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Watching The Olympics- In Prison

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Say what you want about all the negatives of Rio; the Zika virus, the water and the Russians, there is still something galvanizing about the Olympics. It's one of the few things the world can come together on. It brings people together to cheer the competitive nature of human beings.

For two weeks, we get to see how athletes around the world prepare, and compete, for the gold, silver and bronze medals. Even in prison, we can watch it.

I was originally worried that no one would watch the Games, because they can't bet on it...

Yes, Virginia... gambling DOES happen in prison, usually the major sports, but you can't quite bet on Judo, or Water Polo or Synchronized Swimming. So I feared we may not watch it.

Even with 7 televisions per dorm here at USP Tucson, I wasn't very confident that they'd watch it. But it appears that I underestimated the hearts of inmates who desired to participate in viewing what the rest of the world was watching. So yes, we've been watching the Olympics since Day

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Now, as of August 16th, with a handful of days left, I sat in awe, watching 4 of the 7 televisions cover different sports of the Olympics. And every sport had a human interest story, one of overcoming odds, just to make it to the elite of that particular event.

I watched Synchronized Swimming on one television, as the duo from Greece participated. There is a guy here FROM Greece, a friend of mine, and I wished he could see his countrywomen perform. They did a great job. The team after them, from Austria, was also originally from Greece, but defected to Austria so they could compete in that same event. Russia did an extraordinarily good job, as did China. I think Russia won the gold, and China the silver.

At the same time, Men's Track and Field was on, the obvious star being Bolt. Everybody expects him to win every event, and he didn't disappoint.

I watched an incredible comeback in Handball, as France defeated Spain to move to the semis. France was down 7 points but rallied to take it to overtime and beat Spain. It proves... never give up.

Volleyball was also on at the same time, as USA was playing Japan, and winning. Brazil, I think is the favorite in the tournament, and USA would have to face and beat Brazil in

the finals to get the gold.

In the Swimming Marathon, it looked like the guy from Greece won, but on replay, he didn't touch the bar, which registers the winners. He ended up in 2nd place. I think the guy from USA came in 12th.

Women's soccer was also on, with Sweden playing Brazil. I don't know the score on that, and I might imagine that the home country, Brazil, was favored.

So many stories, so many people competing in front of the world. Every athlete is there to represent the best in their country. The Olympics itself represents the best of sports. While the news spent weeks picking at the flaws, the last 2 weeks have shown what human nature is more about; looking for the GOOD, rather than the bad.

So even now, as I hear a prison-made speaker blare out a recent goal in the soccer... did Sweden just knock off Brazil in Women's soccer??? Anyway, I see a 2nd television is about to show the Mens' 1500 meter race... so many events, and even as inmates we enjoy the drama of sports competition.

I'm glad to see this; it proves that even as inmates, we're still part of humanity.

Frederick Mason