



SPORTING EVENTS TOURISM

Sporting events tourism is travel where “the main purpose of the travel is to take part in an ‘organised’ sporting activity, either as a spectator, participant or official. ‘Organised’ sporting activities involve some type of formal organisation, where there are teams, classes or bookings required. Competitive sports, recreational activities such as sailing and surfing, and less active sports, such as chess and yoga are all included in this definition”ⁱ

In September 2003 Tourism Queensland conducted a review of current research to gain a better understanding of the sporting events tourism market. Specific objectives of conducting the review were to:

- Develop a market profile of the sporting events tourism sector in Queensland;
- Provide information on what people are looking for in a sporting events tourism experience; and
- Identify core issues that confront both the operation and development of sporting events tourism businesses.

1.1 Market Insight

- Over a 12-month period between 1999-2000: ⁱⁱ
 - 29% of Australians had participated in sport or physical activities organised by a club or association.
 - 55% of Australians (aged 18 and over) participated in sport or physical activities, although males (59%) were slightly more likely to participate than females (51%).
 - The most popular sports participated in were walking, swimming, aerobics/fitness, golf and tennis.
- In 2002: ⁱⁱⁱ
 - Australians took 3.2 million **domestic overnight trips** for sporting purposes, representing approximately 4% of the total domestic overnight trip market.
 - Australians took 8.7 million **domestic daytrips** for sporting purposes, representing approximately 6% of the total domestic daytrip market.
 - Approximately 74,000 **international visitors** travelled to Australia for the main purpose of attending an organised sporting event, representing approximately 2% of the total international visitors to Australia. Approximately 7% of international visitors incidentally attended an organised sporting event during their stay in Australia.
- The most popular Australian sporting events, in terms of attendance are: ^{iv}

– Australian Rules football	17%
– Horse racing	12%
– Motor sports	11%
– Rugby League	10%
– Cricket	6%
- Sporting events tourism in Australia accounts for approximately \$3 billion per annum. ^v
- In 2000-01, the Australian Government allocated a sports budget of \$111 million. ^{vi}
- Each year, Sport and Recreation Queensland provides in excess of \$40 million through funding programs towards new and improved opportunities for people to participate in sport and active recreation. ^{xv}
- In 2000-2001, activities associated with sport and recreation attracted the largest sponsorship from Australian businesses (\$480 million). The biggest sponsors of sport and recreation activities were businesses in the manufacturing industry (\$148 million). ^{vii}
- Queensland attracts approximately 18% of all domestic sporting events tourism. ⁱⁱⁱ
- About 53,000 Queenslanders are employed in sport and recreation. ^{viii}

1.2 Type of Experience Sought

- The main experiences that sporting events tourists travel for are:
 - Support of their team (or an individual).
 - Pure enjoyment of sport attendance.
 - Social aspect of attending a sporting event.
- A study examining sex differences in sports fans found that females were “more likely to report being a sports fan because they attended and watched sporting events with friends and family, while males were more likely to consider themselves to be fans because they played sports and wanted to acquire sports information”.^{ix}

1.3 Activities ⁱⁱⁱ

Domestic Sporting Events Visitors (Overnight only)

Activity	Participants	Spectators	Total
Eat out / restaurants	44%	57%	48%
Attend an organised sporting event	20%	76%	38%
Pubs, clubs, discos etc	28%	29%	28%
Play other sports	29%	4%	21%
Walk or drive around/taking in the sights/general sightseeing	16%	29%	20%
Go shopping (pleasure	15%	29%	20%
Visit friends & relatives	15%	29%	19%
Other outdoor activities (e.g. horse riding, rock climbing, etc)	24%	5%	18%
Go to the beach (incl. swimming, surfing, diving)	13%	11%	13%
Go fishing	13%	3%	10%

Domestic Sporting Events Visitors (Daytrip only)

Activity	Participants	Spectators	Total
Attend an organised sporting event	12%	69%	32%
Eat out / restaurants	23%	27%	25%
Play other sports	30%	3%	21%
Other outdoor activities (e.g. horse riding, rock climbing, etc)	17%	2%	11%
Play golf	15%	2%	10%
Go fishing	13%	1%	9%
Pubs, clubs, discos etc	9%	7%	8%
Go to the beach (incl. swimming, surfing, diving)	10%	4%	8%
Picnics/BBQs	8%	5%	7%
Visit friends and relatives	6%	5%	5%

International Sporting Events Visitors

Activity	Participants	Spectators	Total
Go shopping for pleasure	78%	80%	80%
Attend an organised sporting event	50%	84%	66%
Go to the beach (including swimming, surfing, diving)	53%	65%	58%
Pubs, clubs, discos etc	43%	64%	52%
Visit friends & relatives	43%	54%	48%
Go to markets	38%	45%	42%
Visit botanical or other public gardens	28%	50%	37%
Visit national parks / State parks	28%	38%	32%
Visit wildlife parks / zoos / aquariums	31%	33%	32%
Visit casinos	24%	35%	29%

1.4 Destination Preferences ⁱⁱⁱ

- **Domestic** overnight visitors who travelled to attend an organised sporting event in Australia in 2002 most commonly visited New South Wales (36%), Victoria (26%), and Queensland (18%). Sporting event travel in Queensland was mostly concentrated within Brisbane (25%), the Gold Coast (18%), Darling Downs (14%) and the Sunshine Coast (10%).
- **International** visitors who travelled to Australia for a sporting event in 2002 most commonly visited New South Wales (41%), Victoria (41%), Queensland (32%) and Western Australia (21%).

1.5 Accommodation Preferences ⁱⁱⁱ

- **Domestic** overnight sporting travellers most commonly stay in:
 - Hotels, resorts, motels or motor inns 39%
 - *Participants* 35%
 - *Spectators* 47%
 - Friends or relatives properties 23%
 - Caravan parks, commercial camping grounds or camping near the road or on private property 22%
- **International** sporting travellers to Australia most commonly stay in:
 - Hotels, resorts, motels or motor inns 73%
 - The home of a friend or relative 28%
 - Rented houses, apartments, units or flats 14%

1.6 Transport ⁱⁱⁱ

- **Domestic overnight** sporting travellers most commonly use the following types of transport:
 - Private or own vehicle or company car 80%
 - Air transport 10%
 - Bus or coach 7%
- **Domestic daytrip** sporting travellers most commonly use the following types of transport:
 - Private or own vehicle or company car 95%
 - Bus or coach 4%
 - Railway 1%
- **International** sporting travellers most commonly use the following types of transport:
 - Air transport 57%
 - Rental car 33%
 - Long distance bus or coach 12%
 - Private or company car 8%
 - Long distance train 6%
 - Charter or tour bus 5%

1.7 Travel Party ⁱⁱⁱ

- The travel parties of **domestic overnight** sporting travellers commonly comprised of:
 - Friends or relatives (without children) 30%
 - Family groups (parents and children) 22%
 - Adult couples 19%
 - Unaccompanied travellers (travelling alone) 12%
 - Non-school sporting group/community group 9%
 - *Participants* 12%
 - *Spectators* 3%
- The travel parties of **international** sporting travellers commonly comprised of:
 - Unaccompanied travellers (travelling alone) 44%
 - Adult couples 29%
 - Friends and/or relatives travelling together 20%

1.8 Information Sources ⁱⁱⁱ

- The majority of **domestic overnight** sports travellers did not use any information sources when planning their trip. For those travellers who did use information sources for planning their trip, the most commonly used information source was the Internet, used by 68% of spectators and 66% of participants.
- Similarly, while the majority of **domestic daytrip** sports travellers did not use any information sources for planning their trip, the most commonly used information source was the Internet.

1.9 Demographic Profile ⁱⁱⁱ

1.9.1 Gender

Domestic Overnight			
	Participant	Spectator	Total Sports Travellers
Male	67%	53%	63%
Female	33%	47%	37%
Domestic Daytrip			
	Participant	Spectator	Total Sports Travellers
Male	72%	50%	64%
Female	28%	50%	36%
International			
	Participant	Spectator	Total Sports Travellers
Male	66%	69%	66%
Female	34%	31%	34%

1.9.2 Origin

Domestic overnight visitors travelling for sporting events **in Australia** most commonly came from:

- New South Wales 36%
- Victoria 24%
- Queensland 20%
- South Australia 9%
- Western Australia 7%

Domestic overnight visitors travelling for sporting events **in Queensland** most commonly came from:

- Queensland 84%
- New South Wales 13%

International visitors travelling for sporting events **in Australia** most commonly came from:

- New Zealand 34%
- United Kingdom 16%
- Japan 13%
- United States of America 12%
- Europe (excluding the United Kingdom and Germany) 10%

1.9.3 Age

Age of Domestic and International Visitors Travelling for Sporting Purposes in Australia

AGE	Domestic Overnight			Domestic Daytrip			International		
	Participants	Spectators	Total Sports Travellers	Participants	Spectators	Total Sports Travellers	Participants	Spectators	Total Sports Travellers
15-24	31%	15%	26%	38%	19%	31%	18%	5%	12%
25-34	21%	17%	20%	15%	17%	15%	11%	21%	16%
35-44	19%	31%	23%	16%	25%	19%	32%	27%	29%
45-54	15%	25%	19%	14%	23%	17%	19%	21%	20%
55-64	8%	8%	8%	8%	11%	9%	14%	16%	15%
65+	6%	4%	6%	8%	5%	7%	6%	10%	7%

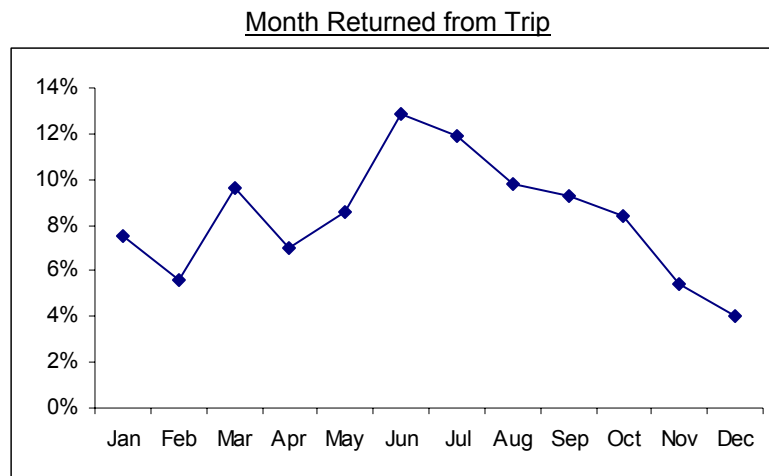
1.9.4 Income

- Approximately one-third of the **domestic overnight** visitors travelling for sporting events in Australia earn less than \$52,000 per annum.
- Approximately 34% of the **domestic daytrip** visitors travelling for sporting events earn less than \$52,000 per annum.

1.9.5 Lifestage

LIFESTAGE	Domestic Overnight			Domestic Daytrip		
	Participants	Spectators	Total Sports Travellers	Participants	Spectators	Total Sports Travellers
Young single living at home	23%	9%	19%	29%	14%	24%
Young single living alone or in shared accommodation	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%
Midlife single	9%	6%	8%	8%	9%	8%
Young/midlife couple, no kids	17%	14%	16%	14%	8%	12%
Parent with youngest child aged 5 or less	11%	8%	10%	8%	11%	9%
Parent with youngest child aged 6-14	11%	29%	16%	10%	27%	16%
Parent with youngest child aged 15+ still living at home	5%	9%	6%	8%	9%	8%
Older working single	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Older non-working single	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%
Older working married person	9%	10%	9%	5%	9%	6%
Older non-working married person	8%	7%	7%	11%	7%	10%

1.9.6 Seasonality of Sporting Travellers (Domestic Overnight visitors)



1.9.7 Tour Travel

- 86% of the **international visitors** who came to Australia to **watch sporting events** did not travel on a group tour.
- 59% of the **international visitors** who came to Australia to **participate in sporting events** did not travel on a group tour.

1.9.8 Repeat Visitation

- 71% of the **international visitors** who came to Australia to **watch sporting events** were on a return visit to Australia.
- 51% of the **international visitors** who came to Australia to **participate in sporting events** were on a return visit to Australia.

1.9.9 Return Visit to Australia within three years

Of the international sporting visitors who were asked if they would like to return to Australia in the next three years:

- 76% **plan to return** within the next three years.
- 14% **do not plan to return** within the next three years.
- 11% were **unsure** if they plan to return to Australia within the next three years.

1.9.10 Traveller Identification

Traveller Identification (International Visitors)	Participant	Spectator	Total Sports Travellers
Budget traveller	23%	21%	23%
Adventure traveller	22%	8%	15%
Gay/Lesbian traveller	16%	9%	10%
Luxury traveller	6%	16%	11%
Nature-based traveller	11%	9%	9%

1.10 Barriers

- Attracting sufficient numbers of overseas visitors is one potential barrier in the organisation of a successful sporting event. Commonly perceived barriers for travel to Australia, particularly from Europeans, Canadians and Americans are time, cost and distance.^x These barriers need to be addressed to attract a substantial international market for a sporting event.
- The size of a sporting event will be limited by the infrastructure that is available within the region the event is being held. If accommodation and transport needs cannot be met, even small regional events will be difficult to host.^v An attractive destination for sporting events requires several key aspects to accommodate both participants and spectators including:^v
 - Sporting and accommodation facilities
 - Air, road and rail transport networks both to and within the region
 - Other tourism related facilities such as restaurants, retail outlets and entertainment venues
 - Employees and volunteers available
 - Food and beverage
 - Ticketing and admissions
- Sporting events can be subject to heavy public liability insurance premiums, especially when there may be a potentially high risk involved (e.g., stage lighting, fireworks, etc)^{xi}, and although there has been action recently to provide cheaper premiums for community and not-for-profit events (e.g., Community Care Underwriting Agency^{xii}), this is not the case for larger and more profitable sporting events.

1.11 Opportunities

- Australia is seen as a sporting nation and despite its relatively small population, Australians are consistently succeeding in the international sporting arena including Rugby Union, Cricket, Golf and Tennis as well as recent successes in the Olympics and the Paralympics.
- Queensland has well-established government and private groups to assist in the establishment of sporting events such as Queensland Events and Sports and Recreation Queensland as well sport-specific organisations.
- Queensland contains many world-class sporting facilities including:^{xiii}
 - QEII Sports Centre (formerly ANZ Stadium)
 - Suncorp Stadium
 - Brisbane Cricket Ground
 - The Sleeman Centre
 - Brisbane Entertainment Centre
 - Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre
 - Ballymore Stadium
 - Cairns Convention Centre
 - Dairy Farmers Stadium
 - Carrara Stadium
- A directory containing a variety of the many world-class sporting facilities currently available in Queensland, can be accessed via the Sport and Recreation Queensland webpage, www.srq.qld.gov.au/facilities/facilities.cfm.^{xvi}
- In addition to quality sporting facilities, Queensland has a variety of holiday destinations and activities for both domestic and international visitors to enjoy, including beaches, rainforests, shopping and tourist accommodation ranging from budget to luxury.
- The Australian Tourist Commission currently promotes Australia as a holiday destination that features sporting activities and incorporates a “sports” theme into the overseas image. This is a logical progression from Australia’s ‘sporting nation’ image.^v

1.12 Marketing

- Given that few people travelling for sporting events utilise information sources when planning their holiday, event organisers may benefit by marketing to local, state, federal and international sporting groups. A list of sporting and recreational groups available in Queensland are detailed on the Sport and Recreation Queensland website, www.srq.qld.gov.au/industry_information/industry_contacts/industry_contacts.cfm.
- Marketing support, depending on the size and nature of the event, can be gained through various government and industry bodies. Tourism Queensland may also be able to assist in the development stages of the event and in developing an overall holiday package with which to market the product.
- Sporting events will be best marketed if they do not coincide with any other similar or major sporting events, most of which can be found on the Australian Sports Commission calendar.^{xiv}

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- ⁱ Foo, L.M. (2000). Sports Tourism – An Australian Perspective. Tourism Research Report, Journal of the Bureau of Tourism Research, 2 (1), p. 9.
- ⁱⁱ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2000. 4177.0 Participation in Sport and Physical Activities, Australia, 1999-2000.
- ⁱⁱⁱ National Visitor Survey and International Visitor Survey, Bureau of Tourism Research, 2002.
- ^{iv} Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1999. 4174.0 Sports Attendance, Australia.
- ^v Towards a National Sports Tourism Strategy (Draft) (2000). Commonwealth Department of Industry, Science and Resources.
- ^{vi} <http://www.austemb.org/Australiasport.htm>
- ^{vii} Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2002. 8157.0 Generosity of Australian Business 2000-2001, Australia, 2000-2001
- ^{viii} http://www.sportrec.qld.gov.au/general/employment_in_the_industry.cfm?CFID=1971493&CFTOKEN=61653550&dt=09_09_2003_12_03_51
- ^{ix} Uhler, D., Harrick, E.A., Christian, E., & Jacquemotte, L. (2000). Sex differences in sport fan behaviour and reasons for being a sport fan. Journal of Sport Behaviour, 23 (3), 219-231.
- ^x <http://atc.australia.com/newscenter.asp?art=4082>
- ^{xi} <http://www.juliusmedia.com/cxweb/article.asp?ID=306>
- ^{xii} <http://www.community-care.com.au/index.html>
- ^{xiii} <http://www.msfa.qld.gov.au/index.shtml>
- ^{xiv} <http://www.ausport.gov.au/info/sportcalendar/>
- ^{xv} http://www.srq.qld.gov.au/funding/funding_programs/funding_programs.cfm
- ^{xvi} Sport and Recreation Queensland, <http://www.srq.qld.gov.au/facilities/facilities.cfm>

Further Information

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