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Kurzbeiträge / Reports

Peter Alegi

The Football Heritage Complex: history, tourism, and development in South Africa¹

The post-1994 era will be characterised by change. Change that will not seek to negate or obliterate the experience of any of our communities, but change that seeks to correct the distortions of the past by the revival and the preservation of the cultural heritage of all South Africans. Because, and any reasonable person recognises this, of the deliberate and studied marginalisation and negation of the Black, especially the African experience in the past, this necessarily entails bending the stick radically in the opposite direction. We intend to liberate, depict, put on display and give equal prominence to the cultures, the experience and the stories of the indigenous peoples (Pallo Jordan, South African Minister of Arts and Culture, 2005).

Hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup offers South Africa a unique opportunity to generate cultural capital by displaying its rich football past to the nation and to the world. This article describes an ongoing project to establish a *Football Heritage Complex* (FHC) in KwaZulu-Natal province. This complex is to house a Hall of Fame and Football Museum in Durban's new King Senzangakhona Stadium (under construction) and a Research Centre at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The goal is to open the Hall of Fame in time for the 2009 FIFA Confederations Cup and the Research Centre in 2011. This article explores the project's vision to honour the legacy of the game's greatest players, teams, and builders; to chronicle South African football's largely 'hidden' past; and enhance knowledge production in history, heritage, and sport studies. The FHC's target audience is comprised of tourists (domestic and foreign), fans, sport professionals, members of the media, primary and second-

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dary students, researchers, corporate clients, and heritage experts. The FHC is to promote the importance of historical knowledge, foster a deeper understanding of the nation's heritage, and offer a tourist attraction closely integrated into KwaZulu-Natal's development strategy for 2010 and beyond.

The Hall of Fame and Museum: a brief overview

The idea of building a football heritage site emerged from discussions I had in 2003 with Sifiso Ndlovu, a South African scholar with experience in public history and a member of the National Heritage Council, about the potential impact and wider uses for my social and political history of football in South Africa (Alegi 2004) – the first scholarly monograph published on this topic. We were emboldened by the new heritage infrastructure that emerged after 1994, focusing on representing liberation struggle narratives and political history. Among the most prominent of these sites were the Robben Island Museum in the Western Cape, and the Hector Pieterse Museum, the Apartheid Museum and Constitution Hill complex in greater Johannesburg (cf. Coombes 2003). The Nelson Mandela Heritage Complex in the Eastern Cape, the Ncome/Blood River Museum and the Luthuli Museum in KwaZulu-Natal, and the ongoing Freedom Park project in Pretoria provided further evidence of 'the government's drive to preserve the memory of people, and events that form part of our national experience' (Jordan 2005). Perhaps, Ndlovu and I believed, this firm political and financial commitment could be harnessed and include a football heritage complex.

As the sport of the Black majority (i.e. Africans, Indians, Coloureds), football offered us unique opportunities to link liberation struggle narratives with the historical experiences of ordinary people. The FHC would stand as a powerful and long-overdue tribute to the skill, courage, and passion of players, coaches, officials, organizers, and fans who transformed football into a mobilising force for South Africa's political and cultural liberation. Far from endorsing a hagiographical approach, the FHC seeks to move beyond some recent interpretations of South African heritage centred around large movements and prominent leaders at the expense of ordinary men and women. Instead, the FHC seeks to use sport history to 'historicize the popular' and, simultaneously, popularize history. This approach can attract non-specialists, particularly young South Africans. Several South African academics and football journalists supported this method and encouraged me to conduct a feasibility study.²

² I am especially grateful for constructive comments on the original proposal by André Odendaal, former Director of the Robben Island Museum and currently head of Western

In order to do so, Ndlovu and I joined forces in June 2006 with Ochre Heritage, a leading private company in the heritage tourism industry that delivered the R500 million Constitution Hill development in Johannesburg (Segal et al. 2006). We forged a formal partnership provisionally called *Football Heritage Trust*, propelling the project forward. Our team of historians and heritage experts then pitched the project to, and received an enthusiastic response from, the KwaZulu-Natal Premier's Office. In June and July 2006 project representatives met twice with the Director General and the Special Projects Officer. As a result of these meetings, the FHC was incorporated into KwaZulu-Natal's 2010 World Cup strategy, budget and implementation. The province funded a feasibility study, which is currently underway. A final decision to publicly fund the project described below is expected by the end of 2006.

The first phase of development is focused around the South African football Hall of Fame and Museum, housed inside Durban's iconic King Senzangakhona Stadium planned for 2010, with a seating capacity of 70,000 people. Scheduled to open in 2009, the Hall of Fame aims to celebrate the game's greatest players, teams, and builders (i.e. coaches, administrators, chairpersons, media representatives, and other football personalities). By doing so, South Africans will recognize heroes of the people, individuals who captivated the nation's imagination, made unusual sacrifices, humanized the lives of oppressed South Africans, and brought joy to people with little else to cheer about. Echoing these values, the museum, to be opened early in 2010, will be devoted to the presentation of the history of the game, from its colonial origins to the democratic present. Its pedagogical and narrative particularly focuses on explanations of how and why the development of the game in South Africa influenced, and was influenced by, the social, political, and economic experiences of people caught in the web of racial segregation and apartheid. The museum's presentation would strive for a careful balance between the game's organisational history, football's relationship to South African society and political economy, and changes in the game within the boundaries of the playing fields.

The international benchmarks for this phase of the project (and the inspiration for its name) are the US Soccer Hall of Fame in Oneonta, New York (www.soccerhall.org), and the National Football Museum and Hall of Fame in Preston North End, England (www.nationalfootballmuseum.com). These venues are financially sustainable and socially engaged with local communities, and education and sport structures. South African benchmarks include heri-

Province Cricket; Ciraj Rassool and Premesh Lalu, historians at the University of the Western Cape and District Six Museum board members; Mark Gleeson, soccer writer and commentator; Richard Maguire, Editorial Director of *Kick Off*; and Rodney Reiners, senior soccer writer at the *Cape Argus*.

tage and memory sites like Constitution Hill (Segal et al. 2006), the community based District Six Museum (Rassool/Prosalandis 2001), and the Apartheid Museum (Bonner 2004). We chose to begin the project with the Hall of Fame because it can be realized relatively quickly. Successful completion of this phase would build momentum for the FHC as a whole, as well as strengthen institutional confidence in the FHC and heighten public awareness. Print, broadcast, and electronic media coverage of induction ceremonies and other events are likely to make the Hall of Fame into a regular and attractive venue in the South African heritage and tourism landscape. Finally, these synergies should facilitate the FHC's marketing and communications efforts and boost fundraising campaigns involving corporate sponsors and private foundations.

Visitor experience, education outreach and sustainability

The Hall of Fame and Museum are designed to be accessible, interactive, fun, and self-sustaining. Former players and coaches could be trained to work as tour guides, thereby creating jobs and adding personal knowledge to the visitor experience. This approach has been used successfully at the Robben Island Museum, which employs ex-prisoners as guides to the notorious apartheid prison. Central to the creation of an enjoyable visitor experience is an area where players test their technical skills by dribbling, juggling, heading, passing, shooting, playing small-sided games, videogames, and more. A 300-seat auditorium is planned for the Hall of Fame's annual induction ceremonies, coaching seminars, academic conferences and special events. An on-site restaurant will provide food and catering services. Merchandising will be available for sale at the gift shop, including replica jerseys, museum-branded souvenirs, games, books, CDs, DVDs, team photos, and so on. Arts and crafts spaces for local artists, temporary exhibitions, and other cultural activities are also envisioned. The FHC expects to lend collections to local history museums, heritage sites, sport associations, and interested institutions and companies. It can also plan for touring exhibitions in South Africa and overseas.

A crucial feature is the FHC's commitment to use sport for social upliftment purposes. The FHC aims to improve the standard of the game in KwaZulu-Natal by working with the provincial government, the South African Football Association, and other stakeholders to host football academies and coaching schools, health and fitness programs, as well as workshops and seminars on sport administration and management. These initiatives should ensure King Senzangakhona Stadium's use between football matches. The project has plans to develop educational outreach programs. In cooperation with university and heritage partners, the FHC would follow in the footsteps of the District Six Museum in Cape Town and the Apartheid Museum in

Johannesburg developing educational materials and activities which link directly to the National Curriculum in the learning areas of Social Sciences, Arts and Culture, Technology, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Economic and Management Sciences, and Life Orientation for use by school groups (Bonner 2004, Prosalendis/Kolbe 2004).

With the assistance of Matrix, Michigan State University's award-winning humanities and technology research centre (www.matrix.msu.edu) and the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the FHC intends to create and manage an interactive, open access web site, and launch data-gathering and digitalization projects (e. g. Online Football Digital Library). Moreover, visitors would have computer terminals at their disposal to test their knowledge of football history and explore memorable moments in the history of the sport. IT solutions like virtual environments can also significantly enhance the visitor's experience. Following the National Football Museum in England, we would like to have visitors enjoy taking penalties against past goalkeeping greats!

The Football Heritage Complex as a cultural institution

The Hall of Fame celebrates the careers and achievements of past football greats. The main room is where the Hall of Fame inductees are enshrined. Each member of the Hall would have an individual plaque detailing his/her accomplishments. The museum exhibits would focus on the themes of history, culture, and identity. The popularisation of football in South Africa is to be situated within the broader context of British and Boer/Afrikaner colonialism, commercial capitalism, and the spread of missionary Christianity. It was during the period of industrialisation and urbanisation (after the discovery of diamonds in 1867 and gold in 1886) that the inherited institution of British football was transformed into the 'people's game'. The inclusion of a discussion of migrant labour, pass laws, and influx control will explain, *inter alia*, the diffusion of soccer to rural villages and the social and cultural bonds that linked town and countryside.

KwaZulu-Natal's key role in the history of domestic football would feature prominently. The Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 and the subsequent war with the South African Republic (Transvaal) in 1880-81 brought a large influx of working-class British soldiers who popularized football. Whites in Natal founded the first stable, formal football organisations: the Pietermaritzburg County Football Club in 1879 and the Natal Football Association in 1882. In this formative period a wide range of Black men took up football; in 1886 there already were four Indian football clubs in Durban. African football's origins in Natal can be traced back to the 1890s, with mission school students making up a significant portion of the membership of many clubs. The American Board missionary Onslow Carleton founded the famous Bush

Bucks Football Club in 1902 at Ifafa mission station near Durban. Shooting Stars Football Club of Adams College is one of the best documented of the first mission-based football. The Durban and District Native Football Association, founded in 1916, became the first major urban African football organisation in the country. (As football became the leviathan of Black sport, Whites turned increasingly to rugby and cricket). Chief Albert Luthuli, ANC President (1952-67) and Africa's first Nobel laureate, joined the Durban and District executive as vice-president in 1929. In 1932 Luthuli was named national secretary and treasurer of the South Africa African Football Association. As an emerging African nationalist, Luthuli appreciated the special value of football as a cultural force that could help to build political alliances among Natal's urban workers, rural migrants, and mission-educated *kholwa*. In partnership with Rev. Bernard Sigamoney, Luthuli formed the Natal Inter-Race Soccer Board in 1946. This move represented an initial, perhaps necessary, step towards challenging apartheid in sport. Sportspeople from KwaZulu-Natal, in other words, were at the forefront of the process of transforming sport into a potent force for racial integration, equality, and human rights.

After the Second World War and the rise of apartheid, football's mass popularity brought it into close contact with formal resistance politics. In the 1950s and 1960s, the daunting obstacles faced by African footballers in securing playing fields from hostile White authorities created a new space for contesting, negotiating, and shaping capitalist and colonial attempts to impose strict controls over workers' lives. In 1951 Africans, Coloureds, and Indians came together in Durban to form the South African Soccer Federation, which opposed apartheid in sport. The sports boycott movement played an important role in the fall of apartheid relying heavily on the support of football players, supporters, and organizations. Isolated from world football from 1961 to 1992 (with a one-year reprieve in 1963), South Africa maintained tenuous links with the major changes that revolutionized world football in the 1970s and 80s. However, inside South Africa, television sparked soccer's commercial boom. Sponsorships increased substantially in the 1980s and top players began to earn a living wage. Vigorous corporate support and rising gate income underpinned the game's financial growth. Growing Black power in the game during this era was symbolized by the creation of Kaizer Chiefs (in 1971), which introduced the corporate model of American sport to domestic football, and Jomo Sono's acquisition in 1983 of Highlands Park, a White football powerhouse, which he renamed Jomo Cosmos.

Beginning in the late 1980s, as the ANC and the National Party laid the foundations for a negotiated end to apartheid, antagonistic football associations came together and eventually created, in December 1991 in Durban, an integrated South African Football Association. FIFA welcomed South Africa back into world soccer on July 3, 1992, and four days later the South African national team, later known as *Bafana Bafana* (the Boys), defeated Cameroon 1-0

at King's Park Stadium in Durban. Nelson Mandela acknowledged the magnetic power of the game when he attended a match between South Africa and Zambia on 10 May 1994 – just hours after his presidential inauguration. On 3 February 1996, South Africans became African champions by defeating Tunisia (2-0) before a delirious home crowd of 90,000 people at the FNB Stadium, Soccer City. *Bafana Bafana* participated in the 1998 and 2002 (but not 2006) World Cup finals, which South Africa will host in 2010.

Curatorial methods and approach

Following best practices in public history, as discussed by the Report of the History/Archaeology Panel to the [South African] Minister of Education (2000: 7), the museum is to focus on:

- Representing the past through concise narrative and clear analysis
- Encouraging critical evaluation of sources and evidence
- Fostering debate over interpretations of the past
- Highlighting the links between past, present, and future
- Identifying key processes (power, economic interests, etc.) driving historical change

Exhibit spaces in the Hall of Fame and the Museum are to feature display cases filled with photographs, posters, the art of football fans (e.g. makalapa [miners' helmets]), trophies, jerseys, balls, shoes, match programs, and assorted memorabilia to bring South Africa's rich football heritage to life. All materials should be accompanied by multilingual (e.g. isiZulu, English, etc.) text identifying the contents, providing contextualizing information and a succinct explanation of their significance.

We intend to make ample use of multimedia images and sounds. For instance, large screen televisions would show footage of football collected in the National Film and Video Archive in Pretoria and the South African Broadcasting Company archive in Johannesburg. Radio broadcasts of past football matches in different South African languages could be heard over the sound system, thereby placing visitors in a multicultural and historical context. The incorporation of multilingual personal testimonies into the exhibits is central to the overall mission of the complex. 'Sound domes', used effectively in Cape Town's District Six Museum, would tell individuals stories (Rassool and Prosalendis 2001). Personal anecdotes and life stories can humanize the museum's macro narrative (Coombes 2003) and capture the richness and diversity of historical experiences in a way that books cannot. As South African historian Phil Bonner recently put it: 'It is ultimately these individual voices, these individual personalities, which allow students to connect with the past

and which make history meaningful and alive ... It is here that museums, for all their limitations, can have more scope' (Bonner 2004: 143). These individual portraits should add layers of complexity to the overall narrative and reveal how oppressed South Africans managed to enjoy moments of freedom and creative power that colonial and apartheid officials and documents failed to capture.

Three permanent exhibits would focus on critical issues in South Africa's conflict-ridden past in order to bring to life the main museum themes of history, culture, and identity. A 'Breaking Racial Barriers' exhibit is envisioned around a domestic section and an international one. The first section describes how soccer in South Africa has at different times been organized along racially segregated, multiracial, 'multinational' and non-racial lines. The fluidity and salience of race and racial categories can be probed through a discussion of the Transvaal and Natal Inter-Race Soccer Boards of the 1930s and 1940s and the rise of the anti-apartheid South African Soccer Federation (founded in 1951). The exhibit would then go on to analyse the anti-racist South African Soccer League (1961-65), which demonstrated that racially integrated professional soccer was hugely popular. 'Breaking Racial Barriers' continues by exploring the Pretoria regime's 'multinational' policy of the 1970s and the cracks in the edifice of apartheid that emerged in the mid-1980s. The formation of the National Soccer League in 1985 along nonracial principles and its support of the sports boycott movement will close the domestic section. The global focus section seeks to document the anti-apartheid struggle in world football. A founding member of the Confédération Africaine de Football in 1957, the (White) Football Association of Southern Africa became the main target of the non-racial sport movement (Darby 2002). FIFA sanctions in 1961 were among the very first international indictments of the apartheid regime. The historical significance of South African football must be explained within the context of broader anti-discrimination campaigns, the growing influence of Pan-Africanism, and vital global solidarity. This exhibit will incorporate football into South Africa's liberation narrative and collective memory through the actions and recollections of players, organizers, and ordinary male and female fans.

Another exhibit entitled 'Struggles for Playing Space' is to bring into sharp relief the enormous difficulties faced by Black South Africans in gaining access to playing fields and leisure space during segregation and apartheid. This display should rely on reconstructed environments, such as a ramshackle township sporting facility, a dusty street or school playground, to illustrate the acute shortage and abysmal conditions of playing grounds for the Black majority. Use of still and moving images of playing fields can complement a brief narrative explaining how everyday struggles over leisure space influenced capitalist and colonial attempts to impose strict controls over workers' lives. An analysis of the relationship between football and broader struggles

for space allows to better understand how local and national power was negotiated and contested in twentieth-century South Africa (Alegi 2004).

Video footage and oral testimony will encourage visitors to rethink their views on history, sport, and race. These sources capture the resilience and creativity of South African athletes and also challenge racial and ethnic stereotypes. Tour guides and recorded interviews may discuss the emergence of different styles of play. Most African, Coloured, and Indian players developed their skills as youths in township streets and school playgrounds. In these spaces, individual ball control, grit, guile, and improvisation outweighed the importance of off-the-ball movements, combination play, and positional specialization. 'As a young boy, we had no other choice but to be creative,' Darius Dhlomo told me in a 2003 interview. 'We believed in our own creativity. Things were very tough, but the best way to survive is to do something. Our parents couldn't afford buying us shoes so we started playing on the streets of the location barefooted. Soccer was one of the sports we could without having to pay any money. We only needed a tennis ball! And that's how the talent grew up.'

The world-class sporting facilities generally found in White residential areas must be represented in order to discuss White domination as the fundamental cause of inequality and injustice in South African sport and society. Local and regional differences, as well as the impact of racist laws and policies, should foster an understanding of the deep impact of apartheid on the oppressed majority (cf. Merrett 2006). Overall, this exhibit combines a political economy analysis with a critical account of the game's technical performance on the field of play. By doing so, the visitor should appreciate the material basis of local football history and the historical causes for the game's fierce politicization in South Africa.

A permanent exhibit entitled 'Going Local' is planned around the process of 'vernacularization' of football (Alegi 2004). The goal is to carve out a museum space in which visitors can consider internal dynamics (including tensions) in Black communities and how people negotiated culture and identity over time (cf. Nuttall/Coetzee 1998). This exhibit's goal is to shed light on how the world's game was transformed to suit local customs, traditions, and objectives. As colonial football's popularity grew over time, agrarian rituals featuring diviners, healers, use of *umuthi* and *iziphandla* (arm bracelets/protective amulets) percolated into the metropolitan game. The relationship between indigenous cultures, colonial power, and changing social identities should be further examined through a presentation of rituals of spectatorship. The practice of giving nicknames to players, borrowed from the long-standing rural tradition of *izibongo* (Zulu) or *lithoko* (Sotho), provides a fascinating example (Alegi 2004: 52).

Another important objective of 'Going Local' is to demonstrate how football empowered people to create social institutions that instilled civic

pride and forged community bonds. For instance, some clubs (e.g. Orlando Pirates and Durban Bush Bucks) operated for many years in ways reminiscent of mutual aid societies: providing burial funds, jobs, passes, and bursaries to club members and their relatives. Ultimately, themes of culture and identity bring out subaltern agency and emphasize how football enabled oppressed Black South Africans to cope with urban migration and industrial labour, and to build alternative networks and social networks outside the control of the White minority.

2010 and beyond: the Football Research Centre

The second phase of the FHC's development proposes the establishment of a Football Research Centre at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg. Its primary objective is to create an institutional repository to gather, catalogue, and preserve written, oral, audio, and visual sources, as well as material culture, documenting South(ern) African football, past and present. By funding the construction of a Football Research Centre, KwaZulu-Natal province can become a symbol of innovative knowledge production and become a role model for South Africa and, perhaps, other African nations. It must be openly accessible to any visitor, lay or professional, domestic or foreign. The Research Centre's Library should enable visitors to consult thousands of scholarly publications, newspapers, magazines, and electronic sources directly related to Southern African and international football. The Archive is to hold organizational records of football clubs and associations, personal papers and private collections of former players, coaches, administrators, and other leading football personalities, as well as photographs, oral history interviews, radio broadcasts, film and television footage.

The Research Centre can be built and maintained through a partnership between the FHC, the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and other government, academic, and heritage partners, including overseas institutions. These partnerships should promote rigorous scholarship and transnational cooperation, encouraging joint projects and the sharing of staff, resources and knowledge. The Research Centre can open a new intellectual space by integrating everyday stories of football's past into the mainstream of South African history and heritage. Strategically, the Research Centre is a fundamental component of the FHC's long-term sustainability goals beyond 2010.

Conclusion

The 2010 FIFA World Cup is a powerful catalyst for this proposal to build a Hall of Fame and Museum at Durban's new King Senzangakhona Stadium. The proposed complex aims to provide benefits that extend well beyond 2010. The FHC can provide KwaZulu-Natal with a flagship heritage project in pursuit of the province's goal to host a successful 2010 World Cup. It intends to generate cultural capital by presenting historical narratives that link South Africa's liberation movements with the quotidian experiences of ordinary people. The FHC should make the new stadium a key tourist attraction, foster economic growth, and promote the development of football and education in the province. Capital and operational funding from public and private sources – South African and foreign – is necessary for long-term viability. Public funds should come from the government of KwaZulu-Natal Province, the municipalities of Ethekwini (Durban) and Umsunduzi (Pietermaritzburg), as well as the national Departments of Arts & Culture, Environmental Affairs & Tourism, and Sport & Recreation.

As an innovative space for the representation and negotiation of history and memory, the proposed FHC has begun to pry open a new window on football's hidden past in an attempt to address the cultural racism of the past (cf. Wright and Mazel 1991: 59-77) and to assist in the nation-building process. 'Through the use and development of museums and significant sites, and through the search for and retrieval of lost heritage,' local museologists Prosalendis and Kolbe have noted, 'we can begin to create a new sense of citizenship' in South Africa (Prosalendis/Kolbe 2004: 130). The FHC hopes to contribute to South Africa's strategic plan to place the 2010 World Cup 'in a broader context ... in terms of looking at culture, music, tourism' and to transform this global mega-event into 'a total experience, not only a football experience' (Danny Jordaan, quoted in KwaZulu-Natal 2006).

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