

New vs old yankees stadium

[Sport & Tourism](#), [Baseball](#)



“ The House that Ruth Built” has seen many history-making moments in its 85 years in the Bronx: twenty-six World Series titles, four Major League Baseball All-Star games, two papal visits by John Paul II and Benedict XVI. Now that the Bronx Bombers have ended their 2008 season 8 games out of first place, finishing third behind the Boston Red Sox and the Tampa Bay Rays, the old Yankee Stadium will shut its doors (M. L. B.

Advanced Media, “ 2008 Regular Season Standings”). The start of next season will bring extra attention to the Yankees due to the opening of their brand new stadium, located across the street. Their new stadium is just one of many recent parks that have been built. These “ new stadiums” change the classic pastime of watching a game with a hot dog in hand. Even though the modern ballparks have amazing architectural designs with countless means of entertainment, the central sport of baseball seems to be just playing in the background. Since 2000, twelve Major League teams have built new stadiums. The two New York Teams, the Yankees and the Mets, will both open brand new parks in the spring of 2009.

Five teams have plans in progress to have completed their new fields by 2012, which will leave the Boston Red Sox’s Fenway Park, built in 1912, the oldest baseball stadium in the country (Grand Slam Enterprises). The new Yankee Stadium is the most expensive one in America, costing approximately \$1. 6 billion (M. L. B. Advanced Media, “ Yankees Unveil 2009 Schedule”). The opening of two baseball stadiums, as well as the Jets and Giants new stadium, all in the same state and the same season has prices flying through the roof for local ticket holders, and the citizens of the state

concerned about what their taxes are going towards since all the stadiums received some aid.

The Yankees received over \$200 million from the city and the state, which, even though only covers a fraction of the cost, the money still comes from the taxpaying citizens (E. S. P. N.). People that have had season tickets for years now have to sacrifice their exclusive seats because they cannot afford the prices (Sandomir). However, money aside, New York City is going to get extra sports attention in the upcoming year.

According to the teams website, the Yankees are “ all about embracing the future,” and their new stadium does exactly that. The virtual tour of their new facility explains the countless number of new additions and changes, and shows how the new stadium takes the same basic design of the old one by creating the same atmosphere, but modernizes it entirely (M. L. B. Advanced Media, “ New Yankee Stadium Virtual Tour”). This means that the new home of the Yankees will contain well-known features such as Monument Park, the white frieze that runs along the top border and the playing of Frank Sinatra’s famous “ New York, New York” after a home game win. The Relocation Guide that all the ticket holders received opens up its 48 page description of the stadium by stating: “ The new Yankee Stadium...will merge the glorious past and future greatness of the Yankees to create the ultimate fan experience by providing the latest technology, luxurious fan amenities and customer service in a setting that will feel both reassuringly familiar and surprisingly fresh.

Before going into detail about all features, it states: “ the new Yankee Stadium will be all about choice, comfort, convenience and accessibility” (M. L. B. Advanced Media, “ New Yankee Stadium Relocation Guide”). Notice there is nothing said about baseball. The new house of the Yankees has many improvements. The gentler slope of the seats gives everyone a good view of the game.

The stadium itself is 63% larger than the old one, yet has less seats. The available wireless Internet and major cell phone antennas around the stadium, will give fans web access and strong cell phone service, which seem unnecessary for a night at the ballpark. Do fans actually need their cell phones and laptops for a couple-hour game in New York? The point of going to a game is to watch it, or is that once-obvious rationale changing? The Yankees plan on opening a Metro-North train stop right at the stadium so that fans from neighboring states can easily arrive and depart the game without dealing with the subway or the street traffic, which takes away from the hustle and bustle of the pregame street activities. This includes souvenir shops, foodvendors etc. And finally, the most un-baseball related aspect of the new stadium on the list is the fact that Yankee Stadium will be open year round with clubs, restaurants, banquet rooms, conference rooms and business centers, and will host corporate outings, business meetings, bat mitzvahs, seminars and weddings (M. L. B.

Advanced Media, “ New Yankee Stadium Relocation Guide”). According to Brian Cashman, Senior Vice-President and General Manager of the New York Yankees, the team has “ to be in a position to pursue excellence. He knows

the potential of the Yankee organization, and he feels that the new stadium is the best thing for it. Although many have complained about the destruction of such a historical landmark, Cashman says that the new stadium is just as good, if not better than the old one. He states that the move was necessary because of all the improvements and new stadiums that other teams have made. The opponents all have better “batting cages and health recovery areas” and other key advantages at their home fields, so the Yankees obviously needed to keep up. Cashman feels that the new stadium will bring the community together in the Bronx, making the investment a good thing for everyone (Cashman).

Even if the Yankees improve their practice facilities, which may make their team better, will the fans be paying any attention to the game? Or will they be having a drink at the martini bar or spending the game with their head down looking at their email? The Washington Nationals call their new stadium a “beacon for business development,” and all the new stadiums are exactly that. The game has been lost, but the fans might not mind this new era of sports entertainment. The Nationals say that they would like to offer their fans the opportunity to enjoy the game or “explore the unique array of entertainment options” that they have available at the stadium (M. L. B. Advanced Media, “New Nationals Park Virtual Tour”). The Yankees, Mets, Twins, Royals, Marlins, Athletics, Rays and all the other franchises that decide to rebuild soon want to make a profit from this transition in ballpark style as well.

The Yankees know that “ all the new stadiums” do the same thing, and it is the Yankees’ reputation to “ do things right,” according to Jim Kaat, an announcer for the Yankees Entertainment and Sports Networks (Kaat). To do thing right for the Yankees mean to make money. And they plan on pushing their fans towards retail, entertainment and expensive ticketing options to make that happen. Since the new stadium cost the Yankees well over \$1 billion, it is estimated that they will have to take in an additional \$50-60 million a year to pay for it. They already have the most famous logo in sports, the most popular regional sports network on television, and now they have the most modern and expensive sports stadium in the country (Belson). In order to make a profit with the new stadium, the Yankees dropped their capacity by over 4, 500 seats, but tripled the amount of luxury suites available. The luxury suites include different levels of luxury: Legends, Luxury, Club, Main Level and Terrace.

All the suites come with club access, preferred parking, a bar and restaurant, private bathrooms and HD televisions (M. L. B. Advanced Media, “ New Yankee Stadium Relocation Guide”). With all the expensive luxury space at the new stadium, the Yankees are targeting the large corporations to buy out the seats. The Yankees may sell out every game, but they almost never have full attendance. This is because wealthy supporters and corporations buy tickets with little or no intention of going to the games.

The Yankee organization does not mind this because they are making money, but in the classic sense of the game, a lot of true baseball fans will lose their opportunity to go because the only tickets available will be sitting

in the desk drawer of some rich executive. The stadium now has a sports bar, a martini bar, a steakhouse, a grillroom, an art gallery, a sports memorabilia store, a museum and four retail stores on top of the hundreds of regular concession stands that are all available to the ticket holding fan. The luxury suites have special admission to their own clubs, bars and restaurants depending on which one of five levels you have access to. Ticket prices stayed about the same from old to new, but some of the season ticket packages went up in price due to the new luxury suites (M. L. B. Advanced Media, “ New Yankee Stadium Relocation Guide”).

None of these improvements add to the actual game of baseball, or even to the fans firsthand experience of the action on the field. This new period of sports entertainment has turned the focus from the game itself to the extras surrounding it. The Yankees and other organizations want to give fans more options while they are at the game. Whether or not this is a good idea will be seen in the near future, after the public settles in to the new fields. George Steinbrenner, owner of the Yankees said, “ I am thinking about the future and the new Yankee Stadium being built next door. There is no doubt in my mind that the Yankees should have the best ballpark in baseball, and I will make sure our new home does justice to the great tradition of this franchise...Yankees fans deserve nothing less” (M. L.

B. Advanced Media, “ New Yankee Stadium Relocation Guide”). Yankees fans have always had the best ballpark in baseball. The stereotypical “ new stadium” draws the crowd from the field to the entertainment. Hopefully this new style ballpark does not damage the American pastime, and take away

the opportunity to watch live baseball for future generations. The history of the old stadium is unbeatable by the other teams. Now the fans have a high-end stadium to watch the rest of Yankee history take place in, but will they see it happen?