

Leveraging Sport Involvement Through Heritage Memorabilia

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**Session 31: Socio-Cultural
Presentation (25-minute)**

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2:30 PM - 2:55 PM

Travel to venerate sport-related heritage sites (of which sport museums are part) has been referred to as nostalgia sport tourism (Gibson, 1998). Nostalgia has been identified as a motive for travel to sport museums (Snyder, 1991; Wilson & Gibson, 2005). The way in which sport heritage memorabilia is displayed, promoted, and marketed has been informed by understanding consumer behaviour and nostalgic experiences.

Nostalgia sport tourism such as visiting sport museums (that house sport-related heritage memorabilia) is recognised by governments and sport organizations alike as a powerful catalyst for sport tourism, and therefore to increase revenue. Many cities now include sports museums as part of their tourism marketing strategies (Fairley & Gammon, 2005). Sport organisations use heritage memorabilia displays to form additional revenue streams; (Wood, 2005) to offset the seasonal nature of sport competitions (Higham, 2005); and to increase spectators at facilities (Mason, Duquette, & Scherer, 2005). However, it has been noted that some tourists will choose to visit locations and attractions at a destination that are associated with a distinct sporting past and sporting culture for motives that might not be linked solely with nostalgia (Ramshaw & Gammon, 2005). Rather, motives such as pilgrimage or education may be present (Hinch & Higham, 2004). Ramshaw and Gammon (2005), suggest that positioning this type of sport tourism as 'heritage' rather than 'nostalgia' "places the emphasis on the heritage characteristics of the attraction rather than the perception or motivation of the tourist" (p. 237) therefore allowing multiple motives to be considered.

While the empirical literature (whether from the perspective of nostalgia or heritage) is useful in understanding motives to visit sport museums, there has been little exploration of how heritage memorabilia can be leveraged by sport organisations to increase sport involvement beyond increasing museum visitation. Literature suggests that heritage memorabilia can be useful to assist in strengthening event employee involvement by building organisational culture, employee knowledge and reward systems (McDonald, 1991). Further, it has been found that heritage memorabilia can assist in increasing event volunteer involvement by providing for a core volunteer motive--learning (Fairley, Kellett, & Green, in press). However, the role of sport museums in developing sport involvement beyond tourism experiences has not been considered. The aim of this research is to examine how sport organizations can strategically plan to leverage collections of heritage memorabilia to increase involvement in sport.

This research examines how Tennis Australia plans to leverage its international Tennis Heritage Collection (the Collection). A museum is currently being planned to display the Collection. All strategic planning documents related to the Collection were analysed. Two key stakeholders from Tennis Australia who are responsible for the museum's conceptual development were interviewed.

Results suggest that strategic planning for the Tennis Heritage Collection museum is not limited to merely preserving and displaying heritage memorabilia for tourism visitation. Strategic planning documents indicate Tennis Australia's desire to increase sport involvement by leveraging the Collection in a variety of ways that complement existing tennis museums nationally and internationally. Conceptual planners at Tennis Australia have liaised with museum designers, architects, and tennis museum managers internationally in order to implement plans that leverage the Tennis Heritage Collection to increase the tennis fan and non-tennis fan visitation, but also to increase participant, employee, and volunteer involvement in the sport. Implications for strategic development, policy development, marketing and management will be discussed.

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Gibson, H. (1998). Sport tourism: a critical analysis of research. *Sport Management Review*, 1(1), 45-76.

Higham, J. (2005). Sport tourism as an attraction for managing seasonality. *Sport in Society*, 8(2), 238-262.

Hinch, T., & Higham, J. (2004). *Sport Tourism Development*. Clevedon: Channel View Publications.

Mason, D., Duquette, G. H., & Scherer, J. (2005). Heritage, sport tourism and Canadian junior hockey: Nostalgia for social experience or sport place? *Journal of Sport Tourism*, 10(4), 253-271.

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- McDonald, P. (1991). The Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee: Developing organizational culture in the short run. In P. J. Frost, L. F. Moore, M. R. Louis, C. C. Lundberg & J. Martin (Eds.), *Reframing organizational culture* (pp. 26-38). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Ramshaw, G., & Gammon, S. (2005). More than just nostalgia? Exploring the heritage/sport tourism nexus. *Journal of Sport Tourism*, 10(4), 229-241.
- Snyder, E. E. (1991). Sociology of nostalgia: Sport halls of fame and museums in America. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 8, 228-238.
- Wilson, A., & Gibson, H. (2005). Something old, something new: Motivations of nostalgia sport tourists at Wrigley Field. Paper presented at the 20th Annual Conference of the North American Society for Sport Management, Regina, CA.
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