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Spartan Race Visitor Study: 2014

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2014 Spartan Race Survey Kit Visitor Study

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Case Study Report 2014-8

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Introduction

A Spartan Race is the world's leading obstacle race series varying in distance and difficulty ranging from 1 mile to marathon distances. In 2012, they were voted Outside Magazine's "BEST OBSTACLE RACE". Races are held in the USA, Canada, Europe, South Korea, and Australia. On May 10, 2014, the Kalispell Convention and Visitor's Bureau sponsored a Spartan Race located at Averill's Flathead Lake Lodge. There were 5,700 registered participants in this 4-mile race.

The purpose of this study was to provide the organizers of the 2014 Spartan Race with an understanding of the characteristics of participants and spectators of the race, money spent in the Flathead Valley area by race attendees, and level of satisfaction of the race. Surveys were completed on-site by 386 attendees.

Methods

Surveyors intercepted participants and spectators for on-site completion of the survey. Surveys were given to people by random selection in an attempt to represent the attendee population. People willing to fill out the questionnaire were given a clipboard, pen, and a survey. No documentation of the number of refusals was recorded.

Limitations

As in all research, there are limitations to the study. Limitations for the Spartan Race study include the following:

- Data was collected by Kalispell CVB workers who received a short training from the Kalispell CVB on how to intercept people and how to obtain completed surveys.
- ITRR personnel were not present during data collection for quality control.
- If the respondent was a spectator but part of a group where someone was a participant, they were not asked the expenditure questions. This was to avoid over-representing spending by travel groups if the participant also responded to the survey.

Results

Of the 386 respondents, 77 percent (297 people) were participants in the race and 23 percent (87 people) were spectators. Of those spectators, 95 percent were in a group with someone who was a registered participant. Sixty-four percent (185 people) of all respondents to the survey were from Montana and 36 percent (110 people) were from out of state or country (see Tables 1 and 2). Of those who were from Montana, 32 percent (59 people) were from Flathead County while 68 percent (127 people) were from other Montana counties. The mean age of respondents was 36. Of those who were from outside Flathead County and responded to the survey, 93 percent (234 people) reported that they spent at least one night away from home. Of those nights spent away from home, the greatest percent of respondents (67 percent) spent two nights in Montana. A full breakdown of nights spent as well as results of all other questions in this survey can be found in Appendix A.

Table 1: Residence of Respondents

Place of Residence	# of total	% of total
Flathead County	59	20%
MT (not in Flathead County)	126	44%
US State	61	21%
International (Canada)	44	15%
International (overseas)	0	0
Total	289	100%

Table 2: Out-of-State and International Respondents

US Residence	# of respondents	US Residence	# of respondents	International Residence	# of respondents
Idaho	25	California	2	Alberta, CA	30
Washington	11	Texas	2	British Columbia, CA	11
South Dakota	7	Alaska	1	Saskatchewan, CA	2
New York	4	Florida	1		
Colorado	3	Vermont	1		
North Dakota	3				

Expenditures

Spending information was asked of all participants and those who were solely spectators (their travel group did not include a participant) who reside outside of Flathead County, Montana. The survey asked that they report their best estimate of the total amount of money they and their family/travel group (if applicable) spent in the Flathead Valley area in the following categories: accommodations, restaurant or bar, groceries or snacks, gasoline, transportation, auto rental, retail goods, and entertainment or recreation.

Table 3 presents the expenditure data of only the respondents who reported spending money in the categories. The mean expenditure of those who spent money for each category can be found along with the percentage of people who reported that they spent money in that category. The last column provides the total dollars spent by respondents who reported spending money in each category. The total reported expenditure for respondents who spent was \$96,864.

**Table 3- Expenditure Data:
Expenditures calculated using only respondents who spent**

Expenditure Category	Mean expenditures of attendees <u>who reported that they spent money in these categories</u>	% of respondents who reported spending money in each category	Total dollars spent in each category <u>by respondents who spent</u>
Motel/Hotel/B&B	\$300.49	50% (n=120)	\$36,059
Campground	\$48.67	4% (n=9)	\$438
Restaurant/Bar	\$148.51	68% (n=164)	\$24,356
Groceries/Snacks	\$65.78	38% (n=91)	\$5,986
Gasoline	\$96.67	67% (n=162)	\$15,661
Local transportation	\$19.29	6% (n=14)	\$270
Auto rental	\$700	<1% (n=1)	\$700
Retail goods	\$141.04	28% (n=67)	\$9,450
Entertainment/Recreation	\$109.56	15% (n=36)	\$3,944
		TOTAL	\$96,864

Appendix A- Results

Q1. Are you a registered participant of the Spartan Race? N=384

77% Yes (Skip to Q2.) 23% No (answer Q1a.)

Q1a. Does your group include someone who is a registered participant of the Spartan Race? n=84

95% Yes (Skip to Q17. on back) 5% No

Q2. Are you a resident of Montana? n=295

63% Yes 37% No (Skip to Q4.)

Q3. Do you reside in Flathead County? n=186

32% Yes (Skip to Q17. on back) 68% No (Skip to Q5.)

Q4. In what state, province, or foreign country do you reside?

See Table 1 for domestic residence results and Table 2 for International residence results

Q5. Is this your first time visiting the Flathead Valley area? 29% Yes 71% No

Q6. Was attending this event your primary reason for being in the area?

96% Yes 4% No

Q7. For what other reasons are you visiting the area? (Check all that apply.)

30% Vacation/recreation/pleasure 3% Just passing through 1% Business/convention/meeting
14% Visiting friends/relatives 5% Shopping

Q8. For this event, how many nights did you spend away from home?

7% 0 (Skip to Q12.)	12% 1	13% 3	2% 5	0% 7	<1% 9
	60% 2	6% 4	<1% 6	0% 8	<1% 10 or more

Q9. How many of those nights were in Montana?

0% 0	67% 2	6% 4	1% 6	0% 8	1% 10 or more
12% 1	12% 3	1% 5	0% 7	0% 9	

Q10. Of your nights in Montana, how many did you stay in Kalispell?

4% 1 night 2% 2 nights 3% 3 nights

Q10a. Of your nights in Montana, how many did you stay in other Flathead Valley locations?

4% 1 night 16% 2 nights 5% 3 nights <1% 4 nights <1% 5 nights

Q11. In what type of accommodation(s) did you stay in the Flathead Valley area? (Check all that apply.)

27% Hotel/motel/B&B n=104	3% Private campground	3% Resort/condominium
8% Rental cabin/home	10% Home of friend/relative	1% Guest ranch
1% Public land camping	2% Second home/cabin/condo n=1	1% Vehicle in parking lot

Q12. Please enter your best estimate of the TOTAL amount of money in US dollars you (and your family/travel group, if applicable) spent in the Flathead Valley area in each of the following categories. If you did not spend money in a category, please leave it blank.

See Table 3 for Expenditure Results

ACCOMMODATIONS in Flathead Valley

Hotel/motel/bed & breakfast

Campground

FOOD in Flathead Valley area

Restaurant/bar

Groceries/snacks

TRANSPORTATION in Flathead Valley

Gasoline/diesel

Local transportation

Auto rental

RETAIL/SERVICES in Flathead Valley area

Retail goods

Entertainment/recreation

Continue on back...

Q13. What option best describes the group with whom you attended this event?

2% Self

7% Immediate family

53% Family & friends

1% Business associates

6% Couple

3% Extended family

24% Friends

5% Organized group/club

Q14. Including you, how many people are in your group?

2% 1	9% 3	6% 5	6% 7	4% 9	28% more than 10
10% 2	17% 4	10% 6	5% 8	5% 10	

Q15. Please select all the ages represented in your group:

7% 0-5 years 11% 11-17 years 64% 25-34 years 28% 45-54 years 0% 65-74 years
 9% 6-10 years 28% 18-24 years 47% 35-44 years 12% 55-64 years <1% 75 and over

Q16. What best describes your annual household income? (in US dollars)

5% Less than \$20,000 19% \$60,000 to \$79,999 6% \$150,000 to \$199,999
 11% \$20,000 to \$39,999 16% \$80,000 to \$99,999 5% \$200,000 and over
 21% \$40,000 to \$59,999 17% \$100,000 to \$149,999

Q17. How long before this event did you make plans to attend?

1% The day of the event 9% 1-4 weeks before the event 37% Over 6 months before the event
 5% 1-7 days before the event 47% 1-6 months before the event

Q18. How did you hear about the Spartan Race? (Check all that apply.)

30% Word of mouth 6% Posters 7% E-mail from event planners 3% Flyer
 5% Newspaper 5% Magazine 7% Group or club 12% Event website
 5% Radio 1% Direct mail 1% Retail outlet 20% Social media
 4% Television 5% Other website

Q19. Please rate your satisfaction with the Spartan Race:

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	N/A	Mean
Organization of the event	4%	2%	4%	17%	74%	0%	4.55
Event staff	4%	<1%	2%	18%	76%	0%	4.63
Cost of the event	6%	6%	15%	23%	49%	2%	4.07
Location of the event	4%	<1%	3%	17%	75%	1%	4.61
Concessions available	4%	1%	8%	20%	68%	1%	4.50
Number of people at the event	4%	1%	4%	21%	70%	1%	4.54
Parking	5%	2%	8%	26%	60%	<1%	4.35
Sound system	4%	1%	4%	21%	71%	<1%	4.55
Variety of activities	4%	1%	5%	23%	66%	1%	4.49
Signage/directions	4%	1%	5%	21%	69%	0%	4.49
Cleanliness	4%	1%	6%	22%	67%	<1%	4.50
Availability of restrooms	5%	3%	11%	21%	60%	1%	4.30

Q20. What is your age? Range= 21-83; Mean= 36

Q21. What is your gender? 53% Male 47% Female

Q22. When might you come to the Spartan Race again?

91% Next year 8% Within 5 years 1% Never

Q23. Please tell us what you liked about the Spartan Race.

See Appendix B

Q24. Please tell us what you did not like about the Spartan Race.

See Appendix B

Q25. What suggestions do you have for improvements to the event?

See Appendix B

Appendix B: Open-ended Responses

Q23. Please tell us what you liked about the Spartan Race.

A challenge and fun, really push yourself
A great challenge to try for. Very well organized
A great personal challenge.
A great test of determination and it was a blast.
Able to see more events this time
-All
-All
All
-All
-All
All of it
All of it
All of it!
All of the above
Always a great atmosphere at the race.
Always great fun!
Athletes
Atmposphere
Atmosphere
Atmosphere and girls
Atmosphere!!
Atmosphere, design, activities
Atmosphere, family, friends
Awesome
Awesome
Awesome obstacles
Awesome people, awesome course
Awesome physical challenge for all ages. Kids loved it!
Awesome race location
Awesome venue, great people
Awesome!
Awesome!
Awesome!
Beautiful scenery, fun obstacles
Beer
Beer and food options

Fun group of people, good music, good beer
Fun times
Fun times
Fun!
Fun! Exciting!
Fun, social, beer, food
Fun-competing
Gets people outdoors and off their smart phones
Girls
Good athletic challenge. Fun atmosphere
Good athletic event.
Good day
Good energy.
Good group event
Good venue with fun folks in a well run atmosphere of entertainment. Damn bucket list. Done!
Great
Great atmosphere
Great atmosphere
Great atmosphere, great obstacles
Great challenge and atmosphere
Great event
Great obstacles.
Great venue, great people
Happy and love it- love the location, especially Bigfork
Haven't done it yet
Haven't done it yet, looks awesome
Hill climbs
How spaced out it is. You don't feel crowded.
How supportive and encouraging everyone is.
I liked all of it!
I liked the energy and hospitality.
I liked the obstacles
I liked the physical challenge of the obstacles
I love the challenge and seeing how much I really can do. Teamwork this year was phenomenal!
I loved the variety of obstacles.
It is awesome!! and positive
It tested by abilities. I had doubts, and I was wrong. I got medal!
It was a ton of fun!
It was awesome!
It was awesome. Very organized.
It was fun to watch. Made me want to race next year.
It was great!
It was just plain fun!
It's awesome with a capital A baby!
It's awesome, challenging and fun!
It's more than just running! Likes obstacles
Just a great time
Keep it up!

Kids race
Local, unique
Location
Location
Location
Location
Location
Location
Location, Friendliness of the staff was awesome too!
Location, obstacles, atmosphere
Lots of fun, great community
Lots of fun. Well organized.
Love everything
Love the event and workout as well as the no man left behind attitude
Love to run
Loved everything except uphill
Loved it
Loved it
Loved it!
Loved the family friendly environment
Loved the overall energy of event!
Merchandise
More bathrooms, friendly staff, tent for spectators, course cleanliness.
Motivated staff
Mud
Mud
Mud
Mud
Mud
Mud!
Mud, blood and beer
Mud, different, fun, music,
Obstacles, hills
Obstacles
Obstacles
Obstacles
Obstacles and location
organization
Organization and the great atmosphere
Organize and set up.
Outdoors
Outside, Fires, friendly
People
People dedication, goals, stigma
People, terrain
People/country
Personal challenge. Well organized.
Pretty cool, overwhelming amount of people

Pushing yourself to your limit and completing
Rain
Rope climb obstacles
Running, obstacles
So far so good
Social atmosphere
Social atmosphere and inspiration
Social, friends
Sport event
Staff
Sweet
Team spirit, volunteers, and the group
Team work! Will power! Determination.
Teamwork
Teamwork, energy, Flathead awesomeness!
That it was the hardest physical challenge I have ever completed
The ambition level of participants
The atmosphere
The challenge
The challenge
The challenge
The challenge and nature
The challenging course and the spirited fellow racers
The challenging courses
The cleanness and very helpful staff
The community
The course and beauty of race and view
The distance
The elk
The energy
The energy
The environment
The event is so much fun and good hard competition
The experience
The friendly yet competitive attitude
The intensity
The music and obstacles
The obstacle
The obstacle course
The obstacles
The pain
The physical challenge
The psychical and social aspect.
The suckers that paid to punish themselves
The teamwork
The variety of obstacles and the staff
The variety of obstacles for all skill levels/fitness areas.
The venue

The whole thing
Time to get out and hangout with friends
To push yourself beyond what you thought was possible.
Tough, friendliness
Uniqueness of it.
Unknown obstacles
Variety
Variety of people, events, encouragement, concessions, and area parking
Venue
Very challenging
Very challenging
Very challenging
Very exciting and challenging
Very fun, outdoors
Very organized. Way to go city of Kalispell!
Very well organized
Volunteers are awesome
Watching
Watching all the participants and supporting my company
Water & mud!
Well organized
Well organized
Well organized. Fun. Impressive
Well placed obstacles despite hills.
Well planned
Well rounded event

Q 24. Please tell us what you did not like about the Spartan Race.

2 hour line at sportmen to pickup packet. No signs of people indicating that you can bypass lines if already entered.
All good
All good
All good
ATM not working
Barb wire crawl
Barb wire low crawl
Barb wire!
Barbed wire crawl
Bathroom/registration lines too long
Bathrooms were gross
Better spectator sign in.
Bib numbers were not posted, but website said they would be.
Burpees
Burpees
Can't hear on trail, staff instruction
Challenging hills, not enough running, short course, events were easy.
Check in process

Check in registration
Cold
Cold
Cold showers
Cold showers at the end
Cold water
Cold weather
Cold!
Cost
Cost of all the extras.
Cost vs length of course, barb wire
Could use more obstacles
Couldn't tell what obstacles to follow, where end and where start?
Didn't participate.
Don't know yet.
Dudes
Great
Great!
Had to walk uphill to the beer and food
Heard a rumor spectator sign in was a pain.
Hiking, no loved it all!
Hills
Hills
Hills
Hills
Hills
Hills, rain, cold
I had work
I loved it!
Information station
Kind of cold
Lack of bathrooms
Lack of water on trail
Large transfer fees that of registration from injured person.
Less running
Liked it
Line for pre race pick up
Lines to get packet at the race and the day before
Lines to register when we are pre registering should be shorter.
Lines were long
Lines!
Long barbed wire crawl
Long line the night before to pickup packets
Long lines for registration
Long lines to get in
Loved it!!
Maybe more obstacles
Missed son racing

Money to spectate
More bathrooms
More bathrooms
More locations would be great (Idaho)
More pottys
More slippery shoes
Mud
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
NA
NA
NA
NA
NA
NA
Need more restrooms
Need more variety in the swag tent
Needed more muddy obstacles.
Needed more obstacles
Needs more obstacles
No maps for people to follow routes
None
None
Not able to buy tickets online or at Sportsmans, parking
Not enough bathrooms
Not enough bathrooms
Not enough beer tickets
Not enough hard body women.
Not enough music
Not enough restrooms
Not enough volunteers
Nothin
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing

Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
nothing
Nothing
nothing
nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing really
Nothing!
Nothing!
Nothing!
Nothing, great
Package pick-up very slow- 1.5 hour wait
Packet pickup could be better organized.
Packet pick-up Friday was horrible
Packet pick-up took 2 hours
Packet pick-up was terrible!!!!
Packet pickup! Mail them out or let locals get them early
parking
Parking- late registration fee
Port-a-potties
Pre-registration vs. registration for kids race confusing
Pre-registration was a brutal wait, even compared to last year.
Price
Price is too much.
Race
Race packet pickup
Rain
Rain
Rain
Rain
Registration

Registration
Registration needs help
Registration on Friday night took over 2 hours.
Registration process sucked this time. I've done 5 of these and this is the first time.
Registration took too long!
Restroom locations
Restrooms
Restrooms could be cleaner
Restrooms, cost, not hearing the announcer
Rope
Sand bags and long carry. LOL
Seemed to need a first aid station at the far end of the course.
Short
Should be restrooms on path at water stations
Sign up the day before took a long time
Slow registration
Spectator fees
Standing in line for 1 hour to pre register to get packets
Stocked porta potty
The cost
The cost.
The extra cost for parking and entry for viewers
The long line at pre-registration
The loud man getting in my face telling me I'm a spartan
The mass of people, waiting to go was not fun.
The organization at Sportsman Ski Haus should start earlier or have more people doing the registration.
The Pain
The people
The pre-registration at Sportsman Ski Haus was a line up disaster. Everything went smooth but too long. Last year was not like this. Should have more registration tables.
The price for everything
The price is for profit
The price!
The rain
The up hills
The way the rope climb was designed
To many people on my itteration
Too few obstacles
Too many hills
Too many hills!
Too much \$, will not be back
Took an hour to get registered
Tough course
Use of computers for registration- lines backed up with long waits
Water and hills, but you should still have them.
We spent \$80 first 15 min. Too expensive. Will not be back. 25 per person too much!
Weather
Weather

Weather
Weather
Weather- May in Montana too early
What?
Wifi not working good at registration. Could be quicker.

Q25. What suggestions do you have for improvement to the event?

1 mile slip and slide!
2 day event
2 days longer
A little later in month
All good
Banana stations. Too many cramps.
Better check in
better check in
Better check in, way too long!
Better lines
Better online ticket purchasing
Better parking
Better performance at next years event
Better weather, ha ha
Bigger festival
Can't think of any.
Change packet pick-up!!
cheaper registration
Cheaper tickets
Child care
Child care!
Clean up the dead elk
Deals on hotels
Didn't get lost/trails could have been marked better
Different section for different levels of difficulty
Directions no course, saw people get lost.
Do it again.
Do not tether the rope climb to another rope
Do the same thing
Everything was great, better weather
Everything was great. Maybe more H2O stations.
Fewer folks. Hold race over 2 days. Have a spartan to greet people on HWY.
Fix pre-registration
Follow the results of surver, or not.
Good job!
Great organization, computers malfunctioned a bit. Couldn't practice spear throw at Ski Haus
Hot showers! Ha-ha!

Hot tub/hot spring
I liked it besides it costs a lot.
Improve registration
Improve registration process
In northern states- later in summer
It was great.
Keep doing what you're doing!
Keep doing what you're doing.
Keep it
Keep it awesome!
Keep it going!
Keep it up
Keep it up!!
Keep up the good work!
Keep up the good work!
Keep up the great work and good music
Kinda muddy. Add some gravel
later in summer
Less and more pain
Less expensive.
Less hill climbs!
Less hills!
Less hills/more options passing on trail.
Less lines and a little cheaper
long lines for packet pickup
Lower cost of entry fee
Lower the price. We want to throw water balloons at barb wire event
Lower your price!
Mail out packets
Make check in quicker
Make it more affordable for young people, more obstacles too.
Make it warmer
Make online registration available
Make pre-registration faster.
Map and faster entry
Map of course for spectators
More and harder obstacles.
More bathrooms
More bathrooms on the trail
More beer
More beer & bathrooms
More beer stands
More chicks
More communication of what goes on the night before
More complex events
More distances at some locations
More elk
More first aid stations

More free beer?
More group obstacles
More hard obstacles
More hydration points
More mech
More mud
more mud
More music!
More obstacles
More obstacles
More obstacles
More obstacles
More obstacles
More obstacles
More obstacles!
More registration lines
More registration lines.
More restrooms at start
More restrooms, early registration packet mailed
More trash cans
More trash cans/people seemed to disregard the landscape with trash.
More trashcans
More upper body
More vendors
More volunteers, maybe larger area
More WATER to drink and run through.
More!
Move it north about 12 miles.
Move people through registration
Move to end of May, early June
My favorite location. Registration process needs help.
n/a
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
NA
NA
NA

Signage for kids race for line registration-more clarity
Slow paths/fast paths
Streamline the sign up
Thank you!
Tougher challenges, more running.
Use a local server that uploads data instead of client based web access
Very well organized! Keep it up!
Warmer weather
Wider running lanes