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The Construction of Sport Heritage Attractions

Gregory Ramshaw

Abstract

Sport can be heritage, and sport heritage attractions such as halls of fame, museums, and stadium tours can be one of the more potent forms of heritage tourism. However, few studies have examined sport heritage attractions, nor considered their construction. This paper examines three ways in which sport heritage attractions are constructed, exploring in particular the human dimensions of sport heritage, the link between sport heritage and legacy, and the relationship between sport heritage, tourism and globalization. Several outcomes of these constructions are examined, both in terms of the representation sport heritage as well as implications for the attractions themselves. Ultimately, this paper seeks to consider sport heritage, and its constituent attractions, in wider heritage and heritage tourism debates.

Key words: sport, heritage, museum, stadium, tourism

Introduction

Sport heritage attractions are potent creators of both cultural and economic capital. Sites such as sport halls of fame and museums (Adair, 2004; Gibson, 1998; Kidd, 1996; Redmond, 1973; Springwood, 1996; Synder, 1991; Vamplew, 1998), sports stadia and sporting venues (Friedman, Andrews & Silk, 2004; Gammon, 2004; Gammon & Fear, 2007), sport fantasy camps (Gammon, 2002; Gibson, 1998), and heritage sporting events (Bale, 1993, 1994; Hinch & de la Barre, 2005) are but a few examples of tourist attractions that utilize sport heritage, and are integral in creating and disseminating particular cultural values and ideals as well as generating significant tourist visitation. For example, Gammon (2007) argues that sport heritage sites in England are fundamental in constructing particular ideals of national identity, while Friedman (2007) notes that Fenway Park, the historic stadium home of the Boston Red Sox baseball team, is the most visited attraction in Massachusetts. Although some heritage-based research has briefly referred to sport (Graham,

Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000; Howard, 2003), and sport tourism research acknowledges that heritage can be a central aspect of an attraction (Hinch & Higham, 2004), few studies have directly or explicitly examined sport heritage and its role as a tourist attraction.

The aims of this paper are therefore three-fold. Firstly, this paper examines sport as a form of heritage construction. Secondly, this paper considers three ways in which sport heritage attractions are constructed, exploring in particular the human dimensions of sport heritage, the link between sport heritage and legacy, and the relationship between sport heritage, tourism and globalization. Three case studies, representing three different types of sport heritage attractions, will be used to illustrate these constructions: The Olympic Hall of Fame and Museum at Canada Olympic Park, Twickenham Stadium Tours, and the Heritage Classic ice hockey event. Finally, this paper discusses some potential outcomes of these sport heritage constructions, both in terms of the representation sport heritage as well as implications for the attractions themselves. Ultimately, this paper seeks to consider sport heritage, and its constituent attractions, in wider heritage and heritage tourism debates.

Sport as Heritage

Sport can be heritage. This has little to do with whether sport is important as a historical or cultural resource, for its recognition as heritage has little to do with the intrinsic value of the sporting past. Rather, it is simply to recognize that anything can be heritage, as heritage is not a finite resource (Howard, 2003). Sport can be heritage simply because we wish to make it heritage. This is because there is no such “thing” as heritage (Ashworth, 2008; Smith, 2006). On the surface, this statement appears to be counterintuitive, for surely we have all taken pride in our personal or collective inheritance, be it a building, a relic, or some other tangible artefact from the past, and wished to share such “things” with others. Many of us have no doubt been asked to donate time or money in the conservation of a heritage property or site, or perhaps been saddened when a symbol of our heritage has been destroyed, lost or vandalised. However, heritage is not necessarily just the artefact

itself – the childhood toy, a photograph of great-grandparents, a medieval church at the centre of a village, Machu Picchu, or the Great Wall of China – or some other tangible piece from the past. In Ashworth's (2008) words, heritage is not "an object or a site but...a process and an outcome: it uses objects and sites as vehicles for the transmission of ideas in the service of a wide range of contemporary social needs" (p. 25) or, as Smith (2006) contends, "heritage is...ultimately a cultural practice, involved in the construction and regulation of a wide range of values and understandings" (p. 11). Heritage, therefore, is a product of the present, driven by the needs, tastes, and values of that present, which takes materials of the past, whether they are relics, history or memory, and constructs them for the requirements of an imagined future (Ashworth, 2008; Graham *et al*, 2000; Lowenthal, 1998). As a resource of the present, sport heritage has been used in everything from the design of stadia (Friedman *et al*, 2004) to legitimizing and enshrining contemporary sporting practices (Starn, 2006). Sport heritage can be collectively recognized, enshrined, and institutionalized, while also recognizing that such constructions can be collectively altered, changed, and challenged based on contemporary contexts and circumstances. Sports jerseys, sports cards, or sports stadiums possess no intrinsic heritage value. Rather, the object or site may, for example, be associated with a famous athlete or historical moment, or may represent a sport's genealogy or history, and thus we place particular heritage values in that object. Furthermore, if we place the jersey or sports card behind glass or commodify the heritage of the stadium through a tour, we are institutionalizing and legitimizing particular values, whatever those may be. An ordinary Canadian dollar coin may have no intrinsic heritage value in and of itself, but if it is buried beneath the ice at a gold medal winning Olympic hockey game, it becomes an artefact worth of conservation and display, and becomes a symbol of national identity and unity.¹

A sports artefact or location can also 'lose' its heritage or have it altered for a variety of reasons. For example, the role of the Superdome in New Orleans during the

¹ At the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, a Canadian dollar coin – known as a 'loonie' – was buried in the ice hockey rink at by a Canadian icemaker as a good luck talisman for the Canadian teams. Both the men's and women's teams won the gold medal at the Salt Lake City Olympics, and the 'lucky loonie' was later donated and displayed at the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto, Ontario.

Hurricane Katrina disaster in 2005 may have shifted the heritage of that facility from exclusively sport-based (as the home of the New Orleans Saints football team and host facility of several 'Superbowl' championship games) to a symbol of both the disaster and racialized poverty in the United States. The point is not whether sport is 'heritage-worthy,' but rather that sport sites, sport artefacts, and sport traditions can be the raw materials from which heritage is created. Thus, the question is not whether sport can be heritage, but rather how is sport heritage constructed, particularly as a tourist attraction.

The Construction of Sport Heritage Attractions

The forthcoming sections explain the three significant ways in which sport heritage attractions are constructed. Firstly, sport heritage looks to be a hybrid of traditional and contemporary approaches to heritage, in large part because there is an explicit human dimension to sport heritage that is not common in other forms of heritage. Sport heritage attractions appear to both embrace contemporary museological practices in emphasizing interaction between patrons and displays, as well as being explicitly partisan, popular, and commercial, while also espousing traditional museological practice, where displays are meant to 'speak for themselves' through sites that employ few interpretive intermediaries and rely heavily on the cultural capital of visitors. The human dimensions of sport heritage further emphasize this hybrid approach, as patrons are encouraged to try simulations of particular sports while also being asked to 'gaze in awe' of athletes and athletic achievements on display. A case study featuring the Olympic Hall of Fame and Museum at Canada Olympic Park will be used to illustrate this type of construction. Secondly, sport heritage attractions employ particular spatial and temporal constructs that emphasize legacy rather than history, in large part because notions of crisis are a central feature of sport heritage. An emphasis on legacy makes sport heritage attractions both culturally and economically significant, as a sense of continuity not only creates an impression of stability and longevity but also contemporary relevancy. Constructions of legacy also combat notions of decline, a stalwart trait of heritage constructions. A case study featuring the tours of Twickenham Stadium will be used to illustrate this type of construction. Finally, globalization, particularly when manifest through global

tourist consumption, is integral to the construction of sport heritage. Sport heritage is a globally disseminated and consumed commodity, and the values and objectives can change depending on who is consuming the heritage. This is particularly true of tourism, as many sport heritage sites are created largely because of global tourist demand. A case study featuring the Heritage Classic ice hockey event will be used to illustrate this type of construction.

The Human Dimensions of Sport Heritage Attractions

Manifestations of heritage have drastically changed in the past two generations, during which the transmission of heritage narratives, as well as the types and forms of heritage presented, have fundamentally been transformed (Harrison, 2005; Urry, 2002). Although Brett (1996) argues that heritage is a form of popular history that has its roots in mid-nineteenth century critical reflections on modernisation and industrialization, the construction of heritage in space and time has become primarily post-modern (Smith, 2006), particularly as it relates to its dissemination and consumption. Heritage sites are no longer just for a few, learned individuals who possess the prerequisite knowledge and ability to decode exhibitions, artefacts and displays. Rather, heritage sites have become democratized and, as Mason (2005) and Harrison (2005) describe, places of public interaction. For better or worse, sites have also become locations for public leisure and have had to not only demonstrate public support, both through traditional areas like site visitation as well as through political support and funding, but also have had to dedicate space and resources to retail spaces and popular (rather than critical) displays (Urry, 2002).

A significant aspect of these changes is an emphasis on the individual and human dimensions of heritage and heritage narratives. Heritage is created for and by human beings, and though heritage qualities and attributes may *appear* to be intrinsic and may initially seem to have little to do with human culture (such as with natural heritage sites, like national parks) all heritage ultimately possesses a human dimension (Graham *et al*, 2000). This is particularly evident in the way heritage has been translated in the public sphere, mainly in light of Harrison's (2005) examination of the 'new museology' where heritage patrons are provided context to interpret the

meaning of heritage into their own personal experiences, and where heritage has become more intellectually accessible and 'human' by focusing on the local, the everyday, and the individual. These foci have sometimes changed the approach to the heritage experience, from looking at artefacts in glass cases to watching and interacting with human beings in a heritage setting. 'Living history' sites such as Colonial Williamsburg in the United States, Beamish in the United Kingdom, and Fort Edmonton Park in Canada reflect the contemporary approach of making the past 'come alive' by providing an engaging heritage narrative through the utilization of heritage interpreters or 'characters.'

Sport heritage attractions reflect both traditional and contemporary approaches to the display and dissemination of heritage narratives, as well as explicitly touting the human dimensions of sport. The fact that many sport heritage sites are tourist attractions first and foremost (Ramshaw 2006) speaks to their role in broader initiatives beyond public education and the dissemination of knowledge. For example, the NASCAR Hall of Fame in Charlotte is a for-profit venue that is owned and operated by the city's convention and visitors bureau, and which uses sport heritage as a means of increasing tourist visitation to the city. In addition to their tourism role, sport heritage sites are also unabashedly partisan and popular, frequently touting widely held mythologies rather than critical narratives (Kidd, 1996). Although ostensibly contemporary in style, scope, and operation, sport heritage attractions nevertheless still employ traditional approaches and constructions. Seemingly, much of what is on display at sport heritage attractions is purely spectacular, as visitors with the prerequisite knowledge and cultural capital (such as through fandom) consume relics of the sporting past without the benefit of an interpretive intermediary. Issues of multivocality, where multiple interpretations are presented, are implicitly eschewed, focusing rather on positive and progressive heritage narratives rather than critical and contextual narratives. However, as Mason (2005) argues, visitors to heritage sites and museums are not blank slates as they come with their own perspectives and memories. This is particularly the case with sport, where 'flashbulb memories' (Snyder, 1991) from media coverage can create second-hand memories and impressions of past sporting events and athletes. As

such, traditional displays may be consumed phenomenologically, and the multivocality may come, not from multiple curatorial interpretations of exhibits and displays, but from the visitors themselves.

The human dimensions of sport heritage further reflect this hybrid approach to heritage narratives. Many sports museums enshrine famous athletes from the past, particularly based on their sporting accomplishments. Often times, it is assumed that visitors will have the required knowledge to decode the significance and accomplishments of these athletes and, therefore, there is little need for mediation between the 'artefact' and the visitor. Contemporary sports museums may also explicitly promote the spectacular consumption of athletes by placing the training areas of contemporary athletes in museum spaces. However, sport museums also provide vehicles for active interaction and dialogue between the visitor and the 'displays', such as through museum-sponsored athlete meet-and-greets and autograph sessions as well as through interactive sport simulators. Furthermore, many sports museums are also advocacy agencies for athletes, while the display of athletes' training regiments is provided, in part, as a means of public awareness as well as recruitment of future athletes.

The primary difference between sport heritage sites and other forms of heritage that employ 'living' dimensions to their exhibits is a form of authenticity. In this, though all heritage is ultimately a human construction (Graham *et al*, 2000), it is specifically within sport heritage that the human dimension of heritage becomes most evident. While other heritage attractions use representations of particular historical people, many sport heritage attractions use the actual people. In other words, a blacksmith at Colonial Williamsburg is not an actual eighteenth century blacksmith, but is rather simply representing an historical figure or perhaps a common trade of the period. An athlete who is training at a sports museum may not be 'representing' or demonstrating how an elite athlete might train; s/he may actually be training. The relatively recent pasts of many sports certainly helps achieve this construction. What is considered 'heritage' in sport may be no more than a few years old and, as such, the human ties to heritage are not only alive but remembered by many heritage

consumers. Frequently, particular sport spaces are also shared between sporting generations, whereby current players and players of the past competed on the same terrain or at the same venue. Many sport heritage sites are also not stand-alone venues and may employ larger mandates, such as athlete training and public awareness of sport. As such, heritage constructions may be multifaceted and have objectives to address the cultural (e.g., conservation, preservation and dissemination of particular traditions, practices, or artefacts), the economic (e.g., tourism, public visitation, souvenirs, maintaining fandom) and the political (e.g., national/regional unity and identity, dissemination of particular policy initiatives such as fitness and public health) dimensions of a sport site or organization.

Case Study - The Olympic Hall of Fame and Museum (Calgary, Alberta, Canada).

The Olympic Hall of Fame and Museum in Calgary is part of Canada Olympic Park (COP), a site developed for the luge, ski jump, skeleton and bobsleigh competitions of the 1988 Winter Olympics. The site is now used as a year-round competition, tourism, recreation, and athlete-training facility. Hall of Fame collections and exhibits are displayed in three venues at the COP site: at the Frank King Olympic Visitors Centre, the ski jump tower, and the Ice House athlete training facility. The exhibits at the Visitors Centre are almost exclusively focused on the winter Olympics, particularly the 1988 Calgary Olympics. The exhibits also promote current Canadian winter Olympic athletes and winter Olympic sport. The displays at the ski jump tower are primarily related to the two most famous ski jumpers at the Calgary Olympics: Matti Nykänen of Finland, who won three gold medals at the Calgary Olympics, and Eddie 'The Eagle' Edwards of Great Britain. The latter was a unique athlete as he managed to compete at the Calgary Games despite having very little ski jump experience. Although he finished last in the competition, he became a folk hero in large part because he was an 'average person,' and not an elite athlete. Exhibits at the Ice House are related to sliding sports, including a large, interactive 'tourist' luge track. The location also features a large observation deck to watch bobsleigh and luge athletes train..

The Olympic Hall of Fame and Museum reflect the different approaches used at sport heritage venues, particularly as it relates to the human dimension of sport heritage. The Hall of Fame employs both traditional and contemporary methods in displaying and disseminating heritage narratives. Many displays at the three Hall of Fame 'wings' are purely spectacular and assume a pre-existing level of knowledge in the visitor, particularly with regards to the 1988 Winter Olympics in Calgary, winter Olympic sport, and famous Canadian winter Olympic athletes. Display cases include artefacts that are meant to 'speak for themselves' and include few interpretive panels or explanations as to the context or significance of the collection. Spectacular consumption of 'artefacts' also extends to the human dimension of the site, as a central 'exhibit' are the athletes themselves, training at designated museum spaces such as the Ice House for future competitions like the Olympics or World Cup events. Visitors watch the athletes, admire them, but do not necessarily interact with the athletes nor are necessarily provided with any form of interpretive intermediation as to what the athletes are doing. On the other hand, many exhibits are also partisan, popular, interactive, and designed to meet the cultural and commercial aims of Canada Olympic Park. The narratives reflect the current aims and concerns of both the Hall of Fame and the site as a whole, whereby visitors are told about the site's current role and relevancy in athlete training, and are solicited for awareness and support of contemporary and future athletes. In particular, visitors are encouraged to try simulations of particular sports like luge, skiing, and hockey. These simulators are meant both for leisure and entertainment as well as to make patrons aware of particular types of winter Olympic sports. In some cases, there is active recruitment of future athletes (and, by extension, future museum displays) in the museum spaces, in particular through posters soliciting young visitors to 'get involved' in sports like luge, skeleton, and bobsled.

Ultimately, using a hybrid of approaches in disseminating sport heritage narratives, as well as explicitly exhibiting the human dimension of sport, says a great deal about the construction of sport heritage. Seemingly, sport does not require the same level of interpretive mediation as other, more distant and obscure forms of 'history' do. The distant past in sport often exists within living memory or, in many cases, has

been replayed *ad nauseum* and, as such, memories can be formed and/or recalled either from personal experience or from particular media images of particular sports or sporting events (Snyder, 1991). As such, visitors need not necessarily be told who an athlete is or why a particular artefact is significant because it is assumed that the visitor already possesses this knowledge. On the other hand, sport is not a passive endeavour. It is active and it should be fun. It is also a significant a commercial enterprise and it should therefore come as little surprise that sport museums and halls of fame incorporate interactive exhibits as a form of 'edutainment.' However, if sites like the Olympic Hall of Fame and Museum can offer both artefacts and experiences that the visitor may perceive as authentic (such as the opportunity to watch 'real Olympic athletes' train and then try these same sports), then this is certainly a key feature in how sites are constructed. Furthermore, the proliferation of sports (and, with them, sport heritage sites) can result in a contest for public attention, funding, and recognition. As such, using the 'human angle' through a hall of fame or sports museum site can help to create awareness, solicit support, disseminate organizational purposes, and, in the case of Canada Olympic Park, create a form of 'species conservation' where the next generation of athlete, and artefact, are produced.

Legacy, Crisis, and Sport Heritage Attractions

Heritage researchers have consistently argued that heritage is not about the past, but rather that heritage is concerned with the selective mining of the past in order to address the needs and concerns of both the present and the (imagined) future (Ashworth, 2008; Graham *et al*, 2000; Lowenthal, 1998). Heritage narratives should not be taken as a critical and thorough investigation of past events and people in the same way that historical or archaeological research might, but rather should be seen as a pastiche of academic research, nostalgia, memory, and imagination (among others) that may address a variety of needs and concerns, from legitimization of a particular policy initiative to selling gift shop merchandise. As such, heritage can adapt and change depending on who is using it and in what context it is being used.

As they exist in space and time, sport heritage attractions share many similarities to other forms of heritage, particularly in addressing veracity and accuracy. This is not to suggest that sport heritage attractions have a license to lie, but rather that these attractions are malleable and can be adapted to suit particular circumstances. For example, Friedman *et al* (2004) note that representations of sport heritage are often ripped from their original temporal moorings and placed without context in contemporary settings, as is the case with many 'retro' baseball parks in the United States. These baseball parks were not necessarily created as accurate reconstructions of other, historic stadiums, but rather are contemporary constructions that use heritage architecture and imagery to meet commercial objectives. These are not necessarily 'false' representations, but rather they are moulded to fit the needs and circumstances of the present in which they were created.

However, sport heritage attractions often diverge from other heritage constructs, particularly in how the past is presented and contextualized. Contemporary heritage sites and museums employ particular vehicles in conveying heritage narratives, including first person live interpretation meant to 'immerse' patrons in the heritage experience, although what is being displayed and demonstrated is clearly meant to represent aspects of the past. On the other hand, sport heritage sites appear to spatially and temporally merge past and present. As such, many sport heritage attractions emphasize legacy rather than history, which suggests that sport heritage attractions lose their power and potency, and perhaps become somewhat irrelevant, unless placed within a framework that explicitly highlights continuity. For example, a sport heritage experience such as tours of Yankee Stadium, which was (until recently) the home stadium of the New York Yankees baseball team, emphasized the venue as the perpetual home of both past players like Babe Ruth and current players like Derek Jeter (New York Yankees, 2008). Two famous sport heritage locations further illustrate this point. Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto, where the Toronto Maple Leafs ice hockey team played from 1931 to 1999 and where the art deco style of architecture and the historical importance of the venue made it one of the most well-known and culturally significant sports venues in North America, sat largely dormant for nearly a decade and will reopen as a retail space for national

grocery chain and as a fitness and athletics space for a nearby university (Reuters, 2009). Tiger Stadium in Detroit, where the Detroit Tigers baseball team played until 1999, was one of the few remaining stadiums from the early decades of professional baseball (with only Boston's Fenway Park and Chicago's Wrigley Field being a similar vintage) and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but was demolished by the city of Detroit in 2009 (Friends of Tiger Stadium, 2010). Both facilities have a significant historical pedigree and, like Yankee Stadium and the aforementioned Fenway Park, could have been tourist venues if they were still in daily operation as working stadia. However, there was not significant tourist interest to maintain them as just attractions, suggesting that the lure is not just the stadium alone. Although legacy is clearly integral to the construction of sport heritage attractions, there are numerous sport venues where the narratives are explicitly focused on the past. Exhibitions at the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City, for example, are entirely about a league and players that no longer exist (Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, 2005). However, whereas many heritage attractions can effectively have their core product based about the past, sport heritage sites appear to emphasize continuity and legacy rather than history.

The emphasis on continuity and legacy in sport heritage stems in large part from the contexts in which sport heritage is constructed, particularly if the heritage is created to face a real or perceived crisis. Hewison (1987) argues that heritage becomes manifest, in particular, during times of social/cultural and economic decline, and contends that much of what is celebrated and enshrined as heritage comes out of an inability to deal with crisis and change. This is true of any form of heritage. However, crisis appears to be central to the construction of sport heritage attractions. The proliferation of heritage products in sport, such as large-scale heritage sporting events and heritage-based stadia, both of which grew out of notions of discontent in present circumstances (Mason, Duquette & Scherer, 2007), suggests the degree to which sport heritage and decline are intertwined. Hobsbawm (1983) further argues that traditions, one of the more ubiquitous forms of heritage, are created and discarded based largely as a reaction to crisis and change:

We should expect (the invention of traditions) to occur more frequently when a rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patterns for which 'old' traditions had been designed producing new ones which they were not applicable. (p. 4)

Enshrining particularly sporting traditions, sporting spaces, or even particular sports, as traditional not only provides a comforting social buffer in 'times of trouble,' but also legitimizes and protects particular views, values and identities. Bale's (2003) illustration of a 'typical,' but imaginary, village green exemplifies traditional sport spaces as both a means of legitimizing and enshrining identities as well as buffering against social change. Again, this is not to suggest that sport heritage is somehow exceptional with crisis and decline being part of their contexts. Rather, it is to propose that crisis is central to their contexts and constructions.

Case Study - Twickenham Stadium Tours (London, England).

Located on the western edge of metropolitan London, Twickenham Stadium is the home of both the English national rugby team as well as the Rugby Football Union (RFU), the governing body for rugby union in England. The venue hosted its first match in 1909, and its first international test in 1910 (J. Smith, 2006). The stadium has undergone numerous changes since its first match (Dinning & Sheard, 2005; Richards, 2006) and, other than the pitch itself which has remained in the exact same location, the current version of the stadium is a twenty-first century venue. Tours are offered year-round at the stadium, providing visitors a behind-the-scenes view of the inner workings of the venue (See Ramshaw and Gammon 2010 for methodology).

Notions of legacy, continuity and crisis are central to the construction of Twickenham Stadium tours. Tour narratives highlight the connections between past and present squads, particularly through emphasising the continuity of the pitch as the same space that all England teams have played on, as well as that the stadium has been the home of the national squad for nearly a century. The display and interpretation of artefacts from past England squads, as well as more general artefacts related to

the sport's international past, is also a tour highlight. The fact that the stadium is also home to the Rugby Football Union, the administrative organization for the sport in England as well as the body which arguably 'invented' rugby through the sport's codification in the nineteenth century, also plays a prominent role in stadium tour narratives. Tour commentaries also emphasise the traditions, both formal and informal, associated with the sport, and note that many of the norms and values of the sport – particularly as it applies to rugby spectating – are practiced and maintained at Twickenham Stadium.

The notions of crisis stem from the tour narratives positioning Twickenham Stadium as a type of 'home.' Firstly, and quite obviously, the tour commentary positions the stadium as the home of the English national rugby team, both for the current squad as well as for all England teams for all time. A narrative that explicitly places the current squad at the centre of tour narratives may adversely affect the commercial aims of the tour, particularly if the current squad is not competitive or features few notable or star players and, as such, having the tour explicate a wider national team narrative buffers against some possible economic issues the tours may face. Secondly, the tour narratives position Twickenham Stadium as the 'spiritual home' of the sport, with the Rugby Football Union being the chief steward of the game and its traditions. Such narratives reflect unease about the Rugby Football Union's proprietary assertions that Twickenham Stadium is the sport's 'home' both in England and abroad, particularly in the face of rival domestic claims from the 'inventors' of the sport at Rugby School as well as the sport's more prominent cultural role in countries like Wales and New Zealand. Finally, tour narratives position Twickenham Stadium as 'home' of particular romanticised notions of English culture and identity. Such notions not only speak to the colonial dissemination of the sport, and Twickenham's subsequent post-colonial tourist visitation, but also that a certain idyllic form of Englishness is perceived to be under crisis. There are obvious economic reasons for each of the 'home' narratives, from the sale of souvenirs and stadium hospitality packages to the ultra-competitive English tourism market. However, these narratives also speak to the small 'c' conservatism of heritage –

when a crisis is perceived, there is a retreat into narratives that emphasize an uncomplicated past. This emphasis on continuity as a buffer to crisis may lead to significant dissonance in heritage narratives, particularly in a diverse and dynamic society as exists in twenty-first century England. As a result, conservative heritage narratives entrench and legitimize certain ideas and values that, as Hewison (1987) warns, can be inflexible to change and can cause an inability to face and conquer future issues and challenges.

Globalization, Tourism, and Sport Heritage Attractions

Globalization has had a pronounced affect on sport, tourism and heritage. Jameson (1998) argues that 'the concept of globalization reflects the sense of an immense enlargement of world communication, as well as of the horizon of a world market, both of which seem far more tangible and immediate than in earlier stages of modernity' (p. xi). Standardization of rules, global broadcasts of sporting events, international markets for both players and spectators, and trans-national manufacturing and consumption of sporting goods and apparel, are just some of the ways in which sport is impacted by globalization (Bairner, 2001; Jarvie, 2006; Miller, Lawrence, McKay, & Rowe, 2001). From a tourism perspective, Reiser (2003) notes that 'tourism and globalization can be connected in many different ways. In general terms, both have to do with the movement of people, the movement of ideas and the movement of capital across borderlines' (p. 310). As a result of globalization, Hannam (2002) notes that 'virtually everyone now lives in a region that is subject to tourism development' (p. 228) and that the processes of tourism and globalization can 'lead to changes at the destination level' (Rieser, 2003, p. 318) including transformations to economic, social, and cultural well-being.

Heritage is also a globally disseminated and consumed entity. World Heritage sites such as Stonehenge and the Taj Mahal have become symbols of our shared inheritance as well as being significant heritage attractions in their own right (Boniface & Fowler, 1993; Lowenthal, 1998; Titchen, 1995). Heritage is also one of the foundations for creating and re-articulating a distinctive sense of place,

particularly in an increasingly placeless global tourism environment. Morley and Robbins (1995) contend:

Tradition and heritage are factors that enhance the 'quality of life' of particular spaces and make them attractive locations for investment. An emphasis on tradition and heritage is also, of course, important in the development of tourism as a major industry. Here, too, there is a premium on difference and particularity. In a world where differences are being erased, the commodification of place is about creating distinct place-identities in the eyes of global tourists. Even the most disadvantaged places, heritage, or the simulacrum of heritage, can be mobilized to gain competitive advantage in the race between places. (pp. 119-120)

In particular, Morley and Robbins describe the re-imagining of Newcastle's heritage from industrial to contemporary, noting that the industrial heritage of the city was not necessarily abandoned but rather repositioned as a distinctive and consumable heritage product. In this case, heritage was mobilized and moulded both as a global branding mechanism for the city as well as to articulate a contemporary identity for Newcastle.

There is little doubt that globalization plays a role in the construction of sport heritage attractions. Ramshaw (2006) argues that because of the global dissemination of sports broadcasts and products, a sports franchise can become a tourist attraction in its own right and attract fans year-round to its museum or venue. As such, a fan of Liverpool Football Club may be from Maryland as well as Merseyside, and may visit Anfield, even in the off-season, as part of his or her vacation. Furthermore, Friedman *et al's* (2004) description of the transition from manufacturing to tourism service industries in the urban centres of some US cities is a pertinent example of heritage, sport and tourism in an era of globalization, particularly as these districts were created both to attract new visitors in a globally competitive tourism market and to replace jobs lost in traditional manufacturing and industrial sectors. Attraction managers and curators may also advocate particular heritage narratives if significant portions of visitors are from the same region or if the

destination targets tourists from particular countries. For example, Gammon (2004) contends that sport heritage locations can be very powerful in attracting secular 'pilgrims' to experience sites of sporting significance. A site such as a hall of fame or a stadium, thus, can become a magnet for the 'devout' sports fan, particularly those from outside the locality, and may alter narratives to appeal to a broader, global tourism market.

Global business interests can also shape sport heritage attractions through the sponsorship of sport heritage sites and exhibits. For example, the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto features gallery sponsorship from Panasonic ('Salute to Hometown Hockey'), TSN ('Broadcast Zone'), and Upper Deck ('Collector's Corner') (Hockey Hall of Fame, 2008), each of which appears to 'theme' an exhibition related to the sponsors' products. This is not to suggest that globalization is an omnipresent force in sport heritage. Jarvie (2006) notes that few sports can claim global status and importance, that even large American sports like baseball and football have had little global appeal, while professional soccer, arguably the most 'global' of sports, is almost a non-entity in North America. Bairner (2001) further argues that sports fandom, though increasingly taking on an international dimension because of global media broadcasts, is still most enthusiastically demonstrated for local teams and familiar sports. Rather, it is to suggest that the global dissemination of sport heritage, along with its consumption as tourism, can influence its construction in space and time at the attraction level.

Case Study - The Heritage Classic Ice Hockey Event (Edmonton, Alberta, Canada)

The Heritage Classic was a sports event that was positioned on the heritage and nostalgic pasts of the National Hockey League (NHL) and the 'purity' of hockey in the outdoors, as well as being structured to appeal to a global tourism audience (see Ramshaw and Hinch 2006 for methodology). This event, held on 22 November, 2003, featured 'two of Canada's premier 'heritage' teams, the Edmonton Oilers with five Stanley Cup Championships, and the Montreal Canadiens with 24 Stanley Cup Championships' (Heritage Hockey Classic, 2003). Two games were played during

the event, the first being a match between star players from past Edmonton and Montreal teams, and the second being a regular season game between the current squads of the Oilers and Canadiens. Played in the outdoor venue of Commonwealth Stadium in Edmonton, rather than the normal indoor setting, the game had been billed as a revisiting of hockey's greatest teams in a 'natural environment,' evoking images of hockey's outdoor past. The Heritage Classic festivities, which took place over a four-day period, also included several associated events such as team rallies, civic lunches, and displays of hockey memorabilia, making the Heritage Classic a civic-wide sport heritage weekend. Since the Edmonton Oilers Hockey Club staged the Heritage Classic in 2003, the NHL adopted the format and held the 'Winter Classic' in Buffalo, New York on 1 January, 2008, which featured a regular season game between the Buffalo Sabres and the Pittsburgh Penguins (though, notably, the event did not feature an 'old timers' alumni game like the Heritage Classic). The perceived success of the Winter Classic led the NHL to host other outdoor games - on 1 January, 2009 at Wrigley Field in Chicago and 1 January, 2010 at Fenway Park in Boston.

Constructing an event that would resonate globally clearly played a role in planning the Heritage Classic. An estimated 14,000 out of town visitors attended the game in addition to the over 43,000 locals, and local media reported a \$25 million (Canadian) injection into the economy (Cormier, 2003). The event also attracted international media attention, as many international daily newspapers sent columnists to cover the event. Organizers also revealed that they were keenly aware of the uniqueness of the event and, as such, constructed it in order to appeal to as broad an audience as possible. From a tourism perspective, sport is one of the more common ways to advertise the locality to a global audience. Sporting franchises exist in a competitive global environment, and positioning the Edmonton Oilers as an emerging player in the international sports marketplace appears to have been a major motive in the organization's planning and hosting the event. However, it is unclear how wide ranging the Heritage Classic was in its reach, either in positioning Edmonton as a tourism destination or the team as a global franchise.

In constructing a heritage event for a global audience, fidelity to the past is often lost in the translation. Organizers stated that they initially wanted the New York Rangers as opponents, a globally-recognized franchise to which the Edmonton Oilers have virtually no history. The organizers eventually settled on the Montreal Canadiens, another widely-recognized franchise who share a very nominal history with the Oilers organization. These opponents were chosen over more natural regional rivalries, such as the Calgary Flames, in order to have the event covered globally. In addition, the NHL's adoption of the Heritage Classic model points to the marketability of a unique and globally consumed heritage product. The fact that the 2009 and 2010 Winter Classics were held at Wrigley Field and Fenway Park respectively, two of the most historic and most widely-recognized stadiums in the world (and stadiums that share absolutely no historical relationship with the sport of hockey), further demonstrates that the values and outcomes of sport heritage have little to do with authentic representations of the past, but rather that sport heritage symbols are mobilized as a form of capital that can be globally disseminated and consumed outside of their locality. It is also telling that all outdoor games after the Heritage Classic have been held in American cities, two of which (Chicago and Boston) are large, well-known cities both within the United States and around the world.

The Outcomes of Sport Heritage Attractions

Ashworth (2008) argues that heritage is not 'an object or a site but...a process and an outcome: it uses objects and sites as vehicles for the transmission of ideas in the service of a wide range of contemporary social needs' (p. 25). Further to this, Smith (2006) contends, 'heritage is...ultimately a cultural practice, involved in the construction and regulation of a wide range of values and understandings' (p. 11). Graham *et al* (2000) in particular outline heritage as a resource of both cultural and economic capital:

...(H)eritage is that part of the past which we select in the present for contemporary purposes, be they economic, cultural, political or social. The worth attributed to these artefacts rest less in their intrinsic merit than in a complex array of contemporary values, demands and even moralities. As such, heritage can be visualized as a resource but

simultaneously, several times so. Clearly, it is an economic resource, one exploited everywhere as a primary component of strategies to promote tourism, economic development and rural and urban regeneration. But heritage also helps define the meanings of culture and power and is a political resource; and it thus possesses a crucial socio-political function. (p. 17)

The construction of sport heritage attractions undoubtedly lead to numerous ends and outcomes that reflect contemporary social, political, and economic needs. What these outcomes may be requires some consideration, as it is important to consider not just what sport heritage *is* but also what it *is meant to do*, both from cultural and economic perspectives.

From a cultural perspective, sport heritage could be used to meet particular organizational mandates, such as exposing visitors to particular sports or traditions, explaining an organization's aims and existence, maintaining fan loyalty, and demonstrating the importance of the organization to a sport or community, as well as establishing a level of cultural caché for the host community or venue. From the economic side, sport heritage attractions can lure visitors year-round and are not subject to the seasonal schedules of sport franchises, leagues, or competitions, while also exposing visitors to a variety of products and services, such as jerseys, game tickets, and catering and rental opportunities, or in the case of sport heritage events, can provide another revenue stream for an organization through event tickets and souvenirs.

From a theoretical perspective, sport heritage has traditionally been lumped with nostalgia (Gibson, 1998) which is a potent lens from which to view the past, particularly in sport. However, nostalgia does not possess the breadth, depth, or perspective of heritage, particularly in dealing with the more unpleasant legacies of sport such as violence, racism, and sexism. Labelling sport with a broad nostalgia brush makes it easy to dismiss as mere fluff and makes addressing the broader implications of sport heritage challenging. Placing sport within a heritage context

allows space for multiple interpretations of sport heritage, and not just the nostalgic or positive legacies of sport. Furthermore, contextualizing sport heritage attractions within a heritage milieu provides room for sport heritage to be critically addressed. Graham *et al's* (2000) duality thesis recognizes that heritage exists within Bourdieuan dichotomies of taste, where what is deemed 'high' and 'low' heritage can represent one of the most widespread areas of contestation and dissonance. It is interesting that sport has not been more widely considered part of the heritage milieu, perhaps because it has been considered 'low' heritage. Addressing sport heritage within wider heritage and museum research may provide critical space for sport heritage to develop beyond its nostalgic roots. Finally, some of the constructions of sport heritage attractions reveal a case for exceptionalism. While areas such as crisis, legacy, globalization, and tourism are not unique to sport or heritage tourism, their application at sport heritage attractions does suggest some unique facets to the creation and consumption of sport heritage.

Conclusion

Beyond some of the applied rationales for sport heritage to be considered by heritage researchers and practitioners alike, we must also look further and deeper into why particular narratives are adopted at sport heritage sites, who they benefit and ignore, and what they mean on a larger scale. This ultimately comes back to Graham *et al's* (2000) assertion that heritage is a zero-sum game, as dissonance is the key characteristic of any heritage construction. As public funding for culture becomes more closely scrutinized, there is a risk of sport heritage being mobilized as a kind-of 'Trojan Horse' to broadcast uplifting narratives that require patrons to 'cheer and not question.' While such a scenario may lead to greater public dissemination of sport heritage, it may further conceal the critical and dissonant legacies that have been inherited from sport. As more destinations anchor their tourism planning and development in sport heritage attractions, it is therefore important to consider the wider implications this form of heritage. Furthermore, little is known about the patrons of sport heritage attractions. While there is an assumption that most visitors attend sport heritage attractions for purely nostalgic

reasons (Gibson, 1998; Weed & Bull, 2004), the consumption of sport heritage attractions – and how consumption affects and creates particular constructions – requires investigation.

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