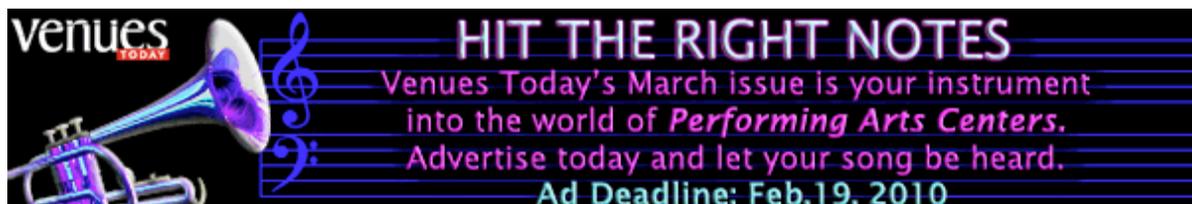


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VT PULSE

A WEEKLY PUBLICATION FROM VENUES TODAY

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Quote of the Week

"In every merger of public companies, there are arbitrageurs making bets on whether the merger will go through and they're changing their bets to see where the chips are located."

— Bert Foer of the American Antitrust Institute on market fluctuations surrounding the Live Nation/Ticketmaster merger.

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Greetings,

Welcome to VT Pulse, your weekly guide to the "News Behind the Headlines." We're back from our two-week break. Look for our January Issue, which mailed today.



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- University concerts and operations
- University sports and entertainment curriculum and growth plans

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[Naming Rights Report](#)

DEPARTMENTS

Short Takes

HELP WANTED

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SHORT TAKES

>> **WALLEYE HONEYMOON** – The Toledo Walleye drew its largest sellout crowd to date, 8,200, Dec. 27 at the new Lucas County Arena. The previous record was set on Oct. 16, with 8,000 in attendance for the ECHL team. *Contact: Steve Miller, (419) 255-3300*

>> **JAGERMEISTER GETS SOME CHURCHING** – Nashville artist, Eric Church, is scheduled to headline the 2010 Jagermeister Country Music Tour. The tour is set to begin on Feb. 9 and visit 32 venues nationwide. *Kate Laufer (914) 637-5752*

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VT NEWS

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

MARKET BACKS MERGER AS UNCERTAINTY PERSISTS



Stocks for Live Nation and Ticketmaster have swiftly risen this year as optimism continues to surround a potential merger between the two concert giants.

Conflicting reports have surfaced on the Internet about the possibility of an approval of the merger in early 2010. Wall Street site TheDeal.com reported that the Justice Department was close to approving the deal, while Reuters Newswire issued a conflicting report that said the DOJ was amassing a team of litigators to block the deal. Both reports cite

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BI-LO Center, Greenville, S.C. -
Assistant Box Office Manager

unnamed sources, but the market has chosen to follow the optimistic report, leading to a surge for both companies' stocks.

Ticketmaster's shares were up 21 percent from the 2009 close, finishing Tuesday at \$14.78. Live Nation's stock made an eight percent gain from Monday to Tuesday, closing at \$10.10, an increase of 19 percent over the same period last year. Shareholders from both companies are set to vote on the deal on Friday.

Representatives from both Ticketmaster and Live Nation were contacted for this story, but neither side would comment on the reports.

"In every merger of public companies, there are arbitrageurs making bets on whether the merger will go through and they're changing their bets to see where the chips are located," said Bert Foer of the American Antitrust Institute, a Washington think tank that has been monitoring the proposed merger. "I don't think the market has any better knowledge of the inside track than we do."

The merger has slowed the ticketing marketplace as major venues wait to see the outcome of the DOJ's decision before renewing their ticketing contracts.

"We're still doing our evaluation of the major systems out there," said Fred Maglione, who runs NewEra Tickets, a regional ticket system powered by Ticketmaster. Maglione said his company's contract is set to expire this year and the company is shopping new platforms.

"Are we in a leadership position? I don't know and I'm not sure if others are waiting to see what decision we make," Maglione said.

First announced in February, the proposed merger has been held up in the U.S. Justice Department as regulators examine whether the merger would create a monopoly in the ticketing and concert promoting space. Company officials had expressed optimism that the deal would be approved in the third or fourth quarters of 2009, but the New Year came and went without much word from Justice Department officials on their eventual decision.

"Typically the DOJ staff will talk to the parties, competitors and consumers and anyone that has any information," Foer said. "If they do opt to block the deal, the DOJ will begin drafting a complaint and talking with parties and seeing if there are correctives. It's up to companies to propose divestitures and other corrective measures to avoid going to court."

Lawyers from the department spent months interviewing officials from both companies, along with dozens of other promoters and executives from rival firms.

"I sat with them for several hours and it was clear that they were seeking to learn whether the merger would prevent me from doing business," said Jeff White, VP of Business Development for InTicketing. "Because our business models are so different, I told them I doubted that the merger would have a negative impact on our ability to attract new markets."

The deal seemed threatened in October when the United Kingdom's Competition Commission – a regulatory agency similar to the Department of Justice issued a report highly critical of the merger, indicating that major portions of the company would have to be broken

Vbase, Christchurch, Australia -
Food and Beverage Manager of
Retail

Vbase, Christchurch, Australia -
Operations Manager of Hosting

PMI Entertainment Group, Green
Bay, Wis. - Manager

The Royal Agricultural Society of
NSW, Australia - Exhibition
Operations Executive

Melbourne (Australia) & Olympic
Parks Trust -Stadiums General
Manager

VenuWorks, Ames, Iowa
-Executive Director

Lehigh University, Bethlehem,
Pa. - Business Development
Director

Royal Agricultural Society of
NSW, Australia - Floor Manager

Flynn Center for the Performing
Arts, Burlington, Vt. - Exec.
Director & CEO

[VIEW THE FULL LISTINGS](#)

up or sold off before the deal would be granted an approval. The commission reversed course in December and cleared the merger, issuing a report stating that it didn't think the deal would result in "substantial lessening of competition in the market for live music ticket retailing in any other market in the U.K., including live music promotion and live music venues."

Foer said a deal this large is usually decided by the "upper echelons" of the Department of Justice, and it's not uncommon for one team of litigators to prepare a legal case to block the merger, while another team of lawyers negotiate a settlement.

"This one is terribly important because American consumers are looking to see if the Obama administration is going to be serious about mergers," Foer said.

The prolonged merger hasn't been without its costs for either company. According to Securities and Exchange Commission filings, Live Nation spent \$7.8 million in the third quarter of 2009 on merger-related costs. Ticketmaster spent a comparable amount. — Dave Brooks

Interviewed for this article: Jeff White, (415) 526-8247; Bert Foer, (202) 276-6002; Fred Maglione, (610) 854-1100



SPORTS

BOWL GAMES HANG ON PLAYER POWER

For the teams and organizers of this year's various college football bowl games, matchups have proven just as important as the economy.

From Pasadena, Calif., to Miami, ticket sales have been as varied as the Game Day field conditions with many analysts placing an emphasis on matchups. Smaller conference schools, even when playing close to

home, seem more susceptible to the economic downturn than larger schools.

One game that saw its average ticket prices drop was the Fiesta Bowl Jan. 4 in Glendale, Ariz., moved to the University of Phoenix Stadium after 30 years at Sun Devil Stadium in nearby Tempe.

Spokesperson Tony Alba said the game achieved a near sellout (he didn't release final statistics), but added that a number of tickets were sold at a greatly reduced discount in the final days before the game. Working with TicketsNow and Travelzoo, some primary tickets were marked down as much as 65 percent. Texans made up 19 percent of ticket buyers, followed by 22 percent from Idaho and 21 percent from Arizona.

Sales were sluggish despite opponents Boise State University and Texas Christian University's undefeated records.

The 2010 Orange Bowl suffered a similar fate. The matchup between Georgia Tech and Iowa was 11,000 seats short of a sellout Tuesday at Land Shark Stadium in Miami. Georgia Tech had a particularly difficult time moving its ticket allotment of 17,500 tickets and had as many as 6,500 left to sell on Tuesday, according the Atlantic Coast Conference's website.

"Even though our numbers were down, it was still a win for us," said Jim McVay, CEO of the New Year's Day Outback Bowl played at the Raymond James Stadium in Tampa, Fla.

"We had been forecasting a drop in attendance and worked to get proactive to offer new incentives to bring people to Florida," McVay said.

Approximately 48,000 fans were in attendance to watch Northwestern lose to Auburn. Approximately 55,000 fans attended the game in 2009, and 60,121 were in attendance in 2008 to see Tennessee battle Wisconsin.

The Rose Bowl in Pasadena pitting Ohio State versus Oregon State, two popular programs whose fans are known for traversing the country, completely sold all its tickets and had the highest resale value on StubHub, with the cheapest tickets reselling for \$323, and tickets averaging \$374.

The Rose Bowl is also home to the most costly bowl game ticket, the BCS Championship that kicks off Thursday with Texas battling Alabama for the national championship. The average ticket price available on StubHub.com was \$988. In third place was the Cotton Bowl in Dallas at \$218, followed by the Gator Bowl in Jacksonville, Fla., averaging \$155 per ticket, followed by the Holiday Bowl at Qualcomm Stadium in San Diego at \$132. — Dave Brooks

Interviewed for this article: Tony Alba, (480) 350-0909; Jim McVay, (813) 874-2695

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TURNKEY SPORTS POLL

A LOOK AT THE TRENDS OF 2010

Each month, *Venues Today* and Turnkey Sports and Entertainment survey the top executives in facility management through our Turnkey Venues Poll. The poll questions are designed to collect reputable opinions about trends featured in both *Venues Today's* monthly printed magazine and the VT Pulse.

According to our monthly Industry Confidence poll, optimism remained flat from November to December, with 73 percent of respondents reporting they felt good about the next 12 months, while pessimism increased three points to 23 percent. Below are additional results of the final Turnkey Venues Poll for 2009.

VANOC will be establishing two secondary ticketing sites to help ensure safe resale and distribution of 2010 Vancouver Olympic tickets. In addition to the site for general consumers the organizing committee is launching another platform exclusively for sponsors to help them manage any unused tickets. What is your opinion about this new approach?

Might be a cool idea but the jury is still out	46%
Great idea - this will become the norm for large scale events	35%
Waste of resources	3%
No response / Not sure	15%

This first question ties into a story featured in January's INTIX Quarterly section. While a vast majority of respondents thought the creation of a new marketplace was a potentially good idea, doubts about the program's long term success persist.

Which US Athlete will you definitely follow during the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver?

Apolo Ohno - Short track speedskating	25%
Sasha Cohen - Figure skating	12%
Bode Miller - Alpine skiing	8%
Shaun White - Snowboarding	8%
Tanith Belbin - Figure skating	3%
Evan Lysacek - Figure skating	3%
Lindsey Vonn - Alpine skiing	3%
Louie Vito - Snowboarding	2%
None of the above	20%
No response/Not sure	17%

In case you haven't heard of Apolo Anton Ohno, he is a five-time medalist and shares the record for most career medals at the Winter Games by a man.

Ticketing sites, such as TicketWeb, have launched a Facebook integration application allowing consumers to "share" the news about a ticket purchase by posting a link on their Facebook page such as:
"Chris just bought tickets to the [Concert] on [Concert Date]!"

In addition to the event name and date, the post contains a link to the event ticket site. How long before this becomes the norm for all ticketing platforms?

1-6 months	27%
7-11 months	23%
12 months or longer	19%
It will never become widely popular	16%
No response / Not sure	16%

Do you wish your organization's ticketing partner offered this integration with Facebook?

Yes	44%
No	19%
N/A - They already do	9%
N/A - Not a venue, team, event, etc.	11%
No response / Not sure	17%

These next two questions were inspired by the industry's continued infatuation with sites like Facebook and Twitter. As more tickets are sold online, ticketing companies find themselves looking for ways to tap into a buyer's own social network. If a Bon Jovi fan buys a ticket and posts a link on Facebook telling his friends, will they follow suit and buy tickets too? Look for this to be an emerging trend in 2010.

Feld Entertainment announced the launch of the inaugural Nuclear Cowboyz 15-City tour, which combines freestyle motocross with a high energy, theatrical performance. What will the status of this act be two years from now?

Still around but less popular than Monster Trucks	55%
It will be discontinued	19%
As popular as Monster Trucks	16%
More popular than Monster Trucks	6%
No response/Not sure	5%

This final item relates to our January cover story on Feld's new freestyle motocross tour. *Venues Today* attended the show's launch at the LA Sports Arena, and our cover story offers an in-depth look at this new cross section of theater and throttle.

HOTTickets

HOT TICKETS is a weekly summary of the top acts and ticket sales as reported to VT PULSE. Following are the top 20 concerts and events, the top 5 in each seating capacity category, which took place since Dec. 1.

AVENTURA BRING LATIN SIZZLE TO LOS ANGELES

15,001 or More Seats	10,001-15,000 Seats	5,001-10,000 Seats	5,000 or Less Seats
<p>1) Aventura Gross Sales: \$2,370,544; Venue: Staples Center Arena, Los Angeles; Attendance: 27,374; Ticket Range: \$116-\$46; Promoter: AEG</p>	<p>1) Fleetwood Mac Gross Sales: \$3,003,541; Venue: Brisbane (Australia) Entertainment Centre; Attendance: 20,535; Ticket Range: \$173.11-\$111; Promoter:</p>	<p>1) Radio City Christmas Spectacular Gross Sales: \$38,308,079; Venue: Radio City Music Hall, New York; Attendance: 556,257; Ticket Range: \$90-\$42;</p>	<p>1) Atlanta Ballet's Nutcracker Gross Sales: \$1,589,085; Venue: Fox Theatre, Atlanta; Attendance: 30,418; Ticket Range: \$97-\$20; Promoter: Atlanta Ballet; Dates:</p>

Live, Goldenvoice, SBS Ent.; Dates: Dec. 15-16, 2009; No. of Shows: 2	Andrew McManus Presents; Dates: Dec. 15-16, 2009; No. of Shows: 2	Promoter: MSG Entertainment; Dates: Nov. 30-Dec. 20, 2009; No. of Shows: 94	Dec. 11-27, 2009; No. of Shows: 20
2) Andrea Bocelli Gross Sales: \$1,721,083; Venue: Izod Center, East Rutherford, N.J. ; Attendance: 12,063; Ticket Range: \$350-\$75; Promoter: Frank J. Russo, Gelb Promotions; Dates: Dec. 5, 2009; No. of Shows: 1	2) Keith Urban Gross Sales: \$1,519,237; Venue: Brisbane (Australia) Entertainment Centre ; Attendance: 16,193; Ticket Range: \$119.10-\$75; Promoter: Chugg Entertainment; Dates: Dec. 18-19, 2009; No. of Shows: 2	2) Cirque du Soleil - Wintuk Gross Sales: \$6,390,982; Venue: The WaMu Theater at Madison Square Garden, New York ; Attendance: 98,323; Ticket Range: \$220-\$30; Promoter: BASE Entertainment, Cirque du Soleil; Dates: Dec. 2-6, 9-13, 16-20, 2009; No. of Shows: 34	2) Cher Gross Sales: \$1,271,451; Venue: The Colosseum at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas ; Attendance: 11,826; Ticket Range: \$250-\$95; Promoter: AEG Live, Concerts West; Dates: Dec. 15-16, 19-20, 2009; No. of Shows: 4
3) Miley Cyrus Gross Sales: \$1,219,210; Venue: St. Pete Times Forum, Tampa, Fla. ; Attendance: 15,850; Ticket Range: \$79.50-\$39.50; Promoter: AEG Live; Dates: Dec. 1, 2009; No. of Shows: 1	3) Green Day Gross Sales: \$1,367,108; Venue: Vector Arena, Auckland, New Zealand ; Attendance: 22,926; Ticket Range: \$74; Promoter: Frontier Touring Company; Dates: Dec. 18-19, 2009; No. of Shows: 2	3) Stevie Wonder Gross Sales: \$394,504; Venue: Nokia Theatre L.A. Live ; Attendance: 5,809; Ticket Range: \$149.75-\$45.25; Promoter: AEG Live, Goldenvoice; Dates: Dec. 12, 2009; No. of Shows: 1	3) Rain Gross Sales: \$1,212,744; Venue: The Colosseum at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas ; Attendance: 6,776; Ticket Range: \$288-\$98; Promoter: AEG Live; Dates: Dec. 24-25, 2009; No. of Shows: 2
4) Star Wars: In Concert Gross Sales: \$1,190,208; Venue: United Center, Chicago ; Attendance: 18,036; Ticket Range: \$85-\$24.50; Promoter: Jam Productions; Dates: Dec. 6, 2009; No. of Shows: 2	4) Lady GaGa Gross Sales: \$447,345; Venue: San Diego Sports Arena ; Attendance: 9,941; Ticket Range: \$45; Promoter: AEG Live; Dates: Dec. 19, 2009; No. of Shows: 1	4) Aventura Gross Sales: \$375,553; Venue: NOKIA Theatre at Grand Prairie (Texas) ; Attendance: 6,101; Ticket Range: \$79.75-\$39.50; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: Dec. 2, 2009; No. of Shows: 1	4) Cirque Dreams Holidayze Gross Sales: \$1,002,981; Venue: Fox Theatre, Atlanta ; Attendance: 20,978; Ticket Range: \$65-\$30; Promoter: Magic Arts & Entertainment, NewSpace Entertainment, Olympia Entertainment; Dates: Dec. 22-27, 2009; No. of Shows: 8
5) Miley Cyrus Gross Sales: \$1,098,931; Venue: American Airlines Arena, Miami ; Attendance: 15,819; Ticket Range: \$79.50-\$39.50; Promoter: AEG Live; Dates: Dec. 2, 2009; No. of Shows: 1	5) Trans-Siberian Orchestra Gross Sales: \$394,543; Venue: San Diego Sports Arena ; Attendance: 8,427; Ticket Range: \$58-\$25; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: Dec. 4, 2009; No. of Shows: 1	5) Morrissey Gross Sales: \$351,507; Venue: Gibson Amphitheatre at Universal CityWalk, Universal City, Calif. ; Attendance: 5,795; Ticket Range: \$99.75-\$45.75; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: Dec. 10, 2009; No. of Shows: 1	5) Jerry Seinfeld Gross Sales: \$883,246; Venue: The Colosseum at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas ; Attendance: 8,388; Ticket Range: \$150-\$75; Promoter: AEG Live, In-house; Dates: Dec. 26-27, 2009; No. of Shows: 2

Compiled by Rob Ocampo and Riley Camarillo. To submit reports, e-mail HotTickets@venuestoday.com or fax to (714) 378-0040.

THE BEAT

TRAVELOG

INDUSTRY MEETINGS OFFER UPBEAT FORECAST FOR 2010

Association leaders planning conferences this year have one eye on the economy and the other on ways to

make their forums a “can’t miss” event.

Members of the International Association of Assembly Managers who travel to Houston for the 85th annual conference and trade show July 23-27 will see major changes to the meeting – including the rebranding of the conference to IAAM Venue Connect.

“There are a lot of trade associations that put a name on their annual meetings,” said Randy Brown, IAAM’s second vice chair and manager of the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum in Ft. Wayne, Ind.

“We decided this would identify the event better with a name, ‘venue’ in terms of who we are and ‘connect’ is part of what we do. We’re a people-to-people business. Whether it’s facility members, allied members or suppliers, we’re in a face-to-face business.”

Last year’s conference in Boston had an attendance of 2,166, said Dexter King, IAAM’s president and CEO. Leaders expect at least flat attendance, Brown said, but are hopeful that a less expensive city and the event’s rebranding will be a big draw.

“We’ve positioned well for an uptick with all the meetings,” Brown said.

The conference will open at the House of Blues and close at Minute Maid Park, where attendees will be able to see a game between the Houston Astros and the Chicago Cubs.

“We think that’s a great hook,” Brown said.

Telecommuting or webinars have been under consideration to allow members access to content without traveling to Houston.

“It’s in the discussion stage,” Brown said, who added that IAAM was working on developing its own social networking platform.

“We’re looking at new means of communicating with the membership,” Brown said.

As in years past, the National Association of Concessionaires will share their conference with IAAM, said Susan Cross, director of communications for the group.

“We’re going to be finalizing the educational programming and what we’ll be doing in the next month or so,” she said. “We gave everyone a breather during the holidays and now that we are through with the holidays, we’ve got to get back on it.”

For the Event and Arena Marketing conference held June 9-12 at the Marriott Magnificent Mile in Chicago, this summer’s gathering marks the group’s 30th anniversary, said Suzanne Richardson, president of EAMC and marketing director for AEG Live, Las Vegas.

“We are working on some special events for opening and closing sessions,” she said. “We’re also hoping that many industry veterans will join us this year in the celebration.”

Telecommuting and distance learning have been discussed in the past, Richardson noted, but so far organizers have decided not to implement such programs.

“An important part of the EAMC is the ability to network and interact with your peers,” she said. “However, we do offer session presentations online after the conference available to attendees with a unique password.”

Last year’s attendance was down slightly from the typical 250-300 attendees, Richardson said, but organizers “expect 2010 to return to our typical numbers.”

The International Ticketing Association (INTIX) conference held Jan. 26-28 at the Sheraton Centre Toronto is also hoping for an increased turnout and is expecting approximately 75 vendors and 700 attendees, said Jena L. Hoffman, president and CEO of INTIX.

In addition to looking for conference sponsors, INTIX is looking for an audio-visual partner for the Toronto event to enhance the event for attendees, she said.

“We are considering recording certain sessions that could be accessed by members at intix.org after the conference,” Hoffman said.

Members of the Stadium Managers Association will kick off their conference in the usual style: the Feb. 7 opening night coincides with the Super Bowl and the conference runs until Feb. 11

New events at this year’s Stadium Managers Association conference include a “Guest Services” segment on one afternoon and a “Student Internship Symposium” on another afternoon, said Mary Mycka, the group’s executive director.

Organizers are expecting a strong turnout, with an anticipated attendance at least matching last year’s 500 or even exceeding it, she said. They also are excited about the record sponsorships for this year’s conference, including free golf registration for attendees and a sponsorship for the screens that members can watch the Super Bowl on.

No “webinars” will be offered this year, Mycka said, but it’s something the association might consider in the future.

The keynote address will be given by Don Yaeger, former associate editor of Sports Illustrated and New York Times best-selling author of books such as “Tarnished Heisman.” – Mary Wade Burnside

Interviewed for this article: Suzanne Richardson, (702) 650-8403; Jena Hoffman, (212) 629-4036; Mary Mycka, (515) 282-8192; Susan Cross, (312) 236-3858.

SPECIAL EVENTS

NHL EVENT NOW NEW YEAR’S EVE TRADITION



Preparing for 2010 Bridgestone NHL Winter Classic at Fenway Park in Boston, are (from left) Comcast-Spectacor President Peter Luukko, National Hockey League Vice President of Communications Jamey Horan, NHL Chief Executive Officer John Collins, and Philadelphia Flyers General Manager Paul Holmgren.

In its third year, the National Hockey League’s Winter Classic again proved that if the outdoor rink is built, hockey fans will come.

The 2010 New Year’s Day game between the Philadelphia Flyers and Boston Bruins was held before a sellout crowd of 38,112 fans at Boston’s historic Fenway Park.

This year’s ticket prices started at \$275. A portion of the 5,000 tickets allocated to the Flyers

were designated for a travel package. For \$1,600, fans received round-trip train transportation and hotel accommodations for two nights. The team sold out all 353 available packages.

The NHL set up and maintained the \$1.5 million rink for the event.

“The setup began on Dec. 10, when we took over Fenway and began construction,” said Jamey Horan, the NHL’s vice president of communications. “The build-out was earlier than in previous years, because we planned community skating events from Dec. 18 up until Christmas Day.”

The pre-game program began with on-field ceremonies honoring members of the 1960 and 1980 U.S. Olympic hockey teams and a salute to Boston-based civic organizations.

Legendary singer-songwriter and Boston native James Taylor performed the National Anthem and Canadian singer-songwriter Daniel Powter sang the Canadian Anthem. During these performances, a U.S. Air Force B-2 Spirit flown by the 509th Bomb Wing of Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri and 131st Bomb Wing of the Missouri Air National Guard flew over the ballpark.

Boston's American Celtic punk band Dropkick Murphys then performed, "I'm Shipping Up to Boston," which was featured in the 2006 Academy Award-winning film, "The Departed."

"It was a great showcase for the game," said Comcast-Spectacor president and president of the Philadelphia Flyers Peter Luukko. "I think this is one of the great experiences of my career. As a single event, I can't think of anything better. I have to think this is everything the league wanted."

Throughout the event, youth hockey players from Boston and Philadelphia played games on an auxiliary rink in Fenway Park's outfield. Bruins players also signed autographs in tents hosted by the Classic's sponsors, which included Reebok, Honda, Compuware, Verizon, Bridgestone Tires, Bud Light and GEICO.

Aramark, which holds the concessions contract for Fenway, used the game to showcase two of the company's regional fares – New England Clam Chowder and Philadelphia Cheesesteaks. The company also expanded its number of points-of-sale offering cold weather items like soup, coffee and hot chocolate, served in a 16 oz. souvenir cup.

With freezing temperatures being a major concern, Aramark installed six additional hot water heaters, five temporary prep areas and six portable stands to account for the cold and keep the food and beverage areas operating. With baseball concluding in October, Fenway is rarely used during the cold winter months.

Freezing pipes were also a major concern, and Fenway contains several exposed pipes used to provide water to concession stands. Aramark and the team devised a plan to heat the concourse with large, industrial-level heating furnaces and temporarily sealing entryways with warm air circulating around the stadium.

Like this year's Classic, the 2009 event between the Chicago Blackhawks and Detroit Redwings at Chicago's Wrigley Field and the 2008 Buffalo Sabres and Pittsburgh Penguins game at Ralph Wilson Stadium in Orchard Park, N.Y., also sold out.

Plans for this year's Classic were put in place last July. "Wrigley was a comparable venue to Fenway, so we knew what to expect in terms of setup," said Marty Ray, Boston Red Sox manager of public affairs.

Horan said there was twice as much interest in this year's Classic compared with the 2009 event.

"More people recognize it and are familiar with the Winter Classic brand," Horan said.

Bids for the 2011 NHL Winter Classic will begin in February, following the Vancouver Winter Olympics. – Lisa White

Interviewed for this article: Jamey Horan, (212) 789-2785; Peter Luukko, (215) 336-3600; Marty Ray, (617) 226-6000

NAMING RIGHTS REPORT



CHEDDAR EXPLOSION

Date Announced: Dec. 31

Buyer: Kraft Macaroni and Cheese

Ownership: City of Irving, Texas

Terms: \$75,000 one-time sponsorship

Comments: Irving officials have accomplished something that has eluded Cowboys owner Jerry Jones. According to the City Council's meeting minutes, the city has struck a naming rights deal



for the old Cowboys Stadium.

The oddball agreement with food giant Kraft is for the naming rights to the demolition of the old Cowboys Stadium. While the old stadium will be destroyed via implosion, Kraft has opted for the name the Cheddar Explosion and will use the event as a promotional tool for Kraft products.

While details of the activation have yet to be fully specified, Kraft has agreed to pay \$75,000 to the City of Irving, and donate over \$75,000 in food product to local charities. Because the old facility contains asbestos, the environmental mitigation for the site has yet to be completed and a demolition date has not been set. The contract with the city says the implosion must take place between March 14 and April 18 or the agreement will be terminated.

Kraft will launch an essay contest for children in the coming weeks and the winner will get to trigger the detonator for the implosion. Laura Kunke, the city's director of communications, said the total cost of the demolition is approximately \$5.8 million and the implosion will be broadcast via webcam. The city plans to redevelop the site as a mixed-use commercial/retail site in the future. — Dave Brooks

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