

Cape Town and the Two Oceans Marathon: The Impact of Sport Tourism

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INTRODUCTION

Travel is a very old activity. In early times and civilisations, there were harsh realities associated with travel; and there were also restrictions and constraints on modes of travel, accommodation and services. Additionally, the leisure time required for recreational travel in ancient societies was rather limited. As the quality of life gradually improved, individuals began to travel between places without difficulty. Shorter working weeks, holidays and religious days contributed to mass travel, leisure and self-development. Gradually, travel and tourism were transformed. In addition, technological, political and social events made tourism a world-wide leisure experience (Bhatia, as cited by Zauhar, 2004:6).

In the past, tourism was viewed and studied in terms of travel patterns, typology, financial implications, general activity movement, as well as the demand-supply equation and service development. Studies in travel motivation often refer to pleasure, religion, culture, business and related aspects; and many authors and specialists refer to tourism as a somewhat contemporary phenomenon (Curran, 1978). However, the roots of tourism can be traced back to the Grand Tour. The popularity of these tours is considered by some to have heralded the beginning of tourism; and only very rarely has this concept been analysed in terms of sport pursuits and sport offerings (Zauhar, 2004:6). However, by the end of the 20th century, event tourism had emerged as one of the fastest-growing components of the leisure travel market. Although event tourism includes arts festivals and cultural activities as well as sport events, the latter have played a key role in the growth of the event industry. One reason for this is that sport events have been seen to make an effective contribution to the economic development mix of cities and regions (Chalip and McGuirly, 2004; Turco *et al.*, 2003; Saayman and Uys, 2003).

According to Gibson (2004) researchers had turned their attention to the study of sport tourism by the mid-1990s, and had begun to describe and define this phenomenon. But even among “experts” there is considerable controversy con-

cerning the definition of “sport”, the first word in the concept. Some critics insist that an all-embracing definition is impossible because sport is a socially constructed activity that has varied across historical eras, societies and cultures. Others hold that sport has specific and timeless characteristics, such as being goal-oriented and competitive; and moreover, it provides a forum for the creation of winners and losers (Ritchie and Adair, 2004: 3).

Because of this lack of consensus, it is very difficult to define the concept of sport tourism, owing to its complexity (Deery *et al.*, 2004). However, sport tourism was defined by Zauhar (2004:6) as the different sports which, throughout history, have been the source and/or the principal reason for travel. The distances travelled should be viewed relatively, according to the lifestyle epochs of history. In 1998 Gibson defined sport tourism as “leisure-based travel that takes individuals temporarily outside of their home communities to play, watch physical activities or venerate attractions associated with these activities”.

The Commonwealth Department of Industry, Science and Resources in Australia made a distinction between domestic and international sport tourism. *Domestic sport tourism* is defined as any sport-related trip of over 40 km which involves a stay of at least one night away from home; while *international sport tourism* refers to any trip to Australia that is made with the prime purpose of participating in a sporting activity, either as a spectator, participant or official (Jago, 2003:7).

According to Gammon and Robinson (2003: 22), the problem with defining the concept is that one is dealing with two already distinctive disciplines that have to be compounded into one. If, for example, the prime motivation relates to sport, then the touristic element will comprise a secondary reinforcement, whereas the reverse will apply if tourism constitutes the main point of interest. Therefore, it is entirely possible that two individuals travelling on a plane to Atlanta, or any other city hosting a mega-event such as the Olympic Games, could qualify from both perspectives. One individual, though travelling specifically to see the Olympic Games, might also make use of the opportunity of sight-seeing whilst he or she is there.

Travel decisions for sport tourism are made not only for intrinsic reasons such as emotions, a need for temporary escapism, or a desire for involvement, but also for extrinsic reasons—rewards, recognition, prestige. The “weight” given to each specific or combined motive, whether positive or negative, influences the basic motivational interplay that occurs within sports-travel dynamics. Furthermore, the intrinsic influences affecting the decision-making process may fluctuate; and marginal factors relating to health condition, discretionary monies, age demographics and the like, may also come into play (Kurtzman and Zauhar, 2005:30).

Considering that various factors motivate different people to travel, four categories of travel motivators can be applied to sport travel, namely:

- a) Physical motivators—these are directly related to physical needs and drives such as fitness and sport.
- b) Cultural motivators—linked to tradition, way of life and heritage, such as sports museums, halls of fame and historical sites.
- c) Interpersonal motivators—include the socialisation potential that can be found in sport resorts, cruises, and world games.
- d) Status and prestige motivators—these are demonstrated by people who are enticed by high-profile destinations, athletic celebrities and distinctive sport events (McIntosh, as cited by Kurtzman and Zauhar, 2005:27).

Three of these categories, namely physical, interpersonal, as well as status and prestige motivators may apply to a large number of participants in the Two Oceans Marathon, which is used as a case study in this research.

To assess the economic impacts of events, whether sport or cultural events, the input-output models are often used by researchers, but these models do not provide a clear picture of the extent to which different household groups benefit from these events. Samdahl (as cited by Daniels *et al.*, 2004), also noted that tourism has been promoted by many countries for the economic revitalisation that it can bring to a region; but researchers have accorded scant attention to the inequitable ways in which this wealth is distributed among community members, or to the question regarding which segments of the population are served through the tourism industry.

In South Africa, it is estimated that the sport industry contributes approximately two percent to the gross national product of the country. According to the ANC government, tourism had earned R53 billion for the country in 2003 (according to world figures, sport tourism accounts for 30 percent of the total amount generated by tourism. In the case of South Africa, this would amount to R15.9 billion), as against the R35 billion generated by the gold-mine sector (Coetzee, 2006:9). In view of the importance of sport tourism for this country, the purpose of this paper is to investigate the impact of sporting events on the host town or city. In this case study, the impact of the Old Mutual Two Oceans Marathon on the host city, Cape Town, will be considered.

SPORT TOURISM AND THE CITY

The study of hallmark events or mega-events became an important part of tourism literature in the 1980s. Since then, the economics of sport tourism at major sport events have increasingly become part of this event tourism literature.

Many governments around the world have adopted national sport policies stipulating that the hosting of major sport events is a primary objective. A broad range of benefits that accrue to both the host country and the host city from the staging of major sport events have been identified, including urban regeneration legacy benefits, sporting legacy benefits, tourism and image benefits, and social and cultural benefits, as well as the usual economic benefits (Gratton *et al.*, 2005: 233).

The hosting of sports events is increasingly being viewed as part of a broader tourism strategy aimed at enhancing the profile of a city. Therefore, success in this regard cannot be judged merely on the basis of profit and loss. Often the attraction of events is linked to a re-imaging process; and in the case of many cities, this process is invariably linked to strategies of urban regeneration and tourism development. Major sporting events, if successful, have the ability to project a new image and create new identity for the host city. Hosting these events can be justified in terms of the long-term economic and social benefits that result from the staging of such events (Gratton *et al.*, 2005: 234).

In many cases the hosting of sport events goes hand in hand with the development or redevelopment of stadia or sporting facilities. In the United States of America, the Astrodome in Houston and the Superdome in New Orleans are examples of stadia that have been developed alongside hotel and convention centre complexes as part of urban regeneration and inner-city tourist-based development programmes (Stevens, 2001). These stadia have also stimulated the development of a service industry, including travel agents specialising in sport tourism, in order to accommodate the needs of tourists. These developments, in combination with ancillary tourism services, such as accommodation, transport, dining facilities and entertainment, enhance the status of these sport centres (Hinch and Higham, 2004:88). A fact that needs emphasis, is that accommodation is a fundamental element of the tourism product. Not only is it the largest and most ubiquitous sub-sector within the tourism economy, typically accounting for one-third of trip expenditure, but it is also an essential ingredient of the tourism experience. The choice of accommodation reflects, by and large, the needs and expectations of the tourists and, as a result, born the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the supply of accommodation service directly influence the type of tourism/tourists attracted to destination areas (Sharpley, 2000:275).

Despite the growing recognition of tourism's development potential for Africa and South Africa on a number of fronts, as a whole tourism scholarship on this continent remains limited and is mostly centred on issues relating to nature-based tourism products, the role of tourism in conservation, and the potential rural development possibilities that tourism can unleash (Visser and Rogerson, 2004).

However, a growing number of researchers and authors have noted the growth of sport tourism; but to date, most of the research on sport tourism has tended to focus on event sport tourism or large spectator events such as “hallmark” or “mega” events, at the expense of small-scale sport events (Ritchie, 2004).

According to Higham, as cited by Ritchie (2004) small-scale sport events include regular seasonal sporting competitions, international sporting fixtures, domestic competitions, masters—or disabled sports, and the like. Higham points out that these smaller events can use existing infrastructure; require smaller investment of funds; can potentially minimise tourism seasonality; and are more manageable than larger “hallmark events”.

In South Africa, ever since the first democratic elections in 1994, the country has experienced a dramatic increase in tourism, which can partly be attributed to the hosting of a number of higher-profile sport events. The marketing of sport events has become particularly important in the endeavour to achieve growth in the tourism industry. With the hosting of the Rugby and Cricket World Cups in 1995 and 2003 respectively, and the forthcoming 2010 FIFA World Soccer Cup, sport tourism has become an important component of the growing tourism economy in numerous cities in South Africa (Van der Heever, as cited by Turco *et al.*, 2003).

To maximise South Africa’s tourism potential, the government launched a sport tourism campaign, South African Sport Tourism (SAST), as part of a theme-based initiative. SAST has been instituted in order to act as an umbrella enterprise under whose auspices existing events may receive unified promotional support, while additional sporting events and recreational activities can be developed to the maximum benefit of the tourism sector, and the country’s extensive recreational resources can be publicised to potential international and domestic tourists (Saayman, as cited by Turco *et al.*, 2003).

Investigations have been carried out in Durban by Bob and Moodley (2001a; 2001b; 2001c) concerning the social-economic impact of sport tourism events such as the Comrades Marathon and the Investec Cycling Tour. This research demonstrated, for example, that the Comrades Marathon, which is run annually between Durban and Pietermaritzburg, generated revenue of R20 million from 58 000 tourists, while the Vodacom Beach Festival drew an estimated 960 000 visitors, resulting in tourist spending in excess of R76 million in the city of Durban.

In this case study, the focus will fall on the Two Oceans Marathon in Cape Town. This marathon is an annual run that is held on the Saturday of the Easter weekend, and which has been presented since 1970. The first race, the brainchild of Dave Venter, was known as a 35-miler, starting and finishing at Impala Park, now the site of the townhouse complex in Claremont. The total number of run-

ners was twenty-six. After much political bureaucracy and red tape, the race was granted “multi-national” status in 1975, affording different racial groups the opportunity to compete against each other—thus making it a “first” for a club-organised event in South Africa (Etheridge, 2006: 34). This event has used more or less the same route for the ultra-marathon for the past 36 years, except for the period of three years during which Chapman’s Peak was closed, after rock falls, for reconstruction. The event organisers use existing infrastructure for the hosting of the race, ensuring that all income generated by this event will be directly beneficial to the hosting city.

THE TWO OCEANS MARATHON AND CAPE TOWN

The world of sport tourism is concerned with the realms of *pseudo*—and *intentional choices*. At times, participants and/or spectators make sport tourism decisions without being truly aware of the subtle or hidden forces that are shaping or determining their selection of a sport destination. In essence, the decision to travel and participate in or attend a sport activity is sometimes intentionally engineered by external forces such as family, friends, social peer groups, and/or entrepreneurial media advertising. Here, the individual impetus towards sports destination travel is directly influenced by and dependent upon others, and does not necessarily depend upon oneself. Such cases are examples of the *pseudo-choice*. The *intentional choice* made by a sport tourist differs from the pseudo-choice in that the person concerned makes his or her own decision to travel, since he or she attaches a deeper meaning to the sport involvement—whether as a participant or spectator.

Nonetheless, whether the choice is *pseudo* or *intentional*, the tourist concerned usually has a basic affinity for the sport in question. For a person with no particular or specific sport affinity, the desire to travel and the likelihood of destination displacement would largely be absent (Kurtzman and Zauhar, 2005:21). For the participants in the Two Oceans Marathon, both of the two realms may play a role, since although peer groups may convince them to participate in this event, they themselves must also have a basic affinity for the sport in question, whether it be distance running, cycling or any other sport.

The Old Mutual Two Oceans Marathon takes place towards the end of the high tourist season of the Western Cape, during the Easter weekend. An advance booking of accommodation in Cape Town for this weekend is essential. The organisers of the sporting event present two races on the Easter Saturday, both starting in Main Road, Newlands, and both following the same route up to Gabriel Road in Plumstead, and also finishing at the same point, at the sport fields of the Univer-

sity of Cape Town. The university's sport fields and sports centre are used for the registration of the runners, as well as for the runners' Expo. To host the event, the roads have to be temporarily closed for a period of ten hours, from four in the morning until two in the afternoon, on the day of the race. The starting positions for the runners of both these races are organised according to qualifying times, so runners are advised to arrive at the starting point at least an hour before the race begins, in order to ensure a good starting position. The 56-km ultra marathon starts at 06:00, while the 21-km race begins a half an hour later. After 36 years, this major sport event, with 15 480 participants, has become very well-organised.

If the numbers of runners for 2005 and 2004 are compared, it is clear that a 14.6 percent decline occurred in the number of competitors in 2005, in comparison to the previous year (see Table 1). If the number of participants in each age category is considered it is clear that there were more people in the younger age group (up to 29 years of age) who ran the 21-km race. Thirty percent of the runners in the 21-km race were younger than 29 years, while only 10 percent of those running the ultra-marathon fell within this age group. The majority of participants (73%) in the ultra-marathon fell within the two age groups ranging from 30 to 49 years. Another very interesting factor is that 16.5 percent of the participants who took part in the gruelling 56-km race were 50 years of age or older, on average, for the two years (2004 and 2005), as against the 12.7 percent who participated in the half marathon.

If the gender distributions in respect of the two races are investigated, it is clear that a much higher percentage of female participants took part in the half marathon, accounting for 41 percent and 44 percent of the total number of entries for the 2005 and 2004 races respectively. In contrast to this, only 21 percent of participants running in the ultra-marathon in 2004 and 2005 were female. If the countries of origin of the runners are considered, it is clear that almost 95 percent of the runners of both races were from South Africa, while the proportion of runners in both races from Africa was just under two per cent. In addition, more overseas competitors took part in both races, with a slightly higher number of runners completing the ultra marathon (see Table 1).

If the numbers of runners per province for the two races are considered, it is clear that the majority of the competitors were from the Western Cape. In the half marathon, 63 percent of the participants were from this province. This percentage declined to only 33 percent for the ultra-marathon (see Table 2). Distance does play a role in respect of the number of athletes taking part. The longer the distance between Cape Town and the runners' homes, the smaller the number of runners from that province who take part in the two races. If the numbers of

Table 1: Participants in the Old Mutual Two Oceans Marathon

Years	2005		2004	
	21 km	56 km	21 km	56 km
Age:				
< 20 years	285 (3.7%)	5 (0.1%)	317 (3.8%)	5 (0.1%)
20–29 years	2061 (26.9%)	771 (9.8%)	2284 (27.3%)	996 (10.2%)
30–39 years	2519 (32.9%)	2880 (36.8%)	2772 (33.1%)	3670 (37.6%)
40–49 years	1773 (23.2%)	2863 (36.6%)	1974 (23.6%)	3526 (36.1%)
50–59 years	812 (10.6%)	1099 (14.1%)	820 (9.8%)	1353 (13.9%)
60–69 years	176 (2.3%)	194 (2.5%)	170 (2.1%)	204 (2.1%)
≥ 70 years	24 (0.3%)	18 (0.2%)	25 (0.3%)	14 (0.2%)
Gender:				
Male	4467 (58.4%)	6147 (78.5%)	4668 (55.8%)	7731 (79.1%)
Female	3183 (41.6%)	1683 (21.5%)	3694 (44.2%)	2037 (20.9%)
Nationality:				
South African	7262 (94.9%)	7339 (93.7 %)	7903 (94.5%)	9173 (93.9%)
African	121 (1.6%)	131 (1.7 %)	155 (1.8%)	171 (1.8%)
Overseas	267 (3.5%)	360 (4.6 %)	304 (3.6%)	424 (4.3%)
Number of runners in the 21-km & 56-km races	7650 (49.4 %)	7830 (50.6 %)	8362 (46.1 %)	9768 (53.9%)
Total number of runners	15480		18130	

runners per province per race are compared, it is clear that many participants tend to be willing to incur the expenditure of travelling long distances, and the accompanying accommodation costs, in order to partake in the ultra-marathon, because of the prestige value attached by the running community to the Old Mutual Two Oceans ultra-marathon.

With regard to the participants from outside South Africa, there is not a significant difference between the numbers of athletes in the two races (see Table 2). In both cases, the majority of runners were from Europe. A possible reason for this could be the higher number of flights to South Africa from Europe, and also the fact that because of the competition between airline carriers, cheaper flights are available for travellers. The second highest number of foreign participants were from the rest of Africa, and 86.8 percent of these runners were from neighbouring countries of South Africa. A very strange phenomenon is the high

number of participants from North America who only ran the half marathon, namely 76, as against the 44 athletes who took part in the ultra-marathon. It would be to South Africa's advantage if the Old Mutual Two Oceans Marathon were to be promoted more among runners from abroad. This might encourage more people travelling for sport tourism, to stay longer in the country. The secondary motivation for this group of people, of leisure tourism and sightseeing could then also become an important generator of revenue for the city and even for the country.

Of the 6 953 participants in the ultra-marathon and the half-marathon from the Western Cape, 6 670 (95.9%) lived within a radius of 100 km from Cape Town. (As a result of the 6:00 starting time of the race, it is very difficult to travel a distance of more than a hundred kilometres to the starting point on the morning of the race.) This means that 8 993 of the athletes in the two races, would need at least one night's accommodation in Cape Town or the surrounding towns. In many cases, the trip to Cape Town for participants in the Old Mutual Two Oceans

Table 2: The countries of origin of runners in the Old Mutual Two Oceans Marathon

Province in South Africa	21-km race	56-km race	Abroad	21-km race	56-km race
Western Cape	4519 (63.1%)	2434 (33.4%)	Europe	270 (54.9%)	335 (61.4%)
Gauteng	1461 (20.4%)	2393 (32.9%)	Africa (not including SA)	124 (25.2%)	125 (22.9%)
KwaZulu-Natal	386 (5.4%)	990 (13.6%)	North America	76 (15.4%)	44 (8.1%)
Eastern Cape	389 (5.4%)	661 (9.1%)	Australia & New Zealand	10 (2.0%)	23 (4.2%)
Free State	159 (2.2%)	284 (3.9%)	Asia	7 (1.4%)	15 (2.7%)
Mpumalanga	72 (1.0%)	218 (3.0%)	South America	4 (0.8%)	3 (0.5%)
Northwest Province	53 (0.7%)	118 (1.6%)	Islands	1 (0.2%)	1 (0.2%)
Northern Cape	88 (1.2%)	112 (1.5%)			
Limpopo	31 (0.4%)	74 (1.0%)			
Total	7158	7284		492	546

Marathon is regarded as a family affair; and often, a whole family will travel to the city for the Easter weekend.

Although no official data could be found concerning the amount of income generated by this sport event for the city of Cape Town, this amount is likely to be in excess of six million rand, even if only the accommodation and meals required by the runners who have to travel to Cape Town to participate in the event, are taken into account. This figure was calculated on the basis of two nights' accommodation and three meals for the runners only. If one considers the figures for Durban and the Comrades Marathon, with an average of 12 000 runners from 2002 to 2006, and the attraction of 58 000 tourists and an income of R20 million, it may be deduced that the income for Cape Town would probably be higher. Thus, it must be concluded that the Old Mutual Two Oceans Marathon comprises a large economic injection for the economy of the Mother City.

CONCLUSION

In South Africa, as in most countries of the world, it is clear that the hosting of sports events is regarded as part of a broader tourism strategy aimed at enhancing the profile of cities and also that of the country as a whole. As a result, the country has already made a bid to host a number of mega-sporting events. In South Africa, the attraction of these events is strongly linked to a re-imaging process. The cities where these sporting events are held are invariably linked to strategies of urban regeneration, including the development or redevelopment of sport stadia, as well as tourism development. The successful hosting of the Rugby and Cricket World Cup in 1995 and 2003 respectively made it possible to create a new image and identity for the country, reflecting a new South African society in a post-apartheid era. The hosting of these events in South Africa was, and is, justified in terms of long-term economic and social consequences. Thus, South Africa made a bid for the hosting of the forthcoming 2010 FIFA World Soccer Cup, which was allocated to the country in 2005.

In contrast to the mega-sporting events, the one day-event considered in this study, namely, the Old Mutual Two Oceans Marathon in Cape Town, could be classified as a small-scale sport event. This marathon is presented towards the end of the Western Cape's high tourist season. As can be inferred from this research, the event provides a large economic injection for the economy of Cape Town. No infrastructure investments are required for the successful hosting of the marathon, since the organisers only use the existing infrastructure of the Cape Peninsula. In order to host the event, the roads have to be closed for a period of ten hours, starting from four in the morning on the day of the race. The registra-

tion of the runners before the event as well as the finish is conducted at the University of Cape Town's (UCT) sport fields. The runners' Expo is held at the UCT sport centre. This reduces the investment costs related to the hosting of the event and helps to attract tourists to Cape Town when the tourism season is coming to an end.

From this case study, it is clear that governments, whether national or local, in developing countries that do not have the capital to host mega-sporting events such as the Olympic Games or world-cup sport events, should consider hosting smaller sporting events. A well-organised marathon, or any other smaller sporting event that is well covered by the media, could generate much-needed income, and contribute towards the re-imaging of the hosting city or country. Finally, South Africa should do more to promote these smaller, highly-rated local sporting events amongst athletes and tourists abroad. Some of these events, such as the Two Oceans and Comrades marathons, the Cape Argus cycle race, and the Dusi and Berg River canoe marathons, are presented in some of the most scenic areas of South Africa. Thus sport tourists could also engage in tourism when they come to South Africa to attend, or participate in, these events.

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