
MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 26-03-2008 11:34

Just thought I would kick off, as the season kicks off.
Currently 4-0 to the A's.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 26-03-2008 11:44

Has news of the Bosox winning yesterday not made it to Bournemouth?

That game counted, you know. Your boys are already half a game behind! Fire Girardi!!

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 26-03-2008 11:54

I missed it. I thought the game on now was the first... oh well.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 26-03-2008 12:54

So who is the "home team" in this series?

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 26-03-2008 14:55

When it was the Cubs and Mets, each team had one "home" game, so as not to create a schedule imbalance. I presume that they are doing the same thing this year, and as a result the Sox and A's will each have 80 "real" home games instead of 81.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 26-03-2008 17:02

A's win.

Yankees (and everyone else in the AL East) now a half game ahead of the BoSox.

Gero, order champagne!

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 26-03-2008 17:28

Just watching ESPN News, and I had to jump back to be sure I read the crawl right--Kaz Matsui is going to be out a few days because of an anal fissure.

Really, in a case like that, couldn't they say "an undisclosed condition"?

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by JtS - 26-03-2008 18:02

Can we have a sum up of who everyone supports?

Me: SF Giants

<http://bigleagueneews.com/resources/sfgiants.jpg>

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 26-03-2008 18:14

Chicago Cubs.

99 years without a championship and counting.

ms. ursus is a Giants fan, and I likely would have been if they hadn't abandoned New York the year before I was born. I would counsel against irrational exuberance regarding their chances this year.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by JtS - 26-03-2008 18:24

Is it possible to predict who will do well in baseball. It always seems quite random from this side of the pond.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 26-03-2008 18:58

It's quite possible. We haven't yet entered "Big Four" territory, but some teams are clearly better than others. One thing that can make it seem more random than it is is the divisional system, which means that a mediocre team in a weak division can make the playoffs, whereas a good team in strong division may very well not.

That is basically the only hope for the Cubs this year, btw; they are in the weakest division in the major leagues by far.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Amor de Cosmos - 26-03-2008 19:02

In this corporeal world its the Blue Jays. Out there on the astral plane however the Expos are playing at Jarry Park and I'm on the third base line four or five rows back.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 26-03-2008 21:59

Parc Jarry was indeed a very special place. I can almost convince myself that it never really existed as a major league stadium, but I saw the Expos play the Phillies there.

Other allegiances among the US contingent:

Femme Folle: Red Sox
Reed: Reds
Jason Voorhees: Yankees
Inca: Dodgers
goldstone 97: White Sox

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Matej - 26-03-2008 22:04

I don't support anyone, really, but will probably go see a few Nats home games.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 26-03-2008 22:30

ursus arctos wrote:
Inca: Dodgers

I again stress that this is half-hearted.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 26-03-2008 23:28

I would just like to remind everyone that going to Nationals games brings with it eternal damnation.

AdC is a wimp for even wandering onto the corporeal plane.

The '94 Expos were the perfect team. Pedro Martinez was the no. 3 starter, for Chrissakes, and the bullpen had arguably both of the best closers in baseball that year (Rojas and Wetteland). When the season ended they had the best record in baseball. The stadium was starting to fill up again. It all could have been so different.

Baseball is dead to me.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 26-03-2008 23:37

Ah, the heavy from the NPS is a sentimental softie at heart.

Genuinely great piece by Pat Jordan on Canseco.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 27-03-2008 00:07

The NPS vividly remembers the many searing humiliations brought upon us by the weak dollar of the 1990s. It's what's made us who we are.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Amor de Cosmos - 27-03-2008 01:07

AdC is a wimp for even wandering onto the corporeal plane.

Perhaps, and in truth my support for that Toronto team is half-hearted at best (which is more than they've deserved for the past ten years or so.) But I do so like baseball, it's just the players and the teams I can't live with. Some allegiance, however faltering, keeps the glimmer of interest alive.

The '94 Expos were the perfect team.

They were very good, no question, but my heart lies with the Dawson, Carter and Raines crew from the previous decade. Bill Lee, Rusty Staub and Steve Rogers. Real baseball players all (except Carter who was a jerk but every team has to have one.)

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 27-03-2008 02:07

Does Vancouver still have a Triple-A team, Amor?

Yeah, the Dawson-Carter-Raines era was a good one (especially the early bit, before Bill Lee got railroaded out of town) with the full stadium and the Valder-ee, Valder-aa stuff. But the pitching was shit.

But there was a lot to that later team, too, where even the smallest bit players could make a huge impact. Like in '94 when Rondell White drove in all 7 runs against the Dodgers in a 7-0 game, and then seeing him get benched the next game because he was after all the team's fifth outfielder. Like in the stretch in '93 when we made that improbable run at the Phillies (14 games back in early August, 4 games back by mid-September), Curtis Pride hit an 8th inning game-tying double and the crowd - knowing he was deaf - made noise so loud the place actually rocked and rumbled so he could feel the vibrations. I've never heard anything quite that loud at a sports event (although the Big O's uniquely shitty acoustics had a great deal to do with it). A special, special night.

Yes, I am deeply, deeply sentimental about that period. Somewhere, I still have a set of press clippings containing stuff on all the big games of the 93-94 period.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jefe - 27-03-2008 03:07

Orioles here. God help us this year.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Amor de Cosmos - 27-03-2008 04:19

Does Vancouver still have a Triple-A team, Amor?

The Canadians play 'A' ball these days. I don't go as often as I did when they played 'AAA.' Back then I lived fifteen minutes walk from Nat Bailey Stadium and used to walk to the games on warm summer evenings. It faces Queen Elizabeth Park and, on weekends you could watch the weddings going on in the rose garden. Minor league ball has much of the appeal of English non-league football.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 27-03-2008 08:27

That's a good analogy. With whom are the Canadians affiliated?

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 27-03-2008 09:33

The Oakland Athletics.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Vernons Pools - 27-03-2008 17:34

Ursus how could you leave me off the list !

I am a BIG Red Sox fan. Have been since the early 1970's when I was introduced to the game. It certainly influenced my decision on where to live when I emigrated to Boston in 1988.

So yes, Red Sox all the way. The best ballpark, which is sold out EVERY home game, win or lose. The most voiciferous fans. And Manny being Manny.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 27-03-2008 17:38

Vernons Pools wrote:

So yes, Red Sox all the way. The best ballpark, which is sold out EVERY home game, win or lose.

How far in advance to they announce the result of the upcoming game?

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 27-03-2008 17:45

Was just trying to smoke you out, Vernons.

And I wasn't sure if jefe still carried a torch for the O's. SocScrim doesn't really do baseball, does he?

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Matej - 27-03-2008 18:09

I just want to clarify my position here. Even if I attend Nats games and boo them (which, I tend to do, since they usually stink) I'm still damned for eternity?

What if I do it wearing a Expos jersey?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Vernons Pools - 27-03-2008 18:53

Inca wrote:

yes, my typing betrays my lack of college education.

What I mean to say, in the unedited version was;

Every Red Sox home game is sold out, whether or not the team had previously a winning or losing season and whether or not the team is not having a winning season. Basically, since the mid 90's you cannot walk up to Fenway Park and buy a ticket for the game about to happen.

But you already figured that out.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 27-03-2008 18:59

Which makes it all the more remarkable that I was always able to get tickets on the day in '78 and got my tickets for the "Bucky Dent Game" by simply walking over to the box office after the last out of the regular season.

The experience of attending a game (including that of getting a ticket) at both Fenway and Wrigley has changed dramatically in the last 25 years, much more so than at Yankee Stadium or Shea.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 27-03-2008 21:25

I was just joshing, Vernons.

Have they given up plans for a new Fenway?

These numbers for 2007 show that somehow the Red Sox managed to average beyond Fenway's capacity. Is that because of the Green Monster seats?

I'd also like to point out that despite the slurs against LA fans, the Dodgers and Angels were both in the top 10 in terms of capacity average, and the Dodgers are consistently at the top of National League attendance records.

(and one more thing--Pittsburgh averaged only 57.7% capacity at home, but over 75% for their road games. Odd)

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed Miller - 27-03-2008 21:30

JtS, It's actually very predictable as sports go. Because there are so many games, there's almost always "regression to the mean," i.e. the teams with talent may slump early, but they'll almost always recover (2007 Yankees). Likewise, a scrappy talent-light team may win a lot of games by the skin of their teeth early on, but then their luck will run out (2005 Nationals).

During the regular season, the teams with the most money will almost always be in first or second in their division, except there's usually one big money team every few years that is simply dysfunctional and often this isn't clear until around mid-season (the Murdoch-era Dodgers come to mind). The lesser well-off teams will do poorly, in general, unless its the Twins or the A's in which case they'll make a good run of it put end up just out of the money in the end.

However, once the playoffs start, all bets are off. Anybody can get hot in the playoffs and win, although the team with the best three starting pitchers who aren't injured generally wins the world series.

My allegiances are torn. I was born and raised to be a Cincinnati Reds fan, but since my grandparents have passed on, we don't go to Cincinnati any more. My connection to the current team is very remote and I really only pay attention to

them out of loyalty and nostalgia.

I've taken up rooting for the Nationals since I live in the DC area. I don't want to live in DC, but I'm stuck, so I figure "when in Rome..." Also, the Nats are in the same division as the Braves and the Mets, whom I hate.

I also keep an eye on the Twins since my best friend is a Twins fan in Minnesota.

I also follow the Pirates a little because their A-short season affiliate is my favorite minor league team, the mighty State College Spikes of the New York-Penn League.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 28-03-2008 09:09

I just want to clarify my position here. Even if I attend Nats games and boo them (which, I tend to do, since they usually stink) I'm still damned for eternity?

What if I do it wearing a Expos jersey?

This is acceptable. Even a cap would do, if it were the pre-92 old-skool ABA-style cap.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Paxton Sprout - 28-03-2008 09:26

I know naff all about baseball but nail my colours to the Dodgers mast on account of them being the only team I've seen play (at their Spring training place, Vero Beach, Florida).

As a further bonus...a notable Spurs club official (Charlie Roberts - from 190something till 1943) apparantly pitched for the Brooklyn Dodgers and also tried to introduce baseball to White Hart Lane.

I like baseball because it seems to me to be the closest thing to English football in terms of history, stadiums, family traditions etc etc.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 28-03-2008 09:42

Hmmm.

I think the Charlie Roberts story is apocryphal. He doesn't appear on baseball-reference.com's list of major leaguers or the all-time Dodger roster on Wikipedia. All kinds of marginal players managed to make it to the major leagues during the latter years of WWII (most notably, Pete Gray, a one-armed outfielder), but Roberts doesn't seem to be among.

Sadly, this is the Dodgers' last year in Dodgertown/Vero Beach; they are moving their spring training home west next year. From a tradition/history point of view, it is a real loss, which Inca and I bemoaned on the old board.

And I compeltely agree with you about the similarities with football in this respect; they go a long way to explaining why they are my two favourite sports.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 28-03-2008 10:01

OK, who's read National Pastime?

Not a super page turner, but I found the chapter on the origin of the concept of a "league" fascinating; the fact that the English League was explicitly patterned on the National League was new to me.

(It's hard to imagine, now, that sports could be organized into anything other than leagues, so completely has this meme colonized team sports).

Exploding Vole, of course, did a great job of showing how baseball was responsible for incubating (proper) football in the US.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 28-03-2008 10:13

I haven't read (or even heard of) National Pastime, but the revelation about the English (Football) League was one of my favourite bits of Harold Seymour's series of academic histories of the sport (Baseball: The Early Years, Baseball: The Golden Age, etc.)

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 28-03-2008 10:29

National Pastime

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 28-03-2008 11:15

That's a bum link, but I'm guessing you mean the Szymanski and Zimbalist book?

Is it any good? Zimbalist is generally pretty good on baseball economics.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 28-03-2008 11:27

Link fixed. Man, I need sleep.

It's an OK book. It's mostly history - the early bits good, the later stuff not so much. The explanation of why relegation and promotion is the alternative to anti-trust is not bad, either.

The final chapter (which I think is mostly Zimbalist) is interesting because it's a fresh eye on the problems of revenue sharing and salary caps in European leagues. If I remember correctly, he comes to the conclusion that a Euro super league is more or less inevitable, but that provided it is coupled with relegations and promotions into multiple national leagues in the same way that C2A and C2B both feed into C1, it wouldn't be such a bad thing.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 28-03-2008 11:33

You aren't driving today, are you?

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Paxton Sprout - 28-03-2008 11:42

Ursus - thanks, that's a shame about Dodgertown. It was a great facility for 'just' a training camp although I recall the local 'Vero Beach Dodgers' play there. I enjoyed watching baseball there, similar in atmosphere to pre-season friendlies. Some very friendly (and patient!) american folk also helped explain what was going on.

I think Mr Roberts' claim to baseball fame would have been very early in last century when he would have been of sport playing age. I think it was only 'rumoured' that he played but then again that's part of the appeal to me.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 28-03-2008 11:52

There's significant hope that another team (perhaps the Orioles) will take over the facility, so all is not lost.

There is an evocative slide show and related article from the New York Times here and an ESPN extravaganza here.

Spring training is one of the truly great things about baseball, though even it has become significantly more corporate in the last 20 years.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 28-03-2008 12:19

Urs - no, tomorrow. Tonight is Toronto Eagles U-11s. I'm hoping to get 8 solid hours tonight.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 28-03-2008 14:21

I've only skimmed National Pastime--I hoped it would be useful for my research, but it was only tangential. Thankfully I got it for free.

The Dodgers leaving Vero Beach is even more sad because a lot of the facilities--like the movie theater, golf course, and pool--were built so the black players could relax along with their white teammates, as Jim Crow was very much alive down there in the 1940s and 1950s. The Dodgers were pioneers, and their leaving that history of Dodgertown behind.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Vernons Pools - 28-03-2008 15:26

I thought that all the Yankee haters might get a chuckle out of this.....

This evolution of the game is to its detriment, says deadspin.com editor Will Leitch in his book *God Save the Fan: How Preening Sportscasters, Athletes Who Speak in the Third Person, and the Occasional Convicted Quarterback Have Taken the Fun Out of Sports (And How We Can Get It Back)* (Harper). The baseball-watching experience, on TV and at the ballpark, has been degraded, he writes, be it by beer advertisers who "not only think morons, but also that we're monsters," or by brainless fans in the stands. ("If you have a sign that spells out the name of the network showing the game, you are a douchebag.")

Singled out for contempt: Yankee Stadium. "There's not a stadium in sports that's a less enjoyable place to watch a sporting event," Leitch writes, likening it to a "wealthy uncle's house, the one who never talks to you, works for some evil law firm somewhere." (The "ASS-HOLLLLLLE!" chants are charming, too.)

Soon, Stade Fasciste will be demolished. But rejoice not — it will only be replaced by a gargantuan, gleaming edifice that's just like its old self, but more so. More boorish fans. More nauseating symbols of arrogance and entitlement. Louder loudspeakers for "Cotton-Eye Joe" and "God Bless America." God help us all.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 28-03-2008 15:30

Inca - what research are you referring to? You got a book on the go or something?

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 28-03-2008 15:36

Antonio Gramsci wrote:

Inca - what research are you referring to? You got a book on the go or something?

My dissertation back when I was in grad school. A very ill-defined history of American attitudes towards soccer, hopefully bringing the West Coast more into soccer's early history in America. I did some research in Oneonta, and in the archives of SIU-Edwardsville. I never found many sources for soccer on the West Coast in the early 20th Century, and my grad school career came crashing down in a roughly two-week span last June. I was getting tired of it anyway, but I still hope to write something (if not that, then at least one somewhat related paper that I have an idea for, and I think would be good if I can find the sources).

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 28-03-2008 15:42

Jeez, Vernons is really into it. Stade Fasciste?

I have been thankfully gone for the entire "God Bless America" era, but there is real cognitive dissonance between that kind of image and my memories of the Jerry Kenney/Horace Clarke Yankees.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Vernons Pools - 28-03-2008 15:50

Ursus - that wasn't me - that was part of an article in this week's Phoenix, that starts like this..

Hope springs eternal with each opening day. But even as the sun rises on the new Major League Baseball season, skies are cloudy for the game we love. Echoes of the Mitchell Report's j'accuse still reverberate. One assumes more names are forthcoming — if not in official documents, then at least in Jose Canseco's juicy new tell-all. But it's worth remembering that, in one way or another, the sport has always had a split personality.

Baseball is a game of verdant fields, of balletic athleticism, of beery sunny Sunday afternoons. It's also one of cheating and meanness and corruption and greed. "Some ballplayers were alcoholics, others gamblers," writes Northeastern professor Roger I. Abrams in his new book, *The Dark Side of the Diamond: Gambling, Violence, Drugs and Alcoholism in the National Pastime (Rounder)*. "Some were violent sociopaths. Although appealing as an escape from day-to-day life, baseball reflected what we are as a society, warts and all."

It still does. Just look at Elijah Dukes, who this past year texted a photo of a gun to his estranged wife. ("You dead, dawg," he intoned on the attendant voicemail.) Or Scott Spiezio, who was recently charged with drunk driving and assault and battery (and four other counts, including hit and run and aggravated assault). Or Jim Leyritz, who kicked off 2008 by pleading not guilty to DUI manslaughter. Guys like that make jerks like A-Rod (opting out, then in, for mega millions) or Nomar (snubbing kids on Dodgers autograph day) seem saintly.

This spring, the usual annual crop of baseball books is being tossed onto shelves. But not all offer heartwarming tales of father-son catches and scrappy bench-player heroics. Rather — perhaps feeling that ill wind blowing in from right field — many are zeroing in on the darker aspects of America's game: baseball's seven deadly sins.

You can find the whole article here.

<http://thephoenix.com/Article.aspx?id=58303&page=1>

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 28-03-2008 19:09

Ah, that sounds more like you.

I was thrown by the large space between grafs. Apologies.

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Bunch of haters

Posted by Femme Folle - 28-03-2008 20:12

That is all.

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Re:Bunch of haters

Posted by Paxton Sprout - 28-03-2008 21:14

Ursus - thanks for the Dodgertown links, esp. the ESPN one. I'm glad I went to Dodgertown now. One thing that struck me when I was there was how open and relaxed it was.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Soccer Scrimmage - 28-03-2008 21:56

I just heard that the Dodgers are going to be playing an exhibition game at the Coliseum. Are you going, Inca?

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Merlin the happy pig - 30-03-2008 20:23

I follow the Brewers, there was bugger all else to do in Milwaukee.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 30-03-2008 21:54

Soccer Scrimmage wrote:

I just heard that the Dodgers are going to be playing an exhibition game at the Coliseum. Are you going, Inca?

Wasn't there--tickets sold out in minutes both times they released them. Plus, there was the UCLA game yesterday, and I knew that parking would be horrendous (the lots around the Coliseum usually fill up about 4 hours in advance of an in-

demand game there; people that live nearby sell parking on their front lawns for about \$50). The Dodgers opened up the parking at Dodger Stadium for free and ran shuttles; in great Dodger organizational fashion you had to call a number earlier in the week and make a reservation, and there were still thousands of people waiting to board the shuttles at the first pitch.

The Dodgers held the game as a fundraiser for their cancer charity. There were over 120,000 people paying a lot of money for the game, and they reportedly raised \$1 million dollars. Not to sound like an ingrate for raising \$1m for charity, but that seems like a low number to me.

Some pictures:

<http://cache4.asset-cache.net/xc/80430158.jpg?v=1&c=NewsMaker&k=2&d=17A4AD9FDB9CF1933B836CAF14D5D5C820CCF5FD3E2F3D62E30A760B0D811297>

<http://cache2.asset-cache.net/xc/80430453.jpg?v=1&c=NewsMaker&k=2&d=17A4AD9FDB9CF1933B836CAF14D5D5C85505F9C03BC40C48E30A760B0D811297>

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 31-03-2008 01:43

ursus arctos wrote:

Jeez, Vernons is really into it. Stade Fasciste?

I have been thankfully gone for the entire "God Bless America" era, but there is real cognitive dissonance between that kind of image and my memories of the Jerry Kenney/Horace Clarke Yankees.

You know, the eagle medallions put on the entrance to New Yankee Stadium don't really help:

http://bp0.blogger.com/_Fsh7GWfK4f0/R_AISNG-oYI/AAAAAAAABQg/r9xSA_hftjo/s400/Medallions+Installed.jpg

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jefe - 31-03-2008 01:47

The new Yankee Stadium has a martini bar.

That is all.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Soccer Scrimmage - 31-03-2008 01:55

Thanks for the pics, Inca. Looks really cool.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 31-03-2008 02:03

I know I mentioned it on last year's thread when the game was announced, but my mom went with my grandparents to one of the World Series games in 1959. A family recently moved to Southern California going to see a ballclub that recently moved as well. A good midcentury California metaphor there, I think.

Here's what it looked like back then. The left field wall was further away back then:

http://laist.com/attachments/la_jimmy/080131.jpg

And just to continue the Yankee hate, this was in a Rob Neyer column on the Dodger's Coliseum days in the late 50s:

Famously, one Los Angeles Dodger never got a chance to play in Los Angeles.

Roy Campanella, who built a Hall of Fame career in Brooklyn, was slated to continue as the Dodgers' No. 1 catcher after the move west. But roughly a month before spring training, Campanella was paralyzed when his car hit a patch of ice and skidded into a telephone pole. He would never walk again.

But on May 7, 1959, he did take the Coliseum field for Roy Campanella Night, featuring an exhibition pitting the Dodgers against the Yankees. As Glenn Stout describes that evening, "Over 93,000 fans packed the Coliseum. Another 20,000 or 30,000 milled around outside the park. Police had to stop general admission sales on three separate occasions to push fans back from the ticket booths to keep them from getting crushed."

The final count was 93,103 tickets sold, with the Dodgers' net proceeds going straight to Campanella (according to Buzzie Bavasi, the Dodgers asked the Yankees if they would like to contribute at least a portion of their take, too; the Yankees respectfully declined the wonderful opportunity).

Before the game, Campanella was wheeled to home plate. That was merely the warm-up. As Stout writes, "In between the fifth and sixth innings came the most poignant moment of the evening. The lights were turned off, and 93,000 fans lit matches and cigarette lighters in a silent tribute, bathing the field in a soft, golden, almost celestial glow."

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Soccer Scrimmage - 31-03-2008 02:44

Wow. When I was 10-12 years old, I was huge into baseball history. I used to watch and read everything I could get on the subject, and it was clear that Campy's accident affected people in a way that was (and is) really hard for me to understand. I remember an episode of Lassie (I think) when Timmy meets a wheelchair-bound Campanella and gives him a ball to autograph. But of course he can't, and so Timmy says if Camaenella can hold the ball in his hand that would be just as good. It was really odd to see a major television show going out of its way to honor an injured athlete.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 31-03-2008 18:38

I am not a baseball historian (apart from odd bits pre-96 when it became on TV in the UK)

I saw the Braves - Nats game and thats what I call a good start. Hudson was excellent, Chipper is Chipper, and they still lose. Poor Moylan (sic). They bigged him up over here, and he was throwing absolute filth, and then he hangs one to let Mr Z make an openday hero.

Apologies to all the Expos fans, but I really like the Nats. They have a great stadium, the team doesnt look too bad, and if anyone can beat the Braves, cool.

Comments about GW: I was really surprised that they booed him... I was laughing my ass off, but a little annoyed. And his pitch was a nightmarer (then they showed his pitch at the zoo in '01, and I let him off... curve ball for a dinger)

Aside from that, good luck to the Nats. They have a possibly decent side, who wont win too often, but will look and sound good.

As an aside, I just paid for NASN and they are taking the piss in not connecting me. Its raining, so I dont miss the Yankees... (thank you sopcast)

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed Miller - 31-03-2008 20:31

I'm looking forward to going to the new Nats ballpark, although I enjoyed seeing them play at RFK because it was relatively cheap. I watched the end of the game on TV last night and it looked great. What a great finish for the first game.

GW also threw the first pitch for the first Nats game three years ago and threw it high then too. I think he's just overcompensating because he's afraid he'll bounce it. In ceremonial first-pitch protocol, I think it's generally considered better to overthrow it than to bounce it.

Or you could do what Mayor Mark Mallory did in Cincinnati last year and inexplicably throw it into the dugout.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by scotian42 - 31-03-2008 23:27

Bush was in the ESPN booth for part of the game and specifically said that he didn't want to bounce it.

I liked the footage they had of the old way of doing it - the dignitary throwing it from a box and the players basically having a mad scrum to catch the ball.

Great ending indeed. Zimmermann is great at moments like these. July 4th, Father's Day, Mother's Day, he's hit important home runs on all of these. Someone needs to tell him at the start of every game that it's a holiday.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 01-04-2008 11:21

Meet the new Cubs, same as the old Cubs.

The Wood as closer experiment is not off to an auspicious start. Fukudome has a statistically perfect debut, and we still manage to lose.

It is going to be a long season.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed Miller - 01-04-2008 15:40

I turned on the Cubs game in my hotel just in time to see Fukudome's homer and then through the 9th. But after that I unexpectedly fell asleep for four hours.

Last year I went to a sparsely attended Nats game against the Padres at RFK in which Zimmerman hit a bomb to the left field upper deck that went into the tunnel.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 01-04-2008 16:34

During the offseason, the Dodgers hired away a Red Sox VP named Charles Steinberg, who was largely responsible for community outreach and special events. Here's what the Globe said about him:

Steinberg, who served the Orioles as team dentist in addition to his front-office duties (!), leaves an impressive legacy in Boston, where he oversaw the team's public and community, electronic and live entertainment, television and video production, and advertising and customer service. He created the Fenway Ambassadors program, was the guiding force behind the team's grandest ceremonies, like the World Series rings presentation in 2005 and the Tribute to Ted Williams, and was the innovator behind such popular occasions as the Father's Day catch at Fenway.

Sounds like he started with a bang yesterday:

Hats off to the new Dodgers show producer, Charles Steinberg. The ceremony before today's opener evoked "Field of Dreams." While a dramatic beat played across the stadium, an old man in a retro uniform hobbled in from behind the centerfield fence to take his position. Duke Snider. From the bullpen, another old man ambled to left field. Wally Moon. One by one, every position on the field filled up with ex-Dodgers: Maury Wills, Tommy Davis, Ron Fairly, Wes Parker and Chuck Essegian from the Coliseum and 1960s. Don Newcombe, Carl Erskine and Roger Craig from Brooklyn. Steve Garvey, Ron Cey, Bill Russell, Eric Karros, Bobby Castillo and Lee Lacy from more recent years. Snider found himself surrounded by fellow CFs Rick Monday, Ken Landreaux, Don Demeter and Steve Finley. Fernando Valenzuela strode to the mound in a shiny suit, to big cheers. While Tommy Lasorda walked slowly from the bullpen to the pitching mound, me and I'm sure many others began to wonder: did they entice "the lefthander," as Walter Alston used to say, back to L.A.?

Yep. Sandy Koufax rose out of the dugout, recognized even out of uniform, and walked to the hill looking as fit as anyone on the field. While the crowd was still ovating, all the old men came in to gather around Sandy and hug it out while the current Dodgers rushed the mound to join in. It was a baseball moment. In the first base dugout, it looked as if all the Giants were standing at the rail taking it in.

Sounds completely cornball, but I bet it was very impressive to see.

Here's Koufax:

<http://www.laobserved.com/images/koufaxlasorda.jpg>

There's Fernando in the background, in the suit.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 01-04-2008 17:16

Awwwwwww.

He's still the best pitcher I've ever seen live (and likely always will be, as impressions like that formed when one is between the ages of 5 and 8 are seriously hard to shake).

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Amor de Cosmos - 01-04-2008 19:59

While the crowd was still ovating,

Am I alone in reading that as "ovulating." Has "ovate" always been a verb or is it one of those new-fangled ones?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 01-04-2008 22:13

With you all the way Amor.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jefe - 02-04-2008 01:39

I'm going to be in San Francisco in 2 weekends. Anyone ever been to a Giants game at their new place; I'm considering going to see them play the Reds.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 02-04-2008 10:25

I've been and highly recommend it. The difference with the "Candlestick Experience" cannot be overstated.

Tickets were very difficult to get early in the park's life, but should be considerably easier to find now, given the Giants' craptitude and Bonds' absence. Try to go early so you have time to walk around the park and sample the wide range of things to eat and drink. The upper deck is rather steep, but the view is not bad.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Soccer Scrimmage - 02-04-2008 22:27

I just saw a highlight from the Dodgers game last night, and I was shocked to hear Vin Scully. I didn't even know the guy was still alive, much less doing games.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 02-04-2008 22:41

I am pretty sure that Vin intends to die in the booth, unless he is unlucky, and departs this mortal coil during the off-season.

When that happens, it will be difficult for me to believe that what is being broadcast is actually a real Dodger game. He's been doing them for almost 60 years.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 02-04-2008 22:52

Vin is 80 now, with horrible dyed hair. He doesn't call the full season of games--the only road games he announces are those against NL West opponents, to cut down on his travel. This is the last year in his contract, and he hasn't decided if he's going to retire.

I'm still not used to not having Chick Hearn call Laker games, and I know a lot of people will feel the same way about whoever replaces Vin. Maybe they can get Harry Shearer--he does a pretty mean Vin Scully impression.

A recording of Scully's call of Sandy Koufax's 1962 no-hitter against the Mets recently came to light (NPR story and highlights of the recording).

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 02-04-2008 23:01

As I've noted on here before, the only baseball team I hate more than the Dodgers is the Mets (who I hate more than any other club in any other sport anywhere).

But I love listening to Vin Scully.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jefe - 03-04-2008 00:52

I think he only does about the 1st 3 innings anymore.

Grazie ursus. I take it you are not going to partake of the Shea Stadium experience before it goes away after the season?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 03-04-2008 04:15

jefe wrote:

I think he only does about the 1st 3 innings anymore.

Yep, with some exceptions. He called all of opening day. But the 4th to 9th innings are called by Charley Steiner and Rick Monday, and Steiner does all of the TV broadcasts east of the Rockies.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 03-04-2008 17:47

Ursus will appreciate the cover of this week's New Yorker.

http://www.newyorker.com/images/2008/04/07/p154/080407_080407_p154.jpg

In other baseball art news, I stopped by the Taschen store at LA's Farmer's Market last night, and flipped through Baseball - Ballet in the Dirt, a collection of SI and Time photographer Neil Leifer's shots from the 60s and 70s. It's very beautiful. It's also \$700.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 05-04-2008 15:33

Hawk attacks 13-year-old at Fenway

Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) - A 13-year-old girl touring Fenway Park on a school trip was attacked by a resident red-tailed hawk that drew blood from her scalp Thursday. The red-tailed hawk seemed innocent enough. Perched on his railing, the Fenway native presided over a sunny Boston afternoon. The serenity would not last. She wasn't seriously hurt, but some observers saw an omen for a certain New York Yankees slugger in the attack at the home of the Boston Red Sox. The girl's name is Alexa Rodriguez.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 05-04-2008 16:30

You can't make this stuff up.

Just like the Yankees getting stuffed 13-4 in Tampa.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jason voorhees - 05-04-2008 17:58

The Yanks seem to always have trouble with the D-Rays in April. I remember that one year Tampa swept them, which led to the 14th time that Torre was almost-fired.

Weird shit like that seems to only happen with the Sawx. I mean a red moon on the night they finally broke the Curse ? C'mon now. It's crazy that it was a red-tailed hawk as well. Poor girl, literally learning the phrase insult to injury.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Amor de Cosmos - 05-04-2008 18:34

A brawl, featuring at least two separate fights and plenty of haymakers, broke out in the upper level of the stadium behind first base just prior to the start of the eighth inning.

Toronto the Good goes apeshit.

And with two outs in the ninth inning, a shirtless man and a young woman, who was clad in just a bra and grey slacks, ran onto the field next to the Red Sox's dugout.

Oh my Lord a streaker in a bra and slacks. It's Sodom and Gomorrah redux!

The man was tackled by security in centre field, placed in handcuffs and led off the field. The woman was also escorted away, but not before a courteous Rogers Centre employee gave her his jacket to cover up.

Well thank heavens some people retain a sense of moral purity — not to mention chivalry — in that unholyest of cities.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Gyuri - 05-04-2008 18:56

I watched some of the Jays/Sox game last night (MLB Extra Innings is ace), and was very impressed with the hop in Frank Thomas step during his 7th inning 2-run double. Thomas was one of my very favorite players in the '90s, but I hadn't seen him move that well (or smile) in quite some time.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 05-04-2008 19:02

jason voorhees wrote:

The Yanks seem to always have trouble with the D-Rays in April. I remember that one year Tampa swept them, which led to the 14th time that Torre was almost-fired.

Please jv, they're just the Rays now.

They seem to be moving up a bit. Have some decent pitching and some young hitters. I'm not saying that they'll start challenging the Yanks or the Sawks, or even the Blue Jays, but they might not be a joke anymore.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Amor de Cosmos - 05-04-2008 19:50

The Orioles will probably finish last in the division this season. How far the Rays move up depends on the Jays. Normally half the pitching staff succumbs to hang-nails, blisters, and the like by early May, so Tampa could take third. If TO stays healthy, and everyone plays as happily as Frank Thomas looks, then we might challenge whichever of the two Old Detestables has an off-year for second, maybe even (shock, horror!) a wild card.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 05-04-2008 21:27

It is beyond the realm of comprehension that it will last much longer, but the current AL East standings are quite satisfying:

Tampa Bay
Baltimore
Toronto
Boston
New York

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Amor de Cosmos - 08-04-2008 03:35

Can you spell SW**P! boys and girls?

Nice one. I'll avoid the sour taste of the Stanley Cup playoffs and immerse myself in BJ baseball until the end of the month. By the time I get back at the end of May half the bull-pen will have come down with typhoid, but in the meantime:

OK!
BLUE JAYS!
LET'S
PLAY!
BALL!

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 08-04-2008 07:37

Well, thats a bit better. Abreu does his normal, unselfish best.

I am beginning to think that Giambi is not long for this (Yankee) world. However, I cant really see anyone else taking a chance on him until he starts getting his swing together. And, thats assuming they have a spare \$10million or so a year.

Kansas next, then on to Baaaston, which will be fun.

I noticed that Sopcast have slapped a ban on any MLB games being shown, which is a total shit, as my subscription to Setanta (TV network in UK showing baseball) went tits up.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Soccer Scrimmage - 08-04-2008 15:23

(pedantry alert) Actually, the Kansas City Royals are based in Missouri.

Why did Tampa Bay change its name?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 08-04-2008 15:34

Terminal lameness.

And, believe it or not, some blaterings by local holy rollers about their failure to think of the children.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Soccer Scrimmage - 08-04-2008 15:49

Well then, I think it's the duty of all right-thinking people to continue to call them the Devil Rays.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 08-04-2008 16:11

just the Devils would do.

SS: Somewhere in my brain I think I was strangely aware of that. I was just using 'Kansas' as shorthand for Kansas City Royals, because I forgot they are called the Royals.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Soccer Scrimmage - 08-04-2008 16:33

Maybe it's a British thing. Former DC United manager Ray Hudson always called the Kansas City Wizards "Kansas", which just sounds weird to Americans.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 08-04-2008 16:51

As if that was the only thing that Ray Hudson has said that sounds weird to Americans...

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 08-04-2008 22:01

Woo Hoo! Sky Italia has added NASN to our package without saying anything.

Baseball Tonight!

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 09-04-2008 15:55

Be prepared to be sorely disappointed.

I used to remember Baseball Tonight being good. Now it's just mostly talk, very little emphasis on highlights. And I haven't seen Peter Gammons on it at all this year. Most of the time it's Eric Young, whose catchphrase is "SOUVENIR CITY!" (for a home run).

Still, it's better than nothing, I suppose.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed Miller - 09-04-2008 17:00

I think the confusion comes from British people's familiarity with clubs with "city" in the name, like Lincoln City, Birmingham City or Coventry City. Unless there's another team from that area, they're often just referred to without the City. Like Birmingham City is listed in the table as Birmingham, last time I saw it, at least.

IMP once referred to Kansas City Wizards as "City" in something he wrote, as I recall. I explained to him that the name is not like Manchester City. The actual full name of the municipality in question is The City of Kansas City, Missouri. So the "City" in Kansas City Wizards is part of the place name, not the club name.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 09-04-2008 17:43

If of course doesn't help that in this particular case there is also a City of Kansas City, Kansas across the river (smaller, poorer, blacker and without any major league sports teams).

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed Miller - 10-04-2008 03:57

Except that I think the Wizards current home is a minor league baseball stadium on the Kansas side of the border.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 11-04-2008 10:55

It's that time of year again; the first Yankees - Red Sox series of the season, which means it is also time for stories like this one.

"The new Yankee Stadium may be cursed!

A devilish Boston fan working on a concrete crew at the \$1.3 billion stadium covertly buried a Red Sox T-shirt under what will become the visiting team's locker room to jinx the Yanks, two construction workers told The Post yesterday."

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Soccer Scrimmage - 11-04-2008 14:11

Speaking of ballparks, attendance at Washington's brand new one, for its nearly brand-new team, is already down to 20-25k per game. What an embarrassment.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 11-04-2008 14:19

That's terrible; has the weather been particularly bad or something?

And do a detect just a hint of Maryland-centric Schadenfreude in your report?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Soccer Scrimmage - 11-04-2008 14:45

If I did my job correctly, you would have detected far more than a hint of Schadenfreude, although the source of it isn't just my being a Marylander, it's also being a DCU fan. It galls me that DC was willing to plunk down \$600-700m on this stupid thing, while at the same time is being intransigent about United putting up a privately funded stadium.

It's strange, I was raised a DC sports fan, and like most allegiances developed in childhood, that will probably continue until I die. But because the Nats are new, they merely represent a city I've grown to hate.

Oh, and the weather in DC was gorgeous yesterday: mid 70s.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 11-04-2008 14:54

I hadn't realised that subtext, and am always sensitive to your love of Black Eyed Susans and all they represent.

DC has always struck me as dysfunctional when it comes to local government, in large part because its Federal masters very much prefer it to stay that way. This sounds like yet another example of that dysfunctionality.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Gyuri - 11-04-2008 15:13

Before we break out the schadenfreude (and trust me, I would love to engage in it here), the Nats have played only 4 home games, one of them a sell out and then three of them against the Florida Marlins. While I agree that the Nats won't likely draw particularly well relative to other teams, using games against a Marlins team that dumped its 2 most recognizable names as 3/4 of the representative sample is stacking the deck a bit.

A better time to assess may be after their late April homestand (Mets, Cubs, Braves, Pirates). Of course, they'll like be 10 games back then, so it's probably wise to keep the schadenfreude handy.

Also, while DC ultimately agreed to fund the stadium, it was a painful and vicious political fight to get it done (poor city, graft, etc.). I think once DC United is able to pony up enough in bribes, a privately funded stadium will sail through.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Soccer Scrimmage - 11-04-2008 15:18

Cmon, it's a *brand new stadium*. The place was half empty. The opponent shouldn't make that much of a difference.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Gyuri - 11-04-2008 15:35

It is a brand new stadium, but it's also DC, so of course the opponent matters. As you know, at this moment in time, there are not that many die-hard Nats fans and the team is bad, so attendance will be driven by opponents. I think the Nats will be happy if they're able to average around 7-10k more fans a game than they did last year, and Marlins games aren't going to make that happen. Further, the Nats are up against the Wizards and Capitals making their playoff push, which currently is sucking away interest from the limited number of real sports fans in DC.

As for what the city gets out of the stadium. The answer is generally not much, but at least development has begun in the area around the stadium. Here are some side-by-side pictures of the stadium area now compared against the same area before the stadium was approved.

Finally, the stadium has a real transportation problem. Currently, there is very little parking, and the metro isn't running extra trains during game times, so getting there isn't easy.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Gyuri - 11-04-2008 15:38

I should add that the opponent always matters in DC, because of the weird demographics of the city (Reed and I discussed this a bit in the ice hockey thread). If you go to a Wizards game against the Celtics, Sixers or Knicks (ok, not the Knicks the last two years), at least half of the arena is opposing team fans. It's like the US National Soccer Team playing Mexico in almost any city in the US.

The Nats hope is that, over time, they can build a decent team and develop real Nats fans, but it will take time.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Soccer Scrimmage - 11-04-2008 16:04

This is, of course, why I hate DC. It is nowhere. Its culture and traditions are defined by the fact that it has no specific culture or traditions. DC is being enveloped in bland.

What is left of DC's unique culture, and that has largely come to mean "black DC", is quickly being destroyed. as is dramatically shown by the pictures you linked to. (and yes, I realize that a DCU stadium would also be a part of that. But I am a hypocrite).

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Gyuri - 11-04-2008 16:08

I agree entirely with your last post, although I think the stadium development has done less damage to black DC than the creeping gentrification in the low-numbered streets in NW and in Columbia Heights and Mt. Pleasant. Of course, I'd like to live in Mt. Pleasant, and I'm not sure that would have been true 10 years ago, so I'm a bit of a hypocrite too.

All that being said, Bohemian Caverns on 11th & U NW is still an excellent remnant of what use to count as culture in DC and one of my favorite places to see any type of jazz show. Of course, it may very well be an Applebees this time next year.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Gyuri - 11-04-2008 16:11

Speaking of DC denizens not being DC fans, I'm a little pissed that I have to wait so long to see the Phillies come to town. With their abysmal pitching (and Rollins' injury), I'm worried they'll be out of it by the time they show up here.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Coffy - 11-04-2008 16:18

But they always start off the season poorly.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 11-04-2008 16:27

Thanks for the links to those pictures, Gyuri. It's the bleak photographer in me, but I love mostly-empty urban spaces that you see in most of the "befores", especially the freeway (sorry, "highway"? "parkway"?) underpasses.

SocScrim, any thoughts on GWB's daughter and her fiancee being the newest residents of Baltimore?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Soccer Scrimmage - 11-04-2008 17:10

We use the term 'freeway' Inca. In fact, if you continue along the main road in those pictures, a couple of blocks later you run into the Southeast-Southwest Freeway.

Actually, Jenna moving to Baltimore was news to me, but I've now investigated. She's bought in one of the yuppiest parts of the city, unsurprisingly, so at least she's not polluting some hardcore Baltimore neighborhood.

I am less down on people moving to Baltimore than I am with DC. Baltimore is a dying city, and needs people. Still, to me what makes it great is the fact that it has largely been missed by the urban revival of the last 10-15 years.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Gyuri - 11-04-2008 17:29

But they always start off the season poorly. That's true, though I was kind of hoping that they wouldn't this year. Would've been a nice change of pace.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Soccer Scrimmage - 11-04-2008 17:35

Gyuri, I apologize, somehow I've missed making your acquaintance. You are in DC? What do you do? Where do you live?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Gyuri - 11-04-2008 17:46

No worries, SocScrim. I'm very new to posting on OTF (been here about a week), though I've lurked on the (old) site since 2002.

I'm a lawyer in DC, though currently between jobs. I worked for a large American law firm for 5 years (in Germany and DC). I left the firm to go to a great job at the Discovery Channel that quickly became a bad job, and eventually (due to four rounds of "restructuring") became no job. I made it pretty far in the application process to be assistant counsel for the Nationals (which would have been my dream job), but then ownership decided to go for someone more junior (they said this was because she was cheaper, but I think it may have been because she spent time during law school working for another MLB team).

I was born in Philadelphia (hence my sports team fandom), lived in S. Florida in high school and went to university in RI and law school in MA. I currently live in Woodley Park, but have lived in Van Ness, Logan Circle and Bethesda at various points in my time in DC.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Coffy - 11-04-2008 17:51

Does RI = Brown?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Soccer Scrimmage - 11-04-2008 18:03

Good to have you. We have quite a nice little DC crew here.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Gyuri - 11-04-2008 18:03

Yes, I went to Brown for undergrad (except for one semester at the Universitat van Amsterdam).

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed Miller - 11-04-2008 18:37

From that, Gyuri sounds dead posh, but I won't hold that against him. I for one welcome our new Woodley Park overlords.

Now that I know his story a little, I'll make this comment about DC sports that I was reluctant to make on the hockey board for fear of offending him.

What really pisses me off with all of these Flyers/Phillies/Eagles/Cowboys/Cubs/Penguins/Bruins/RedSox/Yankees, etc. fans that invade Verizon Center, Fed Ex Field and now Nationals Park - especially the Flyers fans - is that so many of them live here, and plan to stay here, and then they have the unmitigated gall to brag about how "their" city is such an infinitely better sports town than DC. Well, Mister-only-real-philly-cheesesteaks-will-do, it's because of carbet-baggers like YOU that this city is a bad sports town.

We've been hearing a lot of this from Flyers fans in the run-up to this series and I once had a roommate who was totally that guy, and a workmate who was like that too.

I can understand that making a living and/or marriage concerns can compel one to move to DC and that it's near impossible to give up a childhood fan loyalty. That's fine. But then don't bitch about your adopted city when YOU are illustrative of the problem.

I feel the same way about Mexican-Americans that support Mexico. I'm all for immigration, and I guess you have to support your childhood team, but I can't stand hearing hating on their adopted country and MLS from immigrants.

I recognize that I'm part of the problem too. I mean, I don't support Maryland or Georgetown. I support Penn State. I grew up there. It's in my blood. But I don't sit around ragging on Maryland for having a much smaller stadium. And if either of those schools played a sport I was really into, like hockey, I would go to games and support them as the "home team."

Also, I continue to hold a torch for the Reds, my childhood team, even while also supporting the Nationals.

I support DC teams out of a sense of "when in Rome..." and because I genuinely like the way DC United and the Caps usually go about their business, but I don't really like DC and want to move. A big reason I don't like it and want to move is because of all the things SS says. I don't think DC would have these problems if it had more of a permanent population that really cared about the history and the long-term destiny of the place, and their neighborhood in particular.

That's what was strikingly different about Marblehead. On the one hand, because everyone I met, it seemed, was from

there, it made it harder to fit in as an outsider. But those people really cared about their towns, which is why even economically troubled places like Lowell, Gloucester and Lawrence have so far managed to avoid becoming object shitholes.

Doc Walker was on 980 this morning lamenting that people around here don't care enough about high school sports. I personally don't think that's something to lament. But what he didn't say, and may not realize, the reason people in other places care about high school sports is because it's an opportunity to connect with their small town or neighborhood. So where I lived in New England, the Marblehead-Swampscott football game was still as semi-big deal even though Marblehead always lost, neither team were really any good and to somebody passing through, the two towns seem like one. Its not that they care about high school sports, its that they care about supporting their neighbors' kids.

I mean, around here, I don't think anyone's ever going to get fired up about Rockville vs. Quince Orchard because nobody really care about Rockville or Gaithersburg. Even Bethesda and Arlington, which are really nice and pedestrian friendly because there's a lot of money sloshing around, don't really have an identity.

The only place around here that seems to really have a civic identity is Alexandria, and I'm not even sure about that.

I haven't been to the new Nats ballpark but I'm keen to go. I thought they were running extra Metro trains there, or at least, running the long trains there like they do after DC United games. If they continue not drawing, that's going to be a real disaster.

Ironically, or perhaps appropriately, I'm not sure, it seems like most of the support for the Redskins and Caps (I can't speak for the Wizards) comes from further out suburbs. That's probably going to be true for the Nats too. Therefore, Metro just isn't an easy option for those folks. Then again, MCI Center struggled with that problem in its early years and has begun to overcome it.

Thats all I have to say about that.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Coffy - 11-04-2008 18:50

Heh, Quince Orchard. I have a relative who goes there, and another who did go there and now is at Radford. I don't think they'd ever imagine their school's name coming up on an UK-based soccer forum.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed Miller - 11-04-2008 19:06

That's right! We picked you up near there that one time you came here for a US qualifier.

I used to live out that way and a girl I work with went there and still lives with her parents near there so it came to mind. They seem to win a lot of local championships.

Its also an odd name. I don't know if I've ever eaten a quince, but apparently that part of Gaithersburg was once, and maybe still is, a hot bed of quince-related agrobusiness.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Gyuri - 11-04-2008 19:39

Wow, Reed, there's a lot of interesting things to work through in your post, and I don't think I can address it all in just one of mine. But, to start with the most important of your points first, I'm not posh. At least I don't think I'm posh. Actually, I have no idea how to define posh, but when I think of posh people, I'm not one of them. . .though I guess I did have a posh education, but I wasn't one of the posh people at my schools. They laughed at me and threw crackers.

Now that I've covered my alleged posh-ness so ably, let's see what other incoherence I can bring to this discussion.

First of all, I have never said on this board that only real Philly cheesesteaks will do. Of course, that's just because I haven't previously had the opportunity to. But, seriously, only real Philly cheesesteaks will do. All that mess with huge chunks of chopped steak, lettuce and mayo is certainly some kind of foodstuff, but I'd appreciate it if it wasn't referred to as a "Philly cheesesteaks". Maybe a "chopped sirloin sub with salad on top" would be better.

As for the complaints of those from other cities that DC is a mediocre sports town, well, it is a mediocre sports town except for the Redskins (for which it is a cuckoo-crazy, excellent sports town). This is not the fault of native Washingtonians, but because it's the governmental seat of a non-dictatorship and therefore subject to fairly high population turnover. However, but for the government being located in DC, it is very unlikely that DC would be a city large enough that it would have so many sports teams. In other words, I think that trying to separate the carpetbaggers from DC is basically impossible, and so ascribing only the negative aspects of DC to the transients is problematic. If they weren't here, a lot of the good things about DC wouldn't be here either. Further, a lot of the gentrification of the past 15-20 years has been replicated in many big East Coast cities, and not usually as a result of carpetbaggers. All that being said, I wish that there was some way that the transients and locals could coexist without excessive gentrification, but that might be a hope too far.

Now, as far as the carpetbaggers moaning about DC being a relatively poor sports town, while bragging about how awesome their city is. . .well, I think you're right. It's somewhat ungracious. It's like being invited over to someone's house for dinner and complaining about the carpet.

(NOTE: I'm about to get defensive, though I'm not certain that I was specifically being attacked.) Now, I don't think I've bragged about how awesome a sports city Philadelphia is (in fact, I've spent a good many years of my life defending Philly fans, and am sure I will have to again when football season starts, if not before). When the Sixers and Phillies are terrible, they don't draw decent crowds (the Flyers and Eagles are different, but then again so are the Redskins). There is, however, a difference between pointing out that the crowds for Capitals and Wizards have been bad in the past and discussing the likely causes of that (which is, I think, what I've done), and "hating on" the city (which I haven't done). I actually quite like DC, and have made it my adoptive home after my family fled Philly for S. Florida.

Sure it would be nice if there was a greater sense of community history in DC. My girlfriend grew up outside of Boston, and the sense of pride in community there is very strong. We often talk about moving back there for those very reasons.

Ok, I've clearly run out of steam and lost track of what we were arguing about. I'll do better next time.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 11-04-2008 19:48

Having known him for years, I am more than happy to confirm that Gyuri is not in any way, shape, or form, posh.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Gyuri - 11-04-2008 20:01

Thanks, UA. I was beginning to doubt my own non-posh-ness.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 11-04-2008 20:37

Can we please stop talking about the Eastern seaboard?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 11-04-2008 21:01

How about those Giants?

I didn't think that they would win three in a row all season.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed Miller - 11-04-2008 21:13

But, to start with the most important of your points first, I'm not posh. At least I don't think I'm posh. Actually, I have no idea how to define posh, but when I think of posh people, I'm not one of them. . .though I guess I did have a posh education, but I wasn't one of the posh people at my schools. They laughed at me and threw crackers.

Damn. That's really disappointing to hear. I was hoping that you'd invite me over and offer me a drink from a crystal decanter you keep on your sideboard in your "study" and the butler would offer me a smoking jacket to wear while I'm there. I've always wanted to do that.

But as it is, perhaps we can just get together for drinks and wear our own clothes.

First of all, I have never said on this board that only real Philly cheesesteaks will do. Of course, that's just because I haven't previously had the opportunity to. But, seriously, only real Philly cheesesteaks will do. All that mess with huge chunks of chopped steak, lettuce and mayo is certainly some kind of foodstuff, but I'd appreciate it if it wasn't referred to as a "Philly cheesesteaks". Maybe a "chopped sirloin sub with salad on top" would be better.

I wasn't accusing you of being like that. And I agree with that assessment. What I meant was that I don't have time for people who insist that only cheesesteaks from Philly will do. A Philly-style cheesesteak can and is done properly elsewhere. The lettuce and mayo is as good a case of point-missing as one will find in the culinary world.

However, but for the government being located in DC, it is very unlikely that DC would be a city large enough that it would have so many sports teams. In other words, I think that trying to separate the carpetbaggers from DC is basically impossible, and so ascribing only the negative aspects of DC to the transients is problematic. If they weren't here, a lot of the good things about DC wouldn't be here either.

That's a really good point.

However, I think there is a certain "critical mass" of transience and neglect that infects even native/permanent people. Does that make sense? I think the suburban sprawl is a good example. Even if I was inclined to really care about the history and fate of Bethesda/Rockville, I probably wouldn't because there's not much here really worth caring about or saving. It got that way because there were not enough people with the vision and imagination to stop it from being developed the way it has been and now we're all stuck with something that nobody really cares about, and the cycle continues. Or something...

Now, as far as the carpetbaggers moaning about DC being a relatively poor sports town, while bragging about how awesome their city is. . .well, I think you're right. It's somewhat ungracious. It's like being invited over to someone's house for dinner and complaining about the carpet.

That was my main point. Perhaps my only point. It's just something that has gotten up my nose lately. I certainly wasn't accusing you of being like that.

I'm about to get defensive, though I'm not certain that I was specifically being attacked.) Now, I don't think I've bragged about how awesome a sports city Philadelphia is (in fact, I've spent a good many years of my life defending Philly fans, and am sure I will have to again when football season starts, if not before).

I'm not attacking you or accusing you of hating on DC. That's why I held back at first because I was afraid it would be taken that way.

]There is, however, a difference between pointing out that the crowds for Capitals and Wizards have been bad in the past and discussing the likely causes of that (which is, I think, what I've done), and "hating on" the city (which I haven't done).

Agreed. And lots of good points made.

I actually quite like DC, and have made it my adoptive home after my family fled Philly for S. Florida.

South Florida, now there's a place that seems to really have a hard time caring about sports (except the Dolphins). I don't know how anyone can live there. It's like a sauna.

To be clear, my dissatisfaction with DC has little to do with it not being an "awesome sports town."

Besides, "awesome sports towns" aren't necessarily awesome in all ways. At least when DC teams are bad, the local papers and sports radio guys seem to have a sense of humor about it, which can occasionally be entertaining. That is certainly not the case in Boston. And it must be admitted that our culture in general takes sports wayyyyyy too seriously and while the passion of Chicago, New York, Boston, Philly, etc. sometimes adds to the fun of going to their games and following the team, it also contributes to the amount of drunken belligerence and needless aggro, especially at night games. I've heard some Redskins fans lament that Eagles fans are not afraid for their life at FedEx field the way Skins fans were at the old Vet. Is basic human civility really something to lament?

Can we please stop talking about the Eastern seaboard?

Why do people call it a "seaboard" but yet that term never seems to be used with respect to any other coastline. I've never heard the West Coast called the Western Seaboard. What's a seaboard anyway? It sounds like a big piece of drift wood that washes up on the beach.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 11-04-2008 21:21

It might be because, at any given moment, the whole shape of the West Coast could change (not sure about earthquake zones on the East Coast).

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Vernons Pools - 11-04-2008 21:23

Reed Miller wrote:

Why do people call it a "seaboard" but yet that term never seems to be used with respect to any other coastline. I've never heard the West Coast called the Western Seaboard.

C'mon Reed - you know it's not called the 'Worst Coast' for nothing.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Gyuri - 11-04-2008 21:44

But as it is, perhaps we can just get together for drinks and wear our own clothes. Sounds good to me, so long as you don't make fun of my ascot. A Philly-style cheesesteak can and is done properly elsewhere. I think this is mostly true. I believe that, because of the type of water, the rolls used in Philadelphia have a slightly different quality for cheesesteaks (this is similar to bagels in NYC). That being said, I've had good cheesesteaks in DC (especially from the place in G'town that ships in Amoroso rolls). However, I think there is a certain "critical mass" of transience and neglect that infects even native/permanent people. Does that make sense? Yes, it does. Once the transient population becomes high enough, an entire area can become imbued with a sense of transience, even for those who were born there and lived there for their entire lives. I'm not sure how you handle this in places that will usually have high levels of transience (DC, Frankfurt, Germany, etc.), except to build new, lasting industries in those areas. South Florida, now there's a place that seems to really have a hard time caring about sports (except the Dolphins). I don't know how anyone can live there. It's like a sauna. When I originally wrote the post, I was going to compare S. Florida to DC for exactly this reason. As in DC, some of this is due to the huge, annual influx of new people to the area (though people are less likely to leave S. Florida). But some of it is also due to the lack of history of the (non-football) teams, and to the fact that there are many daytime and nighttime draws (mainly beaches, too many attractive, scantily clad people and a ridiculous club scene) for many people who might otherwise go to sporting events.

I now regret that I didn't mention it in my last post, b/c I was also going to ask Inca if he felt that there were similar issues with sports in LA.

Also, for what it's worth, I despise S. Florida (I feel I can be ungracious on this b/c my parents moved me there against my loud, obnoxious will). Besides, "awesome sports towns" aren't necessarily awesome in all ways. . . And it must be admitted that our culture in general takes sports wayyyyyy too seriously and while the passion of Chicago, New York, Boston, Philly, etc. sometimes adds to the fun of going to their games and following the team, it also contributes to the amount of drunken belligerence and needless aggro, especially at night games. Here is the crux of why Philly fans sometimes mock fans of other cities. For most of my lifetime, Philadelphia has been a struggling city. The sports teams are one thing that people can use to escape (opiate of the masses, and all that), but, since 1983, the teams haven't provided any victories, and instead they have just reflected the struggles of the city back in on itself, causing all sorts of unhappiness (Philly sports, the bad acid of the masses). So Philadelphians have too much invested in their sports teams, they take it as a lone point of pride, and they can't stand that other, more successful places are not.

At least this has been my interpretation. I'd love to hear what Coffy thinks, as I've not lived there in some time and so she would be best able to understand if this is a sensible interpretation.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Coffy - 11-04-2008 22:04

I agree and would also add that a factor might be resentment that Philadelphia, although it's one of the largest cities in the US, is sort of relegated to a second-tier status. Other cities, some smaller, receive more attention because they are like the "capital" of the region, e.g., Boston for New England, Seattle for the Pacific northwest, Atlanta for the southeast, etc. In the mid Atlantic, New York is the regional capital for most things, and Washington is for people interested in government, so as big as Philadelphia is and despite its attractive features, it's not as admired. That's why, I think, the biggest rivals tend to be the NY metro area teams and not Pittsburgh. That doesn't really explain the Cowboys, though, except for just being in the same division--maybe it's the America's Team schtick being forced on us.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Gyuri - 11-04-2008 22:11

Coffy,

I agree with the resentment due to the city's status itself. When I was a kid, some of my grandparents' friends would still complain that the capitol should have been there, not DC. That doesn't really explain the Cowboys, though, except for just being in the same division--maybe it's the America's Team schtick being forced on us. That, and the fact that the team is/has been the embodiment of all that is evil in the world (ok, maybe a slight overstatement, but just barely).

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed Miller - 11-04-2008 22:54

I agree with the resentment due to the city's status itself. When I was a kid, some of my grandparents' friends would still complain that the capitol should have been there, not DC.

I don't think Philadelphia was the other front runner. New York was already the boom town of that era. Hamilton wanted the new Federal Government to take on the debts of the colonies so that the big creditors/rich folk would have a good reason to support the Federal government. Jefferson was not for this, especially since Virginia was pretty well paid off and would therefore end up taking a share of other colony's debts. Part of the compromise was that the new capitol would be built on this malarial swamp on the Potomac.

I don't have anything particular against Philly, but I can't really muster any great affection for it. I can't imagine a set of circumstances where I'd want to move there, although it's not impossible. Then again, if I had to drive the Skuykill Expressway everyday, I'd probably just lose all hope and decide to drive into the river.

That doesn't really explain the Cowboys, though, except for just being in the same division--maybe it's the America's Team schtick being forced on us

That and for reasons I've never understood, they've always been in the NFC East, which is as often as not, a very competitive division. So even though the alignment has been reshuffled again and again, the Redskins, Giants and Eagles insisted on keeping the Cowboys in their division and vice versa, probably.

If it were up to me, Dallas would be in the Central or Southern or Western division. Fuck Dallas, I don't even want to see them. I think a Baltimore-Washington-Philly-New York division would create much more interesting rivalries over the long run.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Gyuri - 11-04-2008 23:57

If it were up to me, Dallas would be in the Central or Southern or Western division. Fuck Dallas, I don't even want to see them. I think a Baltimore-Washington-Philly-New York division would create much more interesting rivalries over the long run. There's a lot to recommend that alignment, especially as including the Ravens would increase the number of games I could theoretically go to. But the rivalries with Dallas are huge, and though rivalries with Baltimore would build over time, it would be a very long time before they reached the level of the ones with Dallas. All that being said, I'd be happy to banish Dallas to the AFC, or the NHL, really.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed Miller - 12-04-2008 05:46

At the very least, there are certain non-divisional games that should be played every year.

Every year, Washington should play Baltimore, Cincinnati should play Indianapolis, Oakland should play San Francisco. Also maybe Pittsburgh-Philadelphia, KC-St. Louis, Dallas-Houston, Tampa-Jacksonville, etc.

It would be like certain rivalries in college football. Army plays Navy, Kentucky plays Louisville, Iowa plays Iowa State, Georgia plays Georgia Tech, etc, despite being in different conferences

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 12-04-2008 11:01

1 down, 17 to go. Wang pitches a beaut.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 13-04-2008 09:23

sorry I bleeding spoke!

Arizona are currently looking very good.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Soccer Scrimmage - 13-04-2008 17:08

Report: Workers dig furiously to rid new Yanks stadium of Red Sox jersey
ESPN.com news services

Crisis, and curse, averted.

It took about five hours, but the Red Sox jersey that was embedded in the concrete of the Yankees' new stadium to place a curse on the New York franchise has been unearthed with jackhammers, according to a published report.

Earlier this week, a construction worker who is a Boston fan working on the concrete crew at the \$1.3 billion new Yankee Stadium buried a Red Sox shirt in with the concrete foundation, in the hopes of jinxing the New York Yankees' new home, the New York Post reported.

The newspaper reported Sunday that two workers approached a construction manager with what they thought was the location of the jersey. After digging a two-foot by three-foot hole, the jersey was found.

"They absolutely pinpointed that if it was in the ground, that's where it was," Yankees spokeswoman Alice McGillion told the newspaper.

Initially the Yankees denied the jersey was ever buried in the footings of the new stadium. But clearly the Yankees brass is happier now with the possibility of a course gone.

"I hope his co-workers kick the out of him," Yankees co-chairperson Hal Steinbrenner said.

The newspaper said the jersey felt like a filthy rag, but the word "Red" was clearly visible.

There are precedents for fans strategically burying trinkets for good luck. During the construction of the ice rink for the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, a worker laid a Canadian one-dollar coin (known as a "loonie") at center ice. Canada went on to win its first gold medal in men's ice hockey since 1952.

And Mickey Bradley, a co-author of "Haunted Baseball," told the New York Post that a worker was said to have buried an unknown good-luck charm in a water main trench of the current Yankee Stadium back in 1920.

"Prior to that, they never won a World Series," he told the newspaper.

=====
Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jason voorhees - 13-04-2008 17:35

Can we please stop talking about the Eastern seaboard?

No problem. I hear Lisbon and Coimbra are nice this time of year.

=====
Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jason voorhees - 13-04-2008 19:21

Can we please stop talking about the Eastern seaboard?

No problem. I hear Lisbon and Coimbra are nice this time of year.

=====
Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jefe - 15-04-2008 02:33

How about those Giants?

Apparently my showing up to their stadium cursed them, when they got hammered 8-2 Friday.

Notes on AT&T Park:

Dear Northern California: Please get your garlic the hell off your French fries. It's inedible.

There are PS3's running MLB08 set up to be played in the concourses.

You can buy Safeway food and soup at their stand, but I don't know why you'd want to. You can get Ghirardelli ice cream and hot chocolate at the park, and I so know why you'd want to. Hi-def TV's at every concessions stand are also a nice touch.

Albert Pujols is a beast. His nemesis on the day Barry Zito meanwhile has a swing like a Jerry's kid attacking a pinata. It was beyond pathetic, even for a pitcher. And everyone on the Muni back to downtown after the game wants Zito's head on a plate. Especially A's fans.

But being in the upper deck behind home plate (even for the ayfkm price of \$28) with a view over the water, watching the ferries come in behind right field is beyond gorgeous.

It's 501 feet to the glove.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 15-04-2008 16:59

\$28 for upper deck?!?

Hey, the Royals actually look good.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 15-04-2008 17:09

28USD is for the "view boxes" at the front of the upper deck behind the plate; the seats behind those but further up are USD20, and the ones out in the outfield go down as low as USD10.

But going to watch the Giants is not inexpensive; the field boxes go for USD75 (95 for "premium" seats and service).

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 15-04-2008 17:34

Upper deck at Dodger Stadium is \$9 advance, \$11 walk-up.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jefe - 15-04-2008 22:01

Are you sure ursus? I was above the walkway/aisle, and when I walked up to the ticket window and said upper deck behind home plate it was \$28 first offered.

If you want to sit in the field boxes at Yankee Stadium, it's between \$325-400 a game. Mets are over \$100.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 15-04-2008 22:19

I was going from the Giants website. There may be a level of "View Boxes" above the aisle.

When I first went to Yankee Stadium, you could get a season ticket for the field boxes for USD 400. Makes me feel old, that does.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 17-04-2008 09:22

Well, that was just WILD. I tried to stay awake for this (it started here on TV at 1:30 and I record every game, just in case), got to the middle of the 5th, fell asleep thinking the worst, and woke up to find that the Yankees added another 8. I may have to put this onto a DVD in case it ends up as the highlight of the Yankees year.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Soccer Scrimmage - 24-04-2008 00:44

I've just learned that the Mariners have a reliever named Putz, but that he pronounces the name like "puts". Is this the greatest face-saving surname pronunciation since Rusty Kuntz?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jefe - 28-04-2008 02:03

So I went to Shea on Saturday to see it again before it goes away, and it can't go away fast enough.

The Subway stand in the stadium sells footlongs. For \$12. The Dunkin Donuts stand does not sell donuts, meanwhile. Right field loge/2nd deck of 4 seats for an average Braves-Mets game, right out by the foul pole, were \$37.

I've never been to a sporting event with a streaming stock ticker before, but between innings there was one, even with it being Saturday.

But Citifield, rapidly rising behind center field of Shea, looks like it could be absolutely gorgeous. They've extended it behind home plate off the curve of the stadium to build a replica (in orangish brick, not stone) of Ebbets Field's exterior. It looks AWESOME.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 06-05-2008 04:00

Jeez, a bit of an extreme reaction!

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jason voorhees - 06-05-2008 17:16

I'll save the "justifiable homicide" jokes.

Just a horrible, horrible thing. I do believe her when she said "I thought they'd get out of the way," but something inside of your head should say "hmmm, I better have a Plan B just in case they don't get out of the way, as in stepping on the brakes."

But already this brain surgeon is befuddled that painting a Yankees emblem on your car may result in people not liking the Yankees chanting anti-Yankees chants. I mean who woulda thought.

Re: Candlestick Park - I was impressed that the bleachers were \$2.50 in 1990. I remember sitting behind some ex-hippie/ex-Hells Angels/ex-miscreants who were chanting "(Kal) Daniels fucks sheep". Then one of the guys big joke was "Ewe did it !"

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jefe - 08-05-2008 02:48

Can we please stop pissing away 1 run games on the West Coast? Especially after we've knocked out the opposing closer to get that far?

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 08-05-2008 14:59

Two guys sitting next to each other at Dodger Stadium each caught foul balls yesterday...on back-to-back pitches:

The Los Angeles Dodgers' batting lineup didn't have much luck Wednesday. But the team's fan lineup in Dodger Stadium's Section 11, Row N certainly did.

In the bottom of the fifth inning Glen Walker in Seat 1 caught a pop foul hit by Dodger first baseman James Loney.

On the next pitch by the New York Mets' John Maine, Joe Castro in Seat 2 caught a line-shot fouled off Loney's bat.

The crowd in the field-level seats between third base and home went wild.

"It was the weirdest thing," said Walker, 50, of Redondo Beach. "The ball went straight up and came down fast. I caught it on a short hop. I had a baseball glove in my car, but I didn't bring it into the stadium with me. When the ball was coming at me, I wished I had."

Castro, 43, of Long Beach, was high-fiving Walker when the sharp whack of Loney's bat signaled another foul coming the pair's way.

It hit the scoreboard on the second-level facade, then bounced into Castro's hand. He was glove-less too.

"It was crazy. Everybody was in disbelief. People around us were yelling, 'Did we just see that?' They were blown away. A guy across the aisle came back from the snack bar and asked if he'd missed anything and we held up our foul balls. He couldn't believe it," said Castro, an insurance broker.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jason voorhees - 11-05-2008 00:41

It's probably unprecedented, but it shouldn't be. You figure a pitcher placing the ball in the same spot with a swinger swinging the same swing could result with foul balls in the same section. But I guess when you tabulate the odds of square footage, that's when it becomes mind-boggling. I remember one guy in Shea who had seasons tickets at one seat, and held up signs for how many foul balls he caught. He caught 3 in a season, and 10 for his career.

Any comment on the death of Mr. Redlegs, Reed ?
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QqR3wtua2rs>

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 15-05-2008 06:13

A black day for baseball, especially the Dodgers.
<http://www.latimes.com/sports/la-sp-simers8apr08,1,909471.column>

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 15-05-2008 14:46

For some reason, the link got cut off, but is that about the "no autographs unless you have tickets in that section"? I just always assumed that was the rule. The way Dodger stadium is laid out also, it's hard to move between sections from inside the stadium.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 15-05-2008 15:13

Yes.

At every park I've been to, during batting practice, they let kids come up to the railing to get autographs and only clear them out soon before the game starts. It's not a problem.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Gyuri - 20-05-2008 18:36

I took a time out from the basketball game last night to watch the top of the ninth of the Royals/Red Sox game, as Jon Lester (cancer survivor) had yet to give up a hit. I couldn't call my brother or either of my sisters (crazy Sox fan, the lot of them) for fear of jinxing it and suffering their wrath. I still get abuse for causing Pedro's meltdown against the Yankees in the 2003 playoffs, because I called my sister from Germany to ask why the hell Jimmy Williams had left Pedro in.

Anyway, watching the end of no-hitters is one of my favorite things about baseball. I love the strangled cheering of the fans and the way that the announcers try to obliquely mention what's going on without coming out and saying it. Most of all, I love the catcher running out to lift up the pitcher in celebration after it's over. Though this happens after the last pitch of the World Series, I somehow like it more during no-hitters, as the celebration is focused totally on one man. (Although, now that Varitek has caught 4 of them, maybe he should be getting lifted up himself).

Anyway, this is just a long intro to a link to another great Joe Posnanski column. His KC Star article about the game is also quite good.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 20-05-2008 19:00

I still hope to see a major league no-hitter live before I go off to the big diamond in the sky.

I've always loved this picture:

http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/photo/photogallery/ws_top20_large/06.jpg

Catchers may have done the leaping thing before Yogi Berra did it to Don Larsen after his perfect game, but even if had happened before, that is the one I will always remember.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 20-05-2008 19:35

I saw Hideo Nomo throw a no hitter for the Red Sox against the Orioles at Camden Yards. I just went along with some friends and wasn't especially concerned with the proceedings until about the 6th inning where I realized what was happening.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 21-05-2008 01:19

Gyuri wrote:

I still get abuse for causing Pedro's meltdown against the Yankees in the 2003 playoffs, because I called my sister from Germany to ask why the hell Jimmy Williams had left Pedro in.

That was you??! Bastard.

I'm happy for Lester. I wish I had watched that instead of "Locked Up Abroad: Nepal".

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jefe - 21-05-2008 03:42

Dear Yankee bullpen: There's really no point throwing at people's heads when you're already down 10-0.

Reason #1 why Luke Scott could be really really good: The ability to get completely around on a 96 MPH fastball below the knees and put it in the upper deck of Yankee Stadium. This could be fun.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontofiel - 21-05-2008 06:25

sorry jefe.

Note to everyone who hates the Yankees: Meltdown starts here.

I cannot believe what I am seeing (some live, some off tape): we are (in the words of my very close friend) really quite bad.

In my words, we are fucking dreadful... WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU CRETINS PLAYING AT?????

that said, it was on the cards: one pitcher, two crocks, 3 chickens, and a bullpen which wont get used because our fielding is stunningly bad (actually, that is one of the good things).

Hitting: Jeter is Jeter, Matsui is creaking, Damon is streaking, Posada is crunchy, and apart from the INJURED A-Rod, we have Giambi who is pretending to be a hitting version of Tim Robbins.

Having said all that, the sub 3rd baseman Gonzales, looks good (as a shortstop), and I fear thats all. Laugh it up while you can...

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontofiel - 21-05-2008 07:23

5th isnt to be sneezed at

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Gyuri - 21-05-2008 15:23

Gero,

I wouldn't worry too much yet, they're only 5 games under .500 and have much of the season left to play. There was teeth-gnashing (or unmitigated joy, depending on your perspective) last year they were 8 games under .500 on May 29, but they rallied to get the wild card. Same thing in 2005, when they were 8 games under .500 on May 6. That time they rallied to win the division.

I'll believe the Yankees are well and truly screwed when they are mathematically eliminated, and not a second before. .rising-from-the-dead, zombie bastards that they are.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by dglh - 21-05-2008 16:15

But Citifield, rapidly rising behind center field of Shea, looks like it could be absolutely gorgeous. They've extended it behind home plate off the curve of the stadium to build a replica (in orangish brick, not stone) of Ebbets Field's exterior. It looks AWESOME.

jefe - I know way too much about Citi Field (association with the architect). It does sound like it will be fantastic. The only thing to make it better would be closing La Guardia.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 22-05-2008 13:45

I agree about the excitement of no-hitters. The closest I came was a game at the start of the 94 season. Pedro - pitching I think his first game at the Big O (having come in a trade for Delino DeShields the previous November) - went 7 1/3 perfect innings. Then Reggie Sanders came to bat. Pedro - whose control in those days might charitably be described as erratic - dinged him.

Now, if you were hit by a pitch by a guy who was five outs from immortality, what would you do?

Well, if you're Sanders, you charge the mound.

"Why are they fighting"? My wife asked.

"I haven't the faintest fucking idea," I said, truthfully. I mean, really, what kind of ego do you have to have to assume in that situation that the pitch was deliberate?

The next season, of course, Pedro became only the second man in history to throw nine perfect innings and not get a perfect game. The man is phenomenal.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontofiel - 22-05-2008 14:06

That was the quiz question on last nights baseball in the UK on Channel 5.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 22-05-2008 14:10

Why Reggie Sanders charged the mound?

I didn't realise that the questions were that sophisticated.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 22-05-2008 21:14

The question might be sophisticated, but the answer isn't:

- a) he's an egomaniacal moron
 - b) he's an egomaniacal moron
 - c) etc...
- =====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 24-05-2008 11:53

Minor League player traded for bats.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 30-05-2008 06:20

I'll be at Fenway Saturday week watching the Wonderful Sox play Seattle. I'm sure you're all jealous.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 20-06-2008 19:07

Holy 1993!

Cito Gaston back as Jays Manager.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Amor de Cosmos - 20-06-2008 19:34

Is this a sign that Ricciardi will gone at the end of the season and has thrown a warm and fuzzy crying towel to the fans before he's shown the door? I mean you got luuuurve Cito but he's not going to take the current set of spare parts and turn them into a contender, or even an average baseball team.

Respect and condolences to Gibbons, he did the best he could with not very much.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jason voorhees - 21-06-2008 02:24

The strange case of the switch-pitcher, Pat Venditte.

I hope this guy goes far. And yes, he's a Yank.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontofiel van Basten - 21-06-2008 11:02

has Jason Giambi come off the sauce? And thank fuck A-Rod is hitting, cos the rest are shite (pitchers are finally up to it)

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 29-06-2008 17:21

Dodgers get no hits, still win.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jason voorhees - 11-07-2008 01:00

I love this newspaper correction in Newsday.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jason voorhees - 11-07-2008 01:01

And while the Yanks took the early lead, Boston has come back with a vengeance and leads the attack on rival fans scoreboard 2-1. My favorite was pulling the dad out of a car and beating him with a baseball bat in front of his son.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 11-07-2008 02:11

Jesus, when did that happen? People are out of control.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 11-07-2008 02:13

You know how you get songs stuck in your head sometimes? Well sometimes I get words. Sometimes those words are names. For the past few days, and I have no idea why, I've been repeating the words "El Duque" in my head over and over. Am I going crazy?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 14-07-2008 00:04

Femme Folle wrote:

You know how you get songs stuck in your head sometimes? Well sometimes I get words. Sometimes those words are

names. For the past few days, and I have no idea why, I've been repeating the words "El Duque" in my head over and over. Am I going crazy?

Are you saying it like the "By..... MEN-en!" commercials (or Co.....-STAN-za!)?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 14-07-2008 00:36

el-DUKE-ay

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 15-07-2008 23:40

<http://img.photobucket.com/albums/v329/rogue777/93aa96f8.jpg>

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 26-07-2008 22:14

Does anyone else sing that song from a Monty Python sketch that goes Torre-molinos substituting the name Jose Molina every time he comes up to bat?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 27-07-2008 07:24

probably not, and thanks for that pic FF: shame it wasnt the Yanks pins he is wearing.

Incidentally, WOOOOOOOOOOHOOOOOOOOOO. About time too. We (ding) are starting to play like a team that is spending \$220 million a year... I saw the Chamberlain thing the other night, and he was brilliant.

Pettite was his usual 'lucky' self last night, but if the Yanks' bats stay hot, you can all kiss your rings goodbye. Of course its not going to happen, but at least I get to feel good baseball wise for now.

I think the Nady trade from the Pirates may be the piece de resistance from the Turd Jr (copyright c2008) and although the Minor League teams are down to one guy and his pet fish, at least we have back up in the pen, as Farnsworth is currently hurling like my granny after a particularly nasty stag night (when she was the entertainment, and the stag was a Marseille fisherman, fresh from work)

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 27-07-2008 07:27

I got a joba in my pujol.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 27-07-2008 07:36

oh baggage! you are following me around.

I am almost certain that Mr Chamberlain was my first or second pick in the fantasy baseball league... everything else was crap, but finally, I got something right!

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 27-07-2008 07:53

Who is Turd Jr.?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 27-07-2008 08:08

Turd Sr (with the lust of my life (Joe Torre... I am not THAT much of a gerontophile))

<http://www.pollprizes.com/images/steinbrenner-torre.jpg>

Turd Jr

http://nymag.com/images/2/daily/intel/07/10/29_hank_lgl.jpg

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 27-07-2008 08:10

I will edit this if any lawyers come along... or if the all-seeing of eye think there may be trouble.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 27-07-2008 08:24

I thought that might be who you were referring to, but I wasn't sure.

The new Joe is hotter than the old Joe.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 27-07-2008 08:26

well: physically YUM, but the bastard is a Dodger.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 27-07-2008 08:29

http://losangeles.dodgers.mlb.com/pressbox/photos/headshots_players_coaches/123406_90x135.jpg

Joe in 'nasty "I will fuck you up" mode'

anyone see the 'Joe Pesci' thing going on there?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 28-07-2008 07:20

bollocks. And we (ding) were doing so well too.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 28-07-2008 12:18

You can never take it for granted that you're going to sweep. I am glad I stayed up to watch it until the end, even though I will be paying for that around 2pm.

Only one game behind the Devils.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 28-07-2008 15:43

The Cubs thoughtfully saved their worst home performances of the season for the week when I had access to WGN.

Milwaukee (who we saw beat up the Giants) are going to win that division going away.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jefe - 29-07-2008 03:09

Wow, ursus I just missed crossing paths with you. I live in Baltimore. I just went back to San Francisco. Who do I get to see play the Giants? The Nationals. Argh.

Whichever Molina is SF's catcher hit two out on Tuesday, and Fred Lewis hit the very first Nats pitch of the night almost into the Cove. It hit the railing on the back fence of the arcade and caromed back onto the field. Barry Zito still can't pitch for crap, but even he couldn't give that game away.

And we've apparently gone for the home run cycle in the Bronx tonight. I wish they could have saved this until Wednesday afternoon, when I will actually be there. Sigh.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 29-07-2008 03:41

Boy, the things you don't know about your own parents. The other day, my Dad referred to Chicago as his Cubbies. He's only ever really been an Astros fan since I can remember. It almost felt like he had been having an affair.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 29-07-2008 09:07

Jefe, we saw Prince Fielder hit one into the Cove (on the bounce). Strangely (at least to us), it didn't count as a "splash hit", those apparently being reserved only for Giants (which is why there have only been three since we there last year).

FF, perhaps your dad's trying to compensate for Ms. Clinton's conversion to the Yankees . . .

Strangely enough, I was listening to the WGN radio broadcast on the way to the airport and Hughes and Santo (who make even a diehard like me cringe) gave a shout out to some guy whose love for the Baby Bears was second only to that for the LSU Tigers. Perhaps it's contagious . . .

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 29-07-2008 09:28

Dave Trembley is a cock. That is all.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 29-07-2008 14:03

UA - Maybe it was my Dad.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 29-07-2008 14:47

So, nothing to say about the Angels beating the Sox, FF? That's six in a row over Boston. If the Angels can come out over .500 in this trip to Boston and NY, a lot of people are going to be talking about them being World Series favorites.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 29-07-2008 16:00

To be honest, I don't even spend any time thinking about teams other than the Red Sox, the Yankees and the Rays.

It's doubtful (in my mind, at least) that Boston will make the postseason this year, so all I hope for is that NYY and TBR don't make it either.

If the Angels make it, good for them.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 29-07-2008 16:15

The Rays intruded on ursus minor's consciousness for the first time this summer (he having been raised with his parents' National League bias). His first question was how they managed to play in a large body of water.

I was under the impression that the Angels already were the consensus favorites to win the whole thing. They certainly have been the most consistently impressive team to date.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 29-07-2008 17:14

It's doubtful (in my mind, at least) that Boston will make the postseason this year, so all I hope for is that NYY and TBR don't make it either.

You do know, FF, that at least one, and maybe two, of those three teams will make the post-season. It's inevitable. Somebody is going to win the AL East and I don't think it's going to be the Blue Jays or the Orioles.

Baseball season is over for me as it always is once the Reds fall from contention. Roll on the NHL.

Maybe next year. I just haven't been able to care this year. Like most baseball fans in the DC area, I haven't actually been to a Nats game this year and I don't watch them on TV. (Don't worry, Hissing Fauna, you're shirt is enroute). They suck and all of their promising young players have been injured so there's really nothing to see and I'm so sick of this heat that I don't want to go to a game.

Even my favorite minor league team, the State College Spikes have really sucked. They've got like the fifth worst record in all of professional baseball. What's worse, two of their best players were draft picks from West Point and the Army recently decided to renege on its promise to let Cadets play pro sports if they get drafted by MLB or the NFL, so now they're off to war.

With luck, next year my local team will be the Twins. That's a team I could enjoy watching. They're already my favorite American League team (my brief attempt at Red Sox fanhood didn't stick) and have Brendan Harris, a W&M graduate.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 29-07-2008 17:20

The Twins will be a completely admirable club once they get a real ballpark.

Everything you say about the Nats is true. Any team that can get swept by the Giants shouldn't really be in the big leagues.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 29-07-2008 17:44

ursus arctos wrote:

I was under the impression that the Angels already were the consensus favorites to win the whole thing. They certainly have been the most consistently impressive team to date.

Two problems with that that might be resolved:

- 1) hitting. The Angels hadn't been scoring a lot before the All-Star break (something that makes K-Rod's likely shattering of the single-season save record even more impressive is that something like 30 of his saves have come in games in which the Angels won by only 1 or 2 runs)
- 2) the Red Sox. The last few years have seen the Angels lose to Boston in the post-season. True, I think it was only for two years, but they were just dominated by the Red Sox. Their current win-streak has been impressive, and if they can win one more in Boston, showing that they can beat them in Fenway, that will erase a lot of doubts.

Jeebus, I seem like a giant Angels fan, but I'm not really.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 29-07-2008 17:56

Reed of the Valley People wrote:

You do know, FF, that at least one, and maybe two, of those three teams will make the post-season. It's inevitable. Somebody is going to win the AL East and I don't think it's going to be the Blue Jays or the Orioles.

Yeah, I know. I really meant that they wouldn't make the later part of the postseason. Obviously one of those three will

win the division, and possibly the league (although that's not a foregone conclusion). I just don't think we'll be seeing them in the WS. I hope the BoSox prove me wrong, but I'd rather expect disappointment and be pleasantly surprised than the other way around.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jefe - 30-07-2008 00:32

Inca wrote:

ursus arctos wrote:

I was under the impression that the Angels already were the consensus favorites to win the whole thing. They certainly have been the most consistently impressive team to date.

Two problems with that that might be resolved:

1) hitting. The Angels hadn't been scoring a lot before the All-Star break (something that makes K-Rod's likely shattering of the single-season save record even more impressive is that something like 30 of his saves have come in games in which the Angels won by only 1 or 2 runs)

Consider it resolved. Mark Teixeira from Atlanta for Casey Kotchman and a AA LHP.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 30-07-2008 05:42

The Twins will be a completely admirable club once they get a real ballpark.

The new park will be nice, but there's something to be said for watching a game where everyone in the crowd is there just to watch baseball and spend time with their kids - not to be seen, or because of the cache of getting tickets, or because it's "the thing to do," or because of the club bar or the flume ride or whatever the fuck it is these new parks are installing to improve the "experience."

The Metrodome is completely charmless except for the team itself which have been a great franchise since Bud decided not to contract them.

The Nationals will do OK if they can ever get a competitive team on the field. Just as it was with the MCI Center, it's going to take a while for people to get comfortable with a routine of parking and taking the Metro there.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jason voorhees - 30-07-2008 16:45

As I wrote a few years ago, the Metrodome was so horrible that it's not even worth seeing a game there. It's actually a bad memory for me from how ugly, drab, and horrible that place was. It was my Guantanamo, my Tower of London. What a dungeon.

Bring on the hot tubs in right field, hotelrooms overlooking left field with live sex acts of people who think it's a one-way tinted glass, the live MC with the promotional giveaways between innings, mascot racing, commercials on the scoreboard for Disney Channel with the latest High School Musical! ON ICE hit song blasting on the PA, and lawyers and business owners who just want to be seen.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 30-07-2008 17:28

<http://imgsrv.weei.com/image/DbLiteGraphic/200807/2885402.jpg>

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 30-07-2008 17:42

I enjoyed the Twins game I saw at the Metrodome and the prices were all very reasonable. I also saw the University of Minnesota play a baseball game there against Rutgers. Only a few hundred on hand so everything echoed. You could here every tiny little sound from the field.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jefe - 31-07-2008 06:21

One 400 mile round trip bus ride. One steaming hot day. Something like \$85 minimum laid out in total. For this. Satan's minions 13
God's chosen ones 3.

I suppose this is to be expected when you start your long reliever, and then relieve him with the former starter whose job he just took, but I don't care. I cannot wait until Yankee Stadium is blown up. If only it could take the new one and everything Yankee with it when it goes. (Incidentally, a Bud light draft is \$10.50)

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 31-07-2008 10:44

A world in which the O's are the chosen ones is a bit strange, but the beer prices are outrageous.

Yankee Stadium lost its soul in the "renovation". I don't think that many people are going to mourn its demise.

Reed, your view on the Twins' new park strikes me as being heavily influenced by Camden Yards mania. From what I can see on television, the current "crowds" at Oriole Park are now just as genuine as those in the HeftyDome. And they get to enjoy the game in a beautiful setting.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 31-07-2008 14:54

The chapter on going to a game at Yankee Stadium in Will Leitch's God Save the Fan is really good. It sounds like a soul-crushing experience.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 31-07-2008 14:58

It's still better than Shea . . .

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 31-07-2008 15:00

Reed, your view on the Twins' new park strikes me as being heavily influenced by Camden Yards mania. From what I

can see on television, the current "crowds" at Oriole Park are now just as genuine as those in the HeftyDome. And they get to enjoy the game in a beautiful setting.\

My views are more influenced by Fenway, I think.

That's because the Orioles have gone nowhere in recent years and fan morale is low. What you see in Camden Yards is the righteous remnant of hardcore O's fans, plus a lot of Yankees and Red Sox fans (when those teams are in town)

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 31-07-2008 15:03

Just copying from the book, here's a bit from the chapter...

...as far as I'm concerned, there's not a stadium in all of sports that's a less enjoyable place to watch a sporting event than Yankee Stadium. It's not just that the park, because of an ill-fated mid-'70s remodeling, has the nostalgic architecture of an International House of Pancakes (though that doesn't help). It's that the mythos of Yankee Stadium, hand in hand with that unique blend of entitlement and narcissism that makes New York what it is, have combined to make attending a game there feel like you've been invited to your extravagantly wealthy uncle's house, the one who never talks to you, works for some evil law firm somewhere, and makes you take your shoes off the minute you get out of the car. Oh, and he charges you forty bucks once you make it through the front door. It's the biggest rip-off in all of sports.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 31-07-2008 16:57

Hmmmmm.

Seems to me that Leitch is laying the "I'm just a farm boy from Mattoon, Illinois" schtick on just a bit thick there.

The IHOP crack is spot on, though.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 31-07-2008 17:01

I think you'd find that more in the rest of the chapter, especially when he talks about guarding your wallet on the subway.

He mentions that people have to check any bags (presumably not women's purses) at little bodegas across from the stadium and pay 5 bucks. He also mentions ushers blocking people from leaving their seats during God Bless America.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 31-07-2008 17:05

The God Bless America nonsense alone sends me into paroxysms of rage.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 31-07-2008 17:06

I'll never find out. I'd never willingly give Steinbrenner one fucking dime.

Now he's up for the hall of fame. He'll get it, but he shouldn't. Yankees fans praise him for caring so much about his team. He cares a lot about the Yankees, but he doesn't give a shit about the state of baseball overall and, despite the record revenues and attendance, the game is much worse because of it.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 31-07-2008 21:26

So, Reed: thoughts on Griffey going to the White Sox?

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 31-07-2008 21:42

It's about time, but it doesn't seem like the Reds got much for him. I guess it's just a salary dump, which isn't a bad idea. They've got some good young players. They need to build around Bruce, Votto, Volquez, etc and hopefully follow the Rays example.

I thought they were also going to try to trade Adam Dunn. I think he's a free agent after this year, but maybe that changed when I wasn't paying attention.

Its very sad that it has to be this way, but as long as baseball is fine with 90% of the attention being on two teams, the only hope the Reds/Pirates/Royals/A's/Rays/Brewers/Twins/Marlins have is to trade veterans for prospects and hope they eventually blossom.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 31-07-2008 22:08

Uh, the Brewers? What about Sabathia?

I know what you mean, but clearly things are working out for a lot of those teams.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 31-07-2008 22:23

The Brewers are renting him. He's not going to sign there after this season.

I know what you mean, but clearly things are working out for a lot of those teams.

It works out sometimes. If they play all of their cards right, they might be able to make a run every few years. If they make mistakes, as the Reds have, they can't compete. If they make a lot of mistakes, as the Pirates have, they're hopeless.

Small market teams that are really shrewd and not in the AL East, may be able to be respectable most years (A's, Twins), but it's always a thin line and they can never afford to keep the fan favorites.

Meanwhile, while everyone else has to usually be content with a plucky young team rebuilding, the big market teams can afford to be in it every year. They can afford to keep stars through their prime and, sometimes, well after it. The Red Sox can afford to overpay Jason Varitek just because he's such a great guy. The Yankees lose their starting catcher? No trouble, they just call up Detroit and get Pudge Rodriguez. The teams that need the draft the most can't pick the top players because Scott Boras makes sure that they ask for an outrageous signing bonus that only the big teams can afford.

And right now the Yankees and Mets aren't even maximizing their earning potential like they will when they get new ballparks. Then what?

Cities put millions of taxpayer dollars into new ballparks and all the good seats are reserved for the rich.

Baseball is broken. It's just going to take another 10 to 20 years for everyone else to realize it.

News:

The Red Sox have traded Manny to the Dodgers in a three way deal with the Pirates.

Manny goes to the Dodgers, Jason Bay from Pittsburgh to Boston and the Buccos get four players from Los Angeles, including one Single A player.

Typical Dodgers. Wait until a star is past his prime to get him.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 31-07-2008 22:32

Well, that's true about Sabathia, but that's what a lot of these late-July trades are. Look at the Angels and Teixeira. And possibly the Dodgers and Manny (not sure if they have to pick up his contract options).

Compared to what the Dodgers have been getting from Juan Pierre and Andruw Jones, Manny provides an enormous upside in terms of offense.

The downside is that he still has to play LF. Manny was a bad fielder in Boston, where he could play shallow and know that he didn't have to run back to catch any balls--he could let them bounce off of the Green Monster and play them that way. The fence in medium left-center at Dodger Stadium is 360 feet from home plate. He's going to have to cover a lot of ground.

But really, this is all about trying to wrap up the NL West and get past the first round of the playoffs.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 31-07-2008 22:33

You beat me to it, Reed.

I was just about to post this link.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 01-08-2008 11:37

Without wishing ill on either FF or JV, it would be a very healthy thing for baseball if neither the Yankees nor the Red Sox made the playoffs this year, just as it would be a healthy thing for Spanish football if neither Real Madrid nor Barcelona won the title.

There are certain similarities in the two situations, particularly when one considers the extent to which the Yankees' economic might is grounded in their local television contract.

Agreed with Inca on Manny in Dodgerland.

I think the Pirates did an excellent job of "monetizing" Nady and Bay. They are in a division where "small market" teams can reasonably expect to complete (in part due to the incompetence of my dear Cubbies at realising their massive economic advantage), and I would not be surprised to see them pulling off a Milwaukee-like rise over the next several years.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 01-08-2008 14:44

I don't disagree with you about the Red Sox and the Yankees. As I said earlier, I don't think Boston will make it to the WS this year, and I really don't believe that the Yankees will either. I don't even think they will win the AL. Both have had a lot of turmoil in the clubhouse, turnover and injuries to key players. Sometimes it feels as though they've become a team of individuals working for themselves, rather than components of a team working together to win. Last year, I wouldn't have dreamed that Manny would leave (or that people would have wanted him to go, for that matter). His recent behavior and attitude surely affected the other members of the team--how could it not? And the Yankees have A-Rod (whom I sense that most of his teammates really don't like very much). Boston has several players that seem to be past their prime offensively (Crisp, Varitek to name two). Having good defensive players is nice and all, but you have to have more than two people who are capable of hitting out of the park or you're left depending on your pitcher, not so much to win the game as to prevent the other side from winning. Hey, that works, but it doesn't make for a very interesting game to watch. Shutouts are more fun when your team has amassed enough points that your opponent cannot easily surpass you in half an inning. Even good pitchers have bad innings here and there.

And maybe we all shouldn't be so sure that the Satan Rays will choke.

Early days, I know, but I think the Angels will probably end up being the AL representatives in the Series (and hopefully the Cubbies will be there too).

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 01-08-2008 16:32

I get very frustrated with Yankees fans, Steinbrenner and anyone who defends the financial imbalance in baseball as just "free market" enterprise.

Bullshit. If it were really a free market, New York would have a lot more than 2 teams the way London has a lot more than two league football clubs.

As it is, the New York metro area (defined as their official MSA) has a population of around 21 million. Boston has about 7.5 million, but the total population of New England is 14 million.

Pittsburgh's MSA is 2.4 million. Cincinnati is about two million, but also draws in people from Indianapolis and Louisville. Still, that's probably only about 5 million.

If they want the advantages of a closed league, antitrust exemption and exclusive territorial rights, then they should be more of an NFL-type system of revenue sharing.

The reason the NFL has surpassed baseball as the most popular sport is that they promote every team and every team, except maybe the Cardinals, has interesting storylines that ESPN can flog. Baseball never has more than four or five "teams of interest" and, like the UN security council, some of the seats in that group are permanent.

The NFL doesn't have to worry about its ratings if the Steelers and the Seahawks are in the Super Bowl. They don't have to engineer a way for the Giants get the marketable stars. Shit, the NFL doesn't even have a team in LA and it's not that big of a problem.

Shouldn't that be a lesson?

Edit. This table is instructive for those who enjoy reading me flog this equine skeleton. If we take NY divided by two as a baseline, then only New York and LA and maybe Chicago are big enough to support teams. Minneapolis, once regarded

by Bud Selig as expendable, is the 15th largest metro area. His own beloved Milwaukee is 27th.

It also raises the question of what the fuck the NBA is doing allowing the Sonics to move from Seattle to Oklahoma City.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 01-08-2008 16:37

The NFL is the best argument that socialism works in the US.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 01-08-2008 16:48

I don't know about socialism. I think its the difference between a well-run cartel and a poorly run cartel.

They won't let anymore teams be community owned like the Packers. The other owners prefer to work with other obscenely rich people like themselves.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 01-08-2008 17:02

That's also a valid characterization.

To be fair to MLB, the NFL has an easier time of it, because its television contracts have always been national and negotiated by the league. Given the number of games that baseball clubs play, that kind of central control simply isn't possible in baseball. As a result, it is much easier for the Steinbrenners of the world to characterize any attempts at sharing local media revenues as taking away something that is "rightfully theirs" than it would be for the Cowboys to bitch that they don't get a larger slice of the national pie than do the Cardinals (though Jones has in fact bitched about that).

An interesting counter-factual hypothesis is to imagine what would have happened if instead of moving the Dodgers and Giants, MLB reacted to the obvious need to cover the West Coast by creating a third league (or taking over all or part of the PCL). Within four years of those moves, they had already added teams in Minnesota, Houston and a second team in Los Angeles; the overall increase in numbers is not that great.

Of course, my favorite detail of that counter-factual is that the Mets wouldn't exist.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 01-08-2008 17:59

Technically, they didn't add Minnesota. The Senators moved there. But the creation of the expansion Senators in 1961 was already assured when Clark Griffith moved them to Minnesota to be among more white people (that's what he actually said, the fucker).

TV has a lot to do with the Yankees largesse, but it isn't just that, nor did it begin with the exit of the Dodgers and Giants. The Yankees were the richest team during the Depression too.

Indeed, it's my understanding that the reason the Yankees went into the toilet in the late 1960s early 1970s is because they couldn't figure out how to handle the Brave New World of the entry draft. They couldn't just go out into the countryside and buy any kid they wanted. Their extreme suckitude in that period meant that CBS bought them for \$12 million (I think) and then sold them to Steinbrenner and his partners for a mere \$10 million from CBS in 1973.

So Steinbrenner doesn't have anything to complain about, but I think owners of some big teams would have a legitimate gripe if they paid for what they thought was a big market team only to find out a few years later that they're going to have

to share the revenue (which they were counting on to justify what they paid) with guys who paid a lot less for their teams.

With an NFL team, all of that is baked into the sale price now.

But I think something could be worked out to phase it in such that guys like John Henry wouldn't lose money (not that he can't afford it). In the long run, all the franchises would be worth more because baseball will have a brighter future and there'd be less risk.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 02-08-2008 16:43

This woman should be playing for the Giants

What a catch.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 02-08-2008 17:36

Wow. I had to send that one to my Dad.

So does that count? Was the batter out because she caught it and not the LF'er?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 02-08-2008 17:42

Foul ball. She caught it to the left of the foul pole.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 02-08-2008 17:45

It's a Gatorade commercial.

Watched Manny's Dodger debut last night. 12,000 tickets for the game were sold after the deal. The crowd was giving him a standing ovation for everything--after his first at-bat, in which he grounded to short on the first pitch, he was cheered.

Had two singles--a lucky one on his second AB, a tough hop past the Arizona shortstop--but ground out into a 6-4-3 double play in the 9th inning with the Dodgers down 2-1. The whole crowd was obviously hoping for a walk-off home run, but they still loved him. I think he might do well in LA--there's less pressure than in Boston, and if last night is anything to go by, the fans are just happy to have a big name player that can hit the ball. It's been about 20 years since the Dodgers have had someone like that.

One thing, though--in his post-game interview, he was wearing a plain white dreadlock-holder head wrap thing. The Dodgers need to get on it pronto and have a LA logo one made up for him, like he had in Boston.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 02-08-2008 17:50

Oh. I feel cheated.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 02-08-2008 17:50

Really? I was worried about that.

Still an excellent effort.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 02-08-2008 18:02

Inca - At least he wasn't wearing his Boston one. Haha

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 02-08-2008 18:03

Femme Folle wrote:

Oh. I feel cheated.

I had my suspicions when I saw it for the first time--the production value seemed pretty high for a minor-league game.

What apparently happened was that some ad company made it for Gatorade, they ended their partnership and the video was put on the web before it was ever shown officially.

<http://www.snopes.com/photos/advertisements/ballgirl.asp>

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 02-08-2008 18:06

Femme Folle wrote:

Inca - At least he wasn't wearing his Boston one. Haha

It would have just been Manny...ugh, you know the rest.

My favorite Manny story is one that I never knew about until I read Will Leitch's book. It was back when he was with Cleveland. He came into the clubhouse, and everyone was watching the OJ Simpson chase. When he found out that the police were chasing OJ, he said "what did Chad do?", referring to teammate Chad Ogea.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 02-08-2008 18:21

That's a great story. So Manny.

BTW, my boss often says "that's just Marian being Marian". I guess I fall into the Manny category at work: I'm high maintenance, but I produce results.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 02-08-2008 18:24

Maybe you could get Manny's old dreadlock thingy.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 02-08-2008 18:42

I could always buy one.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 02-08-2008 18:43

Or your dad could get you an LSU one.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 03-08-2008 01:45

What exactly what Manny's gripe with the Red Sox? He didn't enjoy winning championships and being beloved by millions of people?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 03-08-2008 02:21

I've wondered about that myself, Reed. I guess there are probably dynamics between Manny and Mannygment (tee hee) that the general public might not be aware of. You know how that happens to regular people? Someone at work suddenly gives their notice and you had no idea that they were even looking for another job.

(sh)it happens.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 04-08-2008 22:50

The Yankees test the bounds of hubris.

\$2500 a ticket for boxes near the field? An average ticket price of \$75 a seat?

For 81 games?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 04-08-2008 23:11

I'm suprised it's not more.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 05-08-2008 00:36

To help pay for this cash cow, the Yankees are asking the government to let the team raise as much as another \$366 million in tax-exempt financing. But the Internal Revenue Service is considering a rule change that would block the request, while members of Congress are investigating why baseball's most valuable team got tax-exempt financing to begin with.

WTF? I sincerely hope the IRS is successful. It's obscene.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jefe - 05-08-2008 04:14

As do the New York Giants, ursus. PSL's for some seats at the new stadium will be 20K alone, never mind the actual ticket cost.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 05-08-2008 14:24

But the Giants play 8 regular season games; the Yankees play 81.

Perhaps it's just because I lived through "crowds" of under 10,000 during the Jerry Kenney years at the original Yankee Stadium, but I just don't see those prices being sustainable in this economy, especially if the team has a couple of off years.

Our firm has a box (and has had one for yonks), and I can assure you that there is no way that we could justify 2500 x 81 x 4 for a single season.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 05-08-2008 15:01

Perhaps, but New York seems to have a completely separate economy, especially when it comes to conspicuous consumption.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 05-08-2008 16:27

I actually think that LA is better at that than we are, at least on a day-in/day-out level.

I assume the model is the Knicks, but there is a big difference in the visibility of courtside fans in basketball and field-side fans in baseball, and it is worth noting that the Knicks are no longer assured of filling the building every night (throughout my lifetime only the New York Football Giants and New York Rangers have appeared to be essentially immune to sharp dips in popularity when they aren't performing).

I really would like to know who is going to pay USD 2500 for a ticket to a midweek day game against Kansas City, if only to suggest to the IRS that they be audited.

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 05-08-2008 16:52

Presumably, those tickets will be bought as part of massive season ticket packages by Wall Street firms, Madison Avenue types and so forth. I would also think the big corporate law firms would buy some too, but you say your's wouldn't so maybe not.

I don't really understand how those businesses work, so I don't know how they justify it, but I think the firms that do buy luxury box packages except a certain amount of dead loss. For example, when a friend of mine worked for Capital One (yes, the credit card people) I got to go with him to sit in their box at the MCI Center for Wizards games (this happened twice). Both times I went, all the other people in the box were middle managers like him who brought friends. No business was being conducted. Capital One wasn't getting anything out of it. It's just that none of the big shots wanted to go to that game in particular so the tickets trickled down through the organization and my friend was able to get them as they trickled through his division.

Likewise, I imagine whoever buys those tickets will be willing to pony up the massive investment just so they can take a few clients to the Red Sox game. The Royals games are just part of the cost. So, in reality, the cost to them is really more like \$5000 or \$7500 per seat.

And I imagine some of the tickets will be bought by outrageously wealthy individuals who either have nothing better to do with their money or who are just really keen on baseball or both.

I imagine the "fan atmosphere" in those seats will be terrible.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 06-08-2008 01:58

UA, can you explain what, exactly, is going on with the Cubs ownership? I thought about asking this in the LA Times thread since Sam Zell owns the Tribune Company now, but this seems more appropriate.

A few months ago it seemed like he was about to sell them to Mark Cuban, but I haven't heard anything more about that.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 06-08-2008 02:18

There was an article about Cuban looking into the Cubs in the NYT on Sunday.

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/03/sports/baseball/03cubs.html?_r=1&em=&oref=slogin&pagewanted=all

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Reed of the Valley People - 06-08-2008 02:51

Thanks. I didn't understand why it's taken Zell so long to sell the Cubs. Given all his problems, I figured they'd be priced to move. Somehow it totally slipped my mind that MLB has to approve the sale.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 06-08-2008 11:16

It isn't just the approval process, but also Zell's interest in maximizing proceeds from the sale, as the Cubs may well be

the single most attractive piece of the Tribune "empire" at the moment (with the television stations, I'd imagine).

We talked about this a bit last year, but I still have rather mixed feelings about Cuban, though I was rather more favourably disposed to him after reading the NYT article that Inca linked to. It's actually quite an accomplishment for him to have gotten Stern and the other NBA owners to publicly support his bid.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 08-08-2008 17:41

I swear that I mentioned Clayton Kershaw on here before (edit: here, on the old board)--the Dodgers' hot pitching prospect with a wicked curveball. And he's a lefty. So no expectations to live up to there.

<http://tbn0.google.com/images?q=tbn:JIVfvRHugJfpkM:http://images.scripting.com/archiveScriptingCom/2007/02/16/sandyKoufax.jpg>

Anyway, he's gotten a few starts in the majors, and he hasn't disappointed. Stats from his last three starts, from Dodger Thoughts:

19 innings
72 batters faced (3.78 batters per inning)
283 pitches (14.8 pitches per inning)
180 strikes (64 percent)
103 balls
27 groundouts (one double play)
13 air outs (one double play)
15 strikeouts (7.11/9 IP)
6 walks (2.84/9 IP)
8 singles
2 doubles
1 triple

1 run (0.47 ERA)

He's 20 years old. Just hope he doesn't flame out with injuries like so many young pitchers do.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 08-08-2008 17:45

Like Joba The Hut?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 08-08-2008 17:51

What we saying about how it would be good for the Rays to win the division??

Inca, you can start to worry when they say that Kershaw has a "perfect motion" that renders him impervious to injury.

That was the line on Mark Prior . . .

Koufax was the best pitcher I've ever seen. Watching him was like being at a virtuoso recital.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jason voorhees - 09-08-2008 18:44

I'm a few years late on this, but as I descried the Sawx and Cubs during The Curse, the Cubs were comedy and the Sox were tragedy.

As y'all were.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 09-08-2008 18:49

Being faithful to a losing team makes you stronger. It makes the victories that much sweeter.

And that's basically the problem with Yankee fans. They're spoiled. Rotten.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 09-08-2008 20:10

FF speaks the truth to power.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 09-08-2008 20:23

Bollocks.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 13-08-2008 17:38

Good pieces on ESPN from the Mag today about this season's hired guns: Sabathia, Teixeira, Pudge, Griff, and Manny. The Manny one is interesting just for the logistics of a team getting everything ready for a new player, especially what number he wants to wear:

Now it's game on. The Dodgers buy full-page welcome ads in La Opinión and Hoy, two local Spanish-language papers, to run in Sunday editions. Team officials then scramble to figure out which number Ramírez will wear so they can place a rush order of jerseys and T-shirts for his debut the following night. A Dodgers VP huddles with Manny's agent, Scott Boras, who has season tickets behind the dugout and is in the ballpark. Manny wore No. 24 in Boston, but in LA, that's Walter Alston's retired number. Also retired are No. 2 (Tommy Lasorda), No. 4 (Duke Snider) and, of course, No. 42 (Jackie Robinson).

Ramírez, through Boras, requests No. 28, because it's the closest he can get to 24. Then, Manny being Manny, he asks for No. 66 instead. McCourt and GM Ned Colletti sign off, and the jerseys go into production. But Manny changes his mind again. Now he wants No. 11, in honor of coach Manny Mota, who's been in the organization nearly 40 years. While waiting for Mota's okay, Ramírez changes his mind once more. He requests No. 34, presumably as an homage to Red Sox buddy David Ortiz. Trouble is, that was Fernando Valenzuela's number, and it's unofficially retired. Someone suggests No. 99; no one is quite sure who came up with it. Could have been Boras. Could have been Manny. Could have been Manny's personal barber, Angel. So a little past 10 p.m. ET, the Dodgers put in a new order. They cross their fingers that the jerseys will arrive on time.

Punchline to the uniform number question at the end of the piece.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 13-08-2008 23:18

Manny being Manny.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 13-08-2008 23:30

Oh, and yay! We have Paul Byrd now.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 14-08-2008 07:00

Add Adam Dunn and Rich Harden to the "rental" list.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Amor de Cosmos - 14-08-2008 07:24

Went to my first Canadians game of the year last night. They're a seriously limp-hitting .235, and duly lost in a terminally routine game to Salem-Keizer Volcanoes 3-1. The Veronica Lake double feature I saw tonight was way more exciting. However a English teenage rugby team kept everyone in the crowd more or less entertained (or confused) with songs and ... ummm ... activities throughout. The Canadians did provide two pretty decent candidates for my Great Names in Baseball archive though. Sporting a .151 average there was Dante Love — pronounced at each at bat by the stadium announcer as "Dawntay LuuuuuuuurrrrrRRRRVE!" Then, at first base, Dusty Napoleon. As incongruous a moniker as I've ever come across. Both sound as though they should be refugees from Chippendale's, and play like it too.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 18-08-2008 17:25

Your Manny-in-LA update: through 16 games, 25-for-59 (.424) with 21 RBIs, 6 HRs.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 18-08-2008 17:55

I know, the bastard.

I hope Torre makes him cut all his hair off.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 18-08-2008 21:44

Oh, and the Manny wigs are available now.

http://www.thefightins.com/wp-content/images_05_08/meechone/500_MannyWig1.JPG

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 18-08-2008 23:35

Well I hope Manny appreciates it.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 26-08-2008 19:08

Not MLB, but this column from a Bergen Record writer's experiences taking a baseball off his face is a great (if scary) read:

I've always thought the real lesson in Jim Bouton's classic book, "Ball Four" was found in its final passage, when he wrote, "you spend a good piece of your life gripping a baseball and in the end it turns out that it was the other way around all the time."

Like the former Yankee hurler, I've spent my entire amateur career chasing that Holy Grail – getting the ball to run, sink, curve or just nudging it up the radar gun by a few mph. But Bouton ultimately was right: Control of the ball - and with it, the at-bat, the game, sometimes even your life - ends the moment it leaves a pitcher's fingertips.

I learned this hard lesson July 10 at Smith Field in Parsippany, when the curveball I threw not only froze in the middle of the strike zone, it turned into a missile searing toward my skull. Thanks to a combination of topspin off the hitter's bat, and a rock near the mound, a last-second bad hop left me defenseless as the ball struck me in the eye.

The explosion in my head might as well have come from a 12-gauge shotgun; that's how loud it was. The ball sliced open my cornea, completely detached my retina, ruptured several areas of the eye socket and broke nearly every bone on the right side of my face.

I remember drifting, floating - was I dying, I wondered? - then landing on the ground with a sick thud. I could feel the blood pouring out of my nose, my mouth and from the cut on my cheekbone, which had been split in half.

"I can't see, I can't see," is what I kept screaming before my words dissolved into a sound that can only be described as a rung lower than primal. One of my teammates, a Roxbury police officer, turned away in horror.

An iron, black curtain was now covering half my field of vision, and as I felt my face beginning to swell, I heard another teammate say, "it's worse than Tony C."

He was talking about Tony Conigliaro, whose gruesome, purple-eyed contusion will forever be remembered by baseball fans. Forty-plus years later, the Red Sox' outfielder, struck in the face by a Jack Hamilton fastball, remains the worst-case scenario of baseball injuries.

At least Conigliaro regained his vision; the emergency room doctors at Morristown Memorial Hospital weren't as optimistic for me. One of the surgeons advised me to prepare for a life with only one functioning eye. "Hey, it didn't stop Sammy Davis Jr." he said, trying to be light-hearted.

At that point, I asked for a moment of privacy: The doctor left the room, as did the half-dozen teammates who accompanied me to the hospital. The Morris Mariners were my friends, fellow warriors, but at this moment I was utterly alone. I called my wife who was home with our two young children and told her I was half blind. We both started to cry.

It's not completely depressing. Read the whole thing.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 27-08-2008 17:37

LOVE the two posts on the top of page 5. Talk about precognition!

Girardi to lose his job the day after post season begins.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 27-08-2008 18:15

I sold the Rays short in my post on page 5.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 27-08-2008 18:33

This season has been a bit of a bust for the Yankees. Injuries and lack of confidence has bugged them up.

Personally, the season has been great. The live Sunday games have been generally excellent, with the Phillies Dodgers on Sunday, especially good.

I can see a Cubs v White Sox World Series... with Ken Griffey hitting the winning home run.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 28-08-2008 01:36

The Yankees have some real lard asses on their pitching staff. They must sit in the clubhouse eating donuts when they're not pitching.

Yeah, Sidney Ponson, I'm looking at you. And you too, Chris Britton.

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jason voorhees - 28-08-2008 04:45

How-the-fuck-are-Los-Angeles-playing-in-the-American-League?

And-what-happened-to-the-California-Angels,and-the-Anaheim-Angels-for-that-matter?

(Im-happy-that-the-Dodgers-and-Angels-arent-cashing-in-on-the-coincidence-that-Crips-and-Bloods-wear-blue-and-red-as-well.)

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 28-08-2008 05:40

Do you mean the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim?

I'm not sure I understand your question. If I say that the Angles are American League and the Dodgers are National, will you say, "Duh, I knew that, what I'm asking is..."?

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 28-08-2008 05:40

Ha! The Angles. I'm leaving it.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 28-08-2008 06:16

Crap. The Phillies steal one from the forces of darkness and then give it back the next night.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by gerontophile - 28-08-2008 07:03

I Yankees v RedSux game on tape, but I shudder to watch it, after an 11-3 rout for the Sox.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 28-08-2008 13:40

Don't watch it unless you have some Prozac on hand. The Yankees bullpen needs CPR--and fast.

I guess the problem wasn't Joe Torre after all, eh Hank?

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Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by jefe - 28-08-2008 20:52

Ursus, I'll be attending Phillies@Mets in 2 Saturdays. Is there anything you wish me to throw?

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Femme Folle - 03-09-2008 16:44

I would just like to congratulate and say thank you (or thankyou) to the Yankees for beating the Rays. Please do it again tonight.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by ursus arctos - 03-09-2008 16:47

Just saw Jefe's message.

Not sure my Port au Prince contacts are working this time year, but will see if I can get some dolls for you to bring along.

=====

Re:MLB 2008: The Year of Anti-Boston

Posted by Inca - 04-09-2008 19:14

Candid words from Rockies manager Clint Hurdle:

Long before Clint Hurdle was a manager, he was a fan with irrational beliefs and knee-jerk responses to every game. Still is, when a Detroit hockey or football team is involved. It was in this context that he made a surprising admission last Saturday.

"I just hate the Dodgers. I love to see them lose," Hurdle said. "It's nothing personal with anyone there. You know how some people love the Yankees? I choose to hate the Dodgers."

It's nice when players and coaches say something that makes them seem like regular fans.

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