

# SPORT <sup>AND</sup> TOURISM

Globalization, Mobility and Identity



James Higham • Tom Hinch



# **Sport and Tourism: Globalization, Mobility and Identity**

James Higham and Tom Hinch



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# **Sport and Tourism: Globalization, Mobility and Identity**

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Dunedin, New Zealand

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Edmonton, Canada

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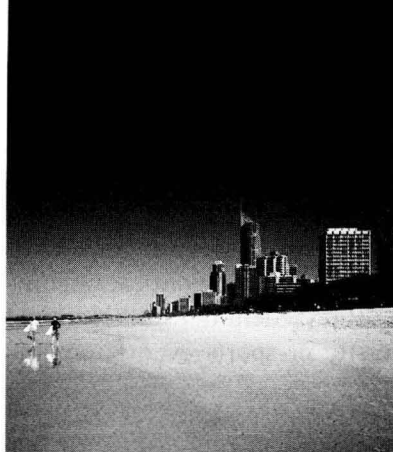
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## **PART 1**

# **Introduction**





# Sport and Tourism: Globalization, Mobility and Identity

It has been widely stated that heightened personal mobility (Hall, 2004; Burns & Novelli, 2008) and increasing interest in both passive and active engagements in physical activities (Glyptis, 1991) are two defining features of late twentieth century and early twenty-first century societies. Unexplained, such claims risk accusations of gross generalization. In many societies, the higher reaches of personal mobility remain the exclusive domain of the privileged (Hall, 2004). Similarly, participation in many sport and recreational pursuits is rigidly defined by social class, race and gender (Gibson, 2005). 'Irrespective of culture or historical period, people use sport to distinguish themselves and to reflect their status and prestige' (Booth & Loy, 1999:1). Booth and Loy (1999) state that similar status groups generally share lifestyle and consumption patterns. This is a claim that relates equally to the consumption of sport and the consumption of tourism. Participation in physical activities remains beset with concerns surrounding increasingly sedentary and unhealthy lifestyles and obesity in some societies (Coakley, 2007).

However, interests in contemporary mobility and increasingly diverse engagements in sport are such that the intersection of the two has become an area of considerable research scholarship (Glyptis, 1982; Maguire, 1993, 1994; Standeven & De Knop, 1999; Weed & Bull, 2004; Gibson, 2004). There has been a relatively longstanding tradition of sport-related tourism research with a focus on sports mega-events (Hinch & Higham, 2004). Situated initially from the 1980s within the events management literature, sports mega-events have featured prominently in discourses on events management and tourism (Ritchie, 1984; Getz, 1997). This focus has moved beyond often flawed economic impact analyses of mega-events (Crompton, 1995; Mules & Faulkner, 1996) to more fine-grained and critical analyses of sports mega-events (Hall & Hodges, 1996; Hiller, 2000; Olds, 2000; Cornelissen, 2004; Preuss, 2005; Weed, 2008). However, as Cornelissen

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perspectives

Beyond defining  
phenomena

The broad context:  
Globalization,  
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place

(2004:40) notes, 'since the vast majority of mega-events are hosted by industrialized states, discourse and research on the processes and impacts of these events tend to be framed around the economic and political circumstances characteristic to the developed world'. It is evident that much critical scholarly work addressing the growing diversity of sports events remains outstanding.

### WIDER AND CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES

Cornelissen's (2004) observation that discourse and research on the processes and impacts of sports events are situated firmly in the circumstances of the developed world bears considerable influence over the discussions presented in the following chapters. This bias has also occurred at the expense, at least in relative terms, of more critical and nuanced considerations of the wider manifestations of sport-related tourism. Bull and Weed (1999:143) noted ten years ago that 'sport tourism is really a collection of separate niches but while tourism associated with mega-sporting events ... in major urban locations is clearly evident, the potential of sport as a tourism niche elsewhere is perhaps less well appreciated'. This criticism remains as applicable today as it was a decade ago. The focus of much research serving the field remains largely concentrated on high profile, mainstream and often professional or semi-professional sports, and global or international sports events that typically take place in major cities in the Western developed world.

One response to Weed and Bull (1999) and Cornelissen (2004) is to critically explore the wider manifestations of sport-related tourism and mobility. There are some notable contributions that have followed this approach. In terms of sports events, research into bundling (Chalip & McGuirty, 2004) and leverage (Chalip, 2006; Chalip & Leyns, 2002) signal a move away from descriptive event evaluation, to a more strategic and analytical approach. Such studies represent a paradigmatic shift from *ex post* to *ex ante* analyses of events (Chalip, 2008). Hiller (2000) and Olds (2000) present critical analyses of the lower socio-economic community impacts felt by the residents of cities bidding for and hosting sports mega-events. Cornelissen and Solberg (2007) examine South Africa's hosting of the 2010 football world cup in terms of the migration of athletic talent, observing South Africa as an alternative to Western Europe which, in terms of the migration of African footballers, is '... mostly viewed as exploitative and an extension of neo-imperialist relations between the continent and its former colonial powers' (Cornelissen & Solberg, 2007:674). Gratton, Shibli and Coleman (2005:233) have addressed the growing competition between second tier cities to host 'less globally



recognized sports events in a wide range of other sports where spectator interest is less assured and where the economic benefits are not so clear cut'. Others have contributed empirical insights into elements of production, consumption and experience associated with non-elite (Carmichael & Murphy, 1996; Ryan & Lockyer, 2002) and non-competitive sports events (Nogawa et al., 1996). These works are indicative of a move towards more critical and nuanced insights into sports events.

However, beyond events comparatively little recognition has been given to the wider relationships that may exist between sport and tourism. Recognition of this intersection of interests was established with a platform of work in the 1980s and 1990s (Glyptis, 1982; Gibson, 1998; Standeven & De Knop, 1999). Standeven and De Knop (1999), for example, describe sport tourism as the sum of the cultural experiences of activity and place. Efforts to build upon this platform with more critical (Weed & Bull, 2004; Hinch & Higham, 2004) and theoretical (Gibson, 2005) contributions have followed. Weed and Bull (2004) call for a move beyond defining sport tourism phenomena and the development of classifications and typologies of sport tourists (e.g., Hall, 1992; Gammon & Robinson, 1997; Standeven & De Knop, 1999; Reeves, 2000). They present a compelling argument that an understanding of the unique manifestations of sport-related tourism may be well served by conceptualizing sport tourism as a composite of activity, people and place. Alternatively, Higham and Hinch (2006) adopt a geographical approach to raise questions that are situated within the concepts of space, place and environment. They do so to highlight research questions relating to the spatio-temporal travel flows associated with sport (e.g., as it relates to tourism seasonality), place attachment and meanings, and the manifestations of environmental change associated with sport and tourism at various (local, regional, national or global) scales of analysis.

Alongside these conceptual contributions, the theoretical platform that serves the study of sport tourism has been initiated (Gibson, 2005). The adoption of concepts and theories from related fields has provided theoretically informed insights into the study of sport and tourism. The use of leisure constraints theory (Hinch, Jackson, Hudson & Walker, 2005), destination branding theory (Chalip & Costa, 2005), role theory (Gibson, 2005) and concepts such as authenticity (Hinch & Higham, 2006) and serious leisure (Jones & Green, 2005) are recent examples. To these conceptual and theoretical foundations have been added an expanding and diverse range of empirical contributions that address specific elements of the relationship between sport and tourism. The aforementioned study of sports event leverage (Chalip, 2006; Chalip & Leyns, 2002), for example, has progressed from the study of events into the wider field of elite sport (Sparvero & Chalip,