spent \$48 million on the four-year campaign but, as always faced the obstacle of geographical loyalty. More than 40% of the IOC is European, and with competition from Rio, the U.S. could not count on support of members from South America, who were trying to bring the Olympics to their continent for the first time. Chicago2016's budget also relied on some \$4.8 billion in funding from the private sector, while other candidate cities had promises of billions of dollars of financial guarantees.

When Chicago was eliminated, a huge gasp rose from several thousand people gathered to watch the voting on three enormous television screens set up on Daley Plaza in downtown Chicago.

"I'm totally shocked, totally shocked," said Kathie Stelman, who took a train from her home in the suburb of Elk Grove Village Friday morning to watch the vote.

Not everyone was displeased. "My hope is that we'll get back to paying attention to the problems that are facing the city on an ongoing basis," said Andrew Huff, editor and publisher of Gaper's Block, an independent Web site

that covers local Chicago news. "We can concentrate on 2009 and 2010 instead of 2016. There are so many things we should be paying attention to rather than whether we're going to host an event in the future."

Phones at Mayor Richard Daley's office weren't being answered Friday morning.

Four Presentations

After a long campaign, Chicago, Tokyo, Rio and Madrid each got 70 minutes to make their case to International Olympic Committee members on Friday ahead of the vote.

Chicago's proponents led off the day's presentations. For nearly 45 minutes, the city's mayor and other backers of Chicago 2016 told the members of the IOC in workman-like fashion why their city was the best place for the Summer Games, emphasizing good venues, good shopping and a lot of hotel rooms. The speeches were interspersed with video footage of the city, sometimes narrated by children, sometimes by athletes to the strains of U2 and "Sweet Home Chicago."

Then the stars of the U.S. show took the podium.

First Lady Michelle Obama said she had come to Copenhagen not just as a Chicagoan or the First Lady, but as a daughter who still holds dear the memories of sitting on her father's lap and cheering on Olga Korbut and Nadia Comaneci in the Olympics of her youth.

Of her father, she said: "He taught me how to throw a ball and mean right hook better than anybody in our neighborhood," breaking into her trademark smile.

Ms. Obama then turned the microphone over to her husband, who also hit on the biggest themes of the Olympic movement -- peace and unity and trust. He told the committee of his experiences of coming to Chicago 25 years ago after a childhood in which his family moved often. He said he fell in love with Chicago as "the most American of cities," with a sense of unity always on display, then finished by stretching out his hand to a room filled with foreign leaders who were turned off by the Bush Administration's go-it-along foreign policy.

Mr. Obama said America "wants a chance to inspire the world once more."

The U.S. president and the three other heads of state who traveled to Copenhagen followed the playbook originally written by former British Prime Minister Tony Blair when he helped London win the 2012 Games in Singapore in 2005.

The Chicago presentation was followed by Tokyo. In a presentation that didn't even take up the full allotted time but emphasized precision and humility, representatives of Tokyo 2016 urged members of the IOC to bring the Games back to Tokyo for the first time in nearly a half-century.

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, meanwhile, led a strident presentation.

Rio stressed the opportunity -- unique among its rivals for the 2016 Games -- it presents to the IOC to make history by bringing the Olympics to a continent that has never hosted them before. Led by their president, representatives of the Rio dared the IOC Friday to be bold and to open their movement to a new continent.

"You have modernized the games without ever dimming the flame of tradition," Mr. Da Silva said, his voice rising with the passion Rio is known for. "The opportunity now is to expand the games to new continents. Light the cauldron in a tropical country, in the most beautiful of cities. Send a powerful message to the world that the Olympic Games belong to all people, all continents, and to all humanity."

The last of the four candidates to speak in front of the IOC, representatives of Madrid 2016 delivered a star-studded presentation. But the presentation was much like the bid itself -- sound but without the wider theme that the IOC often looks for when choosing a host site -- and may be eclipsed by Rio's passion or the Obamas' star power.

Bid officials from Madrid promised to deliver an Olympics with a "human touch" and, repeating its theme of "We Believe," to assure the IOC of its commitment to the Olympic movement of peace through sport. For IOC members who wanted to embrace a Latin culture but unsure that Rio is prepared to host, Madrid positioned itself as a middle ground.

Madrid's strongest argument may have been a personal one. Near the end of the presentation, Juan Antonio Samaranch, the former president of the IOC, addressed his former colleagues with a bittersweet request from a man who still carries much influence in IOC corridors.

"I am very near the end of my time," said Mr. Samaranch, 89 years old. "I ask you to consider granting my country the honor and the duty of hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2016."

—Amy Merrick and Kevin Helliker contributed to this article.

Write to Matthew Futterman at matthew.futterman@wsj.com and Douglas Belkin at doug.belkin@wsj.com

Copyright 2009 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved

This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use only. Distribution and use of this material are governed by our [Subscriber Agreement](#) and by copyright law. For non-personal use or to order multiple copies, please contact Dow Jones Reprints at 1-800-843-0008 or visit www.djreprints.com