

AN ANALYSIS OF SPORT EVENT TOURISM RESEARCH: TRENDS, ISSUES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

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Abstract. *Sport tourism as an academic discipline and research focus has evolved considerably in the past two decades. Textbooks, academic conferences, undergraduate and graduate degree programmes, and a scientific journal, Journal of Sport and Tourism, now exist. This article examines the current body of research devoted to event-based sport tourism and identifies patterns of sport tourist behaviors, research issues, and future areas for research. Research focus areas covered include event economic impacts, serious sport tourists, prestige-worthy sport tourism, residents' perceptions of events, and watching friends and relatives (WFRs).*

Key words: *sport tourism, mega-events, Olympic Games, economic and social impacts*

Introduction

Sport tourism as a distinct line of research has evolved considerably in the past two decades. Textbooks, academic conferences, undergraduate and graduate degree programmes, and a scientific journal, *Journal of Sport and Tourism*, now exist. This article examines the current body of research devoted to one segment of sport tourism, event based sport tourism and identifies patterns of sport tourist behaviors, research issues, and future areas for research. Research focus areas covered include event economic impacts, serious sport tourists, prestige-worthy sport tourism, residents' perceptions of events, and watching friends and relatives (WFRs). It is intended that through this analysis and knowledge sharing, the evolution of sport tourism studies may continue to prosper for the next twenty years.

A number of operational definitions pertinent to sport tourism are provided before proceeding farther. In the interest of length and to avoid redundancy, the dilemma of the tourist definition will not be debated, though the discrepancy centers on length of stay, distance travelled, and trip purpose. For this article, a *tourist* is defined as a visitor for at least one night but not more than six months and whose main purpose of visit is other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited. Similarly, what is and is not sport will not be argued in this article *e.g. Is Greco-Roman wrestling a sport and arm-wrestling not? Horseracing vs. rodeo? Pairs ice dancing vs. ballroom*

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dancing? Sport involves physical activity, competition, agreed upon rules of performance, and is considered sport by its participants.

Sport tourism is simply defined as travel to a destination to experience sport. *Sport tourists* are visitors to a destination for the purpose of participating, viewing, or celebrating sport (Turco, Riley, and Swart, 2002). *Visiting friends and relatives* (VFR) are a tourist market segment referring to nonresidents in the host community whose primary motive is to visit friends and or relatives. In sport tourism, *watching friends and relatives* (WFRs) are VFRs with associates participating in a sport event.

The *sport tourism industry* is the collection of businesses, institutions, resources, and people servicing sport tourists. They include tourists, host residents, and goods and services providers in broad tourism categories of transportation, accommodations (i.e., hotels, bed and breakfasts, resorts, and eating and drinking places), and shopping. Sport serves as the focal or secondary attraction. Natural resources form the bases for the sport tourism system. The natural environment may add to the challenge and allure of the sport tourism attraction. The sandstone rock formations in Moab, Utah have made it the mountain biking mecca, and the rarified air and mountainous terrain of the Leadville 100 Ultra marathon in Colorado signifies that the event is not for the weak of heart. Many participatory and event based sport tourism experiences occur in natural resource settings: fishing, nautical, marine, and aquatic sports are enjoyed on water; climbing, snowboarding, skiing on mountains; and Nordic skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, and hunting in forests and fields. The demand for and finite supply of natural environments for sport presents challenges to sport and destination managers and is growing area of research investigation. Tourism's infrastructure of transportation, communication, accommodations, attractions are built upon the natural resources. Government regulations i.e., immigration and travel requirements, security policies, trade, tariffs, currency values, and international relations influence the tourism supply and demand.

Three primary types of sport tourist types have been identified: *Participatory*, *event-based*, and *celebratory* sport tourists. *Participatory sport tourists* travel to destinations to play sport. They may include golfers playing a round at Royal St. Andrew's Golf Club in Scotland, skiers at St. Moritz in Switzerland, runners in the Berlin Marathon or mountain bikers in Mohab. Participants may be elite professionals or rank amateurs. The qualifiers for participatory sport tourists are that they are visitors to the host destination and they are actively engaged in sport.

Some participatory sport tourists play a dual role by in the sport tourism industry: (a) as visiting sport competitors they require transportation, accommodations, and other tourist services while simultaneously (b) serving as the attraction for event based sport tourists. *Event based sport tourists* are those who travel to a destination to watch others participate in sport. Examples of sport events witnessed by tourists (and researched by scholars) range from A-Z: America's Cup to the Zagreb Open tennis tournament. Consider the Little League World Series in tiny Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Held annually in August, the Little League World Series is the pinnacle of athletic achievement for boys up to 13 years of age. Teams from around the world compete in round robin and elimination play, attracting over 500,000 spectators and live television coverage worldwide on ESPN. The athletes, coaches, and officials are participatory sport tourists to Williamsport for the ten days of the LLWS. Parents, friends and relatives of the participants are event based sport tourists.

Celebratory sport tourists travel to destinations to visit halls of fame, museums, stadiums, and other places of remembrance. They may travel to experience the festive sport atmosphere surrounding a sport event. At the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany, thousands of people congregated in city fan parks for fun, festivities, and to celebrate football though they did not have a ticket to a match. Thousands of people each year pay their pounds to tour an empty Wimbledon Tennis Centre. Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (BOCOG) reported that in the two months following the 2008 Olympic Games, 200,000 people paid to tour the National Olympic Stadium known as the Bird's Nest. The Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Massachusetts attracts 250,000 visitors each year of which 20% are from outside the U.S.

Within a crowd of sport event spectators are distinct market segments with respect to their consumer behaviors. Their places of origin and local spending influence the economic impacts of the event. Among sport event spectators, several distinct market segments exist as identified by Preuss (2005): *Runaways, Changers, Casuals, Time Switchers, Avoiders, Extensioners, Eventers, and Home Stayers* (See Tab. 1). *Casuals* are visitors who attend a sport event but were in host community primarily for other reasons i.e., visiting friends and/or relatives, business, etc. *Day-trippers* or *excursionists* are visitors who do not stay overnight in the host community. *Primary sport event tourists* are those visiting the host community specifically because of the sport event in question. *Residents* are sport event attendees in their home community. Resident spending represents a switching of transactions from one local business i.e., dining out, cinema, theatre, etc. to another, in this case the sport event. *Time switchers* are those who purposely schedule their visit to

coincide with the sport event but who would have visited at another time anyway. *Runaways* are residents who purposely leave the host city during the event due to the event. *Homestay*ers are residents who purposely stay in the host city during the event due to the event. Preuss and Schutte (2008) suggest that primary sport event tourists spend at higher levels than the overnight visitors they displace in hotels and other paid accommodations. In such cases, the value-added of primary sport event tourists must be factored in the crowding out effect. *Visiting friends and relatives* (VFR) are a market segment referring to nonresidents in the host community whose primary motive is to visit friends and or relatives. *Watching friends and relatives* (WFR) are VFRs with friends and/or relatives participating in the sport event. Following the notations of Preuss, each variable is noted with a letter.

Tab. 1. Sport event spectator market segments and description

Segment	Description
Extensioners	Tourists who would have come anyway but stay longer because of the event
Eventers	Persons who travel to the host city because of the event
Home Stayers	Residents who opt to stay in the city and spend their money at home rather than on a vacation somewhere else at some other time in the year
Runaways	Residents who leave the city and take a holiday elsewhere
Avoiders	Tourists who stay away but would have come without the event Avoiders can either be "cancellers" - tourists who totally cancel their trip or they can be "pre/post switchers" - tourists who will come earlier or later
Changers	Residents who leave the city and take their holidays at the time of the event rather than at some other time in the year
Casuals	Tourists who would have visited the city even without the event
Time Switchers	Tourists who wanted to travel to the city but at another time

Also included by Preuss are Residents of the host city who attend the event. Adapted from Preuss, H. (2005). *The economic impact of visitors at major multi-sport events. European Sport Management Quarterly*, 5, 3, 281-301.

Sport Event Tourist Economic Impacts

Economic impact studies are one of the most common forms of evaluating mega events, and have been conducted on a wide range of events using a wide range of methods - from automobile racing (Burns, Hatch, & Mules, 1986) to World Cups (Maennig, 2007; Lee & Taylor, 2005; Baade & Matheson, 2004). Despite widespread use there is growing skepticism surrounding sport event economic impact research, in part, because of faulty studies and over-inflated findings (Crompton, 2006; Baade, Baumann, & Matheson, 2006). There are several reasons for the inaccuracies, including purposeful falsification. Crompton (2006) argues that some event studies are inflated for political reasons i.e., to justify public investment, improve public relations, etc.

Mega-events are bid upon primarily for the expected value added to the host city. An economic impact study essentially measures how value the event adds to the city. Put another way, what would be missing from the economy without the event? One can visualize a giant hand pulling an event from a city and ponder how much money would be extracted. A sport tourism event's "pull" or drawing power is measured by its ability to attract nonresidents and induce consumer spending at and near the event venue (Yu & Turco, 2000).

It is possible that visitors drawn by a major sport event may displace others who would have visited but did not because they could not secure accommodations or they were not willing to deal with the crowds attracted by the event, termed crowding out. Other tourists and residents avoid the mega-event or are priced out and, in turn, the host city loses money that would have otherwise been spent. Crompton (2006) contends that "if each of these visitors merely replaces another potential visitor who stayed away from the community because of the congestion associated with the tourism event, there is no new economic impact."

There is a tendency to compare event economic impact totals as if a larger amount implies greater import or success. Events vary by edition. Host cities change, economies change, competitors change. Turco, Ally and Cox (2007) compared visitor spending at the 2007 and 2003 Cricket World Cups. The 2003 Cricket World Cup (CWC) took place in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Kenya and the 2007 edition was in the West Indies, though Turco et al examined spectator spending only in Guyana. Fifty-eight percent of the net benefit to South Africa arose from spending by foreigners, who spent an average of R1 400 per day (approximately \$US 190) for an average of 16 days. However, per day visitor spending figures for 2003 and 2007 CWC were nearly identical (\$190 for 2003 and \$191 in 2007).

The 2003 CWC matches in South Africa were attended by 626,845 people, while the 2007 CWC sold more than 672,000 tickets and recorded the highest ticketing revenue for a CWC. The average length of stay of a foreign visitor in CWC 2003 was 16 days, which was slightly longer than for the average non-CWC foreign visitor (12 days). Visitors that came specifically for the CWC 2003 stayed the shortest, while those that had timed their holiday to coincide with the event ended up staying over 22 days – this trend was also evident in the Guyana segment of CWC 2007.

Despite a plethora of prior studies, there remains a need for a refined and agile model to predict a sporting event's economic impact. Many studies fail to account for variances in consumer behaviors amongst spectator market segments and the crowding out effect. Distinguishing sport event tourists by their spending behaviors (as Preuss and others have done) will lead to more accurate economic impact estimations.

Sport Event Tourist Behaviors

How much does the average sport event tourist spend per trip? The answer depends on the nature of the sport event, spectator market, and characteristics of the host economy. The spatial proximity/distance of sport tourists in relation to the host economy, and whether or not they are first-time visitors, influences their spending. Event visitors from communities nearer the host economy typically spend fewer dollars than those from greater distances. International visitor groups to the 2005 Little League World Series spent, on average, \$700 more in the Williamsport economy than domestic visitor groups, after adjusting for group size and length of stay. As the geographic origins of event spectators changes from year to year, so too will their economic impacts on the host economy. *Where* the competing athletes are from influences *who* and *how many* will travel to watch the competition, and *how much* they will spend (Tang & Turco, 2001). Greig and McQuaid (2004) conducted spectator interviews at two one-day rugby international matches in Edinburgh, Scotland (Scotland v England and Scotland v France) to estimate the economic impact on the region and city. They revealed that the origin of spectators differed between matches, naturally reflecting the origins of the visiting teams, and a clear association between the distance spectators come to watch the match and the amount they spend. Likewise, Tang and Turco (2001) found sport spectators who traveled longer distances to attend an event spent more in the host community. Holding all other variables constant, for every 100 miles a visitor group traveled they spent on average \$US 26.08 more.

Prestige and Sport Tourism Events

The prestige of an event as perceived by the sport consumer also influences the size of the visitor group and their spending. Playing in a world championship is for most a “once-in-a-lifetime” opportunity, and attracts large numbers of spectators who are relatives/friends of the athletes. The Olympic Games and World Cups are the most prestigious events in the world for the sports they cover because of their global nature, scale, and scarcity. Grand Slam events in tennis (Australia, French, U.S. Opens and Wimbledon) and golf (Master’s, British and U.S. Opens, PGA Championship) are more prestigious than others. For other sports, events may change in perceived prestige over time. The Little League World Series is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for 12 year-old baseball players, since they cannot compete the next year due to age restrictions. The family and friends of the ballplayers who attend the event spend at significantly higher levels than other visitors. This finding is consistent with what Turco (1997) revealed among high school basketball championship spectators, whose spending levels corresponded to their perceptions of the event’s prestige. Fans who assigned more prestige to the event spend more than those who perceive the event as less prestigious. History, prize money, media coverage, scarcity, and the field of competitors influence perceived prestige. The prestige of the Moscow (1980) and Los Angeles (1984) Olympic Games was diminished due to the boycott absence of teams representing the rival super powers, U.S. and USSR. Similarly, the composition of the tournament field and its “star power” influences the media attention, gallery size, and its economic impact. An annual event such as the U.S. Open golf championship may experience significant fluctuations in attendance, spectator market segment proportionality and spending from year to year. For example, when Tiger Woods is in contention for a tournament victory, all these factors are increased. Known as the “Tiger Woods Effect,” in 88 tournaments since 2003, Woods finished in the top five 54 times, pushing final-round television rating share to a 4.4 average. The 34 other events averaged a 3.4 - a 29 percent difference. In 2007, weekend ratings were 58 percent higher in tournaments in which Tiger played (Sandomir, 2008).

Much is made about attracting repeat consumers in marketing literature but first time sport tourists spend more money than repeaters. The novelty of the destination, and not knowing which local businesses provide the best value for money are reasons why first timers spend more than repeat visitors. Repeaters have “been there, done that,” and may not feel the need to do “that” again i.e., purchase souvenirs, attend another attraction, etc. Tang and Turco (2001) showed that repeat visitor groups to a sport event spent \$US 189.56 less than first-time visitors.

Watching Friends and Relatives

Relatively little attention has been devoted to tourists who travel to watch relatives and/or friends participate in sport events. As previously alluded to, spectator research at the Little League World Series found that player association makes a difference in terms of sport tourists' spending, length of stay, and game attendance (Scott and Turco, 2007). Spectators with a player association spent more in the local money and time in the economy. In fact, they spent nearly three times as much, mostly in travel, lodging, souvenirs and other. Most teams qualify for the World Series a few weeks before so expenditures are often made at the last minute, without the benefit of advance purchase discounts. It was surmised that for some visitors in this category, watching a friend or relative in the Little League World Series was a once in a lifetime experience, and they were willing to spend money on the event accordingly. They may have realized that they should experience all the Little League World Series has to offer, including attending most games, purchasing souvenirs, staying the whole time their child plays in the World Series, and eating out instead of budget meals. A comparison of consumer behaviors among domestic and international WFRs and other tourists' consumer at the Little League World Series is provided in Tab. 2. Note that domestic WFRs spent nearly three times more money in comparison to other spectator market segments.

Tab. 2. Characteristics of WFR and other tourists at the 2005 Little League World Series

Travel party	Domestic WFR Sport Tourist 3 persons	Domestic Sport Tourist 4 persons
Sessions attended	6 sessions	4 sessions
Length of stay		7 nights
Spending	\$2,337; \$1,215 for travel	3 nights \$668; \$175 for travel
Travel party:	International WFR Sport Tourist 4 persons	International Sport Tourist 2 persons
Sessions attended:	9 sessions	6 sessions
Length of stay:	11 nights	7 nights
Spending:	\$4,550; \$1,600 for travel	\$3,200; \$700 for travel

Source: Scott, A.K.S. & Turco, D. M. (2007). VFRs as a segment of the sport event tourist market. *Journal of Sport and Tourism*, 12(1), 41-52.

As WFRs travel more frequently to attend competitions, they adjust their spending behaviors. Turco (1997) noted that parents of young athletes who frequently traveled to competitions became adept at cost saving strategies thereby minimizing the impacts of the host economy. Ride sharing, bringing prepared meals and snacks, and taking motor homes or camper trailers are among the practices used by parents who travel with their young athletes to competitions. While Scott and Turco found no difference in spending among repeat and first time visitors with player association, further research is warranted. Repeat participation in the Little League World Series is rare for most athletes. Similar to the consumer behaviors of repeat visitors, it is anticipated that per trip spending by WFRs would diminish as they attend more sporting events in which their friends and relatives participate.

Residents and Mega-Events

Residents in host cities may experience first-hand the impacts of mega-events during the preparation, operation, and legacy stages. For an Olympic Games, they may have encountered sport tourists and been impacted by their presence during the Games. Following the Games, they may use new or improved transportation systems, accommodations, and other infrastructures in the host city or region. They are therefore in a unique position to evaluate the event as taxpayers, hosts, consumers of infrastructure, and as possible consumers of Olympic sport venues.

Previous studies of residents and major sport events include the America's Cup (Soutar & McLeod, 1993) Formula One (Fredline & Faulkner, 2002) and the Olympic Games (Preuss, 2004; Cashman, 2003; Mihalik, 2003; Ritchie, 2000), among other events (Turco, 1998). With respect to the Olympic Games, patterns of residents' perceptions are remarkably consistent across decades, continents, and cultures. Resident surveys implemented after an Olympic Games report reductions in negative responses regarding concerns expressed before the Games. Longitudinal studies at the national (Norway) and local (Lillehammer) levels surrounding the 1994 Lillehammer Winter Olympics (1991-1994) found responses preceding the Olympic Games to be unfavorable (55% and 50% respectively). Post-event research resulted in significant increases in positive evaluations (80% national, 88% local). Unlike Turin, Lillehammer reported substantial quotas of residents opposed to the bid (30%). Before the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games, residents expressed concerns over traffic, inflation, and excessive costs. After the games the responses were more positive with the sole exception of security given that the event was marred by an attempted attack in Centennial Olympic Park. In the landmark study by Ritchie and Aitken (1984, 1985) and extended by Ritchie and Lyons (1990), residents were asked before the 1988 Winter Olympic

Games whether they felt in general it was a food idea for Calgary to host the event. Nearly 85% responded positively which increased to 97.8% after the Games. The mega-event lifecycle includes bid (application and candidacy), preparation, operation, and legacy stages. The length of each stage varies considerably: Two years for bidding, seven years for preparation, 17 days of operation, and a lifetime for the legacy. Public perceptions of the event shift across the lifecycle, from elation and euphoria at the bid stage; concerns over readiness, costs, anxiety and “wait-and-see” in the preparation stage; relief and joy during operations; and pride, appreciation, and satisfaction following the Games. This “rollercoaster” pattern of resident perceptions is illustrated by Guala and Turco (2007) in their study of residents in relation to the 2006 Winter Olympic Games in Torino (See Figures 1). Torino residents were asked between 2003 and 2007 to evaluate the overall experience hosting the Olympic Games. Residents assigned highly favorable ratings at the outset followed by a downswing in 2005 and 2006. After the Olympic Games, evaluations were most favorable and remained high one year later.

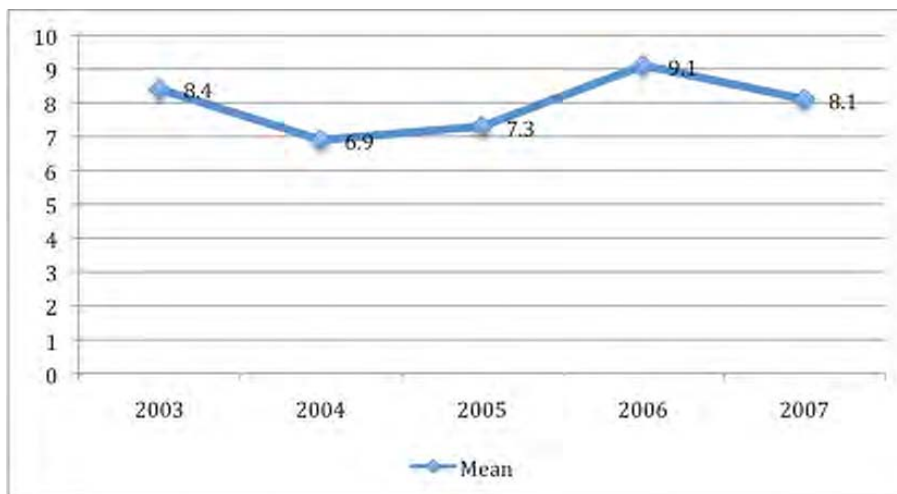


Fig. 1. Residents' Perceptions of 2006 Torino Winter Olympic Games [Evaluate the overall experience of the 2006 Torino Winter Olympic Games; 1 equals poor and 10 equals excellent]

As the sport event evolves so too do the opinions of host residents toward the event. Therefore it behooves the sport event organizing committee to conduct periodic assessments of residents across the event lifecycle. Research by Fredline et al (2003) on social impacts of sport events as perceived by residents has led to reliable testing instruments. As revealed in Tab. 3, a range of social costs and benefits attributed to events are explored in the generic survey

statements: Entertainment, economic benefits, community pride, regional promotion, use of public funds, disruption to locals, community injustice, loss access to public facilities, development/maintenance of public facilities, poor behavior, and environmental Impacts.

Tab. 3. Measures to Assess Residents' Perceptions of Sport Event Social Impacts
[Responses: Agree, Disagree, Don't Know]

Entertainment

The EVENT gave REGION residents an opportunity to attend an interesting event, have fun with their family and friends, and interact with new people.

Economic Benefits

The EVENT was good for the economy because the money that visitors spend when they come for the Event helps to stimulate the economy, stimulates employment opportunities, and is good for local business.

Community Pride

The EVENT made local residents feel more proud of their city and made them feel good about themselves and their community

Regional Showcase

The EVENT showcased REGION in a positive light. This helps to promote a better opinion of our region and encourages future tourism and/or business investment.

Public Money

The EVENT was a waste of public money, that is, too much public money was spent on the event that would be better spent on other public activities.

Disruption to Local Residents

The EVENT disrupted the lives of local residents and created inconvenience. While the event was on, problems like traffic congestion, parking difficulties and excessive noise were worse than usual.

Community Injustice

The EVENT was unfair to ordinary residents, and the costs and benefits were distributed unfairly across the community.

Loss of Use of Public Facilities

The EVENT denied local residents access to public facilities, that is, roads, parks, sporting facilities, public transport and/or other facilities were less available to local residents because of closure or overcrowding.

Maintenance of Public Facilities

The EVENT promoted development and better maintenance of public facilities such as roads, parks, sporting facilities, and/or public transport.

Bad Behavior

The EVENT was associated with some people behaving inappropriately, perhaps in a rowdy and delinquent way, or engaging in excessive drinking or drug use or other criminal behavior.

Environmental Impact

The EVENT had a negative impact on the environment through excessive litter and/or pollution and/or damage to natural areas

Prices

The EVENT led to increases in the price of some things such as some goods and services and property values and/or rental costs.

Source: Fredline, L., Jago, L. and Deery, M. (2003). The development of a generic scale to measure the social impacts of events. *Event Management*, 8 (1), 23-37.

Serious Sport Tourists

Serious sport tourists take sport participation to another level. They are focused and highly committed to participating in their sport. They spend more money on sport-related goods and services, travel more frequently, and stay longer and spend more per night than other tourists.

Serious sport tourists are not only elite athletes. In fact, the vast majority are amateurs. The physical demands to prepare for and compete in an Ironman Triathlon imply a serious commitment to sport. To earn the title of Ironman finisher, one must first swim 2.4 miles, cycle 112 miles and then run a marathon (26.2 miles). Most of the 22 Ironman races held worldwide have a capacity of 2000, with some accepting up to 2500 athletes. The demand is so high for some Ironman events that entries sell out on the first day of open registration. Countries hosting Ironman events in 2008 include Australia, Brasil, China, Germany, Japan, Malaysia, South Africa, Spain, New Zealand, U.K. and U.S.

The 50-States Marathon Club is comprised of a runners who have completed a marathon in each state in the U.S. Besides the serious time, financial and physical demands to run a marathon, the added time, travel and accommodations costs to run in every state demonstrates the high level of commitment these athletes have toward their chosen endeavor.

A marathon is not long enough for some sport enthusiasts; ultra-marathoners want to run twice the distance or more. The Badwater Ultramarathon is recognized globally as “the world’s toughest foot race.” The event pits up to 90 athletes against one another and the elements. Covering 135 miles (217km) non-stop from Death Valley to Mt. Whitney, CA in temperatures up to 130F (55°C). One obviously does not wake up in the morning and decide to run the Badwater; it requires years of dedicated endurance training.

Serious sport tourists demonstrate a strong commitment to sport participation that to the less committed, borders on obsession. Elite gymnasts and their families sacrifice normalcy for specialized and intense training often with high social, psychological and financial costs. Though mere children, the rigors of daily training and diet can make sport a work-like obligation. Serious youth sport tourists are often accompanied to competitions by their serious parents.

Serious sport tourists also include spectators who follow their favorite team to attend away matches. In some cases, visiting sport event tourists outnumber (and out-cheer) home fans, negating the “home field advantage.” Consider the legions of Manchester United fans that travel throughout the season to

witness their team. Tour operations have been established on the club's website providing sport travel packages for serious sport fans. When ManU qualified for the May 2008 Champions League finals in Moscow, the club was allocated 21,000 tickets, most costing either £67 or £117. Add a £95 visa charge and accommodation costs in one of the most expensive cities in the world, and financing the final football expedition would top £1,000 per person.

Destination Attractiveness

The perceived attractiveness of the host community (i.e., alternative attractions, climate, culture, nightlife, shopping, proximity to relatives, friends, etc.) elicits larger visitor groups and stimulates relatively more spending from sport tourists. A sport event destination may not possess warm, sunny weather, snow-capped mountains, or white sand beaches but there may be other regional attractions that, in aggregate, could encourage sport tourists to extend their stays. For example, aside from the Little League World Series, Williamsport, Pennsylvania is not known for or marketed as a tourism destination. There are no distinguishing natural resources in the area or other unique attractions. Little League officials have staged a parade and developed a self-contained entertainment complex with a museum, conference facility, recreation center, park, and lodging accommodations, in addition to the sport stadiums and practice/training facilities, to keep visitors longer.

Recommendations for Future Research

Participatory sport tourism induces event based sport tourism and subsequently, celebratory sport tourism. *To what extent does celebratory sport tourism influence participatory and sport event tourism, if at all?* For example, are those who visit the National Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Massachusetts more (or less) likely to travel to watch/compete in basketball events? Similarly, *to what extent does sport event tourism influence participatory sport tourism?* For example, are visitors to the 2008 U.S. Open Golf Championship in San Diego who witnessed Tiger Woods' playoff victory more (or less) likely to travel to play golf?

What inhibits or constrains people from experiencing sport tourism? Typically it is a lack of time, money, opportunity, or self-concept. A vast body of knowledge already exists on constraints to leisure (Jackson, 2005) and can be extended to sport tourism environments. Constraints to sport tourism for persons with disabilities include the aforementioned constraints, as well as transportation and architectural barriers, inaccessible communications, inflexible sport rules, and unavailable adaptive sport equipment, offers another intriguing research opportunity.

Further understanding of serious sport tourists is warranted to gain insights into their sport involvement, time and financial management priorities, and consumer behaviors. The commitments of time and financial resources for elite and less skilled serious sport tourists may be compared. It is hypothesized that elite athletes will spend less time and money on training and equipment because their exceptional skills and performance are enough for success, whereas less skilled athletes attempt to compensate by investing in training and expensive equipment.

Most research on sport tourism involves mega-events in developed countries. Relatively little research has focused on events in developing countries, in part, because they have not been chosen as hosts by governing bodies. Countries previously excluded have been more aggressive and competitive in their event bidding. South Africa was awarded the 2010 FIFA World Cup, Brasil in 2014, and India (Delhi) will soon host the Cricket World Cup and Commonwealth Games. Sport event tourism managers developing countries, including central European countries new to democracy, market-driven economics, and sport governance systems, face unique challenges to that may include lack of appropriate sport venues, transportation systems, accommodations for large numbers of fans at various star-ratings, limited available capital, political (in)stability, male-oriented culture, etc. Events staged in developing countries also present unique research avenues for sport tourism scholars.

Some sport events appear to attract high-end consumer groups because of the relative cost to entry (i.e., America's Cup Yacht Race, Masters Golf Tournament, Singapore Formula One, etc.), and others, more thrifty visitors (Yu & Turco, 2000). One would surmise that per day/per capita spending would be higher among spectators and participants who attend up-scale events, but this is not always the case. Investigations into the sport lifestyles of the rich and famous (as well as the poor and unnoticed) may shed light on this question. Few published studies have provided glimpses into the world of sport's super rich in polo, yachting, fox hunters, etc., likely due to participant privacy issues.

Lastly, the watching friends and relatives market at sport contests should be studied in relation to event prestige. As they are seasoned, repeat consumers of sport events, it is hypothesized that greater event prestige will negate the downward spending effects associated with repeat visitors.

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