

TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT FOOTBALL INFRASTRUCTURE IN KHARKIV AND SOFIA FROM THE END OF THE 19TH TILL THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURIES

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Abstract. Infrastructure is one of the main parts of football industry in contemporary time. Pitches, stadiums, sporting goods stores, museums of different teams and clubs are very important now. These facilities began to appear in Central-Eastern Europe at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. The aim of this research is the comparison of knowledge transfer process about football infrastructure in Kharkiv and Sofia. This article shows participants and ways to disseminate knowledge about football infrastructure, location of football pitches and stadiums in two non-port cities. It also illustrates the importance of local educational institutions and businesses in disseminating such information. More generally, the comparison provides insight into the influence of the administrative status of the city and the level of its industrialization on the speed and the scale of the implementation of knowledge in practice.

Keywords: football; infrastructure; Kharkiv; Sofia; stadium; football pitch

Introduction

The end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century represent the period of rapid modernization in Europe. The Second Industrial Revolution and urbanization changed lifestyle and leisure of residents of the European cities. The number of people who could afford to go in for sports for entertainment and health was constantly growing. At that time the first football societies appeared in Europe. People started to watch football competition.

The interest in football began to emerge in Central-Eastern Europe. This region was part of multinational states at that time. There were the German, the Austro-Hungarian, the Russian and the Ottoman Empires. Also, new states such as Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro and Romania developed in the Balkans. Social, economic, and cultural modernization of these countries was characterized by the adoption of western practices and the preservation of local flavour. But the Western influence became more visible and the popularity of football as a game for health and entertainment grew.

Infrastructure is one of the main parts of football industry in contemporary time. Pitches*, stadiums with a stand for spectators, sporting goods stores, museums of different teams and clubs are very important now. These buildings began to appear in Central-Eastern Europe at the end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century.

The history of the development of sports infrastructure in the UK, France, Germany, the USA, Italy has been actively studied lately (Bolz 2012; Taylor 2013; Dyreson, Trumbour 2013; Lewis 2016), but the situation in Central-Eastern Europe is revealed very superficially in the available scientific studies (Popdimitrov, Kurtev, Marholev 1970; Simeonov 1984; Georgieva 2002; Yakymyshyn 2006; Grot 2008; Vatsiba 2008; Lutskyi 2010; Bondar 2012; Hristov 2013; Borisov 2020). The purpose of this study is to compare knowledge transfer about the organization of football infrastructure in two cities, Kharkiv and Sofia. The first one is a big provincial city with developing industry in the Russian Empire, the second one is the capital of Bulgaria. At the same time, it is important not only to determine the ways of this transfer from Western to Central-Eastern Europe, but also to show the influence of other Ukrainian, Russian, and Bulgarian cities, as well as the dissemination of this information within Kharkiv and Sofia.

This comparison expands our understanding of the process of spreading the knowledge about football in the non-port cities of Central-Eastern Europe. It is a well-known fact that the first knowledge about football in Bulgaria and Ukraine appeared in the port cities of Varna, Odesa, and Mykolaiv thanks to British sailors who often visited them. How did the residents of Sofia and Kharkiv learn the rules for arranging football pitches and stadiums? Who did bring this information to these two landlocked cities and where exactly? These questions are considered in this study. The relevance of such comparison is determined by the comparability of Sofia and Kharkiv in terms of area and population in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. On the other hand, the experience in arranging the football infrastructure in each of these cities of Bulgaria and of the Russian Empire is original, since the process we are studying is influenced by many factors such as the administrative status of city, the presence of industry, and so on. By all these indicators Sofia and Kharkiv were quite different from each other. Comparison of the process of transferring the knowledge about football infrastructure in Sofia and Kharkiv will allow us to determine the impact of the industrialization level and the administrative status on the development of football in these cities.

We used archival documents from the State Archives of the Kharkiv region¹⁾ and local newspapers²⁾ to solve these tasks. This allowed us to expand our understanding of the level of football popularity in the Ukrainian city, the participation of the Russian empire in the construction of football infrastructure. We formed our

*A sport field without stands for spectators.

understanding of the situation in Sofia with the help of the scientific works of Bulgarian authors (Popdimitrov, Kurtev, Marholev 1970; Kizchenko 1980; Simeonov 1984; Georgieva 2002; Hristov 2013; Borisov 2020).

1. Practices of knowledge transfer about football infrastructure in Kharkiv

Kharkiv was a large center with population of 173 989 people in 1897, 16 years later 244 700 people lived in the city. Kharkiv had good transport communications, enterprises, University, gymnasiums and sporting societies at the beginning of the 19th century. Foreigners constantly lived in the city. They were business owners, bankers, traders, engineers and skilled workers of local factories.

One of the biggest enterprises was “Helferich-Sadet” („Гельферих-Саде“) factory, its owners were Belgian and German industrialists which produced agricultural machines in Kharkiv. British and Belgian workers of this factory built the first football pitch in Karkiv in 1907 – 1908. It was located on Staro-Moskowska Street (Старомосковская улица), named “Sadet-Park” („Саде-парк“), and was connected with the city centre by horse-drawn railway. The field didn’t survive to this day. Department store “Kharkiv” („Харків“) is situated at this place now, with the address Heroyiv Kharkova Avenue, 103.

This field didn’t have a viewing stand for audience and it was used only for health and entertainment purposes. The locals didn’t play on this pitch often. But the significance of this facility was great. It became the model for new football fields in Kharkiv. “Sadet-Park” contributed to the popularization of football in the city. Footballer Ivan Natarov recalled that every novice player dreamed to visit this pitch. He played on this ground in the summer 1913 for the first time. The Kharkiv resident told that the owners of “Sadet-Park” allowed the local public to train there. And after the start of regular competitions in the city, the ground became more accessible (Grot 2008, 8 – 9).

However, football wasn’t the most popular sport at the beginning of the 19th century in Kharkiv. Several facts support this thesis. “The Kharkiv Society for the Promotion of Physical Education of Children” („Харьковское общество физического образования детей“) sent its statute to the local governor for consideration on April 1, 1900. This organization planned to conduct systematic practical training in gardening, gymnastics, swimming, fencing, dancing, rowing, cycling, target shooting, and horseback riding. Football wasn’t even mentioned in the list of activities³). Until 1910 newspapers in Kharkiv didn’t write about football competition. Their attention was focused on equestrian horse racing, which competitions were held at the Hippodrome, but the popularity of football was gradually growing.

Shops selling inventory and accessories for football were opened at this time in Kharkiv. An Austrian citizen and gymnastics teacher at Kharkiv schools Eduard Mali founded a shop in Shlyapny Lane (Шляпный переулок)⁴). High quality

balls and boots could be manufactured or ordered there. Schillinger's shop on Nikolaevskaya Square (Николаевская площадь) and Gavrik Garagulya's workshop on the intersection of Nikolaevskaya Square and Moskovskaya Street (Московская улица) also sold similar goods (Grot, 9). These products were imported from abroad or were made according to foreign inventory.

The first football club was registered in the city in the summer of 1908, it consisted of about 30 people and was named "The First Kharkiv Football Team" („Первая харьковская футбольная команда“). Students of Kharkiv gymnasiums formed the basis of this team. It took part in the first demonstration match with "Helferich-Sadet" („Гельферих-Саде“) team in June 1909 on the ground of the Hippodrome. Since May 1910, football competitions began to be held regularly in Kharkiv. They were organized on different football grounds of the city, that were built by football societies. One of them was located on Chernyshevskaya street, 83 – 87 (вулиця Чернишевська, 83 – 87). There was organized a match between "First" („Первая“) and "Second" („Вторая“) football teams on May 6, 1910, that was described by the Kharkiv press for the first time⁵. The ground was made by the model of "Sadet-Park" but its quality was much worse.

A private sports complex was built on Sumska street (вулиця Сумська) by the manufacturer Zhmutska in 1911. It was located opposite the Zemsky Park (Земский парк). Everybody could get to this facility by carriage. Kharkiv team "Fenix" („Феникс“) that was formed on the base of "The First Kharkiv Football Team" played there. There was also a wooden pavilion with changing rooms and four tennis courts (Grot, 12). This building practice was common at that time in many European cities including St. Petersburg and Moscow. But the ground of the complex was uncomfortable for football, didn't bring income for the owners, and functioned for entertainment and training; however, tennis courts were profitable.

In June 1910, British, French, German, and Belgian citizens together with local Kharkiv intellectuals organized "Sporting Club". Two years later the club founders signed an agreement with the Kharkiv City Government on the lease of land in the Third City Park (Третий городской парк) along the Sumy Highway (Сумское шоссе)⁶, which is the Central Park (Центральный парк) now. Next year in March 18, the society received permission to build a football pitch, courts, and pavilions. The Belgian, German, French, and British founders of this team were the bearers of knowledge about how to equip such sport complex. At the same time, "Sporting Club" was forbidden to build any additional facilities, such as restaurants and buffets, without the approval of the Council, furthermore the sport complex was allowed for visiting only for the members of the society⁷. As we can see, the procedure for obtaining a permission to equip a ground in Kharkiv was quite long and difficult. Nevertheless, a new exemplary sports complex appeared in the city thanks to foreigners.

Other teams also started building their own pitches. “Alexeevsky Club” („Алексеевский Клуб“) had their ground in New Bavaria region near the Alekseev’s factory, team “Mayak” („Маяк“) in Zhuravlevka region near the local church. These sports grounds had no seats for fans and the quality of their surfaces was quite poor (Grot, 9). Some teams such as “Gorets” („Гоpec“), “Viktoriya” („Виктория“), “Yermak” („Ермак“), “Diana” („Диана“), “Spartanets” („Спартанец“), “Marianna” („Марианна“), “Orel” („Орел“), “Banzay” („Банзай“), “Khrizantema” („Хризантема“), “Modern” („Модерн“), “Nadezhda” („Надежда“), “Moryak” („Моряк“), “Provodnik” („Проводник“), “Tsar-Tsarap” („Цар-Царап“) (“Shturm” („Штурм“) since 1912) didn’t have their own pitches and so they played on wastelands using simple portable goals. These numerous Kharkiv teams played an important role in disseminating the knowledge about the arrangement of football pitches among the inhabitants of the city outskirts, such as unskilled workers, merchants, and artisans.

Football also penetrated into educational institutions. Gymnasium and University students also played football on makeshift grounds and wastelands. The two pitches located opposite to the district hospital were popular among the students of the Second and Third gymnasiums. The Sumsky market (Сумський ринок) and resident houses on Kultury Street (вулиця Культури) are situated in this place now. Also, Commercial school built its own football pitch on Pushkinskaya street, 88 (вулиця Пушкінська, 88) later (Grot, 21). The quality of these pitches was worse than that of “Sadet-Park” which remained the standard and the model.

Since 1899 the Kharkiv Hippodrome was the first sports facility with equipped wooden stands for spectators. As we know, football matches were held there regularly. The concrete stand near the running circle was completed in 1914. This Modern style construction was designed by renowned architects Marian-Zdislav Harmansky and Alexander Ginsburg⁸). Two years later a new more advanced drained stadium was built next to the old football pitch “Sadet-Park” by foreign specialists. This ground was sown with grass imported from England. There was a special stand for spectators and a building with a shower and changing rooms (Grot, 8).

Thus, during the first twenty years of the 20th century, football very quickly gained popularity among the local population. There were several permanent football pitches, sports shops, complexes, and stadium with stand for fans in the city. Foreigners which worked at enterprises in Kharkiv were the first people who created the models of football infrastructure in the city. Local sportsmen used those models to organize their own pitches. The local existing sports infrastructure was adapted for playing football, as for example, Kharkiv Hippodrome. Emergence of football infrastructure with stands for spectators testified the growing popularity of the game in the city.

2. Emergence and spreading of knowledge about the football infrastructure in Sofia

The population in Sofia at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries was less than in Kharkiv, numbering 46628 people in 1892, 82621 in 1905, and 102812 in 1910. However, as we can see, the population of the city increased very rapidly. The city was connected by railway and highway communications with the Ottoman Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Serbia, and big Bulgarian ports Varna and Burgas. The Sofia University was founded in 1888, several gymnasiums and schools functioned in this city, but the level of industrialization was negligible. There were state arsenal, railway depot, sugar factory, several mills, foreign electricity companies, banks, and trade firms in Sofia (Natan, 331 – 332). There was no such number of foreign workers in the capital of Bulgaria as in Kharkiv.

Football was introduced in Sofia by Charles Champaud, the Swiss and Bulgarian teacher of the First Male Gymnasium and gymnast, in 1895. Pupils of the fifth and the sixth grades of the gymnasium played football on two pitches. The first was located in the courtyard of this educational institution, and the second was organized in the wasteland where the administration of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” is located now. In two years, the rules for playing were published by Swiss teachers in the magazine “Uchilishten pregled” („Училищен преглед“). Football teams were organized in Varna, Plovdiv, and Sofia. Their first primitive pitches were just some levelled land areas with no markings with sides and corners lines, central circle, penalty areas or even stationary goals, the functions of the latter were fulfilled by flags or piles of personal items.

At that time, in Sofia, as well as in Bulgaria, there were neither shops nor workshops where it would be possible to buy or order football balls, equipment, and inventory for this kind of sport. It is known that Georges de Regibus, the teacher of the Varna Boys High School and the gymnast, used for training and playing football his own ball brought from Switzerland. Before the beginning of the 1896 – 1897 academic year the museum employee Todor Belchov collected funds to purchase a leather ball in Vienna for the students of the Plovdiv Men Gymnasium (Popdimitrov, Kurtev, Marholev 1970, 7).

Swiss teachers Alois Bunter from Tarnovo gymnasium and Jacques Fardel from Kazanlak school published a brochure “Collection of gymnastic exercises for the public” in 1901. Football was named “ritnitop” in this book. The authors listed the exercises which were necessary to improve football skills but didn’t write about the requirements for the relevant infrastructure (Popdimitrov, Kurtev, Marholev 1970, 8).

In 1904, a stadium was built by Bulgarian gymnastic association “Yunak” („Юнак“) in the north-western part of the capital garden of Prince Boris, not far from the place where the “Vasyl Levski” („Васил Левски“) stadium is located now⁹⁾. It was also named “Yunak”. The purpose of this facility was conducting of the

Third General Council of this gymnastic association. The structure was an almost rectangular field with four straight rows of tribunes on all sides. There weren't any markings and stationary goals there. It was intended mainly for competitions in athletics, gymnastics and celebrations, for example parades, ceremonies, etc. However, at the beginning of the 20th century, football games sometimes were carried out there. "Yunak" was the first multifunctional stadium in Sofia and became a model for other football facilities⁹.

Bulgarian publicists also formed ideas about the structure of football infrastructure. In April 1906, Ivan Radoslavov published an article on this topic in the magazine "Rosna kitka" („Росна китка“). The author gained his knowledge about the norms and standards of the arrangement of football field in Lausanne, Geneva and Brussels, where he studied and lived. Football stadiums had already existed in these cities at that time. "A yard or a flat glade are suitable for the playground. Two goals are located on the opposite sides. The gate is formed from two pillars with a transverse wooden stick or a tightrope over them. The gate must be 4 meters wide and 2 meters high" (Popdimitrov, Kurtev, Marholev 1970, 9). It was the first instruction for the construction of football pitch in Bulgaria.

In the article I. Radoslavov also provided information about the main attribute of football, which is the ball. He wrote about standard dimensions of this object with diameter 20 – 22 cm, weight 13 – 15 oz (368 – 425 g). The author also introduced two components of the ball. The first one is an inner rubber chamber with a nipple for introducing the air, wherein the nipple had to be hidden under the lacing. The second one is a tire made of eighteen panels of genuine leather stitched with laces. (Popdimitrov, Kurtev, Marholev 1970, 9). Craftsmen who lived in Bulgarian cities could easily make such a ball in their own workshops using the instructions of I. Radoslavov.

After that the new places for playing football appeared in Sofia. One of them was located between "Eagles' Bridge" („Орлов мост“) and Military school. There is Historical evidence of the game that was played there in 1907 (Popdimitrov, Kurtev, Marholev, 9). Two years later, students of French Lyceum in Istanbul "Lyceum Galatasaray" organized a match on wastelands, where the stadium "Bulgarska armiya" ("Българска Армия") is located today. This was the first football event with spectators. Thereafter students established two football societies¹⁰. The first one is "Otborna na Matinkata" („Отборът на Матинката“) that played its matches on the ground near the Russian monument (Руски паметник) during the period from June till September of 1911. Then they received a piece of land from the Sofia community for a new field near the Tsar's Manage in the place of the present-day National Library "St. Cyril and Methodius" (Borisov 2020, 656). "Savata" („Савата“) team was founded in 1909. After four years this organization was officially registered as "FC-13" („ФК-13“). The club pitch was located on the place of an old Russian cemetery, near the contemporary "Vasyl Levski" stadium. There were a wooden

tribune and an office of the society there. Team “Botev” (“Ботев”) began to play regularly in 1910. After three years its members together with the members of the society and gymnastic partnership “Razvitie” („Развитие“) founded a club called “Slavia” („Славия“). Its pitch was also located near the Russian monument. It is known that the city municipality wanted to build a church on this place, but it was prevented by the intervention of Dimitar Blagoev, the political leader, the founder of the Bulgarian left-wing political movement, and the communal councillor of Sofia in 1911 – 1915, which was a brother of a co-founder of “Slavia” (Popdimitrov, Kurtev, Marholev 1970, 11). Students of the Second Male Gymnasium had their football pitch in the area of Mogilka (Могилка) – Hill, at the corner of Pencho Slaveykov (Пенчо Славейков) Boulevard and Nikola Slavkov (Никола Славков) Street (Bulgaria, 532). On May 24, 1914 they founded one of the most famous and titled clubs in Bulgaria, “Levski” („Левски“).

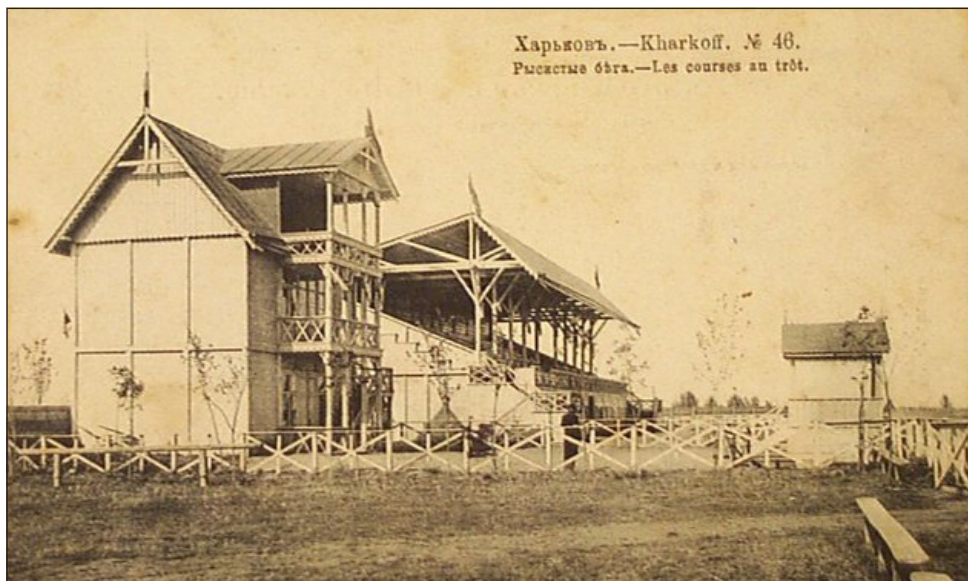
Conclusions and summary

Thus, the presented factual material allows us to make comparative analysis of the knowledge transfer process about football infrastructure. The first sports facilities with stands for spectators in Sofia and Kharkiv weren’t intended for football. This testified to the fact that at the beginning of the 20th century football was inferior in popularity to other kinds of sports. However, one of the first demonstration football matches took place at the Kharkiv Hippodrome and the “Yunak” stadium in Sofia (Application 1, 2).

Knowledge about constructing of football pitches came to Kharkiv with British and Belgian specialists who worked in the factories of the Ukrainian city. In Sofia, Swiss teachers spread information about the rules for arranging football fields. We haven’t identified the influence of the practices of other Bulgarian and Ukrainian / Russian cities on Sofia and Kharkiv respectively.

The initiative to create football infrastructure also belonged to the representatives of foreign industrial enterprises in the Ukrainian city, while in the capital of Bulgaria this was done by teachers and students of local First and Second male gymnasiums. The industrial enterprises and local business in Kharkiv were able to spend much more resources on the development of football infrastructure than the educational institutions and sports clubs in Sofia could afford to. That is why in the city in the East of Ukraine high-quality sports grounds appeared earlier than in Bulgaria. The educational institutions of Kharkiv also took an active part in the construction of football pitches, but their infrastructure facilities, as those in Sofia, were notable for their simplicity and low quality. Also, there were more amateur teams that played matches and trained on wastelands in Kharkiv. They contributed to the dissemination of knowledge about football among unskilled workers. This indicates the higher popularity of football in the city in the East of Ukraine.

Application



1. Kharkiv Hippodrome at the beginning of the 20th century¹¹⁾



2. “Yunak” Stadium in 1910¹²⁾

Journal publications were of certain importance for the share of knowledge about the football infrastructure in Sofia. There were no such practices in Kharkiv at the beginning of the 20th century. Generally, the way of transferring the knowledge about the infrastructure still remained a secondary factor in the development of football industry and the socio-economic conditions in the cities were of greater importance.

Football infrastructure in Kharkiv had already become part of the sports business industry and made a profit for its owners. There had already been attempts to make football fields a part of larger projects, e.g. combining them into complexes with tennis courts. Shops and workshops had already functioned in the city, which sold and manufactured football equipment and balls. We do not see this in Sofia of that time.

At the beginning of the 20th century the participation of the state in the construction of football infrastructure in Sofia and Kharkiv was minimal. It only partially regulated this process granting a building permit. Therefore, the status of capital city didn't provide any advantages. The higher level of industrialization and business activity in the Ukrainian city predetermined more teams and pitches.

The location of football pitches and stadiums in Sofia and Kharkiv was similar in most cases. This infrastructure appeared near educational institutions, on wastelands located near the city borders. However, in the Ukrainian city the constructions were built in industrial areas, and we don't see that in the capital of Bulgaria.

After the First World War, new political and socio-economic factors began to determine the development of football infrastructure in Kharkiv and Sofia. At that time, in Sofia these conditions were better because Bulgaria gained political and economic stability earlier. The Civil war on the territory of Ukraine didn't contribute to the construction of stadiums and sports shops until 1921.

NOTES

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