Although now overshadowed by the bombings on July 7th, Wednesday July 6, 2005, was a joyous day for London and the UK as the city celebrated beating the favourite Paris to win the race to become the host for the Games of the XXXth Olympiad in 2012. Trafalgar Square was overrun with both overseas and UK tourists who came to watch and celebrate the IOC announcement. Stratford in East London, one of the world’s most multicultural places, a fact not lost on IOC members, held a party to celebrate the area’s regeneration over the next seven years. The Olympic Games would be coming to London, and according to a range of commentators, this would provide a range of benefits for the tourism sector in the UK. The nature and extent of these benefits, and how they might be planned for and maximized, not only in London’s case, but in the case of all Olympic hosts, is the subject of the analysis in this book.

As an introduction to the book, this chapter sets out to briefly establish the significant relationship between sport and tourism, and to discuss how sports tourism might be conceptualized and understood. It then utilizes a slightly updated version of Weed and Bull’s (2004) Model of Sports Tourism Types to discuss how activities related to the Olympic Games might be the basis for
each of the five types of sports tourism featured in the model. In addition, the potential for the Olympic Games to stimulate generic tourism is identified. As such, the chapter demonstrates the whole range of sports-related and generic provision that comprises Olympic tourism products in the pre-, during, and post-Games periods. The chapter concludes by proposing a definition of Olympic tourism.

Sport and tourism

Research in the field of sports tourism has burgeoned over the last 15 years. Work by Glyptis (1991) and the subsequent report commissioned by the Great Britain Sports Council (Jackson and Glyptis, 1992) were some of the early substantive works in the field, while other reviews were carried out by De Knop (1990) and Standeven and Tomlinson (1994). The focus of these early works was on advocacy, attempting to establish sports tourism as a legitimate field of study, and one with a potentially significant range of impacts. The first full text relating to sport and tourism was the 1999 work by Standeven and De Knop which, while largely descriptive, outlined the range of economic, sociocultural, environmental, and health impacts of sports tourism.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, a range of authors have carried out more detailed examinations of the sports tourism field in relation to inter alia: policy (Weed, 1999; 2003a), destination development (Vrondou, 1999), seasonality (Higham and Hinch, 2002), participation patterns (Jackson and Reeves, 1998; Reeves, 2000), economic impacts (Collins and Jackson, 1999), and spectators (Weed, 2002a). Furthermore, in the last few years a number of student texts (e.g., Hudson, 2003; Ritchie and Adair, 2004; Turco, Riley and Swart, 2002) and more research-oriented books (e.g., Higham, 2005; Hinch and Higham, 2004; Weed and Bull, 2004) have been published, as well as special editions of European Sport Management Quarterly (2005, Vol.5, No.3), Sport in Society (2005, Vol.8, No.2), Journal of Sport Management (2003, Vol.17, No.3), Current Issues in Tourism (2002, Vol.5, No.1), Journal of Vacation Marketing (1998, Vol.4, No.1), and Tourism Recreation Research (1997, Vol.22, No.2). The existence of these works demonstrates academic interest in the area, while their content clearly establishes sports tourism as a real and significant phenomenon in contemporary society.

In a recent five-year (2000–2004) ‘systematic review of sports tourism knowledge’, Weed (2006a) searched 38 hard copy peer-reviewed journals in the broad sport, tourism and leisure subject areas and found 80 articles that fell within the sports tourism field. There was a clear growth in the field, with only eight articles
published in 2000, compared to the publication of 24 articles in 2004. Unsurprisingly, the most studied activity was event sports tourism (40% of articles), with outdoor and adventure sports tourism (29%) and skiing and winter sports (15%) being the only other two significant areas. In terms of the phenomena investigated, the largest area of investigation was behaviours (38%) with other work taking place on impacts (25%), provision, management and marketing (24%), policy (8%), and definitions, classification and conceptualization (6%). Combining phenomena and activity, the single largest area of investigation was the impacts of event sports tourism (23% of articles), something that is clearly of relevance in a text on Olympic tourism. However, as the rest of this chapter, and indeed this book, will show, Olympic tourism is about much more than the tourism impacts of the event itself.

Implicit in these publications is a recognition that sports tourism is a significant cultural, social, and economic phenomenon (Weed and Bull, 2004). While statistics about the sporting elements of tourist trips are notoriously difficult to extrapolate, Collins and Jackson (1999) conservatively estimated that, at the turn of the millennium, sports tourism was worth £2.5 billion annually to the UK, whilst Jackson and Reeves (1996) had earlier provided a 'guesstimate' that figures of 10–15 per cent of holidays in Northern Europe having a sports orientation are not unreasonable.

There have been a number of attempts to define sports tourism, but few attempts at conceptualizing the area. Typical of many such definitions is that offered by Standeven and De Knop (1999:12) that ‘sport tourism’ comprises:

All forms of active and passive involvement in sporting activity, participated in casually or in an organised way for non-commercial or business/commercial reasons, that necessitate travel away from home and work locality.

Such a definition, while allowing an inclusive approach to the study of sports tourism, does little more than combine widely accepted definitions of sport (cf. Council of Europe, 1992) and tourism (cf. British Tourist Authority, 1981). As such, it is really no definition at all as it does not add anything to an understanding of the area that could not be established from definitions of sport and of tourism as it simply identifies tourism activity involving sport. In fact, such a definition would seem to cast doubt on whether sports tourism is a serious subject for study, or whether it is merely a convenient descriptive term with little
Olympic Tourism

explanatory value. Other authors (e.g., Gammon and Robinson, 1997/2003; Robinson and Gammon, 2004; Sofield, 2003) have attempted to separate out ‘sports tourists’ (for whom sport is the primary purpose of the trip) and ‘tourism sportists’ [sic] (for whom tourism is the primary purpose), and to further classify these categories into ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ participants. However, the flaw in such work is that it is dependent on defining tourism activity in terms of sport, or sport activity in terms of tourism, and as such inevitably establishes a subordinate role for either tourism or sport in an understanding of the area.

I and others have argued elsewhere (Downward, 2005; Weed, 2005a; Weed and Bull, 2004) that sports tourism is a synergistic phenomenon that is more than the simple combination of sport and tourism. As such, it requires an understanding of both sport and tourism (cf. Standeven and De Knop’s definition above), but it needs to be conceptualized in a way that is not dependent on definitions of sport and of tourism, and which allows its synergistic elements to be understood. One way in which this can be done is to examine the features of both sport and tourism and establish an understanding of sports tourism derived from those features.

Sport can be seen as involving some form of activity (e.g., kayaking, cycling, etc.), be it formal or informal, competitive or recreational, or actively, passively or vicariously participated in. Furthermore, sport also involves other people, as competitors and/or co-participants. For vicarious and passive participants, the people element is likely to be both other vicarious or passive participants (e.g., other spectators) and the active participants (e.g., competitors). Similarly, active competitors and co-participants may experience other people as active and/or vicarious or passive participants. Even activities that are sometimes participated in alone (e.g., mountaineering, running) are likely to involve other people because participants may reference their participation in terms of the subculture of the activity and thus experience a feeling of ‘communitas’ (Turner, 1974). Similarly, tourism involves other people, either as co-travellers and/or as hosts. Even solitary tourism entails passing through areas that have been constructed by other people or other communities, and it is rare for a tourist to complete a trip without encountering other travellers. Tourism also involves visiting places outside of the tourist’s usual environment. There is, of course, a travel element, but this is either an instrumental factor in arriving at an ‘unusual’ place, or the travel takes place in or through ‘unusual’ places. Considering the interaction of these features of sport and tourism, it is possible to arrive at Weed and Bull’s (2004:37) conceptualization of sports tourism as
Sport, tourism and the Olympic Games

‘arising from the unique interaction of activity, people and place’. Notice here that the focus is on the ‘interaction’ of activity, people and place, thus emphasizing the synergistic nature of the phenomenon and moving it away from a dependence on either sport or tourism as the primary defining factor. Thinking about sports tourism in this way establishes the phenomenon as related to but more than the sum of sport and tourism, and thus establishes sports tourism as something that cannot be understood as a tourism market niche or a subset of sports management. Consequently, the understanding used in this text is that:

Sports tourism is a social, economic and cultural phenomenon arising from the unique interaction of activity, people and place.

What, though, does this conceptualization tell us about the tourism potential of the Olympic Games? There are, perhaps three important things to consider. First, we know that sport is an important tourism phenomenon (cf. Collins and Jackson, 1999; Jackson and Reeves, 1996) that provides people with exciting and stimulating tourist experiences (Hinch and Higham, 2005). Second, we know that Olympic cities are, in the vast majority of cases (e.g., Sydney, Athens, and London), some of the world’s foremost city tourism destinations, providing vibrant and often multicultural places for domestic and international visitors. Finally, we know that the Olympics is the world’s premier sporting event, providing travellers with varied active, passive, and vicariously experienced activities. Consequently, Olympic hosts experience the interaction of sport as a tourism draw with world city tourism destinations and the Olympic Games as the world’s premier sports event, thus providing the potential for a wide range of highly significant tourism benefits.

The next question, therefore, is what is the scope and nature of Olympic tourism? The simple view would be that Olympic tourism comprises the visits of spectators, athletes, officials, and dignitaries during the Games themselves. However, this is far from the full picture. The IOC announcement that a city is to host the Olympic Games should be the ‘B of the Bang’ for that country’s tourism industry, the start of a tourism phenomenon potentially lasting 10–15 years and leaving a lasting legacy for the future organization and co-ordination of tourism in that country. In addition to tourism generated during the games themselves, potential pre- and post-games tourism may arise from a range of sports tourism types, and it useful to take a look in detail at these types before establishing a definition of ‘Olympic Tourism’ that can inform the rest of the text.
A Model of Sports Tourism Types

In one of the pioneering works in the field, Glyptis (1982) investigated the links between sport and tourism in five European countries and made some comparisons with Britain. She identified five ‘demand types’ – namely: general holidays with sports opportunities, activity holidays, sports training, spectator events, and ‘up-market’ sports holidays – which, although proposed as relating to demand, essentially amount to a supply side categorization of sports holidays. Weed and Bull (2004) modified these categories to reflect the nature of contemporary sports tourism and used them to examine the range of sports tourism provision. In modifying the categories, Weed and Bull (2004:123) noted that the ‘activity holidays’ category, whilst perhaps not initially intended to do so, has come to imply outdoor adventure or countryside pursuits such as rock climbing, potholing, or hiking or trekking. Consequently this category was renamed as ‘sports participation holidays’ to encompass the full range of sports activities that might take place as a prime purpose of a tourist trip. The ‘spectator events’ category was seen as useful because it allowed for the ‘passive’ aspect of sports tourism. However, Weed and Bull (2004:37) noted that other categories, such as general holidays with sports opportunities, may also include passive sports tourism. In addition, it was seen to be important to allow for active involvement in sports events, particularly mass participation events such as the big city marathons. Consequently, Weed and Bull (2004:37) proposed that this category could be more usefully labelled as ‘sports events’. The final category, ‘up-market sports holidays’ has been identified (Weed, 2001a) as being characterized not by the nature of the sports opportunities offered, but by the luxurious nature of the accommodation and attendant facilities provided. As such, Weed and Bull (2004:37) proposed that it would be useful to label this category as ‘luxury sports holidays’ to more accurately reflect this. In addition to the updating of the individual categories, one final modification was required to allow for the inclusion of day-visits, which the vast majority of tourism definitions now include. This was achieved by simply replacing the word ‘holidays’ with ‘tourism’ where necessary in the categories. As a result, the updated sports tourism types proposed by Weed and Bull (2004) were:

- Tourism with sports content
- Sports participation tourism
- Sports training
• Sports events
• Luxury sports tourism.

These types were illustrated by Weed and Bull (2004) in their Model of Sports Tourism Types which also showed the key features of such types. In this text, Weed and Bull’s model has been updated slightly to include the consideration of an additional feature, that of ‘vicarious’ participation in sports tourism (see discussions below). This updated model is shown as Figure 1.1.

In considering the features of the sports tourism types shown in Figure 1.1, perhaps the most obvious feature is that sports tourism may involve multi-sport or single sport participation. This is one of the dimensions identified by Standeven and De Knop (1999) in their categorization of sports tourism, and all of the five types of sports tourism may involve either single sport or multi-sport participation. A further feature of sports tourism, identified by Glyptis in her 1982 categorization and

**Figure 1.1**
Model of Sports Tourism Types.
*Source: adapted from Weed and Bull, 2004.*
Olympic Tourism

utilized in much of the subsequent literature (Hall 1992a; Jackson and Glyptis, 1992; Standeven and De Knop, 1999), is its potential to be either active or passive. While each of the sports tourism types discussed here may be active, passive participation can only take place in the tourism with sports content (e.g., incidental spectating), sports events (as a spectator) and luxury sports tourism (e.g., as a corporate hospitality guest) types. More recently, it has been argued (Weed, 2005a) that there is also a ‘vicarious’ element to sports tourism participation, and this element, as noted above, represents an updating and development of Weed and Bull’s (2004) model and is shown in Figure 1.1. Many sports spectators consider themselves to be much more than passive participants, although they are not actively taking part in the sport itself. Such spectators feel that they are interacting with the active participants and, as such, might be described as experiencing the sport ‘vicariously’ through such participants. This might be true of spectators in the case of sports events, luxury sports tourism and tourism with sports content as noted above. However, as visits to sports attractions and museums become more widespread, such ‘vicarious’ involvement may also be a part of sports participation tourism, where the participation is the ‘imagined’ (Gammon, 2002) journey and ‘vicarious’ experience that takes place.

The five features identified so far exist on dimensions where the features are mutually exclusive: Multi/Single sport and Active/Passive/Vicarious activities. Consequently, features are associated with sports tourism types insofar as each type of sports tourism may potentially display that feature, rather than the feature being a defining part of a particular sports tourism type. The remaining features identified do not exist to the exclusion of other features, but they are still associated with sports tourism types as potential features.

As the following discussions will detail, sports training is not only about elite training, but might also incorporate elements of ‘advanced instruction’. However, instruction is also a potential feature of tourism with sports content (e.g., water skiing instruction on beach holidays), sports participation tourism (e.g., advice about technique on a skiing holiday), and luxury sports tourism (e.g., advice from a resident professional on golfing holidays). In each of these three cases ‘instruction’ is not the prime purpose of the trip as that would define the activities as sports training. Consequently, instruction might feature as a part of four of the five sports tourism types. Sports training is also readily associated with elite sport although, as with instruction, this is not the only sports tourism type that might potentially involve elite sport. Elite sport may feature in both sports events (e.g., Olympic
Table 1.1
Potential Features of each Sports Tourism Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multi-Sport</th>
<th>Single-Sport</th>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Passive</th>
<th>Vicarious</th>
<th>Instruction</th>
<th>Elite</th>
<th>Corporate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tourism with sports content</td>
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<td>•</td>
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<td>Sports participation tourism</td>
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<td>Sports training</td>
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<td>Sports events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luxury sports tourism</td>
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<td>•</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Games) and luxury sports tourism (e.g., National squad ‘get togethers’ at luxurious facilities). Finally, involvement in sports tourism as part of a corporate group can be a feature of sports participation tourism (e.g., outdoor activity management training), sports events (e.g., corporate hospitality), and luxury sports tourism (e.g., a weekend in a country house hotel as a reward for corporate performance). A summary of the potential features of each sports tourism type shown in Figure 1.1 is summarized in Table 1.1.

Each of the features described recur in relation to at least three of the sports tourism types, and three of them – multi-sport, single-sport, and active participation – may be a feature of every sports tourism type. It is perhaps useful to take one of the sports tourism types as an example to illustrate the potential features identified in the model. The model shows that sports events may be either multi-sport (e.g., Olympic Games) or single-sport (e.g., Football World Cup), may be active (e.g., as a participant in the Chicago Marathon), passive (e.g., as a neutral spectator at a New York Yankees Baseball Game), or vicarious (e.g., as an emotionally involved spectator at an Ashes cricket test match), may involve elite sport (e.g., international championships), and may involve participation as part of a corporate group (e.g., the corporate hospitality boxes at Royal Ascot Horse Racing Events).
Sports tourism types as a basis for Olympic tourism products

Developing a model such as this is useful in the context of studying sports tourism provision because an understanding of the nature and potential features of each sports tourism type can assist in examining and developing the most appropriate strategies to provide for such types. In the context of Olympic tourism, the model can help identify the range of tourism that might be generated by hosting an Olympic Games. The following discussion, therefore, examines each sports tourism type in more detail, and identifies those types that might be developed as Olympic tourism products.

Tourism with Sports Content

This category is the broadest of the sports tourism types. Its defining characteristic is that sport is not the prime purpose of the tourism trip. Given such a defining characteristic, this category may overlap with Sports Events and Luxury Sports Tourism, where it may also be possible that sport is not the prime trip purpose.

In exploring this category, it is perhaps useful to begin with the simplest form of sports tourism, that where sport is not an organized part of the holiday, where sports facilities or opportunities do not play any part in the choice of destination, and which would often take place spontaneously rather than being pre-planned. Examples of such activities may be a trip to the local swimming pool, perhaps due to other activities being limited due to bad weather, or a trip to watch an ice hockey match as an alternative evening activity. In each case, the participation has not been pre-planned, nor has it been part of the organized element of the holiday. Some research suggests (see Judd, 2002) that city breaks may often be most conducive to this element of sports tourism, as such breaks often involve a significant element of ‘wandering around’ the city and tourists may be attracted to events, activities or facilities that they had previously no knowledge of. The recent growth in ‘sports museums’ may be an example of this. Visits to such attractions, such as ‘Halls of Fame’ or ‘Stadium Tours’, as with many museums, can often be a spontaneous activity (Gammon, 2002; Snyder, 1991), and some aspects of Olympic-related tourism may be of this nature. However, such ‘spontaneous’ Olympic-related tourism, as it is not pre-planned, does not contribute to the generation of visits to a destination, although it can be harnessed as part of strategies to maximize tourist spending once at a destination.
Of course, the activities described above may, in other circumstances, be a planned, though not prime purpose, part of a tourism trip. Once sport becomes such a planned part of the trip, it is possible to examine the range of activities by reference to the importance of sport as a tourism decision factor. This is one of the categories used by Jackson and Weed (2003) in the Sports Tourism Demand Continuum, and subsequently used within the Sports Tourism Participation Model (see discussions in Chapter 2). In illustrating this element, it is perhaps useful to begin with examples where sport can be a major tourism decision factor, despite not being the prime purpose of the trip. In such cases sport can be the deciding factor between a number of different tourism destinations, in effect, it is a ‘Unique Selling Proposition’ for providers. As an example, a family may wish to take a city tourism break and, as described by Moutinho (1987), may have narrowed the choices down from a ‘total opportunity set’ of options, to a ‘decision set’ of three or four choices. However, this is but one element of the holiday decision making process, comprising eight stages, described by Cooper et al. (1998):

1. Tourism need arousal
2. Recognition of need for tourism
3. Involvement and search for information
4. Identification of alternatives
5. Evaluation of alternatives
6. Decision
7. Purchase
8. Post-purchase behaviour (anticipation and doubt).

The third, fourth, and fifth stages listed above are those that correspond to the opportunity set reduction process described by Moutinho (1987). In many cases, if sport is perceived as important to the family, then opportunities for sports spectating and participation may be the deciding factor between destinations in the fifth stage above. In the case of Olympic cities, the opportunities to visit Olympic sites to take a tour, to watch an event, or to participate in sport may be an important part of the decision making process for potential tourists, while not being the prime-purpose, or even a central purpose, of the trip.

Sport can also be a part of tourism planning once the destination choice has been made. In such cases there may be elements of sports participation or visits to events, facilities or attractions that
are considered ‘must see’ or ‘must do’ activities when visiting a particular area. For example, for many non-American tourists visiting the USA, a trip to an American Football or Baseball game may often be regarded as such. As part of broader research on sports spectator motivations and behaviours in 2002 (see Weed, 2003b), a number of focus groups and interviews were conducted with sports spectators, the following is an excerpt from one such focus group:

**INTERVIEWER:** ... so what about sports spectating outside Europe? Has anyone travelled across the world to watch sport?

**RESPONDANT:** Well, not specifically to watch, but I went to New York this year – my girlfriend and I went to visit a friend of hers who lives out there now. As soon as I knew we were going I wanted to see the (New York) Yankees play, I’ve never seen a baseball match, and don’t really follow it, but it’s something that you’ve got to do if you visit the States isn’t it.

**INT:** What about your girlfriend, did she want to go to the game too?

**RESP:** Yeah, that’s the strange thing. She doesn’t really follow sport at all over here, but as soon as I suggested it she was dead keen – she said going to a baseball match in New York was the same as visiting Buckingham Palace for American tourists in London. She didn’t seem to think it was sports spectating in the same way as watching football is here, she’d never come to football with me in England.

There are three interesting things in this example. First, this example of sports tourism falls into the ‘Visiting Friends and Relatives’ sector which, similar to the city breaks described above, are often particularly conducive to incidental sports tourism (Jackson and Glyptis, 1992). Second, the visit to the baseball game became a part of the holiday plans from the first moment the destination choice was made as a ‘must see/do’ part of any visit to that city, but it was not a decision factor itself. Finally, the game was seen as more than a sports event, particularly by the respondent’s girlfriend, who saw it as a representation of the country’s culture. Whilst this is only isolated qualitative evidence, taken from a study that had other aims, it does give an indication of the types of factors that can be important in this type of sports tourism. It seems reasonable to assume that the VFR sector is important, that sports activities on general holidays can be an important part of
pre-destination planning (Cooper et al., 1998; Moutinho, 1987), and that in some cases sport can be seen as a cultural representation of the destination (Hinch and Higham, 2005). In relation to Olympic tourism, the second and third elements, in particular, may be important. Certainly, in many cases Olympic-related activities on general trips are likely to be pre-planned. This may take the form of plans to watch a sport event at an Olympic site, or to visit Olympic related attractions. However, the global cultural importance of the Olympics should not be underestimated. The way Olympic hosts interpret the Olympics and the venues chosen can be a representation of host culture. For example, the archery competition in the London 2012 Games is set to be held at Lords, the home of cricket, and the customs and symbols of cricket and this venue are often seen as being derived from a particular view of Englishness. Conversely, Australia, which hosted the 2000 Games in Sydney, would interpret cricket in an entirely different way, seeing it as a way of demonstrating a particularly rugged Australian identity where sport is a key part of the national character. The Athens Games of 2004 used the event to emphasize the country’s historic heritage, with images of the ancient Olympics and the Greek Gods being fore-fronted throughout the games. An example of this is the hosting of the shot-put competition at Ancient Olympia rather than, as is customary, at the athletics venue. As such, Olympic venues and attractions are as much a representation of host culture as they are a reminder of the forthcoming or past hosting of the Games.

Sports Participation Tourism

Whilst the previous category is the broadest in terms of both range of activity and types of provision, the Sports Participation Tourism category (where sport is the prime purpose of the trip) is perhaps the most obvious – essentially it refers to sports holidays, which is what most people would think of when they come across the term sports tourism. As with the previous category, there are some overlaps with other sports tourism types, particularly luxury sports tourism. Overlaps with other categories are best dealt with by exclusion. In this respect, active participation in sports events, except at the most basic level, is excluded from this category, as is any extended form of instruction or training. This category, therefore, encompasses the remainder of multi-sport or single-sport sports participation tourism.

A fairly obvious framework for examining this category is to consider multi-sport and single-sport trips. The most obvious single sport is perhaps skiing, and entire texts have been dedicated to this topic by other authors (e.g., Hudson, 2000).
Here, as with many aspects of the previous category, the major tour operators are the main providers, although they are obviously dependent on local destinations for much of their product. There is often demand for some form of instruction on ski-trips, although where instruction is the prime purpose of the trip such holidays would fall into the sports training category. Also, the non-sporting aspects of the trips can be important (see discussions of the Associated Experience profile in Chapter 2) and, whilst the sport provides the prime-purpose and stimulus for the trip, the ‘apres ski’ experience may often mean that some ski-trips fall into the luxury sports tourism category (Weed, 2001a) where the emphasis is as much on conspicuous consumption as it is on sports participation.

Of course, skiing and a range of other winter sports are part of the Winter Olympics. There is a key difference between much Winter Olympic tourism and that generated by the Summer Olympics. While in each case there will obviously be a significant number of tourists coming to watch the event itself, pre- and post-Winter Olympic tourism is often much more focussed on the recreational use of the Olympic facilities, such as ski-resorts and cross-country skiing trails. Following the 1988 Winter Olympics in Calgary, for example, the Canmore Nordic Ski Centre attracted 40,000 cross-country skiers in its first year of post-Olympic operation (Whitson and MacIntosh, 1996).

At this more recreational end of the sports tourism spectrum are sports where the sport itself may be the method of transport for the trip, such as hiking, cycling, and sailing. Taking the latter case as an example, sailing sports tourism can be divided into two distinct categories: that where the boat itself is the transport and accommodation for the trip; and that where the sailing takes place in the same place (e.g., at a lake or coastal venue) and the accommodation is provided nearby (Jennings, 2003). Sailing providers include commercial boat hire companies and marina developers, specialist commercial sailing holiday operators (that own a lake, equipment, and accommodation) or networks of sailing clubs from the ‘not-for-profit’ sector that organize exchange visits. In each of these cases, the prospect or the actuality of having been an Olympic venue will obviously be a fairly ‘unique selling proposition’ for most of these organizations and the wider destination in which they are located. Furthermore, such destinations may often be part of strategies to spread the Olympic tourism spend beyond the host city because their particular resources are often not found in such cities.

While there are a whole range of other examples of sports participation tourism, not least a range of adventurous and outdoor activities, the Olympic aspects of this sports tourism type
are largely limited to those sports where sports tourists can experience the Olympic courses, venues, or facilities. In many cases, such experiences are much more likely to be part of tourism with sports content (e.g., taking the opportunity to swim in the Olympic pool whilst on a more general trip) or sports events (e.g., taking part in a Marathon run over the Olympic course). However, sports tourists may also ‘vicariously’ experience Olympic courses, venues, or facilities, through the Olympic related visitor attractions or halls of fame that have previously been mentioned in the tourism with sports content category. Such visits have been compared to ‘pilgrimage’ (Gammon, 2002) and may involve a certain amount of wish-fulfilment or ‘place collecting’ (Urry, 2001). Although little is known about this particular aspect of sports tourism participation (Gibson, 2002), it is obviously a significant group to consider within Olympic tourism.

Sports Training

Generally, the Sports Training category is much narrower than the previous two sports tourism types discussed above. However, in examining Olympic tourism it is a very important type. It comprises, quite simply, sports tourism trips where the prime purpose is sports instruction or training. This might range from a weekend instruction course for beginners on how to sail a dingy, to an elite training camp at an altitude for a national athletics squad (Weed, 2001a).

It is possible to identify three areas within this category: ‘learn to’ courses, advanced instruction, and elite training. In the first area, the purpose of the trip is to learn to play a sport. Sailing has already been mentioned, and within the UK the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) accredits residential courses at facilities throughout the country. Southwater Watersports, for example, offers residential instructional holidays in a range of watersports for individuals, couples, families and groups of adults or children. In addition to learning to play sports, coach education and training can also be included. Many courses to train coaches are residential, and as such should be considered as part of this ‘learn to’ category (Pigeassou, 2002). The similarity between coach education and learn to play is that in both cases some National Governing Body standard or certificate is often the end product of the course. In the Olympic context, such tourism is likely, like that in the sports participation tourism category, to be made more attractive by taking place at an Olympic venue.

In relation to athletes and participants, the same providers often cater for both advanced instruction and elite training. Club La Santa in Lanzarote is a good example of such a facility, with
a range of sports on offer at top class facilities. In Reeves (2000) study of elite British track and field athletes Club La Santa was a regular training venue. However, a smaller related study also described a trip to the facility by a small amateur squash club for ‘advanced instruction’. The members of the club all contributed towards the cost of taking their own coach with them, and they emphasized that, while the purpose of the trip was squash coaching, all ability levels could join in and benefit from the trip. Here, as with the ‘learn to’ element, Olympic venues have a distinct competitive advantage for advanced instruction over other sports training venues that can not offer the kudos of a link to the Olympic rings.

Similar facilities to Club La Santa exist around the world (e.g., La Manga in Southern Spain), whilst other popular sports training venues are focussed on destinations rather than a specific site (e.g., Hilton Head Island in South Carolina and San Diego in California) that have a concentration of top-class sports facilities and a favourable climate. In both cases, a significant proportion of business comes from repeat visits, particularly from elite athletes.

Sports training destinations may be in exotic locations, they may be linked to sports event venues, or they may be located where expertise exists. Of course, central to athletes’ preparations for the Olympic Games is ‘acclimatization’ training in locations similar in climate to that where the Games are to be held. In this respect, the London Games of 2012 will see traditional ideas about warm weather acclimatization reversed, as athletes seek to acclimatize to the UK’s often inclement, and always unpredictable, weather and environment. In the run up to the decision to award the 2012 Games to London, the East Midlands Development Agency estimated that Loughborough (a University town 120 miles north of London) could benefit by £5–10 million as international teams seek to utilize Loughborough University’s extensive sports facilities and expertise in the 5–6 years before the Games. This may seem an excessive estimate, but the Great Britain team spent £1 million on their pre-Athens Olympic Games training camp in Cyprus in 2004 (Cotton, 2005). The facilities at Loughborough have been subsidized by the UK National Lottery’s Sport Fund for the specific development of elite sport (Sport England, 1999). Other sites in the UK have been similarly subsidized with some, such as the National Water Sports Centre at Holme Pierpoint, which has a 2000 m rowing lake and slalom canoe course that can and have been used for international competition, being linked to event venues. However other centres, such as the picturesque Bisham Abbey, which often hosts England hockey and football team training and is home to the
Lawn Tennis Association and English Hockey Association, are purely training venues. London 2012 will bring an unanticipated tourism spin-off for the investment in such elite sports training systems as athletes and sports governing bodies and teams from a range of countries around the world seek to use such facilities in the four years before the London Games, bringing economic benefits to both the venues themselves and the areas in which they are located.

Sports Events

As with the sports training category above, this sports tourism type is relatively easy to define. It refers to tourism where the prime purpose of the trip is to take part in sports events, either as a participant or a spectator and, of course, it is the most obvious element in any consideration of Olympic tourism. Whilst sports events are often thought of in terms of mega-events such as the Olympics and football World Cup, the smallest of local events, such as a 5 km fun run, are also part of this category. Regardless of size or importance, all events will attract both participants and spectators (Jackson and Weed, 2003), and many smaller events may be part of Olympic-related tourism.

Much has been written about the political and economic impacts of mega events (e.g., Burbank et al., 2001; Fayos-Sola, 1998; Hall, 2001) and it would not be productive to repeat this material here – a brief discussion and reference to other sources can be found in Weed and Bull (2004). Needless to say, there will be an influx of athletes, officials and spectators during the staging of the Games themselves, all of whom will be Olympic tourists, and the details of such tourists are discussed in Chapter 3.

In order to stage an event of the magnitude of the Olympic Games, football World Cup or Commonwealth Games, partnership between the public, commercial and voluntary sector is required. For such major events, a country or city is nominally the provider as the named host, however this is far from the full story. Certainly government support is essentially to winning the right to stage such events, but even the most centralized of governments would not attempt to stage a wholly publicly funded mega-event. The last example of this would have been the Moscow Olympics of 1980, but at that time both world politics and the USSR’s political system where very different to the present day. The commercial sector’s involvement is likely to include, inter alia, sponsorship, management expertise, facility provision and equipment supply (Getz, 2003). In addition, the voluntary sports sector, through sports governing bodies, will be needed to oversee the technical side of the sports competition.
However, whilst the provision of such mega-events involves a complex set of partnerships among sectors, it is unlikely that the initial impetus to stage or bid for the Games will come from the commercial sector, it will usually come from the city, country or, in some cases for individual sports, the national governing body for that sport. Chapter 5 discusses at length the nature of such provision partnerships and their impacts on Olympic tourism development.

Mid-size events, such as national championships or international championships in less high-profile sports such as Judo, will generally gravitate to areas where suitable facilities exist, or to areas that have organizations that are prepared to host such events (Getz, 1997a). In many cases, mid-size events will be hosted in the run up to, and the aftermath of, mega events. The case of Sheffield (Bramwell, 1997a) highlights the way in which the facilities developed for the World Student Games in 1991 are still an important part of that city’s event-based tourism strategy. As an Olympic Games approaches, previously inconsequential sports competitions in the country due to host the Games become significant international events as athletes seek to experience and acclimatize to local conditions. This will inevitably stimulate a growth in travelling sports spectators as international athletes flock to events based in a forthcoming Olympic host country, making that country the centre of international sporting competition in the 3–4 years before the Games.

While events attract commercial sponsors who get involved for the advertising and marketing benefits, it is important not to forget the importance of commercial corporate hospitality. Such hospitality may involve entertaining clients or providing incentive rewards for employees (Fraser, 1998). Corporate hospitality will obviously be most prevalent at more high profile sports and at high profile events, but to some extent corporate hospitality can exist, and can be important to providers, at many lower profile sports events (Lambton, 2001; Stewart, 1993). That a forthcoming Olympic Games is to be hosted in a particular country will, as noted above, lift the profile of many events in the run up to the Games, thus boosting the corporate hospitality sector of sports event tourism at many venues in that country.

At the more recreational level, sports participants will want to compete at venues that are or have been part of an Olympic Games. Mass participation events that take place over prospective or former Olympic courses (such as marathons and triathlons) or in Olympic venues (such as swim meets and badminton tournaments) will be likely to experience a considerable increase in prospective entrants of all abilities who wish to say they have run the Olympic course or competed at an Olympic venue.
Luxury Sports Tourism

Unlike any of the previous categories, luxury sports tourism is not defined by reference to the nature of the sport involved in the trip. Rather it is the quality of the facilities and the luxurious nature of the accommodation and attendant facilities and services that define this type of sports tourism (Weed, 2001a). Consequently it overlaps with all the other categories, as it simply caters for the luxury end of the market in each case. As such it may seem a strange category to include; however, the nature of the clientele attracted and the tourism experience provided means that it is a useful and legitimate category.

Whilst not related to the Olympics, golf and the country house hotel, are high profile examples of this type of sports tourism. In many cases, the luxury market is exploited by the addition of five star accommodation to long established and renowned facilities (Readman, 2003). Similarly, the type of recreational sailing, involving luxury motor yachts, that might be a questionable inclusion as a sport, would also fall into this category (Jennings, 2003). The luxury nature of motor yachting and sailing is defined by the exclusivity of the resorts visited, such as Monaco and San Tropez, where a marina berth would be prohibitively expensive for many aspirant tourists. Such perceptions of exclusivity are likely to be further enhanced by any destination’s past or future association with the Olympic Games.

Of course, as mentioned earlier, it is perhaps in relation to skiing and winter sports provision, where the ‘apres ski’ experience can be important, that the clearest link with the Olympics exists in the luxury sports tourism category. In many cases this is as much a function of the exclusivity of the resort as the nature of the facilities, although five star provision is still the defining element of this sports tourism type. Winter sports resorts that have been associated with the Olympic Games will clearly appeal to those sports tourists motivated by aspects of conspicuous consumption, and such social and prestige motivators cannot be ignored in relation to this type of Olympic tourism. Such motivators and consumption will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2.

Luxury sports tourism can include the top end of the corporate hospitality market. The nature of the hospitality provided at many top sports events, such as the Monaco Grand Prix, would certainly put such provision into the luxury category. Of course, some elements of elite training might be also be described as luxury sports tourism, particularly for those at the very top of their profession travelling with national teams. Both of these elements are potentially part of the luxury end of Olympic tourism.
Generic tourism as an Olympic tourism product

The above discussions of the five sports tourism types identified by Weed and Bull (2004) do not quite complete the picture of Olympic-related tourism, as the Olympic Games can be used as part of strategies to generate future non-sports related tourism. Such tourism may be generated either among tourists that have visited the destination for Olympic-related reasons as detailed in the preceding discussions, or among those who have been exposed to the Olympic host destination through various written and audio-visual media. In the former instance, Weed and Bull (2004) have noted that sports events can often be used to generate repeat visits for a range of general tourist related activities. One of Manchester’s policy goals in hosting the Commonwealth Games in 2002 was to promote Manchester as a broader urban tourism destination, and showcase other aspects of Manchester’s tourism product, many of which had nothing to do with sport. As such the cities range of shops, cultural attractions, theatres and bars were all prominently featured in Manchester’s Commonwealth Games promotional material. Olympic Games may also be used to generate positive images of host cities as potential tourist destinations through event related media broadcasts featuring the destination. Research conducted following the 1988 Winter Olympics in Calgary showed that the Games had enhanced the saliency and attractiveness of Calgary as a tourist destination (Ritchie, 1990). Such generic tourism, clearly stimulated by exposure to a destination facilitated by the Olympic Games, is a category that should not be overlooked in a consideration of Olympic tourism.

Olympic tourism – a definition

A straightforward definition of Olympic tourism that covers all the various tourism categories discussed above is:

Tourism behaviour motivated or generated by Olympic-related activities.

This definition covers the full range of pre- and post-Games sports tourism activity discussed above, but also covers the final category, that of general tourism that has been stimulated by exposure to the Olympic host destination by various corporeal or mediated Olympic-related activities. The definition is intentionally inclusive and all-embracing and is intended to demonstrate the scope of the discussion in the remainder of the text.