

S18	PANEM ET CIRCENSES: SPORT VENUES IN MODERN URBAN EUROPE
Organisers:	Stefan Couperus (Utrecht University) Dr. Harm Kaal (Radboud University)
Period:	Modern/Contemporary
Date:	Saturday, 1 September, 2012
Time:	14:00-15:30
Room:	104

Description

From the end of the 19th century onwards, a series of urban arenas were constructed which facilitated what increasingly became one of the most significant forms of entertainment for urbanites of all social strata throughout Europe: sports. This second age – the first being the Roman era – of stadia witnessed the rapid emergence of velodromes, (football) stadiums, large gymnasiums and race tracks as dynamic loci where urban society interacted in many ways. People were able to admire the marvels of technology as cyclists sprinted for the prize; race-drivers mastered ever more powerful combustion engines; gamblers could take a bet on fine bred horses and exotic boxers; and professional sports created a whole new elitist caste to look up to. As such, sport venues in the modern city did not only entail an impact on the physical city, but also had an impact on urban society at large. Old social divisions were (temporarily) surmounted, whereas at the same time new cleavages and alliances became manifest. Furthermore, the impact of grand sport venues transcended the city borders as they not seldomly became iconic vehicles in city promotion. Sport venues, thus, have contributed immensely to the physical, social and cultural urban fabric from the late 19th century onwards. However, they have not very often been at centre of scholarly attention. Recent research into urban boosterism, civic identity creation and the construction of urban place has marked monuments, churches, town halls, sky scrapers and railway stations as relevant modern urban sites. This session wants to rank sport venues among these more familiar objects of research.

This session will discuss these sport venues from different perspectives which might include:

1. Sport venues as projects of urban boosterism (aimed at stimulating the city's economic potential)
2. Sport venues as showpiece projects of urban elites
3. Sport venues as a new "public sphere" (as sites of commemoration, politics, culture and so on)
4. Sport venues as the constructions of urban place

The session organizers welcome papers from any area of modern history and invite presenters to discuss sport venues from one or more of the perspectives mentioned above or to add new perspectives which might improve our understanding of the meaning and impact of sport venues in the urban context. The session particularly stimulates the comparison of sport venues internationally.

Scientific Programme

- 1137 IDENTITY, CIVIC PRIDE AND THE ROLE OF SPORT IN MIDDLESBROUGH, C. 1870-1914**
Catherine Budd (De Montfort University, London, U.K.)
- 1102 CONFLICT AND SPECTACLE IN URBAN STADIA**
Benjamin Flowers (Georgia Institute of Technology, School of Architecture, Atlanta, USA)
- 820 STADIUM IN THE AGE OF MECHANICAL REPRODUCTION**
Petr Roubal (Institute of Contemporary History, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Department of Post-1989 Democratic Transition History, Prague, Czech Republic)
- 634 PRIVATIZING THE GAME: COLLEGE FOOTBALL, UNIVERSITY STADIUMS, AND THE MAKING OF EXCLUSIVE PUBLICS**
Matthew Blanton (University of Michigan, American Culture, Wellesley, USA)