



CACTUS LEAGUE COMPLETES ANOTHER YEAR FOR THE RECORD BOOKS

Overall Attendance Hits All-Time High, Economic Impact Reaches \$350+ Million

www.CactusLeague.com

April 20, 2009 (MESA, Ariz.) – As officials predicted, the 2009 Cactus League spring training season met expectations with overall attendance reaching 1.57 million baseball fans, representing a nearly 20% increase over the previous season's attendance. Those figures take into account 246 total games played compared to 177 total games played in 2008. Early on, the season was slated to be a banner year due to an extended season, the increase in number of teams (Los Angeles Dodgers and Cleveland Indians joined the league), and the increase in total games played. Included in the increase is the World Baseball Classic which returned to Arizona with 11 games played, drawing 47,483 baseball fans to the overall attendance.

"We got the win," said Robert Brinton, President of the Cactus League and leader of the Mesa Hohokams, the booster club for the Chicago Cubs spring training. "It took extra innings but it's a win nonetheless."

The Chicago Cubs came out on top again as the most watched team in the league with a total of 203,105 fans at their 19 games, setting a single-season record. Rounding out the top three teams are the San Francisco Giants with 177,995 fans in attendance and newcomer Los Angeles Dodgers with 136,944 fans. These same three teams led the league in total attendance per game average. The Cubs ranked first with a per game average of 10,690 fans, Los Angeles Dodgers was second with a per game average of 9,130 fans, and the San Francisco Giants took the third spot with a per game average of 8,476 fans. While the overall average per game did drop by 12% league-wide, or roughly a 1,000-fan decrease per game, the 2009 season set a number of milestones in single game attendance records. Of the top 10 single game attendance records recorded in the history of the Cactus League, 6 of the 10 games were played in the 2009 season. Most notable is the Chicago White Sox and Chicago Cubs match-up at Hohokam Stadium (Mesa) which drew in 13,327 fans making it the second most attended game, followed by the same match-up at Camelback Ranch (Glendale) which ranked third drawing in 13,311 fans.

"To know that in a down economy, we were able to draw record attendances at six games in the league's entire history is simply incredible," said Brad Curtis, co-Vice President of the Cactus League and representative for Tempe Diablos, the booster club for Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim spring training. "We know the attendance surge can be attributed to the addition of teams and the unique conditions that made up the 2009 season schedule."

Perhaps the biggest payoff to the league's continued growth is the increase in the economic impact of spring training. Using the same formula from the league's economic development survey conducted in 2007, and taking into account that less fans traveled from out-of-town this year, the league estimates the total impact growing to an estimated \$359 million statewide. This represents a 7.1% increase over the 2008 economic impact which was estimated to be \$335 million.

"It's clear that baseball is big business no matter what economic cycle the country is in," said Tom Moulton, co-Vice President of the Cactus League and Director of Economic Development and Tourism for Pima County. "Fans follow their teams and it's our hope that records set this year will be challenged next year as the league continues on its growth pattern."

In 2010, the Cactus League will once again grow as the Cincinnati Reds join the Cleveland Indians next year in Goodyear, evening the playing field between Florida's Grapefruit League and Arizona's Cactus League with 15 teams each.

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About the Cactus League:

The Cactus League Association was established in 1989 by representatives of the participating booster organizations and cities that sponsor spring training in Arizona. The Cactus League Association's primary goal is to facilitate, encourage and participate in activities designed to promote the Cactus League. The membership of host cities and community service organizations serve in this capacity on a year-round basis. For more go to www.CactusLeague.com.

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