

We ain't seen nothin' yet



ERIC SCHRODER
Editor

Recently I was having a discussion with some sports turf industry folks and someone said, "Every time a major new stadium opens in the country, it should be a cover story in SportsTurf." I didn't disagree but I did go back to my office and Google.

Within 10 minutes I saw ten stories on new stadium openings due in the next 18 months, five in or near New York City alone. (You'd think Mother Teresa operated from the monuments at Yankee Stadium the way some people are going on about that admittedly hallowed ground's final season.)

A new Major League Soccer park named after team owner Red Bull is scheduled to open next year in northern New Jersey, along the Passaic River near Newark. The 25,000-seat venue will feature a full wavy, translucent roof that will cover all the seats but not the pitch.

This year the Indianapolis Colts will play in new Lucas Oil Stadium, which is scheduled to host Super Bowl XLVI in 2012. The stadium features a retractable roof and window wall, allowing the Colts to play "outdoors." In 2009 the Dallas Cowboys will open a new stadium in Arlington that will incorporate some of the historical features of Texas Stadium. By the time he's done, owner Jerry Jones will have spent more than a billion dollars on a stadium that covers 30 total acres, seats 80,000, and features a 660,800-square-foot, single-span roof structure, the world's longest.

I also found an article from this month's *Popular Science* discussing design aspects of the next generation of "Colosseums." The article says fans can look forward to comfortable seats close to the action, interactive screens that provide real-time game stats and architecture that directs the roar of the home crowd onto the field. In 2012 the Tampa Bay Rays will move out of "The Pit" into a stadium overlooking the bay that will feature a 320-foot mast-and-arch design, which will use a system of cables to unfold the Tenara fabric roof like a sail. The stadium will be shaped to funnel sea breezes across fans to keep them cool.

Oakland Athletic fans might be keeping a virtual scorecard and ordering hot dogs via a wireless screen built into each seat at Cisco Field, slated to be the team's new home in Fremont in a few years. The interactive displays will show fans traffic conditions and, more importantly, location of the shortest bathroom lines.

Speaking of which, the article said by 2012, Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles will become the first ballpark in California to have waterless urinals, saving millions of gallons of water annually.

The downside of these new technologies? Ticket prices are sure to increase even more dramatically than normal.

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