



BRAZIL BADMINTON GRABS SPOTLIGHT



14 AUGUST, 2016 - OLYMPICS, RIO 2016
TEXT BY DEV SUKUMAR | BADMINTONPHOTO

Brazilian badminton came of age with the eyes of the world on it. Ygor Coelho de Oliveira and Lohaynny Vicente's performances in their opening matches were indication of how much promise the South American nation holds in the sport.



When Vicente took court in her Women's Singles match against India's Saina Nehwal, she made light of the vast gulf in their rankings, catching the World No.5 by surprise with her attacking game and sending the crowd wild.

The atmosphere could not have got any more delirious than it did yesterday when local Men's Singles hope Oliveira punched above his weight to take a game off Scott Evans. Evans, the veteran of many a battle, said he'd never been in anything like this. "I was in London when Usain Bolt won the 100m and the crowd was nothing like this," he said in amazement.



With chants of "Ygor, Ygor" booming inside the stadium, the Brazilian was all over Evans after a slow start, darting around and firing steep winners. The second game in his bag, a Brazilian fairytale loomed, but Evans, wise by years of experience, stayed calm and didn't allow things to get out of hand.

The crowd's celebration of its two heroes showed that the nation has whole-heartedly embraced badminton.

"It was tough," Nehwal said, of Vicente. "She got good support from the crowd and she was picking up everything. It wasn't easy at all for me. It took me a while to adjust. I'm surprised at how well she was picking up my shots."



"I never thought six years ago I would play internationally," said Vicente. "It was always a dream, and it's just incredible now. It started as a social scheme in school when I was six.

"The experience of the opening match was amazing and I played my best. She's the world No.5; I'm No.72. So we have to put it in perspective. It was a sensational crowd, they lifted me and I'm thankful to them. It was so special to play in front of my home crowd."

"Most people used to ask me, 'what's badminton?' My mother supported me, she stood by me and insisted that I continue with badminton. I didn't look at her during the match because I would have become emotional."

Oliveira's journey has been the focus of several documentaries and newspaper features – his father Sebastiao started a badminton court in his favela to provide a healthy upbringing to children. Ygor has risen from such unconventional circumstances to become the face of Brazilian badminton.

Titled the Miratus Project, Sebastiao's Oliveira's initiative focusses on social uplift through education, theatre and sport – particularly badminton.

"My message is this: believe in your dreams," Ygor Oliveira said yesterday after losing to Evans. "I was raised in a favela – if I can play in the Olympics, anything's possible."

On Saturday, about 50 children from the project were in the stands to cheer Ygor on.

For Ygor, badminton has ensured he will now be a recognised face all over Brazil.

"In 2007 I began to feel that badminton was changing my life," Ygor said. "I started to travel around the world. There were so many things to see and experience. I made new friends, learnt new languages and different cultures. The travelling has helped me to improve my English. Badminton has also helped me financially. The sport has definitely changed my life."



BWF — Badminton World Federation a ajouté 10 photos à l'album RIO 2016: DAY 4 - UNFORGETTABLE YGOR — avec Ygor Coelho et Marc Zwiebler.

14 août, 23:35 · 🌐

Ygor Coelho de Oliveira has been Brazilian badminton's poster boy in the lead-up to the Rio 2016 Olympic Games and these past two days he has been up front and centre in the Badminton Competition.

Having taken a game off experienced Irishman Scott Evans last night, he returned to battle Marc Zwiebler today and though he found the going rough, losing in straight games, the local lad showed he has the potential to mix it with the big boys in years to come.

A packed arena screamed his name "Y-G-O-R" as the 19-year-old took his final bow, after a warm embrace and exchange of shirts with his German conqueror. As a gesture of appreciation, he hit a few shuttles used in the match into the crowd.

Later he was greeted by adoring fans outside, including his proud parents who hugged and kissed him.

It was his evening – one he will never forget.

Photo Credit: BadmintonPhoto/Shi Tang/BWF

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Ygor Coelho de Oliveira - Brazilian badminton's bright star. – avec Ygor Coelho.

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Marc Zwiebler hugs his Brazilian rival. – avec Marc Zwiebler et Ygor Coelho.

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They exchange shirts. – avec Ygor Coelho et Marc Zwiebler.

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  73 Meilleurs commentaires 

1 partage 3 commentaires



Mariana Machado This is how we do when we play in other person's country. We understand people cheering for him is not a personal choice! It is his country, what did u expect? Congrats to this guy... Ireland guy didn't take it like that.
J'aime · Répondre ·  2 · Hier, à 07:24 · [Modifié](#)



Man Jo Vie Beautiful
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Maria Luiza Ribas De Oliveira Mas ah mano Véio!!!
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Sharing his experience with the media. — avec Ygor Coelho.

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👤 Duarte Anjo, Andrey Balbinoo et 31 autres personnes

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Marc Zwiebler's shirt is a special momento from his Rio 2016 Olympic Games. – avec Marc Zwiebler et Ygor Coelho.

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Ygor gets up close with his fans. – avec Ygor Coelho.

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Leonardo Scheffer No sábado vc não apareceu... mancada...
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What a special Father's Day gift for his dad and badminton coach, Sebastião Oliveira. – avec Ygor Coelho.

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  Leo Guinancio, Duarte Anjo et 43 autres personnes

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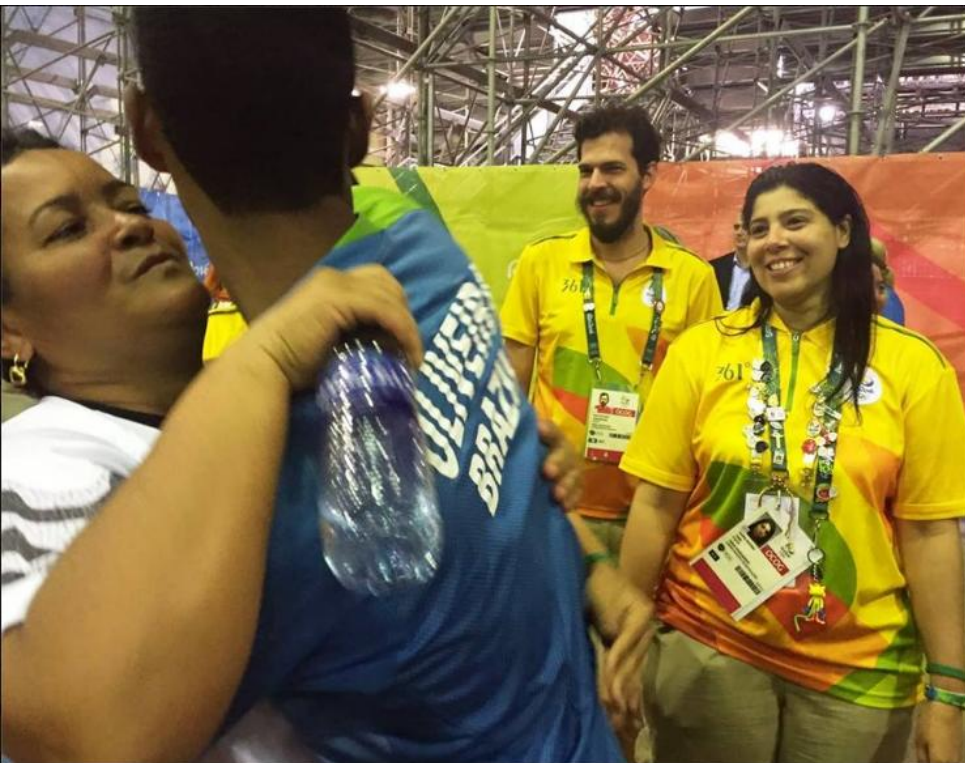
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His mum, Carmen Lucia de Abreu Coelho, was equally proud.

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Cleyson

Luan et 9 autres amis aiment ça.

 J'aime



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More fans...they just can't get enough of Ygor. – avec Ygor Coelho.

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