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**Showcasing the Springboks: The Commercialisation of South
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Showcasing the Springboks: The Commercialisation of South African Rugby Heritage

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Introduction

This paper is concerned with how sport museums, and in particular rugby museums, in South Africa tell the story of South Africa's rich rugby heritage. By drawing on the author's observations at the opening of the Springbok Experience Rugby Museum, making several visits to the museum, sourcing hitherto untapped archival sources from the South African Rugby Board archives, and conducting in-depth interviews with curators of private and commercial rugby museums in South Africa, this paper unpacks the sports heritage within broader heritage debates. It draws attention to the commercial nature of sport heritage initiatives, such as the Springbok Experience Museum. It is proposed that the professional turn in rugby in South Africa since the mid-1990s has made rugby heritage a viable commercial proposition, used not only to tell the story of the country's rugby past, but also to solidify the Springbok brand through the use of sport heritage modalities. More specifically the aim of this paper is to probe the politics of South African rugby heritage with reference to the complexity of representing black and coloured heritage at the Springbok Experience Rugby Museum. I show how despite SARU's best attempt to depict an inclusive rugby heritage of the country, the politics of how 'to make jerseys speak' is a complex practice.

The interpretive and experiential qualities of heritage have increasingly become the focus of contemporary studies on heritage production.¹ Sport as a form of heritage has been considered as an especially relevant social setting where the experiential qualities associated with heritage can manifest, whether through intangible means (for example, songs, rituals or superstitions associated with a sports team or venue), or more tangible means (by visiting

sport stadiums, sport museums and sport Halls of Fame). This paper is concerned with the tangible aspects of South Africa's rugby heritage as they are portrayed in community and corporate rugby museums. The South African Rugby Union (SARU) has made a significant contribution to the preservation of South Africa's rich rugby heritage by opening a modern interactive rugby museum at the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront in Cape Town on Heritage Day, 24 September 2013.

The Springbok Experience Museum serves as a case study to explore the commercial nature of sport heritage preservation and production in the country. The Springbok brand has historically been associated with white national identity.² This paper shows how through SARU's active marketing campaign the association with that particular group has been strategically diminished and the brand is now projected as a symbol of a highly successful sports team recognised nationally and globally.

This paper deals with the complexities of how the representation of South Africa's rugby heritage has changed. It considers the ramifications of the professionalization of rugby in South Africa, with a specific focus on how the rugby heritage has become commercialised and strategically used by SARU to solidify the Springbok brand through sports heritage. Considering that heritage initiatives are closely aligned with economic and commercial objectives, this paper shows that South Africa's rugby heritage has not always been preserved with a commercial goal in mind. Rather, in the amateur era of the game rugby museums espoused an intimate, personal association with rugby memorabilia, mostly in community or private rugby museums. With the inevitable tide of professionalism sweeping through South African rugby, SARU has been able to market South Africa's rugby heritage as a commodity which showcases the Springbok brand on a very competitive sports market. The museum as an expression of heritage is analysed, with specific reference to the changing nature of museums and what they 'do'.

Heritage and Museums in Motion

Most heritage initiatives in post-apartheid South Africa tend to memorialise and commemorate leaders or events of South Africa's political past. Heritage initiatives in South Africa have also been important for economic reasons, attracting tourists to destinations that showcase South Africa's unique social and political heritage.

Heritage is a fluid concept that is continually being social constructed.³ An argument in scholarship on heritage studies is that heritage is an active process of making memory and meaning. In other words, heritage is something we do and experience, and can be understood as 'the practice that occurs at places rather than just the place itself.'⁴ It has also been proposed 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 values and understandings'.⁵ In other words, heritage and the consumption of heritage is an active process. Lowenthal quoting a British custodian, notes: 'it is not that the public should learn something but they should *become* something.'⁶ It is also not necessarily the behavioural aspect that that enables visitors to feel connected to a heritage site, but rather the emotional aspect of performance.⁷ Heritage is a product of the present, which uses the past – whether relics, history or memory – and constructs it for the requirements of an imagined future.⁸

Museums are one expression of heritage. They are physical places for the display of material artefacts, but their roles and functions have changed – from offering static representations of 'how life once was', to becoming a form of entertainment, with interaction becoming a key element of the museum experience. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett highlights this shift by noting that 'museums were once defined by their relationship to objects: curators were "keepers" and their greatest asset was their collections. Today, they are defined more

than ever by their relationship to visitors.’⁹ Museums have become part of an ‘experience economy’, and their dual role has become both to entertain and engage museum visitors.¹⁰

The experiential economy relies on four features: education, entertainment, escapism and aestheticism. The Springbok Experience Museum adheres to all the elements of the ‘experiential economy’, as it is designed to teach/educate visitors about South Africa’s history through rugby as well as entertain through active displays and individual involvement in the ‘Springbok Trials rugby skills zone.’ It also offers a form of escapism from everyday life for the visitor. This is done by drawing on a strong narrative of the successes of the Springbok team, the successes, albeit fleeting allows the visitor to be distracted from the turmoil of everyday life. Portwood House, the Victorian style building that houses the Springbok Experience Museum, has Table Mountain looming in the background with the harbour below, and the displays themselves are designed for a pleasurable aesthetic experience. Elaborating on the pitfalls of the ‘experience economy’, one scholar writes:

The key danger in the experience economy is the “commodification trap”– the disillusionment of customers because things stay the same. In sharp contrast with service economies, the drive in the experience economy is toward customization, creating the impression that every experience is unique and has been developed for the individual alone.¹¹

This is particularly apparent in the entrance foyer to the Springbok Experience Museum, where visitors can take individual photos of themselves that are then superimposed onto a Springbok team photo. This attraction gives the visitor a unique opportunity to feel that he/she as an individual is symbolically part of the display.

This paper shows how the Springbok Experience Museum slots into the ‘experience economy. In doing so the nature of rugby heritage collection and preservation from small, intimate collections to large public commercial collections have changed. This shift has

occurred within global changes in museum practices, a trend that scholars have termed ‘New Museology’. New Museology emphasises the political, ideological and aesthetic aspects of museums and ‘intensifies the subtexts and the present-centred nature of showcasing objects of the past.’¹² Sharon MacDonald analyses three salient aspects of the New Museology. First, museums and their objects are not fixed, but rather shift with changing contexts. In other words, they are ‘situational and contextual, rather than inherent’. Second, visitor and public perceptions of museums and their contents are also changeable, with multiple meanings that are often independent of curatorial intent. Third, New Museology considers museums as going beyond their educative and instructive role to ‘include mundane or market concerns’ such as entertainment and commercialism.¹³

The Springbok Experience Museum evinced all these trends in New Museology. The words of SARU’s CEO, Jurie Roux, at the opening of the Springbok Experience Museum echoed this view: ‘People can forget their traditional ideas of what museums are like – the Springbok Experience will be completely different. It will be interactive, digital and immersive as well as displaying some incredible artefacts in telling rugby’s South African story.’¹⁴ The change in museum practice allows for reflection on how the politics of representation manifest within these trends of New Museology.

Several scholars have contributed to understanding the growth and consequences of heritage initiatives in South Africa, but the study of sport as a form of heritage has yet to be explored academically in the South African context.¹⁵ Recently studies on sport heritages have increased in Europe and the United States.¹⁶ There is considerable scope for studying the way in which sport heritage has been preserved and commodified in South African sports culture.

The Springbok Brand as National Heritage

It is not coincidental that one of South Africa's national days, Heritage Day, was selected by SARU as the day that would mark the opening of the Springbok Experience Museum in Cape Town. Sport, in particular rugby, has long been promoted as a form of South African heritage, most recently by SARU's 2012 brand and marketing campaign 'Our Honour, Our Heritage' (see Figure 1).

Since South Africa is a diverse nation stratified along cultural, social, political, racial and economic lines, this initiative is aimed at homogenising rugby as a form of heritage that many South Africans could associate with. Of course, this is a simplistic approach and in reality the spectatorship and following of the national team varies, but the 'Our Honour, Our Heritage' campaign does allow one to unpack the intricacies of considering sport as a form of cultural heritage. Accordingly, it provides a vantage point from where to make sense of sports heritage and in particular the heritage that rugby sought to convey with the opening of the Springbok Experience Museum.



Figure 1. The Springboks lining up before singing the national anthem, with SARU using this opportunity to showcase rugby as a form of South African heritage¹⁷

The CEO of SARU, Jurie Roux, hinted at the commercial and marketable value of the Springbok brand when he addressed the crowd at the official opening of the Springbok Experience Museum: ‘People talk about a museum; this is not a museum, this is an experience of the most powerful rugby brand in the world, this is the Springboks.’ SARU’s initiative to preserve and display South Africa’s rugby heritage is therefore linked to sport heritage and the Springbok brand’s popularity worldwide and seen as an opportunity to lure tourist to the venue to get a glimpse of South Africa’s rich rugby heritage.

Professionalization and the Establishment of a Corporate Rugby Museum

Professionalism has radically changed the face of South African rugby. During the amateur era of rugby in South Africa funding ensured the financial wellbeing of provinces and clubs, but the most important commodity, the player, was bypassed.¹⁸ The administrator and president of the South African Rugby Board (SARB), Dr Danie Craven, was strongly opposed to players being compensated financially for their services. He considered professionalism in Rugby Union to be the ‘cancer that will kill it’ and was quoted as saying that ‘when the actual thrill of winning is not enough, and you must have cash incentives, then it is time for me to move out of rugby.’¹⁹ Although rugby was played under amateur rules, this does not mean that players were not compensated in other ways. Amateurism in rugby was therefore not applied in the strict sense of the word as players were often compensated in less overt ways. Before the formalization of professional rugby in South Africa, players had been remunerated behind the scenes and “match fees” were often paid under the table by the Unions.²⁰

The mid-1990s saw rugby become fully professional at the elite level and this development was fuelled by the interest Rupert Murdoch’s News Corporation (NewsCorp) showed in acquiring sole television rights for screening the southern hemisphere competition

between provincial franchises in South Africa, New Zealand and Australia (today the competition is known as Super Rugby) as well as international matches between these countries. South African rugby had now been catapulted into the global sporting economy, which meant that the players themselves became commercially viable and marketable products for global sports brands. The consequence of this development is that in the era of professional rugby both players and South Africa's rugby heritage have become overtly commercial.

It is worth considering the different manifestations of sport museums when looking at how the representation of the South African rugby heritage has changed. A leading sport heritage scholar has developed a typology which lists four exhibition types of sport museums. These include academic, corporate, community and vernacular sport museums.²¹

South African rugby heritage was memorialized mostly in community sport museums and on a private level during the amateur era of rugby. Prominent rugby schools, such as Paul Roos (Stellenbosch), Paarl Gymnasium (Paarl) and Grey College (Bloemfontein) have school museums or archives in which rugby features prominently. This form of memorialisation, albeit on a small scale and developed in accordance with an identification with a specific institution, speaks to the value of a rugby heritage for rugby-playing students, but more importantly alludes to the fact that these forms of 'informal' sport heritage collections form the backbone of South Africa's rugby heritage collections.

Another example of a local sport heritage initiative is the Choet Visser Rugby Museum in Bloemfontein. This museum boasts of having the largest private rugby collection in South Africa.²² The museum is a collection of rugby memorabilia that was donated to Visser, a former Springbok manager, by friends, players and administrators in rugby. At the entrance to the museum is a sign quoting Visser that reads 'I am not a collector. Every piece

my museum is a personal keepsake. Friends have to give it to me with a personal message. Only then does a rugby souvenir qualify for the museum.’

The intention and rationale of the museum was never commercial, but depended on the willingness of rugby players and administrators to give him their rugby gear as gifts to be displayed in the museum. Visser’s son-in-law, who showed me through the museum, elaborated on the difficulty he had in obtaining memorabilia of rugby players in the professional era:

The museum is getting less and less [*sic*] gifts, Why, because the guys are keeping their jerseys, pants and boots, and what do they do then? Their benefit year, they sell it. Everything revolves around money, there you have it²³

The Choet Visser Rugby Museum was able to thrive in the amateur era in sport, where the value of rugby jerseys and memorabilia was associated with a sense of loyalty and association with a person, in this case Visser. The memorabilia donated to him by players was a personal gift. The idea that a sporting artefact needs to have a personal connotation associated with it to make it truly authentic was a trend in community rugby museums of the amateur era in South African rugby.

The practice of writing letters to influential players and administrators requesting rugby memorabilia from them, also serves as an example of the intimacy associated with rugby memorabilia during the amateur era. The SARU rugby archives housed at Stellenbosch University have many letters addressed to Craven. Several letters sent to Craven from avid rugby supporters and players request him to send them signed rugby memorabilia, including ties, jerseys, socks and photos. One such letter from a young fan reads:

Dear Dr. Craven. I am a great rugby lover and am obsessed with rugby. I collect all rugby memorabilia that I can get hold of. I have written to you before to ask if you could send me memorabilia, like rugby emblems, rugby jerseys, rugby photos and rugby books. I play for our schools' under 15 team and we have not lost a match this season.²⁴

Craven responded to all these letters meticulously. There is a sense of intimacy associated with such requests and many of the letters reflect the personal affiliation his supporters felt with Craven, although they never met him. In the amateur era rugby memorabilia were donated, either by the players themselves or administrators, while in the professional era rugby memorabilia have become commodified and as such are consumable products for those who can purchase them.

On a bright spring day in September 2013 the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront in Cape Town saw the launch of one of the latest tourist attractions to the city. The 23 million visitors who annually pass through the Waterfront now had the opportunity to delve into South Africa's rich rugby heritage.²⁵ SARU spent two years building up to this day, which saw the opening of South Africa's most expensive sport museum. The Springbok Experience Museum, as noted on their advertising pamphlet, is dedicated to 'telling South Africa's story through the eyes of its most powerful sport.' By September 2015, 80 000 people had visited the museum.²⁶ SARU's strategic communications manager and project director for the Springbok Experience Museum, Andy Colquhoun, explained that the rationale for the Waterfront as a location for the Springbok Experience was both a practical and an operational decision in that the old museum had to be refurbished and the Waterfront was considered to be a place where a large spectrum of people could get the chance to appreciate South Africa's rugby heritage.²⁷

The opening of the Springbok Experience Museum was marked with the current Springbok team in attendance and autograph hunters, young and old, queuing to get a glimpse

(and perhaps an autograph) of their rugby heroes. The current team, management and coaching staff were neatly dressed in suits and ties, representing a clean-cut professional image of the team which was to face Australia that coming Saturday in a Tri-Nations clash. The excitement was palpable as young fans almost flattened the railings where the team has congregated before they entered the new museum. But the day was more than just a chance for rugby fans to get a glimpse of the current Springboks. Behind the current players were former Springbok captains, representing the historically White, Coloured and Black South African rugby federations.

The museum itself is impressive, with the 800 m², double-storey venue catering for both rugby fanatics and those with a general interest in the sport. It has various features from an interactive 'Springbok Trials Rugby Skills Zone', where one can mimic the movement of players on the field and 'try out' the physical skills that the Springboks themselves master on the field, to a digital and interactive retelling of South Africa's rugby past on the second floor. One is taken on a journey ranging from rugby's arrival in South Africa during the colonial era in the late 19th century, to the Springbok tours in the early 20th century, to the political turmoil of playing rugby during the apartheid years. A concerted effort is made to represent South African rugby's fractured history by commemorating and venerating all players who excelled in rugby, as well as by including the previously overlooked histories of the African and the Coloured rugby leagues. As SARU president, Oregan Hoskins, put it: 'Our new rugby museum will embrace the past. We want to celebrate South African rugby in all its diverse histories, as well as shine a spotlight on its troubles and turmoil and its growing pains.'²⁸ But the museum experience is also a celebration of the successes that South African rugby enjoyed on the rugby field over a period of a hundred years. The 1995 and 2007 Rugby World Cup victories stand out as memorable achievements that venerate the players, captains and coaches who contributed to those victories.

The ‘rhythm’ of the museum tour is designed to allow the visitor to experience a complete narrative in terms of rugby’s origins in the country up to the present day. A chronicle is recounted from separation to integration, from colonialism to apartheid and to post-apartheid, culminating with Mandela’s involvement in the 1995 Rugby World Cup. The museum tour concludes with a short film entitled *Match day in South Africa*, depicting rugby as a game ostensibly played and appreciated by all. This romantic narrative resonates with what Kirshenblatt-Gimblett has termed the ‘museum effect ... where not only ordinary things become special ... but the museum experience itself becomes a model for experiencing life outside its walls.’²⁹ The grandeur of the museum was recognized internationally, when the Springbok Experience Museum was shortlisted for an international museum award at the annual Museum and Heritage Awards in the United Kingdom in May 2014.

Furthermore, SARU’s decision to look at international best practice of sport museums and identifying the UK-based company Mather & Co as design partner indicate the importance it placed on representing South Africa’s rugby heritage as a professional product. Evidently the conceptualisation of the museum from the beginning was to use it and South Africa’s rugby heritage to further the interests of SARU as a business and the Springboks as their brand. According to SARU’s museum and heritage manager, Dr Hendrik Snyders, promoting the Springbok brand was one of SARU’s main objectives. He explained: ‘The Springbok emblem is one of the most marketable emblems in the world. It is regarded as one of the most successful brands too. The Springbok Experience Museum gives us an opportunity to showcase the Springboks in a different way and by doing this we keep it [the Springbok brand] in the public eye.’³⁰

‘When Jerseys Speak: Contested Heritage at the Springbok Experience Museum

Sport museums are heavily nostalgic, on both a personal and collective level. An argument in heritage studies is that ‘nostalgic sporting exhibitions that market specific sports as corporate brands often minimize or ignore controversial, contested and potentially divisive issues as well as marginalize a great deal of cultural, gendered and political social context’.³¹ The way in which the silences, discrepancies and divisive issues are dealt with in sport museums has been a topic of concern among sport historians and the exhibitions of the coloured and african rugby boards at the Springbok Experience prove no different.³²

South Africa’s racially segregated past has made the politics of representation of South Africa’s rugby history an especially delicate matter. Although SARU made a concerted effort to commemorate the marginalised and neglected heritage of black and coloured rugby players there are still those who feel that their rugby heritage is not truly represented in the Springbok Experience Museum. This was particularly apparent when at the opening of the Springbok Experience Museum the former captains of the white, black and coloured rugby unions were invited to attend the event. Each captain’s name was called out, and somewhat embarrassingly to the organisers, when the names of the coloured or black captains were called out, there was hardly any acknowledgement from the crowd. I couldn’t help hear a middle – aged Afrikaner man murmur, “these players were not Springboks.” Former SARU captain Salie Fredericks who attended the event relayed his discontent to a journalist:

I was very disappointed to find that none of those guys [the Springboks] knew of me. I had a feeling that I never really existed, yet rugby was my life for many years. It is not the first time that I’ve been invited to an event for past and present players, and it is not the first time that we’ve players that I have played with felt like total strangers. I had hoped that by going along with projects such as these it would be unifying ... I still hear that players who played for their national teams were not good enough to be Springboks

and that is why we had no media, like radio and television, or why records were not kept.

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This development was not a vindictive act on part of the crowd, but rather shows how packaging heritage in broad brush strokes under the historically white symbol of the Springboks is problematic. Despite SARU's best intentions to represent South African rugby heritage in its entirety the politics of representation proved more complex. This shows the difficulty of packaging heritage as 'showbusiness'. One of the intentions of the Springbok Experience Museum was to tell the untold story of black and coloured rugby in South Africa, yet the material culture to tell the story with proved difficult to find. According to Snyders many of their documents had been discarded or destroyed in an attempt to prevent government officials from following a paper trail regarding their anti-apartheid activities.³⁴

The artefacts in the Springbok Experience Museum that represent the history of the South African African Rugby Football Board (SAARFB), the SACOS affiliated South African Rugby Union (SARU), and the South African Rugby Football Federation (SARFF) (aligned with the South African Rugby Board) are minimal. Dr Snyders hinted at the 'over representation' of the South African Rugby Board's memorabilia. According to him

The South African Rugby Board of Danie Craven and the Springboks associated with that board had the opportunity to play tests against New Zealand, England, France and so on. So it is assumed and it is true that there is a lot more memorabilia associated with the Springbok jersey. To tell you the truth, that memorabilia is more than 80% that we have in the museum collection. There are trophies, badges, jerseys, and ceramic plates, anything under the sun. While for the South African African Football Union, the South African Rugby Union and the South African Rugby Football Federation that is not the case. So when trying to conceptualise the Springbok Experience Museum we were

confronted with a critical gap in the record. This is the difficulty in trying to make jerseys speak, when you simply don't have as many jerseys to tell stories with.³⁵

It is not that remembrances of these rugby boards do not exist, but rather that the memorabilia is not readily available. A leading sport heritage scholar argues that 'sport heritage is a globally disseminated and consumed commodity, and the values and objectives can change depending on who is consuming the heritage.'³⁶ In this instance SARU were architects in determining the heritage to be consumed in the museum. In an attempt to fill this crucial gap in the record (in terms of the material culture of the african and coloured rugby boards that is available to display at the Springbok Experience Museum) SARU had to manufacture displayable heritage of these rugby bodies.

Prior to the opening of the museum, 40 former captains from the former White, Coloured and African rugby boards were invited to a ceremony at the Waterfront. The captain's handprints were captured in special moulds to be later at the museum as a permanent exhibition (See figure 2). SARU president, Oregon Hoskins said the ceremonial capturing of the handprints of living national rugby union captains – pre and post-unity – was a symbolic unifying of those traditions. According to him

There is no better way to link the past with the present than take a piece of the past – in the shape of the captains' hand prints – and place them into our present and future by capturing them for posterity and installing them as part of our *Springbok Experience*.³⁷

Among those casting their handprints were Des van Jaarsveldt, the oldest living captain of the old South African Rugby Board Springboks, as well as Austen van Heerden, the oldest living captain of the former South African Coloured Rugby Football Board and Bomza Nkhola, the oldest surviving captain of the South African African Rugby Board. ³⁸A critical analysis of

this initiative shows how divisive issues related to the heritage of coloured rugby in South Africa was overlooked. The Springbok Experience Museum, one can argue, has tried to show the inequities of the apartheid side of rugby through various displays, including frank accounts of overseas boycotts of Springbok tours. But the issue of historical representation is more complicated than this. Despite its valiant attempts to be even-handed, lurking behind its overarching message of a superior brand is the primary, if unspoken, premise of the historical achievements of rugby as a pre-eminently Afrikaner game. Using the past for present day purposes is complicated and not as simple as SARU management would propose.



Figure 2. The handprints of the former white, coloured and black rugby captains displayed on the grass outside the Springbok Experience Museum (Photograph taken by author).

At the back of this is the fragmented past of coloured rugby, divided along political lines of their own. The South African Rugby Football Federation (SARFF) established in 1959 in the Western Cape district aligned itself with the white South African Rugby Board. Their apathetic position to politics sport was criticized by the more politically driven South African

Rugby Union (SARU, not to be confused with post democratic SARU), who in 1973 was one of the founding members of the anti - apartheid sports body, the South African Council on Sports (SACOS). SARU organised their own competitions and refused to be associated with the South African Rugby Board of Dr. Craven. SARU's main objective was to boycott Springbok rugby in an attempt to show that they were not willing to be used as political tokens on the rugby field, and would only compete internationally once all South Africans, irrespective of race had the vote. They considered coloured players that operated outside of SARU as "sell outs" and "tokens". Their slogan was 'no normal sport in an abnormal society' and were adamant that sport could be used to showcase the racial inequality brought forth by Apartheid. The federation on the other hand were less politically driven and it's slogan was 'Where rugby is, we play.' Errol Tobias notably known as the first coloured rugby player to play for the Springboks in a test match against Ireland at Newlands in 1981, and aligned with the Federation writes in his autobiography about the friction between the SARFF and SARU:

The SARU supporters would remind me that I am good enough to play for the white people, but not good enough that they would go to the extent to give me the vote. I would always encourage them to continue with their cause and wished them well. We all knew that the vote and equal rights was the only way forward in South Africa, but just as their approach wasn't wrong, so too what I did wasn't wrong ... Till this day I have no regrets. I feel exactly the same as I did then. I was a sportsman, not a politician³⁹

The symbolic display of the handprints of former captains of both the SARFF and SARU was perhaps relevant for representing a 'unified' heritage for present day purposes, but the very different political agendas of these two groups are opportunely overlooked in this display.

The heritage motive, in this instance as in so much else in the country, sugar-coated history with a thin commercial veneer designed to make it palatable to an increasingly consumerist-oriented society.

An exhibition dedicated to Errol Tobias in the Spring Experience Museum showcases his role in shaping rugby history in the country. Sporting heroes can be considered as a form of living heritage, and this idea was become especially prevalent at the opening of the Springbok Experience Museum.⁴⁰ Tobias was clearly proud of his achievements, as he hovered around the exhibition, giving autographs and taking photos with visitors to the museum. I asked Tobias about how he felt about the recognition he now receives almost three decades after his playing days. He explained that it is the first time that he is able to bring his children to a place where they can see and learn who their father was. Tobias is proud that his role in breaking down racial barriers in sport had become immortalized in a museum. This points to how heritage and the material culture used to promote the sporting past is a powerful medium through which nostalgic recollections of a bygone era can be relived, not only on a national or international level, but also on a very intimate personal level. This nuanced personal form of nostalgia and heritage is however problematic to exhibit and often overshadowed by broad brush strokes of politically persuaded heritage.

Conclusion

This paper has shown how the preservation of South African rugby has changed from small scale intimate collections of rugby memorabilia to commercialised forms of preservation in the professional era. The politics of representation in museum exhibitions were probed with specific reference to the ‘manufactured’ heritage of the african and coloured rugby boards. Ultimately, in the professional era of South African rugby, both rugby’s heritage and the

story of South African rugby are closely aligned with one of the biggest rugby brands in the world, the Springboks. This points to the delicate and complex relationship between rugby, heritage, identity and commercialisation in an era of professional sports in South Africa. Moreover, in South Africa a recalcitrant past is always likely to brush against the neat folds and contours required in the manufacturing of heritage.

Endnotes

¹ For examples, see S. Gammon, 'Sporting new attractions? The commodification of the sleeping stadium.' In S. Gammon and J. Kurtzman (eds.). *Sport Experiences: Contemporary perspectives*. (London: Routledge, 2010): 115 - 12; S. Gammon, 'Heroes as Heritage: the commoditization of sporting achievement.' *Journal of Heritage Tourism* 9: 3 (2014): 1 -11; G. Ramshaw, 'Living Heritage and the Sport Museum: Athletes, Legacy and the Olympic Hall of Fame and Museum, Canada Olympic Park.' *Journal of Sport and Tourism* 15:1 (2010): 45 – 70; G. Ramshaw, 'The Construction of Sport Heritage Attractions.' *Journal of Tourism Consumption and Practice* 3: 1 (2011): 1 -25; L. Smith, *The Uses of Heritage*. (London: Routledge, 2006); H.Y. Park, *Heritage Tourism*. (London: Routledge, 2014).

² J. Nauright, 'Sustaining Masculine Hegemony: Rugby and the Nostalgia of Masculinity.' In J. Nauright and T.J.L. Chandler (eds.). *Making Men: Rugby and Masculine Identity*. (London: Frank Cass, 1996).

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⁴ G. Ramshaw, S. Gammon and W.J. Huang, 'Acquired pasts and commodification of borrowed heritage: the case of the Bank of America Stadium tour.' *Journal of Sport and Tourism* 18: 1 (2013): 17 – 31.

⁵ G.J. Ashworth, 'Paradigms and Paradoxes in Planning the Past.' p. 11.

⁶ D. Lowenthal, *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1998: 23).

⁷ G. Bagnall, 'Performance and Performativity at Heritage Sites'. *Museum and Society* 1: 2 (2003): 87 – 103.

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⁹ B. Kirshenblatt – Gimblett, *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), p. 138.

¹⁰ B.J. Pine and J.H. Gilmore, *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre and Every Business a Stage*. (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1999); M. Hall, 'The Reappearance of the Authentic.' In I. Karp, C.A. Kratz, L. Szwaja and T. Ybarra-Frausto (eds.). *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/ Global Transformations*. (Duke: Duke University Press, 2006).

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