SPORTING PASTS – TOURIST FUTURES

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Candidates Declaration

I confirm that the thesis is my own work; and that all published or other sources of material consulted have been acknowledged in notes to the text or the bibliography. I confirm that the thesis has not been submitted for a comparable academic award.

Abstract

The last fifteen years has seen significant growth and advancement in the study of sport tourism. The publication of numerous texts, journal and conference papers - along with the progress made to the Journal of Sport and Tourism are testament to the subject's maturity. In tandem with these developments institutions in higher education have seen a proliferation in modules, programmes and courses at both under graduate and post graduate level in sport tourism, as well as notable increases in PhD theses with sport tourism related themes and perspectives.

This commentary presents a synthesized critical evaluation on my research publications and their impact upon the developments of sport tourism detailed above. The ten publications chosen have come from both journals and book chapters, and are a blend of conceptual and empirical studies. Whilst the majority of the published are conceptual in nature the methodology adopted in the empirical studies have ranged from qualitatively driven research using in-depth interviews and observational methods – to more quantitatively driven studies which implemented questionnaire and document analyses.

The case is made that the evaluated published works have both collectively contributed to the knowledge in the areas of sport tourist motivation with particular reference to nostalgia and heritage. More specifically, the synthesis demonstrates that the selected studies have contributed in laying the foundations of sport tourism by introducing and explaining the synergistic relationship between the two concepts of sport and tourism, as well as identifying definitive sport tourism markets – and doing so providing unique insights into the distinct sport and tourism-related services and experiences required by each. Furthermore, not only do the published works introduce, define and categorise for the first time the concept of *heritage sport tourism* but also offer the first empirical studies on the experience and design of sport stadium tours. Collectively, the papers are regularly referred to in the literature and, as a consequence, continue to stir debate and further research in the area which, in turn, will contribute to the general advancement of sport tourism.

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Introduction

The aim of the following commentary is to support and synthesise the submitted papers for publication for the award of PhD by Publication. It outlines the journey and subsequent development of the research by critically evaluating the papers and assessing their impact and contribution to the understanding of the sport tourism domain. The ten chosen publications have been selected from a larger body of work in order to illustrate a progression in not only my own understanding of, and contribution to, sport tourism but also in the wider conceptual and theoretical evolution of the subject. To distinguish the selected publications from other authored and co-authored work, I have, within the text, highlighted in bold all references pertaining to the papers being considered. The criterion employed in the choice of papers submitted was that they represented, individually and/or collectively, a body of work that has helped shape and inform the sport tourism landscape as we see it today. Accordingly, those publications which have generated the largest impact through citations (see Appendix 1), academic debate and conceptual originality have been included. They comprise both articles published in peer reviewed journals and a number of book chapters. The decision to include book chapters alongside journal papers was made for both academic and pragmatic reasons. Firstly, the book chapters included in the published works are an integral part of the research journey taken and consequently help fuse previous concepts and ideas with future publications. Secondly, due to technological advancements, publishers can now prepare and print texts as quickly as many rated journals; ensuring a degree of contemporaneity amongst and within the contributions. Thirdly, in some cases the readership of carefully edited texts outweighs the readerships of many journals and so help in disseminating key research findings and ideas more effectively. Also it is important to note that the chapters included in the published works were subject to stringent and vigorous peer review practices prior to acceptance and publication. Even where chapters were written for texts of which I was the editor, all chapters were sent out to at least two external reviewers before inclusion.

It is acknowledged that the nature and value of the impacts of these published works will vary depending upon the audience they are directed at, as well as on those disciplines and fields outside the sport tourism community who have applied, utilised and adapted the many concepts and propositions discussed. Instances where the submitted papers appear in the wider academic community suggest that the conceptual and theoretical debates carry resonance well beyond the sport tourism

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literature. Whilst it is conceded that recent publications (2010-11) have yet to filter down through the sport tourism-related literature and beyond, it is nevertheless felt that these later papers illustrate both the research journey made as well as the consequences or progression of the earlier papers' debates and propositions. These more recent papers also act as a conduit that bridges the concepts and themes discussed in earlier work with the current and future directions discussed at the end of the commentary. In addition, where papers were jointly written, I have ensured that I have made a significant contribution conceptually, theoretically and/or methodologically to both the research process (where relevant) and to the writing up phase of the papers (see Appendix 3 for letters of support by co-authors).

The development of sport tourism in the last 15 years has in many ways mirrored my own progress as an academic teaching and writing in the leisure, tourism and sport fields. At the time of writing my first paper in 1997, published in the Journal of Sport Tourism, there were no text books on the subject and just a handful of papers that directly addressed the potential synergy of the two fields. Today, there over 15 texts, written in English alone, which explore the many manifestations that the subject has spawned. In addition to these books, there are now myriad articles related to the study of sport tourism in journals whose titles range from leisure, sport and tourism to heritage, urban studies and marketing.

The paper in 1997, augmented later **(Robinson and Gammon, 2004)**, acts as a starting point of the commentary as it brings to light the complex customer-drives that help map out the motivational interaction and transaction which takes place between primary and secondary considerations in sport tourist decision-making. It remains a regularly cited framework, intending to depict four broad sport tourist types which, in turn, indicate key factors in sport tourism demand. Theoretically supported through research in secondary reinforcement (Calder and Staw, 1975), it acts as a unique explanation of the synergistic relationship between the two key concepts of sport and tourism. As outlined in the following discussion, the motives and desires of the sport tourist were to remain a common theme in the majority of the submitted papers where the framework is, in many cases, explicitly and implicitly referred to. The remaining papers, however, take a slightly different direction, exploring the extent to which the past (specifically related to nostalgia and heritage) plays in sport tourism demand. Whilst studies relating to the history of sport are well established in the literature (Decker, 1992; Hargreaves,1994; Rader, 1996; Vamplew,1998), relatively few address the many debates and issues which revolve around the personal and collective

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memories attached to sport, and how such memories can be commodified and experienced. More specifically, analysis and research exploring the motives that drive visitations to sports sites and sights that feature heritage-related components were largely unknown. Therefore, the majority of these submitted papers explore, firstly the theoretical components of nostalgia-related sport tourism, which had until that time been the least understood category, and secondly, to argue the case for re-labelling this category under the new, more encompassing banner of *heritage sport tourism*. This evolutionary feature of the published works signifies how, collectively, they have contributed to the maturity of the subject both theoretically and pedagogically. However, it is important to note that any development or new direction does not indicate a rejection or derision of the earlier work but, rather, illustrates a conceptual process that recognises the importance of all the papers and their continuing contribution to the literature. The more recent publications demonstrate well the wider impact and relevance of many of the sport tourism debates, particularly in the areas of heritage, tourism and event studies.

Therefore, this commentary acts a platform to synthesise the submitted published works in order to espouse individually and collectively their impact and contribution to the study and understanding of sport tourism. Each paper, where possible, is critically evaluated through the discussions outlined by other authors in the literature as well as through my own current reflections. It is acknowledged that, whilst the majority of the published works are theoretical and/or conceptual in nature, they continue to stimulate and validate research both inside and outside the sport tourism community.

Beginnings

In 1995 I, along with two other colleagues, undertook a research project for the British Olympic Association (BOA), the purpose of which was to assess the impacts and role of the European Youth Olympic Games (EYOD) held in Bath (UK). The BOA made it clear that they were primarily interested in assessing what part the Games played in the future of the Olympic Games, and in the ethos of the Olympic movement. Consequently, our analyses were framed around the political, social and cultural consequences of the EYOD rather than the more commonly used approach focussing on economic impacts. The operation and management of the Bath games involved a number of key stakeholders, not least of which were Bath City Council, the University of Bath (where the majority of the events took place) and of course the British Olympic Association. The event attracted 2,500 athletes and officials from an impressive 47 countries. Consequently, Bath City saw the Games as an opportunity to generate

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tourism activity in and around the events taking place. Unfortunately, the competition produced few visitors – much to the irritation and disappointment of the council who then focussed their efforts on encouraging repeat visits to the athletes, their families and officials.

In writing up the initial draft of the report I made reference to the disappointing visitor numbers but was informed by the BOA that creating visitor numbers around the event was not their intention. Rather, the chief aim of hosting the event was to showcase Britain's ability to organise and run a major event successfully, in the hope that they may get an opportunity to host the bigger version of the event in the future. As a result the report, along with related publications (see Girginov, Gammon & Robinson, 1996), did not explore in detail the reasons for poor attendance at the Games, though clearly the limited promotional and advertising campaign before and during the event contributed to the low visitor numbers. During that period I was unable to explore further the relationship between sport and tourism, but my curiosity in exploring the potential synergies between the two fields was firmly established.

At that time (1996), there was little published material that mapped-out a potential sport tourism domain, though there did exist articles that displayed related themes connected to sport events (Ritchie, 1984), active sport travel (De Knop, 1990; Hall and Weiler, 1992) and sport museums (Redmond,1973; Snyder,1991). Arguably the first time the two fields of sport and tourism were brought together was in a publication by Anthony (1966), in a paper for the Council of Physical Recreation in the UK. However, it was much later when the first academic studies of sport tourism began in earnest (Glyptis, 1982). Based upon what material I could obtain I wrote an undergraduate module on Sport Tourism which helped in tentatively identifying the various components which make up the subject. Later, in 1999, this module acted as a template for the BA (Hons) Sport Tourism programme, which was the first of its kind in the world (see Gammon and Robinson 1999; Gammon, 2003). It was in this year that I was the recipient of the Sport Tourism Leadership Award, granted specifically for curriculum development, by the Sport Tourism International Council.

Developing a Framework

The sport tourism module referred to above was delivered and managed by myself and a colleague and it soon became clear that there were a number of fundamental gaps in our understanding of sport tourism, primarily with respect to identifying tourists' motives for sport, and how such motives may determine differing potential

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opportunities for a range of destinations, attractions and related businesses. Consequently, and essentially for teaching purposes, a framework was created which aimed to map out two areas of focus; differentiating between those who travel primarily for sport (sport tourism) and those where sport is perceived as a secondary consideration (tourism sport). Each section was segmented further through the use of hard and soft definitions, which differentiated between competitive and recreational considerations in sport tourism. The implications for identifying different types of sport tourists are numerous, such as helping organisations to market their products and services more effectively, as well as indicating the current range of sport tourism opportunities that destinations have.

Realising the potential utility of the framework, it was decided that we should try and publish the above proposition in a relevant journal. It was around this time that the Journal of Sport Tourism was becoming slowly established, albeit in electronic format. The paper was accepted (Gammon and Robinson, 1997) and continues to be used and cited in the literature (over 81 citations to date). However, a noted weakness of the paper (Pigeassou *et al*, 2003) was that it lacked a detailed theoretical framework, along with any explicit examples as to its application. Consequently, the paper was revisited, aiming to address the issues outlined above **(Robinson and Gammon, 2004)**. Theoretically the framework was heavily influenced by the proposition that primary and secondary motives positively interact, each being able to reinforce, or add to the other (Calder and Staw, 1975). At this time, the idea and importance of primary and secondary motivation in understanding leisure behaviour had been explored in the leisure literature (Neulinger, 1981) it had yet to be explicitly applied to the study of tourism. The framework has since been utilised by national agencies (BTA – now Visit Britain), PhD theses (Chang, 2009; Johnson, 2010), case studies (Smith, 2010), theoretical foundations for related books and papers (Hudson and Hudson, 2010), international conference papers (King and Heo, 2010) and has been discussed internationally in 8 languages.

It is important to mention at this point that the sport tourism framework has encountered some criticisms – not least from Weed and Bull (2009), who argue that it is misleading to suggest that either sport or tourism takes a dominant role in the motives and experiences of the sport tourist, that,

> '...a key drawback of this work is that it assumes a view of sports tourism in which tourism is defined in terms of sport, or in which sport is defined in terms of tourism and, as such, establishes a subordinate role for either tourism or for sport in understanding the area.' (Weed and Bull, 2009: 61)

Weed and Bull's (2009) response to their critique is to posit that it is more important to highlight the synergistic qualities of sport tourism rather than to propose that either sport or tourism motives take a predominant role in the decision process. They go on to argue that sport tourism should be conceptualised as a unique interaction of people activity and place. However, they are yet to explain the nature of these interactions as well as revealing any theoretical framework which binds them together (Gammon, 2010). Nevertheless, Weed and Bull's (2009) observations raise an important point as to whether the motives and/or experiences of sport tourism can be precisely balanced between the two key concepts – though it must be taken on board that research to date which has adopted the framework suggest otherwise (Kim *et al*, 2008; Smith, 2010; Williams, 2008; Yusof *et al*, 2007). For example, Smith's (2010: 399) study on the development of sports-city zones found that current and potential markets comprised '...two elements; "sport tourism" and "tourism sports". The former refers to sport as a primary motivation to visit a city, with the latter used to indicate where sport is merely a secondary consideration.' Whilst I have reservations concerning secondary motives being perceived as less important, Smith's (2010) analysis had few problems in distinguishing primary and secondary motives for travel. Similarly, Kim *et al's* (2008) quantitative study of golf tourist motives found that primary and secondary factors were helpful in identifying different golf markets. Weed and Bull's other criticism, that the framework does not account for the synergistic qualities of sport tourism, is a little curious as both 1997 and 2004 papers draw attention to the holistic qualities of the subject as well as outlining how sport and tourism interact additively.

Probably the most comprehensive evaluation of the framework was undertaken by Sofield (2003). His starting point was to question the bisectional structure of the framework, arguing that, in reality, it should be trialectic in nature (consisting of sport/tourism/sport tourism). Whilst first criticising the framework for being two dimensional – he later concedes that in actuality it is more complex and informative than his own proposition: 'Gammon and Robinson formulated a 'bisectional' framework which distinguishes between sports tourism and tourism sport on the one hand, and then further bifurcates into 'hard and 'soft' forms to produce a quadripartite structure' (Sofield, 2003:147). As a result his analysis transforms into more of a validation of the framework rather than a criticism.

A more pragmatic omission of the framework was raised by Smith (2010) who, when applying the framework to sport-city zones, found that professional training camps

were not included in the examples of hard and soft definitions of sport tourism. Smith's concerns are well-made and will be addressed in future papers where such camps are likely to be included in the hard definition category of sport tourism. Such exclusions illustrate not only the organic nature of the framework but also its flexibility, as the 2004 paper had augmented upon the examples and discussions laid out in the earlier 1997 paper.

Leaving the above criticisms aside, the consumer framework continues to be referred to in various literatures as being illustrative of the complexity of the sport tourism market, as corroborated by Hinch and Higham (2004:38) who concluded that '...they [Gammon and Robinson] contribute to a better understanding of sport tourism consumer markets, which provides insights into the distinct sport and tourism-related services and experiences required by each.'

Sporting the past – new directions

The 2004 paper was also an opportunity to address a relatively untapped element of sport tourism connected to the sporting past. It had been identified in the literature as the least known of the sport tourism phenomena and it was usually referred to as *attractions sport tourism* or *nostalgia sport tourism* (Gibson, 1998). My interest in the nostalgic qualities of sport-related tourism had been heavily influenced by some unrelated research I was engaged in concerning the motives of newcomers migrating to peri-urban villages in the UK (Gammon, 2000). It was clear from this research that nostalgia had been a powerful driving force in many people's decisions to move to the countryside. Unsurprisingly this emotion has been connected to sport and tourism singularly too (Dann, 1994; Schuman and Scott, 1989), yet to what extent it represented a significant feature of sport tourism decision making was unclear. Furthermore, it was equally unclear where this emerging category was theoretically positioned. It was around this time that I proposed (with Lesley Lawrence) that the Leisure Studies Association (LSA) may wish to consider adopting sport tourism as the predominant theme for their next conference in 2001 to be held at the then University of Luton. However, it was felt that at that time sport tourism was yet to display the necessary depth and breadth to warrant a full two day conference.

Consequently, I suggested a revised broader theme entitled *Journeys in Leisure*, of which sport tourism would be included as a sub-theme. Fortunately, the conference was able to entice many of those writing and researching in sport tourism at the time, culminating in two keynote speakers on the subject and several plenary papers. A

selection of these papers (after a peer review process) was converted into an LSA volume entitled *Sport Tourism: Principles and Practice* which I co-edited with Joseph Kurtzman in 2002. In addition to the editors' introduction, I authored a chapter that attempted to introduce some theoretically driven explanations of the sport tourism-nostalgia relationship, framed around the hitherto unexplored phenomena of sport fantasy camps. The central premise of the chapter was to highlight the new demands for nostalgic products, services and experiences from a growing grey market. Furthermore, it argued that a distinct feature of nostalgically driven sport tourism was that two journeys are made, '...the journey made to the attraction or event and the imagined journey that takes place once there.' **(Gammon, 2002:65).** Theoretically, the chapter conflated the nostalgia-related literature in both sport (Schuman and Scott, 1989; Snyder, 1991) and tourism (Dann, 1994; MacCannell, 1999), introducing such concepts as personal, collective, armchair and commercial nostalgia. In so doing, it argued that an emerging feature within sport tourism was the commodification of the past with particular reference to wish and/or fantasy fulfilment. The impact of the chapter has been quite diverse, influencing publications related to football fandom (Kulczycki, and Hyatt, 2005; Weed, 2007), Olympic tourism (Weed, 2008) and place identity (Ramshaw and Hinch, 2006). Although the chapter was received positively, there still remained some concerns over the appropriateness of adopting nostalgia specifically in order to explain one form of sport tourism. The majority of misgivings revolved around the fact that nostalgia could be offered as an explanation for engaging in other categories of sport tourism, such as spectator events and active participation. Also, it was questioned whether nostalgically driven motives represented a significant enough segment of the sport tourism market to warrant a distinct category (Weed and Bull, 2004). The basis of this argument was founded on the assumption that it would be unusual for tourists to travel exclusively in order to visit a sport- related attraction. Such criticisms choose to overlook the excursionist market **(see Fairley and Gammon, 2005)** whilst also ignoring the profound meanings that many sports sites hold to sports fans and visitors worldwide.

The significance that "important" sport sites hold to many tourists was explored further in a book chapter entitled *Secular Pilgrimage and Sport Tourism* **(Gammon, 2004).** This largely explorative essay introduced for the first time the concepts of authenticity and liminality to the sport tourism domain. Whilst the narrative of the chapter was explicitly playful in nature, there were a number of imperative points that needed to be made. These points were mostly connected to the powerful, quasi-religious meanings that sport holds for many, along with implications that these beliefs and emotions had

upon the management and marketing of numerous sports venues and sites across the globe. It acted as a catalyst for a slightly new direction in my research that was mostly associated with place meaning and the transaction that occurs between sport tourists and the sport sites they visit (Hoey and Gammon, 2003). The chapter has also been referred to beyond the sport tourism-related literature such as, event studies (Getz, 2007), religious and tourism studies (Olsen, 2008; Scott and Jafari, 2010), linguistics (Hallet and Kaplan-Weinger, 2008), and policy development initiatives (Devine et al, 2010). In terms of the event literature, Getz (2007: 185) takes the discussions set out in the above chapter and considers whether such secular pilgrimages occur in other event types:

> Within special interest groups, or sub-cultures, certain events have prestige and become must see-see, must-do 'icons'. For example, marathon runners strive to qualify for the Boston Marathon, making participation in that event almost like a pilgrimage. Does this apply to music concerts or other types of events? Could consumer researchers identify an 'evoked set' of events that people just have to attend because of their symbolic value?

Getz (2007) poses some important questions which he believes should help drive future research initiatives in the study of events. For sport tourism, the chapter helped identify particular areas of research concerning place attachment, identity and the complex motives of visitors to sport venues, sites and destinations. This research will be explored in detail later within this commentary, but can be seen in the studies on diaspora and sport tourism (Joseph, 2011) and visitor motives and experiences on sport stadium tours **(Gammon and Fear, 2005)**.

Although around the time the chapter was published there appeared to be a stronger acquiescence towards *nostalgia sport tourism*, there still remained concerns as to its theoretical validity as well as to the strength of its taxonomical position (Weed and Bull, 2004). As a result, it was decided that a more comprehensive and theoretically informed analysis should take place, culminating in a paper that I co-wrote with Sheranne Fairley **(Fairley and Gammon 2005)**. The main tenet of the paper was to conceptualise *nostalgia sport tourism* not just in terms of place or artefact but also of social experience. The social experiences that individuals and groups derive from sport, tourism and sport tourism can generate significant life markers which aim to be replicated and nostalgically reflected upon during future trips. Such recollections are not just for the spectator or fan but also for the players. An example of this is the professionals performing once again at sport fantasy camps **(Gammon 2002)** who have the opportunity to reflect upon past glories with old team mates, the benefit of

which is undoubtedly a key instigator of their participation, as intimated by an ethnographic study undertaken by Brandmeyer and Alexander (1986).

The paper was also an opportunity to address the concerns outlined above by highlighting the significant growth and interest for visiting sport-related attractions. However, Weed and Bull's (2004) contention that nostalgia is just but one motivation for visiting sport attractions, that ' ...there are many other types of sports tourist for whom the collection of places is a motivating factor..' is an important observation. Whilst Weed and Bull's (2004) disquiet was not fully tackled in the **Fairley and Gammon (2005)** paper, it was becoming obvious that other terms which had thus far been housed within nostalgia might be more appropriate to use. One of these terms was heritage:

> More specifically object-based nostalgia sport tourism can be further categorized into attractions and events associated with heritage, tours and cruises, fantasy and thematically-designed retail outlets. Unsurprisingly heritage represents the largest category of the five, including sport museums, halls of fame, retro events and master/seniors competitions (Fairley and Gammon, 2005:187).

The debate as to whether the term nostalgia was to remain an appropriate description for a distinct sport tourism type would become a key consideration in future publications, and will be discussed in more detail later. However, at this time there still remained important uncharted areas of research that explored the relationship between sport tourism and nostalgia. Furthermore, the significance of nostalgia in relation to general issues within sport continue to generate much interest in fields and disciplines beyond sport tourism. An indication of this interest can be illustrated by the literature that referred to and incorporated many of the key debates outlined in the **Fairley and Gammon (2005)** paper. For example, some literature comes from a museum and marketing perspective (Kellett, 2007; Kohe, 2010), whist others have incorporated the work into studies concerning fan consumption (Smith and Stewart 2007), spectator satisfaction (Shonk & Chelladurai, 2008) and event management (Getz, 2007).

As intimated earlier, there was still much to learn from the complex motives of those who wish to visit sport sites – a point I was asked to address at a key note presentation at the STIC conference in Rhodes **(Gammon and Fear, 2004)**. The presentation was based on a case study of the Millennium Stadium (Cardiff), later published by **Gammon and Fear (2005)**, and was undertaken to explore some of the various issues highlighted in earlier papers **(E.g., Fairley and Gammon, 2005; Gammon, 2004)**. Although the paper represented a preliminary study, it revealed and

substantiated that the desire to see the unseen was a fundamental part of visitor expectations. The paper theoretically triangulated the back stage continuum as posited by MacCannell, (1999) with Couldry's (1998) work on symbolic reversal. In addition, it illustrated the importance of attending stadium tours, noting that a significant number of those interviewed said that the tour was the primary reason for them coming to Cardiff. This partly addresses Weed and Bull's (2004) concerns discussed earlier, questioning whether the primary reason for a trip to a destination could be to visit a sport-related attraction. Furthermore, the paper discovered that the heritage of many sports sites, even for those relatively new venues such as the Millennium Stadium, represented an important part of the tour experience. For example tour guides often reflected personally on the history of the site, and did so in order to link the present with the past. So, '...in order to create a sense of heritage continuity, references are often made to the previous Welsh national stadium (Cardiff Arms Park) which the Millennium Stadium replaced' **(Gammon and Fear, 2005:250)**. It became clear that visitors comprised not just individuals and groups from outside Wales, but also local people whose motives and experiences of the venue may be aligned more with the search for national pride and identity, rather than nostalgically driven recollections. Again, the limitation of housing a distinct sport tourism category within sport tourism was being brought into question, and would lie at the centre of discussion for future publications. Nevertheless, the nostalgic qualities of sport-related travel continues to be explored, as exemplified by a recent study by Joseph (2011) whose study of Caribbean-Canadian cricket tourists refers regularly back to the Millennium Stadium study above. According to Joseph (2011), not only were the tourists drawn nostalgically to many cricket venues across the Caribbean but also saw their regular trips as an opportunity to celebrate their national heritage.

From Nostalgia to Heritage Sport Tourism

The discussions and issues concerned with the limitations raised of explaining that all trips to visit sport attractions were nostalgic in nature was becoming more obvious, not only through the dialectic processes evident in my own articles but also through observations elsewhere in the literature (Higham, 2005; Weed and Bull, 2004). Although connections had been made concerning the relationship between sport and heritage, the majority of publications had tended to focus upon the importance of protecting and conserving sports venues (Inglis, 2004; Smith, 2001; Wood 2005) rather than mapping out in any detail the precise nature of sports heritage. Moreover, in what ways that sport-related heritage represented opportunities for tourists visits was unclear, though much had been initially explored under the nostalgia banner.

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Therefore, in 2007 I co-authored a book chapter **(Ramshaw and Gammon, 2007)** that aimed to first introduce in more detail the role that heritage played in sport tourism and, secondly, to explore the varied manifestations of sport heritage sought by the tourist. Furthermore, it made the case that future references to this facet of sport tourism should be now known as *heritage sport tourism* instead of *sport tourism attractions* or of course the more commonly adopted *nostalgia sport tourism*.

As intimated earlier, the overwhelming literature related to sports' past had been unsurprisingly situated within the sport history domain. Consequently there had been relatively little discussion regarding the components of sports heritage, let alone as to its utility in the study and practice of tourism. Therefore, the first section of the chapter proposed that sport's relationship with heritage is twofold; that we can examine the *heritage of sport* and/or *sport as heritage*. The *heritage of sport* celebrates and/or acknowledges the achievements and events within sport itself, creating a narrative strictly contained within its own culture. Alternatively, recognising *sport as heritage* acknowledges the wider impacts of sport, where sport in and of itself becomes part of a community's, region's and/or nation's fabric. Its practices, its rituals and its history, transcend sport and become representative of a people. At the time of writing the chapter, more emphasis was placed on the former relationship, that is, exploring the heritage of sport, as it was believed that this represented the clearest and most important connection. However, subsequently, studies have revealed that the opportunity for tourists to immerse themselves as spectators within a traditional sport event (as a way of achieving a more authentic sense of a people and place) is increasing in popularity (Higham and Hinch, 2009; **Gammon, 2011a**, 2011b). The discussions within the chapter were keen not to dismiss or belittle the importance of nostalgia within sport tourism, but to illustrate, by adopting a heritage lens, the widening scope of this particular feature of the subject.

To what extent that this proposition has gained acceptance within the sport tourism community and beyond is unclear, though the supportive comments made by Weed and Bull (2009: xvi – xvii) will undoubtedly help propagate the idea:

> We feel that the range of papers in their edited text, Heritage, Sport and Tourism...provide convincing arguments for the use of heritage to understand an aspect of sports tourism that is more than just nostalgia.

Additional support can be found in the Higham and Hinch (2009) text which, when discussing the impacts of globalization in sport, especially in connection to the search

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for something meaningful and unchanging, found that, 'Heritage tourism, including the veneration of sport-based heritage, represents one of the most direct manifestations of this search (Higham and Hinch, 2009:58). What's more, much of the discussions outlined in the chapter have been used as a template in order to assess how major league baseball and the national football league in the USA profit from the use of heritage-based initiatives (Seifried and Meyer, 2010). Much of these authors' analysis revolves around the varying methods, linked to heritage that sports organisations can utilise in order to grow and sustain their fan base.

The history and the heritage produced by sport organizations through facilities is a particularly interesting strategic tool which can help sport organizations attract new and maintain current fan groups. As an example, sport organizations able to actively promote their facility as a tourist destination can emphasize the display and conservation of organizational artefacts, culture, and identity. The building itself can also highlight technology and represent significant moments, mythical figures, and heroic performances that occurred within the current or past facilities to benefit the organization (Seifried and Meyer, 2010:53-54).

Alongside the co-authored chapter discussed above, I authored another chapter **(Gammon, 2007)** that specifically aimed to address the academic issues and implications of introducing heritage as a new perspective to the sport tourism domain. Also, this chapter was seen as an opportunity to address some of the key arguments that have questioned the seemingly reticent attitude and reluctance to conserve and preserve important fragile sport sites (Inglis 2004; Wood, 2005). As a result, it was argued that much of the restrained reaction to protect and recognise sport sites and practices as heritage was a consequence of the dominant authorised heritage discourse that dominates many societies (Smith, 2006). This particular explanation had not been applied in either the sport tourism literature or any other discussions relating to sport and heritage. Yet there are more pragmatic issues that make the preservation of such sites unrealistic. A significant proportion of sports venues are privately owned and in regular use, so will be affected by both commercial interests as well as health and safety mandates. Consequently, in order for these organisations to survive, they must develop their venues – even at the risk of losing important heritage components.

A further feature of this publication was in the recognition that many sports venues represent powerful symbols of place and home. Such notions are of course not new

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(see Bale, 1982, 1994), but how such heritage and home-based components of sports venues are constructed, commodified and consumed was less clear, and thus determined the focus for the remaining papers.

Home, Heritage and Place

The concept of home is a recurrent theme within the study of heritage (Howard, 2003; Lowenthal, 1998) and is particularly visible when exploring the role sport sites, venues and stadia play in the lives of the communities that live around them. Furthermore, they signify additional spiritual and symbolic impressions of home by fans and spectators who reside far from the site (Bale, 1994, **Gammon, 2007**). As discussed in an earlier paper (**Gammon and Fear, 2005**), stadium tours act as an opportunity for clubs and/or stadium owners to commercially benefit from the curious visitor whilst at the same time promoting the heritage components of the venue. The idea of using these often imposing structures as symbols of place, and so incorporate them in tourism initiatives are not new (Bale, 1994, Hinch and Higham, 2004, John, 2002; Stevens, 2001). However, the manner in which the various notions of home are concocted and promoted within a stadium tour was less clear. As a result, I co-authored a paper (**Ramshaw and Gammon, 2010**) which analysed through empirical data the narratives adopted on the stadium tour at Twickenham Stadium. The research took a phenomenological stance, adopting multiple methods including stadium tour guide interviews, tour observation and the analysis of promotional material.

The study revealed that the stadium is constructed as 'home' in three different yet overlapping ways, each of which is used to encourage visitor numbers. Firstly, the stadium is promoted as being the home of the English national rugby team. The ground, and particularly the pitch, is offered as a symbol of team continuity, as its present location has not moved since its first match in 1909. In addition, fans, as well as the guides themselves, often refer to the stadium as HQ – a term that is considered rather arrogant from other rugby playing nations. Nevertheless, this notion of home is the more commonly understood in the sports fan literature as it indicates the affectionate ties, that more strongly identified fans have with their home grounds (Bale, 1994; Crawford, 2004; Wann *et al*, 2001). The second construction of home was associated with Twickenham perceiving itself as the spiritual home of rugby. Here, the narrative more explicitly denoted heritage as a key constituent of the stadium experience. The basis for taking this position was framed around the fact that the origins and rules of the game were developed in England, and that the rugby union governing body is based at the stadium. Undoubtedly, this standpoint is perceived as

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being the most effective in enticing overseas visitors (Ramshaw and Gammon, 2010). The final construction of heritage involves the stadium, and the rituals and traditions within, as a romanticised representation of Englishness. This nationalistic manifestation of home was arguably constructed in order to promote the stadium as a refuge from the perceived misgivings of contemporary society. In doing so, it could help bolster national identity (as discussed in **Gammon and Fear, 2005**), as well as present an idealistic representation of Englishness for the inquisitive international visitor. The idea that sport events and places offer the tourist an opportunity to tap into a nation or community at play was emerging in the sport tourism literature as a new avenue of research (Higham and Hinch, 2009) and has proved to be a key feature of my more recent work (Gammon, **2011a**, 2011b, **2011c**).

Whilst the Twickenham paper shed light on the processes and narratives that contribute to the ways a stadium can promote itself as home, the research was unsuccessful in exploring and acknowledging the specific nature of the narratives. For example, the promotion and representation of Twickenham stadium was arguably a parochially-based concoction, driven predominantly by white, middle class, and 'southern' notions of Englishness. To what extent such representations are received by the domestic visitors outside the south east of England is unclear. Furthermore, it is doubtful that the stadium would engender the same levels of interest and respect from rugby league fans – a point not covered in the paper. Nevertheless, the international diversity of the patrons on the tour suggest that the stadium has a reputation that goes far beyond its utilitarian use, indicating that for some visitors at least, the journey to Twickenham was akin to a secular pilgrimage (**Gammon, 2004; Gammon and Fear, 2005;** Hoey and Gammon, 2003). Since it was apparent that certain sport sites and structures can bring about powerful emotions of awe and personal reflection, it was still unclear as to how visits to stadia, outside event conditions, are consumed. Moreover, how might the experience of an empty stadium differ from experiences during a live event, and would some visitors prefer to encounter the stadium in this way? These questions would help steer my research in a slightly different direction, exploring the interaction between person and place but specifically framed around the experiences of the sport tourist.

The idea for exploring the somatic experience of sports stadia was influenced by Gaffney and Bale's (2004) work, exploring the many ways visitors 'sense' the stadium during an event. By adapting their approach of using the eight senses of sight, gaze, sound, touch, smell, taste, history and belonging, to the context of experiencing a

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stadium outside event conditions, I delivered a conference paper which later developed as a book chapter (**Gammon, 2011a**). The primary aim of the chapter was to argue that stadium tours offer the visitor a more intimate sense of place, away from the normal distractions that an event will naturally initiate. But it was also an opportunity to evaluate the proposition posited by Higham and Hinch (2009) that sport events offer visitors the prospect of experiencing a people at play and, in doing so, to gain a more authentic sense of place and culture. There is little doubt attending sports events have become a more popular choice in many tourists' itineraries (Weed and Bull, 2009), though as with all tourist attendance, their very presence may in turn contaminate the authenticity they strive for. What's more, the ever pervasive presence of the media has arguably affected the behaviour of attending fans who now self-consciously play to the camera. This form of sports fan performance lies at the centre of my current research which aims to explore, firstly, to what extent performance impinges upon the visitor perceptions of cricket and, secondly, how such performance contributes to their understanding of a people and a place. This is not to discredit the sport event-authenticity hypothesis (Higham and Hinch, 2009) but, rather, to incorporate the findings of visitor experiences on stadium tours into the debate.

It is obviously too early to assess whether the above suppositions will carry any weight in the literature. However, Joseph's (2011) recent paper exploring diaspora in sport tourism describes the excitement of visitors to an empty cricket stadium in the Caribbean where they occupy a space usually reserved for the Prime Minister. Joseph (2011:13) observed that one female visitor:

> ...became excited as she found herself as a powerful Prime Minister, capable of looking down on the players and the other spectators. As Gammon (2011:120) explores in his description of stadia tours, "privileged viewpoints are no longer reserved for those that can afford it...the panoptic gaze will now be experiences by proxy." It is not only what tourists see but also what roles they are permitted to play that motivates their travel.

The manner in which visitors sense and experience stadia during tours and visits remains a key focus for my future research, where plans are in place to gather empirical data on the consumption of sport places. It is an opportunity to introduce environmental psychology to the sport tourism literature which may help in not only revealing the complex interaction and transaction between person and place, but also to add a deeper explanation of what constitutes the sport tourist experience. The significance of place is continuing to grow in the sport tourism literature (Hinch and Higham, 2005; Higham and Hinch, 2009; Silk, 2005) and played an unexpected part in my final published work.

Ostensibly, the aim and purpose of the book chapter on sports events (**Gammon, 2011c**) was to explore the current understanding and usage of sport events categorizations, as well as to make the case that sports events comprise of many features and characteristics that render them distinct from other events. However, it was also an opportunity to introduce some of the issues concerning place, heritage and authenticity, discussed above, to the broader event studies literature. The chapter is contributing to the Routledge Handbook of Events (due to be published in October 2011) which aims to offer a critical evaluation of current thinking in event studies, and is primarily aimed towards the post graduate market. Although I had taught event studies in the past and been involved in editing texts which had a number of event-based chapters (Gammon and Kurtzman, 2002), I was surprised to have been asked to contribute to a book on events. This may act as further evidence that sport tourism debates as well as my own research and publications had successfully permeated into other fields. Nevertheless, it gave me a chance to reflect upon the possible relevance and synergies between the topics discussed in the commentary above and the study of events. Of course, sport tourism has always had a strong event component, though the literature is limited to researching predominantly large sports events and the consequent issues and opportunities in tourism. Whilst sports heritage events have been identified as being a growing phenomena in the sports events calendar (**Fairley and Gammon,** 2005; Ramshaw, 2011; Ramshaw and Hinch, 2006), they represent proportionally a small part of the sport tourism event literature. Therefore, this chapter presented an opportunity to introduce this neglected facet of sport events whilst, at the same time, establishing the significance of sports venues within the event experience. Sport parades and celebrations were also to be included as part of the sport event landscape, which had been, until this time, a notable omission in the studies of sport, tourism and events.

Authenticity was raised as being one of the key constituents of sport events that help distinguish them from other events. Unlike the discussions outlined in previous papers, an additional perspective was taken, highlighting that the primary draw to attend sporting fixtures is that the outcome is unknown. Lastly, drawing from the debates posited in early papers (**Gammon, 2004, Ramshaw and Gammon, 2010; Gammon 2011a)** the significance of sports sites was discussed; especially in relation to the unusual topophilic relationship (Tuan, 1974) fans have with the venues in which the action takes place.

Whilst it is acknowledged that this publication (**Gammon, 2011c**) is not directly associated with sport tourism, it represents one of the first critical evaluations of the sport event landscape, and in doing so, incorporates many of the debates and theoretical nuances raised in my previous work. It could be argued that this final paper in the commentary helps validate and support many of the arguments put forward during this journey, while also exposing potential future research opportunities.

Reflections

The above commentary has aimed to evaluate the ten chosen published works, and to assess their impact upon the development and progression of sport tourism. The majority of the publications are conceptual in nature which is unsurprising given the relatively recent emergence of sport tourism in the academic arena. The theoretical progression of the subject was undoubtedly advanced through the call from Gibson (2004) to move from the "whats" of sport tourism towards the "whys". Gibson's (2004) argument was based on the premise that for sport tourism to be accepted by its older and more established academic relations, it needed to display that it was conceptually grounded in order to increase its knowledge base that would in turn develop it as a recognised subfield. This culminated in a devoted edited text (Gibson, 2006) that is a compendium of theories and concepts by the leading sport tourism academics. This volume illustrates well the countless theories that can be applied and adapted to the sport tourism domain, though it is doubtful that any specific or unique theories will emerge.

I make no apology that the majority of the papers discussed in this commentary are conceptual in nature. There must be a logical and steady progression that introduces, and then develops theory before moving forward to other levels of analyses (Darden, 1991). Without these knowledge development stages it is unlikely that any new sphere of research will stand on firm theoretical foundations; meaning it is necessary that the building blocks are added over time. This is not to imply that once the foundations are in place, that all conceptually driven papers are moribund. Far from it; there are always new perspectives and ideas to be introduced, however old or established the field or discipline, and in most cases the research process is cyclical, with conceptual and empirical work drawing from each other's findings and propositions (Yadav, 2010). In terms of sport tourism, concerns were raised that theoretical contributions were being introduced in a rather haphazard fashion, the outcome being that the subject was built on fragile and potentially unreliable foundations (**Gammon, 2007;** Weed, 2005). It is hoped that Gibson's (2006) text resolved many of these concerns by identifying clear

avenues for theory development, predominantly in the areas of sociology, anthropology, psychology, business studies, and of course sport and tourism studies.

It is undeniable that research papers that gather and interpret empirical data carry more weight and kudos in the social science community, with many journal editors explicitly stating their preference for such studies. There is little doubt that both forms of knowledge development are necessary, though finding an appropriate and reciprocal balance is a challenge for all gatekeepers in the academic publication process. Both empirical and conceptual papers have an important role in the development of any subject, field or discipline and should be encouraged in equal measure. Concerns that there had been a notable preference in publishing empirically driven papers has created disquiet in a number of fields, not least in the area of marketing. For example, Yadav (2010:17) has observed that the decrease in conceptual papers has affected the progression and development in some research *foci* in marketing, arguing that:

> To meet the theory development needs of the discipline, the richness and range of research approaches must match the complexity of the maturing discipline's substantive domain. To accomplish this, the discipline must strike a sustainable, synergistic balance between conceptual and empirical articles; both forms of scholarship are essential. Understanding, creating, and maintaining this balance is of utmost significance for a discipline because it represents the discipline's priorities and collective mind-set that fuels its intellectual endeavors.

The study of sport tourism has clearly not reached the academic maturity of marketing and, consequently, should not deviate away from conceptually determined papers which will continue to offer new and diverse insights into the nature of the subject. My own publications relating to nostalgia and heritage exemplify the knowledge development process well, whereby initial conceptual papers (**Gammon, 2004, Fairley and Gammon, 2005**) have been followed up upon in later empirical studies (**Gammon and Fear, 2005; Ramshaw and Gammon, 2010**). The sport tourism customer framework which was developed in 2004 continues to be utilised in numerous empirical studies which have, in turn, aided in its development, thus highlighting the cyclical process mentioned above.

There are, of course, some deeper axiological and methodological debates concerning the nature and process of knowledge development which are beyond the scope of this commentary, though the need to encourage synergy between these two forms of research are fundamental to sport tourism academic development. The Journal of

Sport Tourism, of which I am associate editor, remains a stalwart for the advancement of the subject and it is my intension to encourage the kind of sustained synergetic balance called for by Yadav (2010).

Conclusion

This commentary has demonstrated that the collection of publications have both individually and collectively contributed to knowledge in the areas of sport tourist motivation with particular reference to nostalgia and heritage. It has been argued that the published works presented here represent a critical body of work which continues to contribute to the development of sport tourism. The sport tourism framework **(Robinson and Gammon, 2004)** remains a useful tool in which to distinguish the overarching motives of the sport tourist whilst at the same time indicating possible related markets for agencies and organisations wishing to benefit from them. One of the key texts in sport tourism (Hinch and Higham, 2004) used the framework in its first two chapters in order to inform the reader the extent and complexity of the subject, whilst Hudson and Hudson's (2010) text applied the framework in order to establish the varying demands and markets in golf tourism. Also, the framework continues to be used as a tool in sport tourism-related curricular development and delivery across the globe, as well as event-based community development projects (King and Heo, 2010).

Subsequent publications listed in this commentary focussed predominantly on the development of knowledge in nostalgically driven sport tourism. This largely pioneering work explored both conceptually and empirically the complex motives that influence this important element of sport tourism behaviour. Nostalgia remains a key concept in many sport tourism-related studies and is likely to do so in the foreseeable future, though it will now be housed within the category of *heritage sport tourism*. The move to take a heritage lens to sport tourism has introduced new literature and theory to the subject, as well as identifying a component so important as to warrant a distinct categorisation of its own. The introduction of heritage will take our understanding of sport tourism in new directions that will raise important questions concerning the interaction and transaction between sport places and the individuals and groups that visit them. In addition, future research will shed light on some broader issues, with particular reference to the identification and meaning of tangible and intangible sport heritage and its impacts upon tourism. Papers, included in this commentary **(Gammon, 2011a, 2011c; Ramshaw and Gammon, 2007, 2010)** have attempted to map out some of these opportunities as well as offer some insights into sports venues

and their roles as representations of home, as well as the complex somatic interface that occurs between visitors and stadia.

It is anticipated that many of the related topics listed above will generate interest beyond the sport tourism domain, as indeed they were in the final paper of the published works in the commentary (**Gammon, 2011c**). For sport tourism to gain firmer acceptance as a worthy field of study, it must appeal to other fields and disciplines that lie near or around the many topics it attracts. It is pleasing to note that collectively, my publications have been referred to in literature relating to, sport studies and management, tourism studies, management studies, marketing, linguistics, urban studies, event studies and heritage studies. These connections have led to further initiatives such as guest lectures, conference papers, and a recent invitation to co-edit a special issue for the International Journal of Heritage Studies with the theme of Olympic Heritage.

In sum, the impact and contribution that the published works have generated can be viewed in two wide-ranging ways. Firstly, they have fundamentally impacted upon the evolution of sport tourism, not only as a framework for mapping out the subject's domain, but also by introducing new theoretical approaches which have in turn added to a more holistic understanding of the field . Secondly, many of the debates and propositions outlined in the attached publications have acted as catalysts for future research and academic endeavours. In doing so they have helped promote and sustain a new academic field which is now entering a phase of maturity and reflection. More specifically the contribution to knowledge achieved by the attached published works can be identified and covered in the following points:

- By introducing and explaining the synergistic relationship between the two concepts of sport and tourism and thereby laying the foundations of the field of sport tourism;
- Through identifying specific sport tourism markets, and in doing so providing unique insights into the distinct sport and tourism-related services and experiences required by each;
- By identifying the importance of place in sport tourist experience and decision making;
- By co-ordinating and publishing the first empirical studies on the experience and design of sport stadium tours;
- In defining and categorising the nature of *heritage sport tourism*.

There are still many avenues to explore in sport tourism, especially involving studies that take a stronger tourism perspective, for there are a disproportionate number of papers which focus on sport's impact upon tourism – rather than tourism's impact upon sport. Consequently the personal journey discussed in this commentary is far from over, as my own research, together with sport tourism as a whole, has much to explore and learn, from the many new initiatives and directions that lie ahead of us.

Futures

The development of sport tourism has been a sporadic one, experiencing dramatic development and academic interest, such as those experienced in the late 1990s and mid 2000s followed by relatively quiet periods of consolidation. We, at least in the UK, are entering a phase of renewed interest and activity in sport-related tourism, predominantly due to the up-and- coming Olympics in 2012. Also, from a global perspective, active sports travel is forecasted to increase over the next ten years – as is the interest in sport attractions (Seifried and Meyer, 2010; WTO 2008). To underpin these opportunities The Journal of Sport and Tourism (previously the Journal of Sport Tourism) has made great strides in the last five years; attracting high quality and well received papers from a variety of disciplines. Papers submitted to the journal for review continue to increase with a number of special volumes already in place for the next two years.

As intimated above, the research journey outlined in this commentary has not come to an end, as many of the findings, and indeed gaps, identified in the published works continue to direct future research initiatives. For example I am presently co-authoring a paper that explores the present situation in recognising, categorising and protecting paralympic heritage. There are also two research projects under way; the first being a co-authored empirical study that explores the role of cricket in creating and maintaining identities amongst temporary migrants to rural upstate South Carolina. The second is an ethnographic study which aims firstly to explore the extent spectator performance impinges upon tourist perceptions of cricket, and secondly how such performance contributes to their understanding of a people and a place. In addition, I am presently in the planning phase of undertaking an empirical study at two premiership football clubs in order to gain deeper insights into the manner in which stadia are consumed and experienced by visitors on stadium tours. From a theoretical

perspective, I plan to take a more environmental psychological approach to sport tourism which I hope will add a new dimension to our understanding of this expanding area of study.

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Appendix 1

Title	Focus/content	Co-authored.	Citations
A question of Primary & Secondary Motives: revisiting and applying the sport tourism framework	Motivational framework for the sport tourist. Destination application.	T, Robinson	132*
Fantasy, Nostalgia and the pursuit of what never was.	First conflation of general nostalgia-related studies to sport tourism. Introduces the concept of fantasy fulfilment and 'living nostalgia'.		24
Secular Pilgrimage and Sport Tourism	Explores sport venues as tourist attractions in their own right. Introducing the "liminal" into the sport tourist literature.		16
Something Lived, Something Learned: Nostalgia's Expanding Role in Sport Tourism	First theoretical underpinning of nostalgia-based sport tourism. Highlights need for the use of heritage.	S, Fairley	28
Stadia Tours and the Power of back stage	In search for authentic backstage at sport attractions. Empirical study of visitor profiles.	V, Fear.	4
More than just Nostalgia? Exploring the Heritage/ Sport Tourism Nexus	First call for heritage to be considered as a discreet form of sport tourism. *Heritage sport tourism* components explored.	G, Ramshaw.	10
Introduction: sport, heritage and the English. An opportunity missed?	Argument for the inclusion of heritage as a sport tourism component. A fight against the dominant authorised heritage discourse.		1
On Home Ground? Twickenham Stadium Tours and the construction of sport heritage	Constructions of home in sport heritage. Power of place and the past.	G, Ramshaw	
Sporting new attractions? The commodification of the sleeping stadium	The first analysis that seeks to explain the somatic experiences of visiting an empty sports stadium.		1
Sports event: typologies, People and Place.	Application of heritage components to the study of sports events.		

*Including original framework not included in publications.

Total: 216

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Appendix 2

Published Works

Appendix 3

Letters of Support