

Sports Stadiums

by Mike Prero

If you're into Sports as a category, then you'll find collecting Sports Stadium covers an excellent and



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fascinating adjunct to your Sports Collection, or they can go right into your Famous Places collection.

Stadiums go way back, of course [not the covers, the stadiums]. Technically, the stadium was actually an ancient Greek innovation. The amphitheater had come first, and it wasn't a very big stretch of someone's imagination to conceptually fit two amphitheaters together to form a stadium. The type of stadium we think of, however, when we hear the word, is the Roman type of stadium, or "circuses."

Nobody did stadiums like the Romans! To them, the stadium was the center of their entertainment world, and, although we automatically think of the Colosseum in Rome when someone mentions Roman stadiums, every town of any size in the Empire had at least one stadium for its citizens.

Roman stadiums came in two basic shapes: circular and oval. The classic Colosseum is an example of the circular type. Well over 2000 years old and once host to the likes of Julius Caesar and Augustus, it still stands today. It seated 50,000 people and was designed for gladiatorial and animal shows.

The oval type was designed more for chariot races. The best example of this type of stadium, generically referred to as "hippodromes," was the Circus Maximus, in Rome. The largest structure in the Ancient World and the largest sports stadium ever built, it seated 260,000 people! [that's five times larger than the Los Angeles Colosseum and almost equal to the entire population of Sacramento, California!] If you remember the big chariot racing scene in Ben Hur, that was supposed to be taking place in the Circus Maximus. This stadium was s-o-o-o big, on special occasions the stadium floor was flooded, ships brought in, and 260,000 cheering fans were treated to the spectacle of naval battles being fought right in front of them! Unfortunately, this unique structure was long since destroyed and is only a grand memory today.

Such are the roots of today's stadiums, which leads us to what we're really after...covers! And,



today's sports stadiums have put out a variety of covers over the years, some of which are pictured here. I've only seen 20, 30, and 40-strike sizes, but they may well exist in other sizes. I don't have any stats on the biggest collection in this category, but I know there are at least 30 that I presently have, including Cleveland, Kansas City, Toronto, New Orleans, Houston, Atlanta, New York, Winnipeg, Los Angeles, St. Louis, and Detroit.

