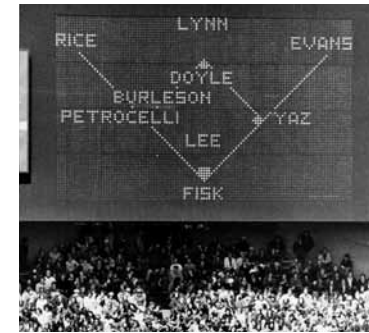




Fenway Park in Boston is a lyric little bandbox of a ballpark. Everything is painted green and seems in curiously sharp focus, like the inside of an old-fashioned peeping type Easter egg.

— JOHN UPDIKE,  
*"HUB FANS BID KID ADIEU"*

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4

-FORTIES-

**STARS GALORE  
BUT NO CIGAR**

**DOM DIMAGGIO:** The first time I walked into Fenway Park was a day in April 1940. It was before the season; there was ice on the field. Coming from California, it was a bit of a shock to me. I was wondering how we were going to start on time.

RED SOX YEAR BY YEAR

1940 - 1949

YEAR	WON	LOST	PCT.	GB	ATTENDANCE
1949	96	58	.623	1.0	1,596,650
1948	96	59	.619	1.0	1,558,798
1947	83	71	.539	14.0	1,427,315
1946	104	50	.675	—	1,416,944
1945	71	83	.461	17.5	603,794
1944	77	77	.500	12.0	506,975
1943	68	84	.447	29.0	358,275
1942	93	59	.612	9.0	730,340
1941	84	70	.545	17.0	718,497
1940	82	72	.532	8.0	716,234

**The Red Sox lineup that day was:**

<b>Jose Offerman</b>	<b>2B</b>
<b>Trot Nixon</b>	<b>RF</b>
<b>Brian Daubach</b>	<b>DH</b>
<b>Nomar Garciaparra</b>	<b>SS</b>
<b>Troy O’Leary</b>	<b>LF</b>
<b>Carl Everett</b>	<b>CF</b>
<b>Mike Stanley</b>	<b>1B</b>
<b>Jason Varitek</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>Wilton Veras</b>	<b>3B</b>
<b>Ramon Martinez</b>	<b>P</b>

**TRACY NIEPARENT:** I was at Fenway during the 2000 season for a series vs. the Mets. Outside the gates they were selling “Yankees SUCK” T-shirts. When I reminded the chowderheads that the Red Sox were playing the Mets, they disdainfully replied, “It’s Noo Yawk, same thing.”

Same thing for the “Sawks” in 2000—a third straight American League East second-place finish. But there was a lot to brag about. The winning of a second straight Cy Young award by Pedro Martinez, the winning of a second straight batting title by Nomar Garciaparra, and the setting of a new Fenway park attendance record: 2,585,895.

**JOHN SHANNAHAN:** On a cold February morning in 2001, I met my brother, who was broadcast manager at Fenway, at the ballpark. It had snowed the day before, and I had my camera with me.

“Hey,” I said, “can I get in and take some pictures of the ballpark with the snow on the field?”

I snapped a few. Then he asked if I wanted to see the clubhouse.

We went down through the Sox dugout, through a door, and up a set of stairs that led

to the clubhouse, where the first thing I saw was a urinal on the wall. Next to it someone had written: “The official urinal of the 1999 All-Star Game.” Equipment and trunks were all over the place, getting ready to be loaded onto the equipment truck that would head out to spring training in Florida. Johnny Pesky was sitting on a crate, bat in hand, surrounded by a bunch of clubhouse guys listening to him talk about hitting and his love of the game. It was a Norman Rockwell scene.

In a scene that underscored the long history of the Red Sox and Fenway Park, a 100th anniversary celebration was staged on May 27, 2001. A pregame ceremony featured 88-year-old “Broadway” Charlie Wagner, who pitched for the Sox in the late 1930s and the 1940s, tossing the first pitch to Carlton Fisk.

Less than a month later, on June 23rd, Manny being Manny Ramirez jerked two home runs, totaling 964 feet. The first one was reported as going 463 feet. The second one was measured at 501 feet, a foot short of Ted Williams’s 502-foot homer, the Fenway record. Manny also came up twice with the bases loaded and left the bases loaded, prompting one disgruntled roofer to bel-low: “You’re no Ted Williams.”

Mike Mussina of the Yankees was no Don Larsen, but on September 2, 2001 he did come within one pitch of perfection—a ninth-inning two-strike, two-out pitch to Carl Everett. The Sox pinch hitter managed a soft liner that fell in for a single. Mussina settled for a 1–0 victory and a one-hitter.

Drawing 2.6 million at Fenway, an average of 32,412 a game, the Red Sox finished the 2001 season in second place again, with an 82–79 record.

The new year of 2002 was one of rejoicing for Red Sox Nation. The old ownership group was out, and on January 17 Major League Baseball approved the new Red Sox consortium headed by



principal owner John Henry. The executive chairman was Tom Werner, and Larry Lucchino was in as president and CEO.

Swift changes were implemented. Dan Duquette was removed as general manager. Mike Port, who had held that role for the Angels, replaced him. On November 25, 2002, Theo Epstein, who had grown up just a mile away from Fenway, replaced Port, becoming, at age 28, the youngest general manager in big-league history.

Grady Little came in as manager, taking the place of Joe Kerrigan. Tony Cloninger was pitching coach, Mike Cuddage coached at third, and Dwight Evans was hitting coach. At first was Tommy Harper, in the bullpen Bob Kipper, and Mike Stanley held down the bench coach duties.

**DAN WILSON:** The new owners were outsiders, but they were very much able to see the beauty of Fenway Park. They were committed to its renovation.

**PAGE 26:** Opening Day crowd, 1923  
**ABOVE:** Fans crowd the Polo Grounds, the Yankees’ home before 1923  
**OPPOSITE:** “The House That Ruth Built” under construction



