

SHORT REPORT

Montenegro as High-Quality Sports Tourism Destination - Trends and Perspectives

Andjela Jaksic - Stojanovic¹, Marija Jankovic² and Neven Seric³

¹University Mediterranean, Faculty for Visual Arts, Podgorica, Montenegro, ²University of Mediterranean, Faculty of Economics and Business, Podgorica, Montenegro, ³University of Split, Faculty of Economics, Split

Abstract

The contemporary development of tourism is characterized by the development of specific forms of tourism, among which is sports tourism. Tourism and sport are two forms of interconnected activities in the sphere of tourist recreation and their relationship dates back to the very beginning of their development. Sport in modern tourism has not only a perceptive role, but it is also an important content of the stay in which tourists become active participants of various sports: water sports, tennis, golf, skiing, riding, sports games, etc. Having on mind the potential of Montenegro for tourism development, the fact that it represents one of the main pillars of economic progress of the country, as well as the trends and perspectives on global tourist market, it is necessary to identify key advantages and disadvantages of sports tourism in Montenegro in order to improve the quality of this segment of tourist offer.

Key words: *tourism, sport, sports tourism, potential, Montenegro*

Introduction

According to the trends and perspectives on international tourist market, sports tourism represents one of the main pillars of future tourism development. Montenegro as a country has a great potentials for development of this kind of tourism, especially having on mind the natural resources such as sea, sand beaches, mountains, national parks etc. But, although natural resources are important, it is evident that there is a lot of work that should be done in future in order to develop this kind of tourism and adequately valorize and promote it on the global market.

The aim of this paper is to identify the main advantages and disadvantages of Montenegro as sports tourism destination in order to improve the diversity and quality of tourist offer and the level of satisfaction of tourists as well as to position Montenegro as high quality sports destination.

Sports tourism – trends and perspectives

The contemporary development of tourism is characterized by the development of specific forms of tourism, among which is sports tourism. Tourism and sport are two forms of

interconnected activities in the sphere of tourist recreation whose relationship dates back to the very beginning of their development. Sport in modern tourism has not only a perceptive role, but it is also an important content of stay where tourists become active participants of various sports: water sports, tennis, golf, skiing, riding, sports games, etc. The foundation of sports tourism was laid by Glyptis who stated that although academics and practitioners consider sport and tourism two separate activities these two phenomena are actually completely integrated (Glyptis, 2011). Sport tourism is defined as: a journey that encourages an individual to temporarily leave his / her daily place in order to participate actively in sport activities sport related events or be their spectator (Valek Slak, Jurak, & Bednarik, 2014). Bartolucci (1981) states that sports tourism is a type of tourism in which sport is the main motive of traveling.

The fact is that there is a growing trend in sports and health care in the world, and it is not surprising that most of the worlds most famous destinations focused on the development of sports and recreational tourism as one of the most important forms of selective tourism in the overall tourist offer. The



Correspondence:

A. Jaksic - Stojanovic

University Mediterranean, Faculty for Visual Arts, Podgorica, Montenegro

E-mail: andjela.jaksic@unimediterran.net

development of sport tourism actually represents a unique response to the phenomena of “mass tourism” and “seasonality of tourism” which represent one of the greatest challenges in tourism industry because of numerous negative effects and consequences. In order to minimize these consequences, all tourist destinations put a lot of efforts in order to exceed the tourist season. One of the possible ways is development of specific types of tourism such as sports tourism, MICE tourism, health tourism etc. (Vukonic, & Cavlek, 2001).

However, it is important to mention that the overcoming of the challenge is not the only nor the most reason for development of sports tourism. Something that is crucial are the social advantages as well as economic benefits achieved through development of this type of tourism. It increases the diversity and quality of tourist offer as well motivation of tourists for a particular tourist destination and their consumption. According to Bartoluci (2004), the sports tourism appears in various forms, such as: competitive sports tourism, winter sports and recreational tourism, summer sports and recreational tourism.

In literature it is also possible to find some other forms of sports tourism such as: observation tourism in which tourists are traveling in order to spectate certain sports events or of sports facilities, Recreational tourism in which tourist participate in sports related events, Adventure tourism that provides opportunities for activities such as walking, hiking, canyoning, biking, rafting, paragliding and hang gliding, horse riding, rowing, etc., Natural Tourism etc.

Sports tourism in Montenegro - trend and perspectives

Extremely favorable natural conditions and the fact that sports tourism represent one of the most dominant types of tourist movements leads to conclusion that in the future, Montenegro should pay great attention to the development of this form of tourism (Hinch, & Higham, 2001). However, it is clear that natural factors are important, but not a sufficient factor of attractiveness when it comes to the development of this type of tourism.

Therefore, in the future, it is necessary to pay great attention to development and improvement sports tourism infrastructure. In order to conceive sports tourism in the optimal way, it is necessary is to segment the offer through its spatial differentiation and specialization for certain sports (Montenegro's Tourism Development Strategy to 2020, 2008). This would make sports tourism a segment of the offer in certain ones places and regions that have the greatest potential for a particular sport, for example: nautical sports and sailing - Boka Bay; tennis, volleyball - Budva; Handball - Cetinje; winter sports - Zabljak, Kolasin, Plav, Rozaje; rafting, kayaking and canoeing on fast waters - Tara and Moraca; golf - Tivat, Zabljak, Ulcinj; athletics - Bar, Ulcinj; swimming - coastal region; kayak and canoe in calm waters - Skadar Lake etc.

Having on mind the fact that tourists dependent on excitement are one of the most numerous tourist groups, and the fact that Montenegro has fantastic conditions for enjoying extreme sports, it is quite clear why in the future this sub-segment should be given great attention. The special accent should be put on paragliding, bungee jumping, parachuting, water formula, auto racing, water skiing, water jumping, snowboarding, etc. In addition, it should also focus on promotion of mountaineering and alpinism with special emphasis on Orjen, Lovcen, Durmitor, Bjelasica and Prokletije.

It is also important to mention the fact that golf tourism represents one of the most demanding segments of tourism demand. Regardless of the continuous increase the number of people who play golf, it still contains a certain amount of prestige, similar to nautical sport. Therefore, all strategic acts regarding tourism development in Montenegro, recognize golf tourism as one the most important segments of sports tourism development. It is known that for the location of golf courses the closeness of airport is very important, so it that's why is planned to build such resources in Tivat. In addition, it is proposed to examine sterile and macchia terrain on the coast (in Boka area and between Bar and Ulcinj) and in the continental areas near the future airports in Berane, Zabljak and Niksic. Also, there is a possibility of the realization of cross-border co-operation with Dubrovnik in order to realize joint investments and marketing promotion on global tourist market.

The strategy of golf development in Montenegro suggests orientation to main target groups:

1. Local population: Promoting golf among the local population at the very beginning of the is a crucial for sustainability of Strategy. Strategic management of marketing activities in Montenegrin tourism would improve golf engagement among Montenegrin citizens through golf schools, competitions, special prices for travel arrangements involving golf, etc.

2. Golfers on vacation: Tourists on vacation are looking for animations. Such tourists would probably stay in a summer resort during a holiday and occasionally played golf.

3. Golf tourists: Dedicated golfers with a significantly higher chance of being Golf club members, who are older, richer, are more interested in golf packages and to visit a large number of golf courses across the country / region. According to rule, they have very high incomes and high demands (Golf Strategy in Montenegro, 2009).

The development of this type of tourism would contribute not only to diversification and the improvement of quality of tourist offer in Montenegro, but would also contribute to the development of business, attracting investments, increasing employment etc.

It would be also interesting to develop sports tourism together with some other types of selective tourism forms such as speleological tourism for example. According to trends and perspectives on international market, it is clear that speleological tourism occupies more important place than ever before and more and more tourists decide to travel motivated by the desire to meet the beauty of the underworld. Having on mind the fact that the development of this kind of tourism is closely related to development of sports tourism from many different points of view (type of tourists, good physical condition as necessary prerequisite for enjoying in speleological activities etc.), as well as the exceptional potential of Montenegro it is clear that in future accent should also be put on combination of these activities. According to Radovic (2010), the most important localities are: Red Rock which is usually compared with famous locality El Castile in Spain, Lipa Cave, Cetinje Cave etc. However, despite the large number of imposing speleological objects, Montenegro has no any cave which is facilitated for touristic visits, on which great attention should be put in future.

All other types of tourism such as sea tourism, mountain tourism, health tourism, cultural tourism, rural tourism etc. should be further enriched with segments of sports tourism which would attract more different target groups, significantly

improve the quality of tourist offer, improve the quality of tourists satisfaction etc.

Conclusions

Having on mind the fact that sports tourism represents one of the key driven forces of future tourism development, and the fact that Montenegro has a great potential for development of this type of tourism, it is clear why in future the great attention should be put on development of this kind of tourism. It is clear that there Montenegro has a lot of resources that should be used for development of sports tourism such as natural beauties, sea, mountains, national parks etc., but it should point out that natural beauties and potentials are important but not sufficient for future tourism development and in that sense in future it should focus on investment in sports infrastructure, systematic and strategic approach to creation of unified diversified tourism offer and high quality promotion on international market. Except to the fact that sports tourism may significantly contribute to the solving of problems of seasonality, it may also significantly contribute to the improvement of diversity and quality of tourist offer, the increase of level of satisfaction of tourists, the increase of expenditure in destination itself etc.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

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