

# Mega-sporting event legacies with reference to accommodation requirements of participants in the Two Oceans Marathon, Cape Town

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## Abstract

All travelling sportspersons require accommodation while taking part in sporting events when away from home. This was true of soccer players from the Professional Soccer League in South Africa, who had to play the Black Leopards team in Thohoyandou, Black netball players in Johannesburg, and generally South African competitors' competing in the two areas identified by the Hospitality students of the University of Venda in 2008, as part of their marketing modules for the Bachelor of Commerce degree in Hospitality Management studies. Similar findings were obtained when participants in the Old Mutual Two Oceans Marathon were surveyed in 2013 and 2014. Quality service and friendliness of staff at commercial accommodation establishments, particularly with regard to rooms, reception and restaurants, were identified by these participants, confirming the 2008 survey results.

**Keywords:** Accommodation, participants, sport-tourism, tourism, Two Oceans Marathon



Source: <http://cinga2.com/opulentcharity/>

## Introduction

Over 29 000 participants entered the various 2013 Two Oceans' events, of which number about 75% came from outside the Western Province region (Carnegie, 2013:8). This 'foreign' participation figure had increased considerably over the past number of

years from about 52% in 2005 and 2007 (Kotze & Visser, 2008:68) to the present figures. The increase in runners from outside the Western Cape raises the problem of affordable and applicable accommodation for all these out-of-town competitors; a fact which was further emphasised with the arrival of the 2.21m Mohammad Irfan,

a member of the Pakistan cricket team that toured South Africa in the summer of 2013, who complained about his struggles to find a comfortable bed! (Potgieter, 2013:5).

In 1981 the South African Springbok rugby team visited New Zealand on an International Rugby Board scheduled tour. Much had been written about the tour in the local media; mainly pro-tour in South Africa and probably marginally anti-tour in the host country. Nobody, not the organisers nor the tourists, anticipated the resolve of the anti-tour demonstrators to stop the games once the tour commenced. At a few venues drastic steps had to be taken to protect the rugby tourists, including alternate accommodation. In Wellington, the Springbok team had to sleep in the grandstand at Athletic Park, dubbed the 'Grandstand Hotel' by the players. A space under the grandstand was converted into a dormitory with '...beds one metre apart facing each other down the two walls' (Claassen, 1985:166). For the Manawatu game the tourists were moved to the match-field at 8am and were provided '...with tiny mattresses on the cold concrete floor (while) an icy wind whistled through the holes in the corrugated iron grandstand' (Claassen, 1985:176), and the players then had to shower in cold water after the match! When the team played against Auckland they were again lodged in a grandstand, this time the 'Ron Don Grandstand Hotel', with two carpeted dormitories and sliding glass-doors opening onto the Eden Park fields. These examples were in stark contrast to the Grand Hotel in Invercargill where everybody went out of their way '...to make us feel at home, even to the extent of having menus printed in Afrikaans' (Claassen, 1985:207).

When the Springboks moved on to the United States of America to complete the tour they '...were accommodated at the Chicago Athletic Association, a posh club where one can stay only on private invitation, a beautifully located facility on the lake' (Claassen, 1985:234). However, for the match against the Midwest Rugby Union, played on a grid-iron (American Football) field the team had to travel to Racine, 70 miles from Chicago, to avoid the demonstrators; this involved leaving the city with '...lunch boxes and plastic cups of coffee' (Claassen, 1985:237) in micro-buses. The test match against the American Eagles was played on the Owl Creek Polo-field outside New York (the NY mayor had banned the Springboks from playing within the precincts of the City), where some players and a handful of spectators had to mark out the pitch and plant the poles just before the game, so that nobody would know what was to take place on the field. The test players had to use the private cellar of a rugby administrator as the change room, and then wait for the double garage-doors to be opened to run to the nearby field, '...which still had patches of horse-dung laying around, and a three-metre slope between the goal-lines' (Claassen, 1985:242-244).

The relevance of the rugby tour to this article was the need then, and remains, the need for accommodation facilities, bath rooms, meals, and security for travelling sports-people.

## **Tourism**

Every author of a tourism text tries to develop an all-encompassing definition of tourism, but the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) definition is usually used in academic reporting. Page (2003:7) quoted this definition to explain the concept of tourism '...as the

activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited', while Moscardo (2001:5) noted that tourists seek 'cultural and heritage experiences' without specifying what these experiences might include. Lickorish and Jenkins (1997:36) emphasised the different forms of tourism, and distinguished between domestic, in-bound and out-bound tourism, but also noted the movement and stay of participants, whereas Tassiopoulos (2008:10) referred to the tourism industry as an '...amalgam characterised as the four As, namely attractions (including events), amenities (accommodation, food and beverage providers, entertainment and other services), access (local transportation, transport terminals), and ancillary services'. Bennett and Strydom (2005:3) used Murphy's 1985 definition of tourism as a '...journey from which one returns to the starting point, a circular trip...during which various places are visited for which an itinerary is usually planned...', and were at pains to emphasise that the journey included at least one night away from the normal place of residence, activities, consumption and tours. Cooper, Fletcher, Gilbert, Shepherd and Wanhill (1998:8) were more analytical in their definitions noting the various components of the tourism phenomenon, including:

- The movement of people, and their stay en route and at a destination.
- The journey and the stay; usually outside of the normal area of residence or work.
- All movements were temporary, and

- The movement involved staying at the destination.

But the definition of tourism most appropriate to this article was that of Saayman (2000:3-4) where he stated that it was the '...total experience that originates from the interaction between tourists, job providers, government systems and communities in the process of attracting, entertaining, transporting and accommodating tourists...', because he emphasised '...that accommodation and catering are involved...', which is the subject of this study.

### **Sport-Tourism**

Wood and Bell (2004:112) argued that the increase in sport tourism was due to the increase in leisure time, improved transport systems and reasonable prices, and quality accommodation, while Rowe, Adams and Beasley (2004:7) defined all forms of physical activity as sport. Gibson (1999:35) said that three behaviours could be detected in sport-tourism: participation, watching, and visiting sport-related activities, but that all required travel and accommodation facilities. He builds his argument on an article he wrote saying that sport took participants and spectators temporarily away from home and accommodation (Gibson, 1998:155). It was Thwaites (1999:2) who provided the link between tourism and sport-tourism, and noted that sport-tourism was divided into two categories, supply- and demand related, with the supply component multi-sectoral, representing various elements, including destinations, facilities, perishability and inseparability; the latter three being attributes of accommodation.

Sport was one of many special interest tourism (SIT) niche areas that have arisen over the past decade or two, to

compete with the mass-tourism phenomena of the 1950s to 1990s. Getz (1994) defined sporting events as

‘...planned occurrences of limited duration which have an extraordinary impact on the host area in terms of one or more of the following: tourist volumes; visitor expenditures; publicity leading to a heightened awareness and a more positive image; related infrastructure and organisational developments which substantially increase the destination’s capacity and attractiveness’.

Events were either once-off (world cups) or annual (the Two Oceans Marathon) according to Zhang, Bob and Swart (2008:137), and South Africa had hosted both, including a number of international mega-sporting events, such as the 1995 Rugby World Cup, the 2003 one-day Cricket World event, and the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup. Other national events with an international appeal included the Comrades- and the Old Mutual Two Oceans Marathons, the international Iron-man competition (held annually in Port Elizabeth) and the Pick-n-Pay/Cape Argus Cycle Tour (to be known as the Cape Town Cycle Event from 2015), while annual Super15 Rugby games take place over an extended five-month period. International soccer games feature quite frequently in the country, and a host of smaller sporting events also take place.

Hiller (1998:47) noted that mega-events were of short-term and fixed duration, while Roche (2000) stated that these events were usually cultural in nature, including sporting events, which had a specific character with mass popular appeal and, sometimes, international significance. Dhurup’s (2010:206) research revealed that

‘...the role that (a) facility and its service elements played in fan attendance ... (needed to consider) parking, seating, ablution facilities, food and beverage ...’ in deciding the importance of sporting mega-events. He notes that various motives prompt competitors and spectators to attend sporting events, but laments the dearth in literature in ‘fan attendance, motivation and fan identification ...’ (Dhurup, 2010:207).

Zhang, Xu, Su & Ryan (2009:555) found that participation was

‘...place- and time-specific, that roles played and satisfactions derived may also be dependent upon company kept, and that satisfaction ... and repeat purchase or customer loyalty ... has an important role to play when considering service quality’.

Both sources referred to the loyalty for an event, in the case of this study the Old Mutual Two Oceans’ Marathon, which ensured return participation, and to the facilities the participants used and enjoyed, without specifically alluding to accommodation facilities required to guarantee enjoyment of the sporting event. Zhang et al. (2009:556) emphasised the

‘...need to return to more basic forms of research that involve direct questioning of tourists (participants) at their site, and asking for their views without reference to a questionnaire that may imply a researcher-led perspective of attitudinal dimensions...’

in establishing athletes perceptions and needs. Gyekye, Oseifuah, Nethengwe, Dafuleya, Sumbana and Manevhela (2013:5) undertook a study on the socio-economic impact of sporting events on rural communities for the National Department of Tourism, noting the positive economic

development potential, but also noting the ‘...lost opportunities from neglecting and under-utilisation of public infrastructure for mega sporting events’. They acknowledged that the ‘...touring aspect was an important element of sport’, adding that ‘...thousands of spectators travelled to support...’ participating teams (Gyekye et al., 2013:6). They continued by suggesting five potential positive impacts on the host-community, including that the event ‘...can act as a stimulus to develop and improve the built infrastructure...’ by inference, public and private accommodation infrastructure, (Gyekye et al., 2013:6). The report quoted Mason (1999) who proposed that professional sport developed four groupings of spectators; the third group being ‘...the local communities which build facilities...’ in support of the sporting event (Gyekye et al., 2013:7), which generated economic benefits, including accommodation. The report also noted that ‘...obvious ways a city/town benefits from hosting sporting events is a surge in hotel reservations...’ (Gyekye et al., 2013:9).

While there is little doubt of the economic benefits for the host city/region (the annual Cape Argus/Pick-n-Pay Cycle Tour earns about R450 million for the City during a week-long extravaganza, (Williams, 2014:17) with income from the Two Oceans event contributing R223 million (Smith, 2013:19; Williams, 2014:17)), of promoting small-scale to mega sporting events, the question of accommodating the competitors and supporters does arise. Mega sporting events were often used to development infrastructure both in ‘...relation to sports events and transport and airport development...’ (Bob, Swart & Cornelissen, 2008:50), and gained promotional opportunities

from the events (the 2012 Olympiad in London earned the country 16.5 billion Pounds, 82% of which was spent on construction activities, Joubert, 2012:14). These opportunities included infrastructural development, hospitality requirements, event management, secondary tourism attractions, training and skills development, and research- and knowledge management (Bob et al., 2008:52). These authors noted the importance of infrastructural development and economic benefits, especially job creation, of mega events, and emphasised that the country could host these major events because of the range of tourism products, cultural and social diversity, and ‘high quality accommodation facilities’ available, but also noted the ‘...massive accommodation demands for participants and supporters’, which could lead to the ‘forced removals of citizens, especially the poor’ in providing the necessary ‘dedicated accommodation facilities’ (Bob et al., 2008:55-58). These authors were speculating on the possibility of South African ever hosting an Olympic games in the country, and the infrastructural and social requirements of providing for such an event.

FIFA (2007) sought confirmation of adequate accommodation for participants and tourists at the 2010 Soccer World Cup in South Africa without specifically noting the requirements. Death (2011) was at pains to emphasise the need for sustainable environmental considerations in providing facilities, while Fowler (2007:2), referring to the FIFA base-camp requirements, lists the FIFA ‘range of hotels’, to include:

- School/university accommodation at 5-star level,
- A range of locations from city-centre to quietly rural,

- Providing exclusive meeting- and dining-rooms,
- And fitness rooms and swimming pools,
- With easy access to airports, and
- Access to high quality gymnasium facilities.

*However, there is no specific mention of the facilities and attributes required for accommodation of participants, nor guidelines for accommodation-providers!*

### **Olympic Games**

The Ancient Games in Greece date back to 776BC, while the 'modern' Olympics date from 1896, in Athens, and have been held for the past 112 years, with breaks for the First- and Second World Wars. Accommodation appears to have been the private arrangements of each competing team until the 1920 event of Antwerp, where athletes and officials were accommodated in a 'school building', while the 1924 Paris accommodation was in 'wooden huts' (de Lange, 1998:46-47). The organisers of the 1928 Amsterdam event found a total of 50 000 beds in hotels, guest houses and private homes for competitors, officials and spectators, but the local Housing Authority discarded about 20 000 as being unsuitable (de Lange, 1998:51). The first Olympic Village ever built was for the 1932 Los Angeles event which '...was considered very innovative and daring at the time' (de Lange, 1998:56), and '...difficult for the members to believe that the organising committee was prepared to build an entirely new, specially designed and completely equipped international city ... (for) the Games'. After the Second World War participants were accommodated in Royal Air Force bases for the 1948 London Games – known as the

'Austerity Games' - with four to six athletes to a room, while Melbourne provided the necessary accommodation in 'suburban hotels, schools, public utilities and private homes (de Lange, 1998:63,67). The 1964 Tokyo Games Committee had to provide '...accommodation and eating facilities in a way that would be more amenable to overseas visitors...' (de Lange, 1998:75), realising that the average international athlete was considerably bigger than the average Japanese! Unfortunately, the 1972 Munich games will always be remembered for the abduction/killing of 11 Israeli competitors, and not for the '...Olympic village (of) ugly exposed concrete apartment blocks ... with leaking roofs and damp walls ...' (de Lange, 1998:87).

The 1992 Barcelona Games saw the organisers using '...cruise ships in Barcelona's harbour ... as extra hotel accommodation' to overcome the 'acute shortage of hotel rooms' (de Lange, 1998:129-131), and '...the construction of the Olympic Village in an old and derelict industrial area close to the sea...', while the competitors' accommodation at the 1996 Atlanta Games '...was poor, and the run-down Morehouse College in which they stayed was in an unpleasant and dangerous neighbourhood' (de Lange, 1998:140). In 2000 the athletes were again housed in an Olympic Village for the Sydney Games. No-where, however, in all the resources is there any detailed description of the sleeping and general accommodation facilities to be provided for the competing athletes and supporting officials.

### **Olympic bid requirements**

The Candidature File for the 2004 XXVIII Cape Town Olympiad did discuss the '...comfortable, peaceful

and secure environment accommodating 10 000 athletes and 5000 officials' and the '...1 500 permanent two- and three-storey residential buildings fronting on the water body', comprising '...a shower, toilet and hand-basin' ... where all units '...will have a common room, sitting area and kitchen' (Anon, 1994:26-27). While most bedrooms '...will be twin-share of 11<sup>m2</sup> including a cupboard', and only *'fifty percent of the number of beds will be 2.2m long'* (author's emphasis), while wheel-chair facilities will be provided for the Paralympics (Irfam would not have been happy with his bed!).

For the 2012 London Olympiad each residential apartment for the 17 000 participants provided '...comfortable accommodation and state-of-the-art communication facilities, including internet access and wireless networking, and bathrooms but no kitchens' surrounding the '...communal spaces, shops, restaurants, medical-, media- and leisure-facilities. Perhaps there were just no long/tall participants at these Games! ([www.London2012.com/venue/olympic-village/](http://www.London2012.com/venue/olympic-village/))

### **The Two Oceans Marathon**

The 'Oceans' is run annually on Easter Saturday, and is proudly known as the '...most beautiful marathon in all of (sic) the world' (Cameron-Dow, 1989). It is a road race, with much of the route passing through natural rural settings and past important features, including the Sentinel Mountain in Hout Bay; the Gordon- and West Batteries built by the British during the Napoleonic Wars, and the East Fort constructed by the French during their war with America; the old jetty, from where manganese was exported, and Mitford-Barberton's bronze leopard in Hout Bay; and the Kronendal Estate

developed in the early 1800s, also in Hout Bay. The name of the marathon was derived from the fact that the event passes first the Indian Ocean in the False Bay area, and then the Atlantic Ocean in the Hout Bay area of Cape Town. That the race-name was a geographical misnomer was beside the point (purists will point to the fact that the two oceans meet somewhere in the Cape Agulhas area at the southern-most point of the African continent, many miles from the race route), it remains a convenient fact of two bodies of water, and this lent itself to a most appropriate name.

The Boston Marathon is the oldest, first run in 1897, while the first major international marathon was the 1976 New York event, which attracted over 2 000 participants, with a very small component requiring accommodation, unlike in present times, where all the major sporting events, including marathons, invite participation and therefore needed to provide accommodation for the invited elite. In 1977 Ralph Paffenbarger, a epidemiology professor at Stanford University, published research which showed that persons who partake in regular strenuous exercise in their leisure time, enjoy a reduced risk of heart-attacks, and an extended life expectancy (Cameron-Dow, 1989). The first Oceans' voyage (one does not run the Oceans, one partakes in a voyage) was in 1970 with 26 'nutcases' (the first entrants were not considered sane by the written media) lined up for the start of the 35-miler race.

Traditionally, the Oceans race has started in the Claremont area and proceeded along Main Road through Kenilworth, Wynberg, Plumstead, Retreat (scene of the 1795 Battle of Muizenberg between the British and the Dutch), and Muizenberg to Fish Hoek. The route then turns right

through Sun Valley and Noordhoek, over Chapman's Peak (constructed between 1915 and 1921 at a cost of R20 000) into Hout Bay, then over Constantia Nek, where the Dutch established a signal cannon to warn of approaching enemy shipping, to follow Rhodes Drive past the internationally famous Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens with van Riebeeck's Hedge (planted in the late 1670s to protect the settlement from marauding Khoi and San inhabitants) still growing in the Gardens, and on to Newlands. Due to traffic congestion, the route now finishes at the University of Cape Town on Rhode's Estate. From those insignificant beginnings, Oceans has developed into an annual mega-event on the South African sporting calendar.

The 1975 voyage was granted 'multi-national' status allowing non-White athletes to take part in the marathon for the first time. In 'modern' times Black male participants have dominated the event, providing almost all the top-twenty finishers. Athletes invited by the organisers have been accommodated at the sponsor's expense, but the huge numbers of 'average runners' have to make all transport and accommodation arrangements for themselves, placing quite a burden on affordable and appropriate facilities in and around the Mother City.

### **Methodology**

Many PSL soccer teams visiting Thohoyandou or Sibasa in the Limpopo Province to play against the local team, Black Leopards, chose to return to their home-city/town after the game and not stay at any of the local accommodation establishments. (The Gyekye report, referred to above, noted that accommodation occupancy at '...24 surveyed commercial

establishments...' on soccer weekends did increase to '...60% versus 40% on weekends without games...' but this is thought to be limited to spectators and not teams (Gyekye et al., 2013:17). The report also noted that persons who had previously attended soccer matches at Thohoyandou had to resort to watching sport on TV when the Black Leopards team switched to Polokwane for their home games.

Questions asked by the 2008 third-year Hospitality Management students at the University of Venda revealed that soccer players were not satisfied with the accommodation standards and facilities on offer. The same students did a follow-up study in Johannesburg during August/September 2008 involving various sporting teams, as part of their practical component while studying at the University of Johannesburg's Hotel School. This study revealed that athletes and players divided their accommodation requirements into nine categories namely:

reception, the restaurant, the bar, bed rooms, public rooms, on-site parking, transfer services, foreign exchange/cash facilities, and an 'other' category.

By comparison, Boshoff (2006:3), studied customer satisfaction at theme parks (Ratanga Junction near Cape Town, the *Openluchtmuseum* at Arnhem in the Netherlands, and Euro Disney outside Paris, France) through observations and personal interviews, and divided the responses obtained into the following categories, among others:

*Restaurants* (which would include room service in the study under discussion),  
*Bathroom* facilities,



*Communications* (front-office or reception, and friendliness and quality of staff in this study),  
*Entertainment* (public rooms, the bar, and gardens),  
*Retail* shopping (foreign exchange/cash facilities),  
*Security* (on-site parking), and  
*Physical* facilities (cleanliness and safety).

Boshoff's survey (2006:2) highlighted '...not enough restaurants, hotel rooms too expensive...' and '...aloof staff with no customer orientation...' as part of his analysis of customer complaints! The findings of the 2008 survey by the University of Venda Hospitality students, bears striking similarities. Further, the student's data could be divided into the following sets for the first five categories:

- Quality of service,
- Friendliness of staff,
- Provision of meals in the restaurant and for room service,
- Variety of meals in the restaurant,
- Range of information and promptness of service at reception,
- The range of products in the bar,
- The range of facilities in bedrooms and public rooms, and
- On-suite bathrooms.
- Items of importance listed as 'other' included cleanliness, pasta meals, showers in bath rooms, a safe in the bedroom, a garden for relaxation, and BIG BEDS.

The information obtained from these initial 2006/2008 studies was used at the 2013 Two Oceans Marathon registration, to establish accommodation requirements of visiting runners. The researcher was the interviewer (and a participant in the half-marathon event), and was dressed in a Two Oceans T-shirt, track

suit and running-shoes to be identifiable with participants, and to encourage an easy rapport between the interviewer and respondents. The face-to-face interview allowed the interviewer to respond to specific questions, provide immediate explanations, and reduced the likelihood of errors creeping into the responses (a suggestion adopted from Swart, Bob & Mbaze-Ebock Arrey, 2008:128). Single persons were approached, while only one person in a group was interviewed, to avoid group-pressure responses and bias.

The first question asked from the structured interview schedule was '(A)re you a participant or a spectator?' The study concerned only 'overnight participants' (staying for 24 hours or more) and not 'day-trippers' or local persons. The questions which followed were for participants only as the objectives of the study were to establish the 'athletes' requirements for accommodation facilities. Question two was whether the participant was a 'local or visiting athlete' to establish the possible need for accommodation, followed by a third question to establish whether the participant was '(S)taying with friends or relatives, or using commercial accommodation during the stay in Cape Town?' Commercial accommodation was deemed to be family- or private hotels, bed-and-breakfasts, and guest-house establishments. Only those respondents using commercial accommodation were asked the fourth and final open-ended question, namely:

*'What do you, as an athlete, expect from a commercial accommodation establishment?'*

300 visitor-athletes were conveniently interviewed, also known as the on-site intercept method, on 28 March 2013,

the day before Good Friday and the second day of registrations at the International Convention Centre in Cape Town (a new and bigger venue to accommodate all the, in excess of, 29000 participants and friends) between 10:00 and 14:00, at various stands or refreshment tables using the standard interview schedule; 147 relevant completed responses were obtained, a 49% response rate. The reason for the apparent high non-response rate was that the majority of persons approached on this convenience basis were Capetonians, or persons not needing commercial overnight accommodation.

For control, on the 16 April 2014, the first day of registrations, a follow-up survey was done again at the Cape Town International Convention Centre between 11:00 and 14:00, with 147 conveniently selected persons for the 2014 events, (the half marathon, the 56km marathon and the Trail runs) where 100 usable responses (74.6%) were obtained. The interviewer was again the researcher (and an entrant for his tenth half marathon!), and the same questions as asked in 2013 were posed, with a not-too-dissimilar pattern of responses. Both surveys involved Black, White, Indian and Coloured male and female runners. The researcher accepts that the convenience method of selecting participants will not necessarily provide data representative of all participants at Old Mutual Two Oceans' events, nor at other marathons, ultra-marathons, or sporting events. This survey differed from the Zhang, Bob and Swart survey of spectators' and participants' at the 2006 Old Mutual Two Oceans Marathon, where that study considered nationalities, levels of income, educational qualifications, age groupings, spending patterns, length of stay in Cape Town, and motivations for being at the Marathon. The only

significant similarity between the 2006 and 2013/2014 surveys was the accommodation requirements.

### **Findings and analysis**

The results of the two surveys have not been analysed separately as the aim of the surveys was to establish marathon-participants general accommodation needs. However, significant differences emerged between ethnic groups which are highlighted in Table 1. Because the original 2008 survey results were used to structure the interview schedule, it was anticipated that these survey results would not deviate to any meaningful degree from the original findings. The results of the 247 applicable interviews are displayed in Tables 1 and 2.

It was not surprising to find that the vast majority of participants rate the (bed) room as most important; specifically the on-suite bathroom (many marathoners need to 'soak' in a warm bath with or without bath-salts/oils after strenuous exercise), a big bed and room facilities, which should include refreshments, comfortable furniture and entertainment (read a TV). An on-suite shower is welcome, but standing in a shower does not relieve the pains of running long distances at 'race-speed'. Generally, marathon runners are a friendly (and sometimes noisy) group and expect friendliness and prompt service from staff at the accommodation facility. A complaint raised by runners travelling on coaches to the 'Oceans' was the time wasted at reception during the registration process. Pre-registration should be considered, where the marathoner simply signs the accommodation card and moves on quickly to his/her room.

Pasta meals, or 'carbo-loading', are important for the serious runner; for the most part marathoners are content with steak and chips, hamburgers and chips, fish and chips (fresh in Cape Town!), and are generally satisfied with the menus provided. 'Carbo-loading' in the form of beers is also important for a number of runners, although the bar is not an important requirement at the accommodation facility. A well-stocked bar fridge in the room is, however, welcomed as it means the runner can relax and wind-down in private, with refreshments of choice. Bacon and eggs, toast and coffee is the definite breakfast of the majority of runners!

On-site parking is important for runners from out-of-town, but facilities for children only scored 34% as most participants are not accompanied by children when running the Old Mutual Two Oceans Marathon, or the spouse looks after children. Changing money is also not a vital requirement although an ATM close to the accommodation is considered an advantage. Many runners indicated that public rooms were not really necessary, but would be used for 'after parties' should they be available. Surprisingly, very few runners required a swimming pool at the accommodation facility (the weather over the Easter weekend in 2013 and 2014 did not encourage swimming).

Not surprising is the requirement that staff should be friendly; runners are selfish and want to be served quickly and efficiently by competent and smiling staff, especially at reception. This is clearly illustrated in Table 2, while, surprisingly, not a necessity in a restaurant.

Black athletes appear to feel vulnerable in hotels, as seen in the statistics in Table 1, regarding the

services they require. This vulnerability could have been a reason why PSL soccer teams, referred to in the 2008 University of Venda survey, chose not to overnight in Thohoyandou or Sibasa after games against the local Black Leopards team. Other data analysed revealed:

Restaurant: There is a significant difference between Black- and other athletes in their opinion of the importance of 'quality of service' in restaurants ( $\chi^2$ -value = 15.7; p-value < 0.001). Significantly fewer Black athletes (53.1%) deemed quality of service in the restaurants to be important, whereas 77.7% of the other athletes deemed quality of service to be important.

Similarly, there is a significant difference between Black- and other athletes in their opinion of the importance of 'friendliness of staff' ( $\chi^2$ -value = 36.6; p-value < 0.001). Only 35.8% of Black athletes deemed friendliness of staff to be important, versus 72.9% of others.

On the other hand, significantly more Black athletes (90.1%) deem 'provision of meals for take away' to be important ( $\chi^2$ -value = 42.4; p-value < 0.001), whereas only 53.6% of other athletes deem take-away meals to be important. There is no significant difference between the various ethnic groups in their opinion of the importance of the 'variety of meals' offered at these restaurants.

Reception: Although there is a statistical difference in the opinion of the importance both quality of service rendered by the reception staff ( $\chi^2$ -value = 7.6; p-value < 0.05), and the friendliness of reception staff ( $\chi^2$ -value = 6.9; p-value < 0.05), the physical percentage of athletes voting for the importance does not differ much between the groups (93.8% for Black

athletes in both cases and 82.5% and 84.3% for other athletes). The range of information offered is significantly less important to Black, Coloured and Indian athletes than to White athletes. The promptness of services was deemed very important by all the ethnic groups.

Bar: Quality of service in the bar was deemed important by fewer than 70% of all the groups with no statistically significant differences between groups. Only 37% of the Black athletes deemed friendliness of staff in the bar to be important where-as 64.5% of the other ethnic groups deemed it to be important. This difference is statistically significant ( $\chi^2$ -value = 16.8; p-value < 0.01). Significantly, fewer White athletes (47.3%) deemed the range of products in a bar to be important ( $\chi^2$ -value = 21.3; p-value < 0.001).

Rooms: There were no significant differences between the ethnic groups regarding any of the aspects of the rooms in hotels. All of the groups deemed all the aspects to be very important.

Public rooms: There are significant differences between the ethnic groups regarding all three aspects dealt with. Only 31.8% of the White athletes deemed friendliness of staff to be of importance versus 55.6% of the respondents from other ethnic groups ( $\chi^2$ -value = 16.8; p-value < 0.01). Similarly, fewer White or Coloured athletes deemed quality of service (51.2%) and the range of facilities (63.3%) important than Black athletes (86.4% & 92.6%). All these are significantly different ( $\chi^2$ -value ranges between 12 and 29.5; p-values < 0.01).

Other services or facilities: None of the respondents deemed facilities for

children or gym facilities to be important. All of the respondents deemed a bathroom with a shower and a big bed to be important. As can be seen from Table 1, on-site parking and having a sofa in the room are mostly important to the White athletes, whereas having transfer facilities, foreign exchange facilities, pasta meals and a garden to relax in, are more important to Black athletes.

A primary aim of the survey was not to establish preferences of the different population grouping, nor between male and female competitors. Nevertheless, some interesting data is contained in Table 2. White male runners are happy to go out for meals, but non-White competitors' value room-service highly, while all population groups and genders require on-suite facilities, except for Indian women who also do not want shower facilities (this is difficult to explain!). There are some differences between the races and sexes with regards room requirements, especially for White males, but there are notable differences between the sexes when it comes to 'bar' requirements; women are generally not interested in this facility. When it comes to open or public areas at accommodation establishments, Black males and females enjoy this facility, because it provides an opportunity to meet and socialise. Women of all races are particular about friendliness and correct operations at the reception, while males generally see this function as something that has to be done, and are rather unconcerned about the staff or the facilities. Why White females require gym facilities (22%) and males and other races do not is difficult to explain, other than that White women are generally supporters of this service 'at home'.

**Table 1: Significant differences between the ethnic groups regarding services, ranked by which are most important**

Areas	Services	Black	Coloured	White	$\chi^2$ -value	p-value
Reception	Friendliness of staff	93.8%	91.9%	82.2%	6.94	0.0311
Reception	Quality of service	93.8%	89.2%	80.6%	7.63	0.0220
Other	Sofa	32.1%	89.2%	93.0%	98.67	0.0000
Public Rooms	Range of facilities	92.6%	56.8%	65.1%	24.72	0.0000
Other	Foreign Exchange /Cash Facilities	88.9%	91.9%	70.5%	14.34	0.0008
Other	On Site Parking	61.7%	67.6%	90.7%	26.72	0.0000
Restaurant	Provision of meals (room, take away)	90.1%	75.7%	47.3%	42.42	0.0000
Other	Garden to relax	87.7%	59.5%	59.7%	19.91	0.0000
Public Rooms	Quality of service	86.4%	56.8%	49.6%	29.51	0.0000
Other	Pasta Meals	85.2%	59.5%	70.5%	10.04	0.0066
Other	Transfer Facilities	84.0%	43.2%	55.0%	24.88	0.0000
Bar	Range of Products	79.0%	64.9%	47.3%	21.30	0.0000
Restaurant	Quality of service	53.1%	75.7%	78.3%	15.70	0.0004
Restaurant	Friendliness of Staff	35.8%	56.8%	77.5%	36.60	0.0000
Reception	Range of information	50.6%	54.1%	72.1%	11.05	0.0040
Bar	Friendliness of Staff	37.0%	67.6%	63.6%	16.76	
Public Rooms	Friendliness of Staff	55.6%	48.6%	31.8%	12.30	0.0021
Other	Swimming Pool	12.3%	2.7%	40.3%	32.39	0.0000



Source: [http://www.roomsforafrica.com/images/newsletter\\_11-04\\_event\\_old\\_mutual\\_event.jpg](http://www.roomsforafrica.com/images/newsletter_11-04_event_old_mutual_event.jpg)

**Table 2: Analysis of accommodation requirements by race and gender**

	Male				Female				
	W	B	C	I	W	B	C	I	
Total (sample size?)	102.00	76.00	25.00	7.00	27.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	
<b>Restaurant</b>									
Quality of service	72.5%	51.3%	76.0%	57.1%	100.0%	80.0%	100.0%	100.0%	69.6%
Variety of meals	63.7%	72.4%	76.0%	42.9%	85.2%	80.0%	100.0%	50.0%	70.0%
Provision of meals (room, take away)	37.3%	90.8%	92.0%	42.9%	85.2%	80.0%	33.3%	50.0%	65.6%
Friendliness of staff	72.5%	35.5%	64.0%	28.6%	96.3%	40.0%	66.7%	50.0%	60.7%
<b>Reception</b>									
Quality of service	76.5%	93.4%	88.0%	85.7%	96.3%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	86.2%
Friendliness of staff	77.5%	94.7%	92.0%	85.7%	100.0%	80.0%	100.0%	100.0%	87.4%
Range of information	67.6%	51.3%	44.0%	57.1%	88.9%	40.0%	100.0%	100.0%	62.3%
Promptness of service	95.1%	92.1%	84.0%	100.0%	85.2%	60.0%	100.0%	100.0%	91.5%
<b>Bar</b>									
Quality of service	69.6%	53.9%	84.0%	42.9%	44.4%	20.0%	33.3%	0.0%	60.7%
Friendliness of staff	67.6%	38.2%	84.0%	42.9%	48.1%	20.0%	33.3%	0.0%	55.5%
Range of Products	48.0%	82.9%	80.0%	42.9%	44.4%	20.0%	33.3%	0.0%	60.3%
<b>Rooms</b>									
Quality of service	75.5%	76.3%	76.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	50.0%	79.8%
Friendliness of staff	76.5%	75.0%	76.0%	100.0%	100.0%	60.0%	100.0%	50.0%	78.9%
Range of facilities	97.1%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	50.0%	98.4%
On-suite Bathroom	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	50.0%	99.6%
<b>Public Rooms</b>									
Quality of service	47.1%	86.8%	68.0%	42.9%	59.3%	80.0%	33.3%	0.0%	62.8%
Friendliness of staff	32.4%	57.9%	60.0%	28.6%	29.6%	20.0%	33.3%	0.0%	42.1%
Range of facilities	70.6%	93.4%	68.0%	42.9%	44.4%	80.0%	33.3%	0.0%	72.9%
<b>On Site Parking</b>	88.2%	60.5%	68.0%	100.0%	100.0%	80.0%	33.3%	0.0%	77.7%
<b>Transfer Facilities</b>	56.9%	84.2%	40.0%	85.7%	48.1%	80.0%	0.0%	0.0%	62.8%
<b>Foreign Exchange / Cash Facilities</b>	63.7%	89.5%	88.0%	100.0%	96.3%	80.0%	100.0%	100.0%	79.8%
<b>Other (Specific needs)</b>	0.0%	0.0%							
Pasta Meals	76.5%	89.5%	72.0%	57.1%	48.1%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	73.7%
Shower in bathroom	93.1%	92.1%	92.0%	85.7%	55.6%	20.0%	66.7%	0.0%	85.8%
Kids	30.4%	26.3%	24.0%	42.9%	70.4%	60.0%	33.3%	50.0%	34.0%
Sofa	99.0%	31.6%	92.0%	100.0%	70.4%	40.0%	66.7%	50.0%	72.5%
Garden to relax	57.8%	92.1%	72.0%	42.9%	66.7%	20.0%	33.3%	0.0%	68.8%
Big bed	91.2%	98.7%	88.0%	100.0%	92.6%	100.0%	100.0%	50.0%	93.5%
Swimming Pool	49.0%	13.2%	4.0%	0.0%	7.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.5%
Gym	9.8%	7.9%	0.0%	0.0%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.9%

## Conclusions

The 2013 and 2014 surveys of Old Mutual Two Ocean Marathon competitors did not reveal any startling accommodation preferences, but confirmed a 2008 survey in the Limpopo and Gauteng Provinces that sports-persons required a comfortable bed-room with on-suite facilities, and quality and friendly service when taking part in sports events away from home. No specific accommodation criteria were found for either the

Olympic Games, or the 2010 Soccer World Cup in South Africa. The findings can at best be described as 'general knowledge'; certainly the owners/managers of accommodation establishments approached in 2008 or 2013/2014 viewed the survey results as 'standard'.

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