



Wrigley Field: The Long Life and Contentious Times of the Friendly Confines

Stuart Shea

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In spring 1914, a new ballpark opened in Chicago. Hastily constructed after epic political maneuvering around Chicago's and organized baseball's hierarchies, the new Weeghman Park (named after its builder, fast-food magnate Charley Weeghman) was home to the Federal League's Chicago Whales. The park would soon be known as Wrigley Field, one of the most emblematic and controversial baseball stadiums in America.

In *Wrigley Field: The Long Life and Contentious Times of the Friendly Confines*, Stuart Shea provides a detailed and fascinating chronicle of this living historic landmark. The colorful history revealed in *Wrigley Field* shows how the stadium has evolved through the years to meet the shifting priorities of its owners and changing demands of its fans. While Wrigley Field today seems irreplaceable, we learn that from game one it has been the subject of endless debates over its future, its design, and its place in the neighborhood it calls home. To some, it is a hallowed piece of baseball history; to others, an icon of mismanagement and ineptitude. Shea deftly navigates the highs and lows, breaking through myths and rumors. And with another transformation imminent, he brings readers up to date on negotiations, giving much-needed historical context to the maneuvering.

Wrigley Field is packed with facts, stories, and surprises that will captivate even the most fair-weather fan. From dollar signs (the Ricketts family paid \$900 million for the team and stadium in 2009), to exploding hot dog carts (the Cubs lost that game 6–5), to the name of Billy Sianis's curse-inducing goat (Sonovia), Shea uncovers the heart of the stadium's history. As the park celebrates its centennial, Wrigley Field continues to prove that its colorful and dramatic history is more interesting than any of its mythology.

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