

## **1960's**

The first lease for the District of Columbia Stadium is signed by the DC Armory Board and the Department of the Interior on December 12, 1958. The stadium was known as DC Stadium during its early years.

Designed by George Dahl, Ewin Engineering Associates and Osborn Engineering, DC Stadium was the first major stadium built as a multisport facility for both football and baseball. Groundbreaking for the \$24 million stadium was in 1960.

On October 1, 1961, DC Stadium opens its doors for its first official event. The Washington Redskins lose to the New York Giants, 24-21, before 36,767 including President John F. Kennedy.

The official dedication of the stadium is held six days later when George Washington University hosted the Virginia Military Institute, the first football game in Colonials history. Offensive end Paul Munley scores the first two touchdowns on passes from quarterback Bill Hardy and GW wins the game 30-6.

The Washington Redskins defeat the Dallas Cowboys 34-24 on December 17, 1961 for their first ever win at the stadium. This game is their only win in a 1-12-1 season and comes on the last weekend of the season.

In the first City Title Championship Game held at the stadium, Eastern High School (public) defeats St. John's High School (private) in November 1961. St. John's returns the favor the following year before a then-record crowd of 50,033 (besting the crowd of 49,888 from the previous year).

On April 9, 1962, baseball debuts at DC Stadium. President John F. Kennedy throws out the first pitch as the Washington Senators defeat the Detroit Tigers 4-1 before 44,383. The Senators played at the stadium for 10 seasons before departing for Texas in 1971.

DC Stadium has hosted two Major League Baseball All-Star Games. In 1962, the stadium hosted the season's first All-Star Game (they played two each year between 1959-1962). The National League won 3-1 before 45,480. In 1969, the All-Star Game returns to D.C. during MLB's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season. Although the National League won 9-3 before 45,259, hometown hero Frank Howard homered for the American League and Senators reliever Darold Knowles retired the only two hitters he faced.

After a four year hiatus, the United States Congressional Baseball Game is revived by Speaker John McCormack and Capitol Hill newspaper, Roll Call. The game was held at the stadium from 1962-1972 with the Republicans winning 10 out of 11 games over the Democrats. The game was also played at the stadium from 2005-08.

The Beatles perform before 32,164 at the stadium on August 15, 1966. Two weeks later they play their last concert for a paying public at San Francisco's Candlestick Park.

The George Washington Colonials play their final football game in school history at the stadium on November 24, 1966. The Colonials end the season against Villanova with a 16-7 loss and a 4-6 overall record. GW has not fielded a football team since this time.

The Washington Redskins beat the New York Giants 72-41 on November 27, 1966. The 113 combined points still stands as the NFL record for most points scored in a regular season game.

On January 18, 1969, the District of Columbia Stadium is renamed Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium to honor the U.S. Senator and presidential candidate who was assassinated the previous June in Los Angeles. The facility is generally called RFK Stadium and affectionately known as “RFK” around the globe.

Soccer joins football and baseball as mainstay sports at the stadium during the 1960’s including the popular Washington Diplomats of the NASL. Eight professional soccer teams have called RFK home during its history.

### **1970’s**

On September 30, 1971, the final regular season American League game is played at RFK Stadium. The Senators come from behind to take a 7-5 lead over the New York Yankees. However, with one out in the top of the ninth inning and reliever Joe Grzenda set to pitch to Horace Clarke, fans poured onto the field. The game could not be completed, and the umpires awarded the Yankees 9-0 forfeit. Following the season, the Senators would relocate to Arlington, Texas and become the Texas Rangers.

Concerts are a mainstay at RFK Stadium during the 1970’s. On Independence Day in 1972, the Rolling Stones performed during their Jack Daniels Tour—their first U.S. tour since the 1971 release of their hit album, Sticky Fingers, and the Grateful Dead made the first of many appearances in 1973.

On December 31, 1972, the Redskins defeat the Dallas Cowboys 26-3 in their first NFC Championship game. This win earned the Redskins a trip to the Super Bowl VII where they lost to the Miami Dolphins, who remain the only NFL team to go undefeated.

George Allen coaches his final game for the Redskins at the stadium, a 17-14 victory over the Los Angeles Rams on December 17, 1977.

### **1980’s**

The Joe Gibbs era begins at RFK Stadium in 1981. The Redskins narrowly defeat the New England Patriots 24-22 to earn the legendary coach his first win at RFK.

During the inaugural Cracker Jack Old Timers game in 1982, 75-year-old Hall of Famer Luke Appling hit a home run 250 feet to left field. Pitcher Warren Spahn applauded as Appling rounded the bases.

Redskins fans chant “We Want Dallas,” taunting their heated rival Cowboys and making the stadium shake, rattle and roll in the NFC Championship game on January 22, 1983. The Redskins would go on to beat the Cowboys 31-17 and earn a trip to Super Bowl XVII where they avenged their Super Bowl loss to the Miami Dolphins, winning 24-17 and securing the franchise’s first Super Bowl.

The Washington Federals of the USFL play at RFK Stadium for the 1983 and 1984 seasons before relocating to Orlando, Fla. It rained during 15 of the teams’ 18 home games.

“King of Pop” Michael Jackson and his brothers invade the nation’s capital and the stadium for the much-hyped Victory Tour in September 1984. The Jacksons hold two sold-out performances over two days and gave local fans memories of a lifetime. Following Michael Jackson’s death in 2009, fans left hundreds of flowers, stuffed animals and sympathy notes near the stadium’s main entrance.

Legendary performers at the stadium during the 1980's included Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band (1985), Madonna (1987), U2 (1987), Van Halen/Metallica (1988) and The Who (1989).

In the sack heard 'round D.C. , Giants linebacker Lawrence Taylor downs Redskins quarterback Joe Thiesman, breaking his leg and ending his NFL career in 1985. Backup quarterback Jay Schroeder comes in and leads the Redskins to a 23-21 victory.

On January 17, 1988, Redskins cornerback Darrell Green knocks down a Wade Wilson pass at the goal line to clinch a victory over the Minnesota Vikings in the NFC Championship game. Redskins go on to beat the Denver Broncos 41-10 in Super Bowl XXII (2nd title) making QB Doug Williams the first African-American quarterback to lead his team to the NFL promise land.

### **1990's**

In the pouring rain, the Redskins defeat the Atlanta Falcons 24-7 in the Divisional round of the playoffs on January 4, 1992. As time wound down in the fourth quarter, the 55,181 fans in attendance shower the field with yellow seat cushions they were given at the entrance.

Under the starry sky at the stadium on May 22, 1993, Riddick Bowe knocks out Jesse Ferguson in the second round to retain his WBA heavy weight title. In an undercard, Roy Jones, Jr. beat Bernard "The Executioner" Hopkins 116-112 for the vacant IBF middleweight belt.

Concerts during the 1990's featured iconic performers such as Paul McCartney (1990), Billy Joel and Elton John during their Face 2 Face Tour (1994), Grateful Dead (1995), U2 (1997) and the popular HFS Festivals through 2004.

Soccer's premier event, the FIFA World Cup, is held at RFK Stadium during June and July in 1994. Five games are held featuring national teams from Belgium, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Saudi Arabia in group play, and Spain and Switzerland in the Round of 16.

Nine men's and women's first-round soccer games are held at RFK Stadium during the Summer Olympic Games in July 1996. Men's games (6) featured national teams from Argentina, Korea Republic, Ghana, Italy, Mexico, Portugal, Tunisia and the United States. Women's games (3) featured national teams from Brazil, Germany, Japan and Norway. During the Games, the USA tied Portugal 1-1 before 58,012, a stadium record for soccer.

Major League Soccer expands to the nation's capital in 1996, and D.C. United is born. United ignite a passionate fan base and keep the stadium rocking ever since. Ten days after winning the first Major League Soccer title, D.C. United defeats the Rochester Rhinos 3-1 in the US Open Cup final, achieving the first "double" in American soccer history.

On December 22, 1996, the Redskins win their last game at RFK Stadium 37-10 over arch-rival Dallas Cowboys before 65,454, the largest football crowd in stadium history. Through 36 seasons (1961-1996), the 'Skins played 278 games at the stadium before 14.3 million fans.

On October 26, 1997, D.C. United defeat the Colorado Rapids 2-1 to win their second consecutive MLS Cup. This is the only time a MLS team has won the championship on its home field. Overall RFK Stadium has hosted the MLS Cup three times, the second highest total in the league.

During "Blessings '97", Reverend Sun Myung Moon and his wife, Hak Ja Han Moon, officiate over a mass wedding and marriage rededication ceremony that drew 40,000 people including 2,500 Unification Church couples who consented to arranged marriages. After a symbolic sprinkling of water, the Moons led couples in saying "I do" to four pledges recited the noontime ceremony.

## **2000's**

In the midst of the pop boy band explosion, N'SYNC headlined a world tour at the stadium in July 2000. Pink would serve as the white hot group's opening act.

On April 14, 2001, Mia Hamm and the Washington Freedom defeat Brandi Chastain and the Bay Area Cyber Rays 1-0 in the inaugural match of the Women's United Soccer Association before 34,198. The Freedom won the WUSA championship this same year.

In October 2001, RFK Stadium is electric as Michael Jackson headlines "The United We Stand: What More Can I Give" benefit concert in tribute to the victims of the September 11, 2001 attacks.

RFK Stadium has hosted two Major League Soccer All-Star Games. In the 2002 Game, a team of MLS players defeat the U.S. Men's National Team 3-2. D.C. United midfielder Marco Etchberry is named MVP. In the 2004 Game, MLS East defeats MLS West 3-2.

Ronaldinho makes his debut for FC Barcelona against AC Milan in a preseason tour of the United States at RFK Stadium in July 2003. Ronaldinho has a goal and an assist as Barcelona defeats defending European champion AC Milan 2-0 in an exhibition game before 45,864.

During September 2003, six games of group play for the FIFA Women's World Cup were held at RFK Stadium featuring national teams from Argentina, Brazil, France, Germany, Korea Republic, Norway, Sweden and the United States.

On April 14, 2005, the Washington Nationals, before a crowd of 45,496 including President Bush, former senators and MLB Commissioner Bud Selig, start a new baseball tradition in the nation's capital with a 5-3 victory over the Arizona Diamondbacks in their season and home opener. George Bush, formerly a part-owner of the Texas Rangers, is the first president since Richard Nixon to throw the ceremonial first pitch at a home opener in RFK Stadium.

Amidst fanfare and media attention, L.A. Galaxy forward David Beckham makes his MLS debut at RFK Stadium in August 2007, losing to D.C. United 1-0 before a crowd of 46,686 fans.

In the 1,047th and final Nationals game played at RFK Stadium on September 23, 2007, outfielder Austin Kearns finishes 3 for 4 with 2 RBIs to lift the Washington Nationals to a come from behind win vs. the Philadelphia Phillies.

Football returns to RFK Stadium on December 20, 2008 with the inaugural EagleBank Bowl, the first college football bowl game to be played in Washington, D.C. Wake Forest quarterback Riley Skinner, the game's MVP, goes 11-for-11 and leads the Demon Deacons to a 29-19 win over Navy. The Bowl game is held annually each December.

A Day of Service for Our Military is held at RFK Stadium as a part of the Martin Luther King Jr. National Day of Service on January 19, 2009. Led by Michelle Obama, Jill Biden and a distinguished group of public officials, 12,000 volunteers made over 80,000 care packages for American Troops overseas.

Greater DC Cares and Serve DC hosted the Armed Services YMCA's Operation Kid Comfort on the RFK concourse during the 2009 9/11 National Day of Remembrance. Over 200 volunteers created nearly 100 personalized photo-transfer quilts and pillows for children of deployed servicemen and women.

## **2010's**

In October 2010, the US Men's National Team tied Costa Rica 2-2 in their final World Cup qualifying game for the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Noted ESPN.com columnist Bill Simmons wrote:

*"Did you see Wednesday's incredible USA-Costa Rica game? Phenomenal crowd, upper decks hanging over the field, entire sections swaying, tons of history.....It's an incredible place. Every seat feels like it's right on top of you. So can't we just make it official? Every big American soccer game should be played in RFK. We need the home-field advantage. Done and done."*

The EagleBank Bowl is rebranded as the Military Bowl presented by Northrup Grumman. Proceeds from the newly named bowl benefit the United Service Organizations (USO) in support of the men and women in the armed forces.

In December 2010, the Maryland Terrapins crush the East Carolina Pirates 51-20 in the rebranded Military Bowl presented by Northrup Grumman in front of 38,789, the highest attendance in the bowl's three year history. The game would be the last for Head Coach Ralph Friedgen, a Maryland alumnus. The game stands as the highest scoring game in bowl history.

The US Men's National Team beat Jamaica 2-0 to advance to the Gold Cup semifinals on June 19, 2011. The game marks the 21st time the USMNT played at RFK Stadium, tying the Los Angeles Coliseum for the most appearances by the soccer squad since 1990 (13-3-5).

On October 5, 2011, Events DC is joined by city officials and former players, coaches and participants in launching the 50th anniversary celebration of RFK Stadium. The celebration was a tribute to the 50 years of sports, entertainment and special events at the Stadium through a combination of interactive programs and community events. The celebration concluded with a VIP dinner at the Walter E. Washington Convention on November 19.

On September 10, 2011, Howard University and Morehouse College renew their historic rivalry in the inaugural AT&T Nation's Football Classic. Howard freshman QB Greg McGhee, the game's MVP, led the Bison to a thrilling 30-27 victory. The Classic is held annually each September.

In November 2012, D.C. United tied the New York Red Bulls 1-1 in the MLS Eastern Conference Semi-Finals, their first appearance in the playoffs since 2007.

As part of their 100th anniversary festivities, U.S. Soccer hosted the Centennial Celebration Match featuring the U.S. Men's National Team vs. Germany at RFK Stadium on June 2, 2013. The USMNT won 4-3 before 47,359, the 15<sup>th</sup> highest soccer attendance in stadium history, and overall is 14-3-5 at RFK. The game marked the 22nd appearance for the USMNT at RFK Stadium, the most by the team in any venue in the world. During pre-game, a greeting from President Barack Obama was played on the videoboard.