

The Olympics... Being held *where*?

 By [Marion Scher](#)

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I arrived in London 10 days ago and after exiting Heathrow, turned to my friend who'd collected me and said: 'Maybe I'm imagining it but I haven't seen a single sign, flag, advert, anything that would denote the [Olympics](#) are being held here in three weeks' time?' She smiled and said: 'funny you should mention that'.

A couple of years ago, when South Africa hosted the [Confederations Cup](#), I wrote about [the fact there were no flags on the road leading from the airport](#) a month before the event - but when I compare what we did with promoting a big sporting event like that to what London is doing...

Alas, only but a few Union Jacks

As we drove through the suburbs leading in to London I expected to see houses with Union Jacks flying proudly and cars adorned with flags and stickers - still nothing. 'Things have to improve in central London,' I thought optimistically - the Brits love pomp after all. How wrong I was. Zip.

There were Olympic rings on London Bridge and in a stay of 10 days I counted just four homes and two pubs with British flags. So you can imagine, if there were only a few local flags, there wasn't a *single* flag for any competing country!

Another place one would have expected to be hit by Olympic mania would have been at the big stores like Harrods and Selfridges etc. Well, there was a small display in each but you had to look hard to find it.

Maybe, I thought, they're waiting for the last week before they put them up - after all it never stopped raining throughout my whole visit.

South Africa goes all out

For me, thinking back to whenever we've hosted an important sporting event, we've gone all out to show off our country, our South African pride - and more importantly - to welcome our overseas guests...the UK not so much.

I'm not an England basher, in fact, I was born and raised there very happily, which made this trip all the more sad - the fact that more effort wasn't put in to 'dressing up the city' for this historic event.

ABOUT MARION SCHER

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