

# Practice

## A User's Eye View of Best Baseball Parks

### Seven new designs, three classics

The July 24 edition of MSN featured its choices for the "10 Best Ballparks" from which to watch baseball.

#### Denver's Coors Field

Built in 1995, this sunken field, which offers outstanding views of Denver, seats 45,000. Designed by HOK Sport, it scored a home run with architect fans who visited it during this year's national AIA convention.

#### Boston's Fenway Park

Designed by Osborn Engineering and built in 1912, Fenway is the granddaddy of ballparks. Its views may be blocked and its seats are narrow—but this is real, old-fashioned baseball, even if it is the Red Sox.\* Some 34,000 fans at any given time can watch right-handed sluggers pull for the famed Green Monster, the 37-foot-tall left field wall.

#### Cleveland's Jacobs Fields

Fondly known as "the Jake," this baseball-only stadium, designed by HOK Sport and built in 1994, welcomes 43,000 fans per game with its stunning pillar floodlights. You can get anything you want to eat, from sushi to Krispy Kreme donuts.

#### Milwaukee's Miller Park

The newest new kid on the block—designed by HKS, NBBJ, and Epstein Uhen Architects—opened this year. It boasts 43,000 seats, two-thirds of which are on its lower level. Like Wrigley Field down the lake, Miller Park boasts a manual scoreboard.

#### Baltimore's Oriole Park at Camden Yards

The trendsetter in the return to more intimate, "old-timey" ballparks was built in 1992. Baltimore's brick-covered pride and joy, designed by HOK Sport, seats 48,000 fans, many of whom take public transportation to the 14-feet-below-sea-level stadium.

#### San Francisco's Pacific Bell Park

Designed by HOK Sport and completed in 2000 to replace the generally disliked Candlestick Park, this 45,000-seater's right-field homers drop right into the Bay, making a big splash with both seatside and seaside Giants fans.

#### Pittsburgh's PNC Park

This 38,000-seat baseball-only replacement for Three Rivers stadium, by HOK Sport and L.D. Astorino and Associates, offers great views of downtown Pittsburgh. Up close, even the most far-away seat is only 88 feet from the action.

#### Seattle's Safeco Field

Opened in 1999 and built in the manner of the new old-time ball fields, this 46,000-seat stadium, by NBBJ, has one unique trait: a retractable roof that protects but doesn't enclose the open-air, real-grass field. Safeco Field served as host of this year's All Star Game.

#### Chicago's Wrigley Field

Some 39,000 fans can be seated in the venerable 1914 grand-old-guy of baseball, designed by Zachary Taylor Davis. The Cubs hosted only day games until 1988, when the stadium was finally lighted. They do brag of eating brats within its ivy-covered surround, but you can get also get sunflower seeds!

#### New York City's Yankee Stadium

With its capacity of 57,500 partisans, long-standing Yankee Stadium has a sensible dress code that says no Mets or Red Sox hats.\* The 1923 icon in the Bronx (built originally by Osborn Engineering and renovated by Praeger-Kavanaugh-Waterbury in 1976) will be sorely missed if the city

goes through with its notion of creating a new home for the Bronx Bombers.

For a resplendence of facts and figures and fan reviews, visit the MSN site. [www.msn.com/local.msn.com/special/summer/ballparks.asp](http://www.msn.com/local.msn.com/special/summer/ballparks.asp)

Another interesting site is [www.ballparks.com](http://www.ballparks.com), which offers extensive coverage of all major league ballparks, including architects (yay!) and construction data.

\*Ed. Note: Our apologies to Red Sox and Mets fans, but even if you can take the AIArchitect editor away from the Yankees, you can't take the Yankees away from our editor. ■■■



San Francisco's Pacific Bell Park by HOK Sport.