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Green for Gold: The Real Influences of Olympic Glory

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Poster Presentation P37

**GREEN FOR GOLD:
THE REAL INFLUENCES OF OLYMPIC GLORY**

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The Summer Olympics are arguably the most important international sporting competition in the world, trumping all other competition in its importance. At the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, 204 countries competed. However, the top 10 countries went on to win 56% of the 958 medals awarded. It is clear that the results of the Games are not based solely on individual athleticism, but what other factors play a role?

This study seeks the makings of a medal winning country by exploring inputs like population, GDP, host advantage, national health and government control of resources. Furthermore, it seeks to find whether countries recently independent of a controlling government continue to win medals at the same rate. Using multiple regression analysis and Olympic medal counts from 1992 through 2008, it looks at countries' ability to utilize their resources to in essence, produce medals. It finds that a larger GDP, a larger population, better health, and a controlling government all improve chances of gaining a larger medal share.