WHAT’S THE GROUNDSPOTTING?

Our readers have just started getting used to such a hobby as GROUNDHOPPING, but it turns out that there is something similar and even not less interesting hobby as a collecting of visited stadiums. It must be liked not only by travel lovers, but also by guys who don’t know the limits too.

Stone Forest talked to a man who doesn’t know the limits and always reaches the target of his interests and who is solid during life. And the name of that man is Maksim Malets.

GREETING MAKSIM! HOW DID YOU GET THE INTEREST IN GROUNDSPOTTING? TELL US \* WHAT IS THE GROUNDSPOTTING?

Hi, according to accepted rules, it means visiting the stadium out of the game. As for me, for example, it wasn’t always important if there was a game or not, but now I get I’d like there were the games played in the stadium and not only football. If you can enter into the stadium using any methods and it doesn’t matter how (the methods can be quiet sophisticated) in this case, yeah, you are cool, you can \*\*\*\*\*, \*\*\*\*\* something, but I’m a man with manners. I just love slapping the stickers peacefully. Firstly, I’m interested in the stadium, its architecture, its history and its fan shop which 80% of the team is in the area of the stadium. There I can buy the official pin for my collection, but about it a little bit later. Moreover, it’s necessary to take pictures of the stadium inside and outside. The photo which was described by the GROUNDHOPPER Oleg Suppagooder, later it turned out it was so called GROUNDSPOTTING.

The counting of my stadium’s collection has been started since 2011; it was my first travelling abroad to Bulgaria. It was an amazing resort. Sunny coast next to the great city BURGAS where the stadium \* LAZUR was. At that moment the local team CHERNOMORETS was playing. But nowadays this team has hard time. The first abroad pin in my collection was bought there. What was ridiculous, walking around the stadium, I was upset of not finding the fan shop. And later it turned out that the fan shop was inside the stadium in the tribune. So then, I decided to attack the guard. I was lucky because the Soviet Epoch left in the guard’s mind some Russian words and he understood what I wanted from him. The worst was that I didn’t get it was Sunday and the fan shop didn’t work which of course I didn’t know. But after twenty minutes of sly persuasion, it was sorted out, where I explained that I couldn’t come the next day because my flight back to Moscow would be that night. Finally I was lucky because the guard called the seller who was living near the fan shop. I could buy a long expected pin and took few photos.

REMEMBER YOUR MOST FASCINATING TRIPS. WHICH COUNTRY DO YOU KEEP IN YOUR MIND MOST OF ALL AND WHY?

My favorite country is Spain. I have been there five times. It never pesters: there is delicious food, great energetic, this is a place where you feel great in any weather. There is something always to do; there is everything that I need for my hobby. I was in Madrid, Valencia and of course in Barcelona. Every time I come to Barcelona I always go to CORNELLE EL PRAT, the amazing stadium in the most exciting city which reminds me about my native place UZHNOE BUTOVO. And this is the stadium where my first GROUNDHOPPING was set. It was ESPANYOL and MALAGA, the match was bullshit, drawn game, the atmosphere was downcast. Only the tasty hot dogs made me glad. Besides ESPANYOL, I sympathize with VALENCIA and their stadium MESTALLA is my favorite one in the country.

What about the interesting stories, they were many of them. I will tell some. One of them is about MADRID and VICENTE CALDERON, it’s a huge stadium and it’s impossible to get inside if there aren’t matches, even I think, Sergey Bubka, wouldn’t able to pole vault. I was just walking around it and saw the workers opening the gates to get into the stadium. Even more I noticed further the other gate behind it I could see the football pitch. I made a rush as a ZOMBIE. In a minute the guard ran out and started yelling TERRORISM POLICE. Only these words I got from his vocabulary. I had to memorize five Spanish words learn at the university and miraculously not to be taken to the police office.

One more story happened in the district of SALZBURG in the awesome and great city GRODIG. Generally, the main staff surprised me there was nobody in the stadium. Even more I yelled some times in different languages to attract attention. Then the moment of checkout was after, there was a café near the stadium. Next to the main entrance there was a small shop window with a pennant, a baseball and a pin with five euro price tag. Only one glass centimeter and strength of will separated me from it. After few years that pin completed my collection thank to my colleague with the same occupation. By the way I will make some videos about the pins periodically and will meet with guys addicted to it. At that time, being in front of the shop window, the only thought came to my mind was to break the glass and leave five euro inside the shop.

HOW MANY STADIUMS AND COUNTRIES HAVE YOU VISITED?

13 countries about 50 stadiums and 90% because of the GROUNDSPOTTING.

WHAT DOES THE HOBBY LIKE THIS ONE GIVE TO YOU?

I just like travelling. I’m interested in architecture, style of the city and how they influence on the sportive objects. For me, it’s just passion, bliss, paramount aim in finding the pin (I call it #PINSHOPPING) and for that one I need the stadium.

I’m ready from the airport to drop all my clothes in the hotel and run to the stadium which is in the city and then visiting historic places, sightseeing, shopping etc.

CAN ANY PERSON DO GROUNDSPOTTING? IS IT NECESSARY TO HAVE MUCH MONEY?

It’s necessary and even more obligatory to do GROUDSPOTTING and GROUNDHOPPING not only abroad, but also in the nearest districts, there are more than 100 stadiums. To do it abroad, you need look for low costs, hostels and have lots of free time. Working in tourism, all my trips were for reasonable price. I can say: “I’m lucky”

TELL US ABOUT YOUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL. HOW DID YOU DECIDE TO CREATE IT?

The idea of channel creating was soaring for a long time. The main idea was just to tell about the football stadiums and pins’ collection. Now I understand that I don’t want to restrict myself only in football. I want to collect the stadiums with different kinds of sport, meet with interesting people. I want to show how I see it. Popularize the forgotten matter.

The fact of the matter is that lots of people don’t like the main kinds of sport, they need something new. That’s why it’s necessary to broaden the mind, leave the comfort zone. Recently, I have been to American soccer and it was very interesting, you can find the video on my YouTube channel, subscribe, watch, comment and don’t forget to share and give advice for improving the channel. The meeting with journalists from \*360 on the stadium TRUD in Podolsk encouraged me to create the channel. It’s complicated and at the same time fascinating matter of my life.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR PINS’ COLLECTION

I collect the pins more than 10 years. Everybody has his own concept of collecting: somebody collects his own club, somebody collects federation one, somebody just from different countries, continents etc.

I remember the beginning of my collecting. Standing in front of the world’s map in my room, I was dreaming of having one football pin from each country. At that moment I even didn’t think that I would have half from Latin America, Africa, New Zeeland, Japan and Iceland. The important moment is that I collect only official pins made by club or by fans with club’s permission as there are many fake pins in internet.

At this moment, my collection is quiet modest, about 800 pins and only from 62 countries. What is more, three-four years ago, I decided to take up the other kinds of sport. I have already about 200 baseball, rugby pins etc. it was started from Kazan \* RUBINA. I remember I have asked friends to bring a small souvenir from Kazan and instead of commonplace expected magnet, they offered the pin.

WHAT WOULD YOU WISH OUR READERS AND THOSE PEOPLE WHO WANT TO CAST THEIR LOT WITH SUCH A HOBBY?

I wish people travel much with reasonable price. It’s highly useful to \*\*\*\*\* time during trips and look around more not to miss something interesting and of course healthy life-style. It’s time to start collecting something, stop lying on the sofa. Also, I’m waiting for everybody on my channel. Maybe, as I, you will not restrict yourself and you will want to collect not only football and hockey pins.

Dear friends, I would be thankful for helping me in the translation of other videos on my YouTube channel.