The Olympics has moved on from Mario and Sonic



For almost 20 years, Nintendo and Sega have released *Mario & Sonic at the Olympic Games* to coincide with the international sporting event. But now, according to a report in *Eurogamer*, that tradition is at an end. In 2020, the IOC made the decision to not renew the game's licensing deal, ending a run of games that's covered most Summer and Winter Olympic Games since 2007.

"Basically the IOC wanted to bring [the licensing] back to themselves internally and look at other partners so they would get more money," Lee Cocker, a developer who worked on the *Mario & Sonic* franchise, told *Eurogamer*.

Strangely though, those "other partners" are NFTs and esports – products that are not currently known for their money-making possibilities. To coincide with the Paris Games, the IOC, in collaboration with *Power Rangers: Battle for the Grid* studio nWay, has developed *Olympics Go! Paris 2024*, a mobile game featuring minigames based on Olympic events. According to the game's website, players are able to claim an "officially

licensed, commemorative Paris 2024 NFT Digital Pin.”

Esports at the Olympics isn’t a new concept. The IOC hosted several summits to determine how best to incorporate esports events with the Olympics in 2017 and 2018 — during the height of esports’ popularity (and financial viability). In 2021, the Olympics held its first medal event called the Olympic Virtual Series and featured games including baseball, sailing, cycling, and motorsports. In June, the IOC announced its creation of the Olympic Esports Games to coincide with the 2024 Paris Olympics, with the event held in 2025 and hosted by Saudi Arabia, now a popular, if controversial, esports destination.

https://www.theverge.com/2024/7/30/24209717/mario-and-sonic-at-the-olympic-games-cancelled-nfts-esports