

The Ticket Scalper Part 3: People I met Along The Way

The year was 1989 and I had already had a few years of ticket scalping experience under my belt. I met so many people along the way, some good, some bad.

Ashley

I met Ashley at a public enemy concert. She looked lost or as if she was looking for something or someone. It didn't take long for me to realize that she was looking for a ticket to see public enemy. I decided to walk up to her and ask if she needs a ticket. She then explained to me that she didn't have a lot of money and that the scalpers wanted too much money for their tickets. I understood her point and I even felt a little guilty. So I decided to sell her a ticket for face value. Before she could speak, I made her another offer. I told her that I would just give her a free ticket to the show if she would give me her phone number. One of my scalper friends told me not to do this because all she would do is give me a fake or phony number. I told him to mind his own business. She was really cute and I didn't want her to slip away from me without ever seeing her again. After Ashley finished blushing, she finally gave me her phone number.

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Before I put her number in my pocket I looked at it and saw she had a 609 area code, so I knew she lived in New Jersey. I went on to sell the rest of my tickets and then I drove home.

I called Ashley the following day and was happy to hear that she gave me the right phone number. We became really good friends and sometimes she would hang out with me while I scalped tickets. Sometimes I would park my car in the old Veterans stadium parking lot and we would drive her car back across the Walt Whitman bridge to New Jersey where she lived. The following morning or the next day, she would drop me off at the Veterans stadium parking lot ~~and~~ where I would get in my car and drive back home.

Passyunk

After a Monday night football game at the vet, I wanted to stop over in the passyunk area of south philly to gas up and buy some cigarettes. I had just made \$1,100 scalping tickets and my spirits were high and I was feeling good. I was thinking about the drive I was going to make to Giants stadium in a couple of days to sell tickets at a U2 concert. I was going to invest the \$1,100 I had just made at the Monday night football game. I at least wanted to turn my \$1,100 into \$2,200 because I was thinking

about buying a new car. Once I got back in my car I noticed someone standing by my car window and it didn't take long to notice that they were holding a gun, pointed right at me. I didn't think twice about it, I handed the dude my money and he ran away. Just when I thought everything is going right, I get robbed. I chalked it up and I just thought or assumed that maybe this was my karma-payback for selling people ^{those} ~~the~~ high priced tickets. I made all that money, only to have someone take it away from me. I was pissed! But I got over it. Luckily I had money (a little) saved up from other events I sold tickets to.

Danville, Illinois

In 1991 when the Chicago Bulls won their first NBA championship, I was there, doing what I do, scalp tickets. I had made the drive from Philly to the Windy City. I had never been to Chicago before and I remember seeing people selling bags of fruit in a plastic bag just off the expressway exit. I stayed in a hotel in Danville, Illinois (Red Roof Inn) which I think was just a little outside of Chicago. I was out there for weeks waiting to see if the Bulls would win it all and they did! I decided to get a haircut and I noticed that there was a barbershop not too far from the hotel I was staying in. So I walk in the

barbershop and ask if I could get a haircut. I see two white women in the barbershop, but they're a bit hesitant about ~~cutting~~ cutting my hair. ~~There's~~ There's not a sound in the entire barbershop for a minute. Then it came to me, maybe she wasn't used to cutting african american hair. I told her that I am not looking for a perfect haircut, I just need it taken down a little with a number two guard and if she could line me up, that would be fine. She cut my hair and did a fine job. I payed her and gave her a tip and said thanks. She said she was glad that I liked the haircut and we laughed when ~~she~~ I told her that, "All I wanted was a haircut." I told her I was a ticket scalper and she asked the usual questions - how do you make money doing it? where you get the tickets from?, etc., the same questions ~~as~~ everyone else asks when I tell them I'm a ticket scalper. Everytime I meet someone from Danville, Illinois, I think about that barbershop.

Washington, D.C.

In 1992 I was in Washington, D.C. selling tickets to a concert. Being so close to Philly, I would drive there a lot to ~~scalp~~ scalp events. I know I'm in Washington, D.C. when I hear that Go-Go music - Chuck Brown, Rare Essence, Experience Unlimited (EU) and so on. Their music scene is awesome!

I met an african american police officer who was a muslim. I was not a muslim at the time, but one of my friends were and he had automatically bonded with this police officer. This police officer was a good person. He knew we were scalpers, but it didn't seem to matter to him. He was very curious about how we made a living out of it and where we got the tickets from, etc., and we explained it all to him. I think at the time I even had a misdemeanor bench warrant out of Philly, but for some reason I wasn't worried about it.

Live To Play For Another Day

In 1991, I was in Buffalo, New York selling tickets to an AC/DC concert. Two guys walk up to me and ^{asked} ~~ask~~ me if I'm selling tickets, and if I am, how much. This was "undercover talk", they want me to tell them a price so they can arrest me. I know they're undercover cops, I can sense it. I tell them that I am not selling tickets, I am looking for a friend. I don't think they believed me because I was wearing a black leather jacket, jeans, a pair of nikes, and a fitted Phillies baseball cap (I had the nerve to be wearing it backwards 😊). I looked out of place at an AC/DC concert and I knew that these undercover were thinking the same thing.

I feel like I am in a chess game and if I don't make the right move soon, I will be checkmated. I head to the parking lot to get in my car. They follow me. I make it inside my car, start it up and I drive away. As I'm driving away I see them standing there looking at me as if they missed their opportunity to arrest a ticket ~~scalper~~ scalper. I drive around the stadium looking for my scalper friend and I see those same two undercover putting a scalper in handcuffs. Better him than me, is what I say to myself. I finally find my friend and we drive back to the hotel. We were happy with the \$1,200 we made together that night, especially since we weren't sitting in a jail cell. We just looked at each other and I said, "Well, at least we live to play for another day." We used this phrase after we would escape a show or event that we know had undercover there who specialize in arresting ticket scalpers.

The New Generation OF Ticket Scalpers

The new generation of ticket scalpers use the internet, iphones, tablets, etc. We didn't have any of that stuff. We had to travel to city to city. We also didn't have to compete with so many other ticket businesses like there are now - Stubhub, NBA tickets.com, etc. These new businesses don't put an end to scalping tickets, it just makes the market a little bigger. Either way, people

Still want good seats to any event and if scalpers happen to be the ones with these good seats, then people will continue to buy tickets from scalpers. The only thing that can change that is changing the laws regarding scalping tickets and I don't see them doing that anytime soon, too many other important issues in the world to be worrying about.

Send me an email @ jpay.com

Later,

Philly Mike