

# SPORT AND TOURISM TO STIMULATE DEVELOPMENT

**B**oth sport and tourism have become integrated components of the global culture of our times, they are two ancient expressions of the human spirit. Since early times people have travelled - not only as nomads seeking new pastures for their animals, but also as explorers - driven by a curiosity to discover new worlds.

Travel is deeply rooted in human culture, behaviour and values. I do not have time to dwell on this but tourism has played a major role in breaking down the borders and barriers of distrust and prejudice between countries and peoples. It has contributed to better understanding, greater tolerance and to world peace in general. The same can be said of sport. Both international tourism and sport have enhanced the process of globalization and contributed to peace and prosperity and to both have inspired many young people to achieve new goals and make their dreams reality.

A society's values are reflected in the way people travel and in the way they play and practise their sport. It is due to the fact that tourism can never be an end in itself but only a servant of humanity that the World Tourism Organization (WTO) General Assembly approved a Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.

## The rationale of sport and tourism

There are many similarities between sport and tourism, yet also some fundamental differences. Tourism is an experience-orientated activity, while sport is a performance-orientated activity.

The experience-orientated dimension can best be illustrated by quoting the example of Joseph Pine in his book 'The Experience Economy'. The price of coffee on a plantation would be about

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one cent. Coffee - in this context - is a product. Once it is roasted, sorted, professionally packed, it becomes a commodity and the price per cup may rise to 25 cents. The same coffee - freshly ground and brewed in coffee shop - becomes a service and the price could be 100 cents. However, if it is served in New York or London or Paris in a trendy new coffee boutique, it is an experience and the price could be 500 cents. The ambience and style of the shop becomes a theatre and the coffee an

experience. Tourism provides people with experiences.

Sport is a performance-orientated activity. It is by nature competitive and the rewards for winning and achieving success become progressively greater as the level of competition increases. Leisure sporting activities are a world away from the competitive intensity of high-level professional sport. The elite sports have all become professional with major entertainment value and they are driven financially by the media and the sports equipment industry. The leisure time sport public, as well as amateur sport participants and youth, provide the market for the sports equipment popularized through superstar endorsements. Performance is richly rewarded. The publicity, money and social status enjoyed by successful athletes create a powerful incentive to train with relentless dedication.

The noble inspiration of performance and excellence in sport can be derailed by the use of performance-enhancing



*The Olympic colours in front of the National Palace in Barcelona in 1992.*



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drugs. We must not be blind to the fact that in both sport and tourism there are negative abuses that conflict with the codes and objectives of WTO and the IOC. Drug abuse in sport and child abuse as well as environmental degradation in tourism, are examples of this. We must continue to work with dedication to reduce, and where possible eliminate these practises.

The reality is that sport and tourism also reflect the values and lifestyles as well as some of the sub-cultures of the fast-changing social structures that characterize our global village. New trends and lifestyles emerge which have a significant impact on tourism and sport.

Tourism was traditionally more orientated to the idea of rest, relaxation and finding relief from psychosomatic wear and tear. The need for tourism to provide this therapeutic service remains important in the high-stressed society of today. However, the emphasis has

shifted more onto health and quality of life issues. This trend gave rise to the need to include physical and sporting activities in tourism products. The 'feel good' or 'wellness' factor has become a new growth sector in tourism. People want active holidays where they can enjoy the 'good things' (sport, exercise) for which there is no time in their every day life. This has created a boom in tourism involving sports like cycling, golf, jogging, mountaineering, hiking etc.

The evolution of sport and tourism continues. The young free-style generation of today has taken to a whole range of new adventure type sports such as skateboarding, snowboarding, amongst others, often referred to as "extreme sports". At the same time the artificial experience-based world of sport - such as 'aquaparks' and 'skidomes' are sprouting up every where. These leisure time sports have

grown in popularity and many of them have established themselves and receive regular television coverage. 'Extreme sports' involve increasing numbers of young people who are losing interest in traditional or elite sport. The competition between extreme and alternative sport, on the one hand, and elite sports, on the other hand, is also increasing.

The constant challenge is to adapt and renew the supply of products and services to meet the changing requirements of new generations. It is a known fact that sports disciplines as well as tourism products are subjected to life cycles. With time they lose their original appeal and importance. Management of the process of renewal and the re-designing of products and services is a field where sport and tourism can exchange valuable experiences. Cooperation in this field will be mutually beneficial.



Tourism and sport are inter-related, one renders a service to the other. Major sport events such as the Olympic Games and the World Cups in football and rugby, have become important international tourism attractions. The remarkable success of the recent Olympic Games in Sydney is a good example of the significant tourism impact that such events can have. Likewise the tourism industry has served as an 'incubator' for new sport disciplines. Tourism has provided an opportunity for leisure activities to be popularized. With increased popularity they have developed into formally-organized sporting activities. Some even progressed from leisure activities to Olympic disciplines. Beach volleyball and snowboarding are two good examples of this.

### The economic impact of tourism and sport

The exceptional growth of tourism over the last 50 years is one of the most remarkable economic and social phenomena of the 20th century. The number of international arrivals shows an evolution from a mere 25 million in 1950 to around 700 million in 2000, representing an average annual growth rate of more than 7% over a period the last 50 years - well above the average annual economic growth rate for the same period. Tourism has clearly outperformed all other sectors of the economy and has grown into the most significant economic activity in the world. Here are a few indicators of the size and impact of the tourism industry today. According to WTO statistics, tourism: on average contributes about 7% of the world's GDP (4-10% in Developed countries and much higher in some of the developing countries and island states). About 8% of the world exports through international visitors' spending is on goods and services. That makes tourism the leading export earner - ahead of the automotive industry, chemicals, food, computers and fuels,

with a generated income of US\$ 476 billion in 2000 - that is the amount spent by tourists annually.

The positive impact of tourism and sport on society and particularly on economic development is often misunderstood or underestimated. One reason for this lack of understanding is the absence of reliable statistics that would reflect the knock-on effects of sport and tourism activities.

WTO has also developed Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSA) which will increasingly become a valuable tool for policy and planning purposes. TSA has the objective of establishing a basic language with common definitions and classifications that will provide a picture of the tourism sector in its totality. The TSA methodology may also find useful application in assessing the contribution which sport makes to economic growth and employment.

### Cooperation between sport and tourism institutions:

I have already reflected on the fact that sport and tourism are inter-dependent and that there are many areas of common interest. They require constant

renewal and have to build and protect their images (their brands) and have to manage negative perceptions and abuses. They have to popularize their activities and transfer a friendly and accessible image. In management they have much to share. The growing number of degree courses for sport and travel management shows that there is considerable interest in making sport and tourism organizations more efficient.

The sharing of knowledge and experiences could be most beneficial for both organizations. In conclusion closer institutional cooperation between the IOC and WTO and the creation of an IOC-WTO Sport and Tourism Observatory would be particularly useful for the pooling and diffusion of knowledge relevant to these two fields. Further collaboration in research and knowledge transfer would certainly pay dividends. An economic evaluation of the contribution of tourism and sport to development is a research topic that deserves urgent attention.

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Rowing, sporting competition and leisure activity.