An Introduction to Sports Tourism and Event Management

Editor | Melville Saayman
An Introduction to Sports Tourism and Event Management

Edited by M. SAAYMAN
This book is dedicated to my dad who loved sport.

Someone once said that the stars in the sky are the souls of those who died.

Your star shines bright.
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Sports Tourism – A Growing opportunity

Not only is there an art in knowing a thing, but also a certain art in teaching it.

Cicero Do Legibus

At the end of this chapter the student should be able to:

- Define and contextualise sports tourism.
- List and discuss the advantages of sports tourism.
- Define and analyse the concept of sports tourism.
- Identify the relevant role players in sports tourism.
- Contextualise wellness in sports tourism.
1.1 INTRODUCTION

Baron Pierre de Coubertin, father of the modern Olympic Games, inspired the development of sports tourism. According to Kurtzman, Zauhar, Ahn & Choi (1998:2) De Coubertin once stated, “competition produces harmony between competitors and the organisations or nations they represent.” It was his belief that sport brings people and nations together. It was De Coubertin’s concept that gave sports tourism its vitality and foundation, according to Firenze (1998:1). Other schools of thought believe that sports tourism existed long before the modern Olympic Games. As a result the profession of sports tourism became a growing reality – and gave impetus for the pursuit of business entrepreneurship, economic impact and profitability within the tourism industry. Sports tourism developed over many years to what it is today. Tourists travelling to see pyramids, visit seaside resorts, and attend festivals and events, needed food and accommodation. They spent money for these services, which qualified them as tourists and more specifically as sports tourists. The economic expenditure was difficult to measure as it still is today regardless of all the economic models available (McIntosh, Goeldner & Ritchie, 1995:40).

The tourism potential of sports tourism and consequently of sports events have been addressed in several studies. In all cases these events have been established to appeal to tourists as well as to the relevant sports community or cultural group (Murphy & Carmichael, 1989:32). According to Burgan and Miles (1992:700) the foreign tourism growth in Australia over the past decade has been an average of 10% annually. Special sporting events have played an important part in this growth. The same applies for a country such as South Africa. Some of the major events were the Commonwealth Games in 1982 with 6,000 foreign visitors, the America’s Cup Defence in 1986-1987 with 700,000 visitors, the World Expo in 1988 with 427,000 visitors (Burgan & Miles, 1992:701) and the Olympic Games in 2000. South Africa has followed suit by hosting a large number of major events such as the Rugby World Cup in 1995, African Games in 1996 and the FIFA Soccer World Cup in 2010 to name but a few. Several countries use sport events as a tool in growing visitor numbers such as Switzerland, England and Canada. In addition to the participants, sporting events also increase tourism numbers via spectators, medical personnel, participants, family and friends, media personnel, and officials. If one looks at different sports, it is also evident that sport tourism is financially big business. An example is golf tourism where it is estimated that there are 60 million golfers in the world playing on 31 600 courses in 2006 and these numbers are growing. In America alone there are approximately 28,6 million golfers and in 2005 these golfers generated $76 billion. The number of golfers in Asia is also growing rapidly which will have a significant impact on golf and specifically the tourism industry in the future. It is the aim of this chapter to address the concept of sports tourism and what it entails.
1.2 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPORT AND TOURISM

The relationship between sport and tourism started in the Ancient times when people were competing against each other in order to show who is the strongest, run the fastest, who can jump or throw the furthest or jump the highest. This led to the Ancient Games, but has since evolved significantly. In fact one cannot think of a world without sport. The same applies for a world with no travel. The one therefore includes the other. Sport is, furthermore, reliant on tourism in terms of providing food and beverages, accommodation, transport as well as services e.g. travel agents and tour operators in order to host events. From a different point of view one could also use sport to develop and grow tourism.

Tourism is an industry and a physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual experience according to Marsh and Henshall (1987). Tourist activity consists of a number of organisations that feed the collective dreams of the tourists and carry out a liberating function in a society dominated by logic, but in need of the legendary and the mythical (Dufour, 1977). It is a liberating myth and a great adventure for a lot of workers. The main representative of this thought is, who compares tourist travel to a “springboard dive” that allows the tourist to be suspended for a while. In this space (indoors or outdoors) the daily world remains behind and the traveller becomes absorbed in another dimension (Miranda & Andueza, 1997). This dimension can take place outdoors, indoors or in a combination of the two. Outdoors seems to indicate a specific way of looking at nature nowadays, merely the contrast to living indoors, in towns with offices, closed houses, etc. Mankind has always been in a relationship with nature. The mere “outdoor-” sight, however, seems to be a total neutralisation compared to the emotionally highly loaded relationship in former times. This evidently implies a new way of preparing landscapes for being appreciated and used by tourists. But as not all tourists are outdoor-freaks, one cannot do this entirely. So, new land uses and infrastructures evolve (Romeiss – Stracke, as cited in Keller & Bieger, 2003). Outdoor sports are also an expression of further advancing individualisation of sport in modern societies. Though highly individual, the outdoor scene produces rapidly changing “tribes” (i.e. the “snowboard-kids”). That calls into question the concept of rather fixed “target groups” in tourism marketing. Lifestyle attributes (equipment, clothing, drinks, slang and music) are essential for outdoor sports. The industry that produces them is a new partner in tourism destination management. The same can, however, apply to indoor activities, for example ice-skating. Whether it is an indoors or outdoors sport it remains an experience. According to Saayman (2000) tourism can be defined as the total experience that originates from the interaction between tourists, job providers, government systems and communities in the process of attracting, interacting with, transporting and accommodating tourists. In analysing tourism and what it is all
about various researchers have analysed the phenomenon of tourism. Some of their findings are explained below.

Jansen-Verbeke (1988) and Saayman (1997) are the only authors who have divided the core aspects of tourism in certain categories, namely primary, secondary and additional aspects. The models of Trigg (1995) and Jansen-Verbeke (1988) are the only two models that exclude transport. All the authors include the aspects of accommodation and catering, although in many different forms, such as hotels and restaurants, food and drink and hospitality. Attractions (man-made and natural) and culture were included in the models of Gunn (1988), Jansen-Verbeke (1988), McIntosh et al. (1995), Sessa (1994) and Lundberg (1990). The fourth largest mutual element in the models was entertainment, addressed by Trigg (1995), Jansen-Verbeke (1988), Chadwick (1994), Saayman (1997), Sessa (1994) and Lundberg (1990).

As shown in Figure 1.1, main elements include transport, accommodation, catering, attractions and entertainment. Other aspects identified by these authors may be classified as secondary aspects. Although they are important to the tourism industry, they are not vital elements such as the primary aspects, which are seen as the core of the tourism industry (Saayman, 1997; McIntosh et al., 1995). These aspects, which were identified earlier, need more detailed explanation due to the complexity of the tourism industry. For the purpose of this book only the primary aspects will be discussed.

1.2.1 Accommodation and catering

Accommodation includes hotels, guesthouses, bed-and-breakfast establishments, holiday resorts, camping facilities, game reserves and game farms. Catering includes
restaurants, coffee shops, informal bars, tearooms, shebeens and kiosks (Saayman & Swart, 1997). These sectors are vital to the tourism industry, for tourists need overnight facilities at hotels, guesthouses and caravan parks. As a result bed-and-breakfast establishments and guesthouses are emerging at a rapid rate.

1.2.2 Transport

According to Burkart and Medlik (1981), “tourism is about being somewhere else...” This quotation illustrates not only the extreme importance of transport suppliers in the tourism industry, but in fact indicates that without transport there will be no tourism industry. The transport sector includes all types of transport, namely ships, bikes, motorcars, aeroplanes, taxis, busses and trains (McIntosh et al., 1995; Lundberg, 1990). Needs for transport include accessibility of tourism attractions, the availability of transport to attractions, route maps and road signs.

1.2.3 Entertainment

Recreation activities and facilities include entertainment, gambling, festivals, visiting friends and relatives, sport, public parks, picnic spots, markets and shopping centres (McIntosh et al., 1995; Trigg, 1995). Tourism attractions and facilities must have the necessary equipment and be accessible to everyone and information regarding the facilities must be available to the general public as well as to tourists. The quality and accessibility of entertainment centres are of the utmost importance to attract tourists. Bookings and reservations as well as services in general must be of a high standard to ensure that tourists will return (Saayman & Swart, 1997). Sport is also regarded as entertainment.

1.2.4 Attractions and culture

Attractions can be natural or man-made (White Paper on Tourism, 1996). Natural attractions include beaches, caves, rivers, lakes, mountains and fauna and flora. According to Swarbrooke (1995:5), two main categories of man-made attractions may be distinguished, namely attractions not originally designed primarily to attract visitors and, secondly, attractions purpose-built to attract tourists.

From a sport tourism point of view the event or sport activity serves as an attraction which include for example well-known sport personalities, infrastructure, meetings and conferences to name but a few. Attractions not originally designed primarily to attract visitors include cathedrals, churches, archaeological sites, ancient monuments, historical gardens and steam trains. Purpose-built attractions include museums, game reserves, zoos, cultural heritage, garden centres, amusement parks, picnic sites, galleries, waterfront developments and marinas. Figure 1.2 gives an analysis of attractions.