



# Iconography

## THE GALLERY OF IMAGES IN YANKEE STADIUM HELPS DEFINE THE BOMBERS

The gates are open at Yankee Stadium. Lines are moving quickly. Place your ticket under the reader, wait for the *bing* and walk through the turnstile. Maybe A.J. Burnett greets you. Maybe it's Nick Swisher. Maybe it's the How May I Help You army. This is the Great Hall, and no matter who greets you, the message is clear: You are in the home of champions.

It's impossible to miss this message. The images are everywhere. It's impossible to perceive anything other than greatness at Yankee Stadium. If you happen to visit on a day when players such as Burnett and Swisher are not among the welcoming committee, there's always Babe Ruth to watch you make your way to your seat. His banner hangs at the eastern end of the Great Hall. Roger Maris is there, too. So is Yogi Berra and Thurman Munson. In all, there are 20 players — 10 from the distant past, 10

from the recent past — who adorn the Stadium's main avenue. They represent but a handful of iconic players who accomplished iconic things, creating and establishing the Yankees' image.

At the westernmost end of the Great Hall by the escalator, there's an enlarged shot of Reggie Jackson at the plate, the slugger watching the trajectory of what can be assumed is a home run. His body language says it all. Above that shot hangs an enlarged photo of the scoreboard that reads: "Reg-gie!"

The message also hangs above you from two images in the Great Hall.

The first is from 1996. John Wetteland — the Yankees' dominant closer at the time, when Mariano Rivera was still a setup man — is on the mound. Wetteland's index finger is in the air, pointed to the sky, a proclamation of the team's rank. His teammates rally around him, about to turn it into a pile-on. That's

BY KEN DERRY

Derek Jeter to the left, a young kid about to be named Rookie of the Year. Next to Tino Martinez' No. 24 is a 38-year-old Wade Boggs. He'll play another three seasons (only one more with the Yanks), but this will be his only such celebration at the mound. The game is over. The Yankees have won the World Series.

The second shot, to the right of the first and closer to Gate 6, is from 1999. Jorge Posada embraces a typically stoic Rivera. Scott Brosius is about to jump in. No. 17 is leading the charge from the dugout to the mound. Who wore No. 17 in 1999? That was Ricky Ledee. He played parts of three seasons with the Yanks, the 2000 season being his last in pinstripes. In the 1999 World Series, Ledee had two hits in 11 plate appearances with one RBI. It's safe to say this photo captures the highlight of his career because in this shot, the Yankees have become world champions again.

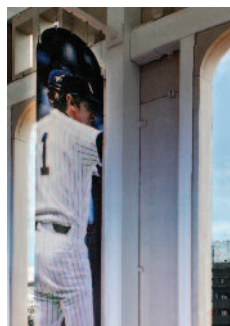
"We decided that when fans walk into Yankee Stadium, they needed to be hit with something emotional," says Kara Mooney, Yankees director of creative services. "What's more emotional than a World Series celebration shot?"

In addition to the images in the Great Hall, roughly 1,400 photos are framed and on display inside Yankee Stadium.

In choosing those images for The Glory of the Yankees Photo Collection, presented by the *Daily News* — found in the suites, on the H&R Block Suite Level and in various lounges and restaurants — Mooney worked closely with Yankees leadership. General partner/vice chairperson Jennifer Steinbrenner Swindal; chief operating officer Lonny Trost; senior vice president, strategic ventures Marty Greenspun; and senior director of Stadium operations Doug Behar were all a part of the dialogue.

While some of the photos around the Stadium were taken in-house, the Yankees partnered with the New York *Daily News* to gain access to its photo archive. The Yankees also enlisted the services of Sports and the Arts, a California-based arts curator that helped open the Prudential Center in Newark, New Jersey.

In November 2008, Mooney, staff at the *Daily News* and the executive team at Sports and the Arts — Tracie Specca, Camille Specca and Dan Specca — began the seemingly endless task of sifting through the *Daily News*' archive.



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“They claim 60,000 Yankees images,” Camille Specia says.

Not just any photo would do. If a photo was going to hang in Yankee Stadium, it had to tell the story of how the Yankees grew to become the model of victory and the prototype of greatness. It had to be the picture of success. It had to be iconic.

The Library of Congress, Getty Images, Major League Baseball and the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum were also indispensable resources.

“There were players like Benny Bengough. We could not find images of this man anywhere,” Specia says. “So the Hall of Fame helped us find those.”


Once the images were collected and reviewed by Trost, Mooney and Behar, they had to be digitized, retouched, enlarged and then printed and framed. Installation began in March and lasted about three weeks.

“We were installing all the way up until the day before Opening Day,” Specia says. “We were pulling 16-hour days. It was pretty intense at the end.”

“It was very challenging and stressful, but it all came out great,” says Mooney, who managed to report to Yankees brass, lead Sports and the Arts and direct other creative projects around the Stadium as Opening Day approached. “I was approving images at 3 o’clock in the morning. But when I see the looks on fans’ faces, especially the fans who know the history better, I feel it in my heart. It was all worth it.”

If you walk along the H&R Block Suite Level, you’ll see photos of the players whose numbers correspond to the suite numbers. You’ll see headshots of the first Yankees to wear numbers on the backs of their uniforms. You’ll see sequences of perfect games on the verge of becoming definitive moments in Yankees history.

In this sense, Yankee Stadium is a museum. It is Monument Park. And with a lineup of stars such as Derek Jeter and Mariano Rivera, to name but a few, Yankee Stadium is a field of dreams.

“The good thing is that we have room to grow,” Mooney says. “And that is going to make for something dramatic and really special for the fans.” 



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