

Place Identity and Sport Tourism: The Case of the Heritage Classic

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This paper will examine the promotion and media coverage of Heritage Classic outdoor ice hockey game held in Edmonton, Canada on November 22, 2002. The Heritage Classic was the first outdoor ice hockey game in the history of the National Hockey League. It included both a regular competition between the current Edmonton Oilers and the Montreal Canadiens as well as an exhibition game of former star players. The distinguishing feature of the event was that the games were played outdoors in the 60,000 seat Commonwealth Stadium. Media discourse about the event was characterized by nostalgic themes associated with the teams themselves, winter in Canada, and childhood memories of hockey on frozen ponds. Leiper's (1990) attraction framework will be used to position the event as a tourist attraction. The cultural context of the event will then be examined in terms of the concept of place identity. Differing perspectives of place identity will be identified through the analysis of local/regional, national, and international media coverage of this event.