

Bet On It: Harrah's Entertainment Reaches Sponsorship Deal with Mets

Written by Maury Brown
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Centurion Guards from Caesars Atlantic City have a new home at Citi Field as Harrah's Entertainment becomes a Mets signature partner. The new Caesars Club located at Citi Field opens officially on April 13.

When the recession first started to make its presence fully felt, I made mention that sponsorship deals would be the one aspect of sports business that would feel the greatest impact ([see *National Post* article regarding the Nashville Predators](#)). That has been true, but a side effect has been the creativity that clubs are engaging in, or rather, the continued breaking of taboos. Take the continued growth of sponsorship deals with casinos.

The New York Mets and Harrah's Entertainment today announced a multiyear marketing and promotional partnership in which the world's largest provider of branded casino entertainment becomes a Signature Partner at Citi Field. The comprehensive set of rights and benefits integrated across multiple properties and platforms includes an exclusive Caesars-branded club space and extensive in-park presence.

Financial terms were not released.

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The destination presence for Harrah's will be the naming and branding rights to the Caesars Club, a 12,000-square foot, 900-capacity, fully enclosed, climate-controlled club with a wide selection of dining options located on the Excelsior Level at Citi Field.

"Harrah's Entertainment is extremely excited and proud to partner with the Mets in opening what promises to be a first-class facility for a storied franchise," said Dan Nita, Senior Vice President and General Manager, Caesars Atlantic City. "The inclusion of the Caesars Club is a wonderful opportunity to reach the loyal fan base of the Mets in New York and give them a taste of the new amenities we offer here in Atlantic City."

"Our new partnership with Harrah's provides new ways for us to connect with current and new fans through Harrah's ongoing communication with its customers," said Dave Howard, Executive Vice President, Business Operations, New York Mets. "We look forward to working with Harrah's to develop event, entertainment, and presence marketing programs at our new home at Citi Field."

Fans throughout the season will experience a variety of programming from offers to Harrah's owned casinos in Atlantic City to themed nights that bring simulate the experience of being at Harrah's and Caesars to the New York Metropolitan area. On opening night April 13 at Citi Field, the Caesars Club will welcome baseball fans by hosting a DJ, providing fans with a commemorative gift, along with providing opportunities to take photos with iconic Caesars personalities.

Harrah's has also signed on as the exclusive Casino partner for prominent in-venue signage at Citi Field, including presence atop Citi Field's left field roof, first and third base rotationals, and identification throughout the concourses.

Harrah's promotional rights extend to the Mets' minor league affiliates at Tradition Field (Port St. Lucie, Fla., home of Mets Spring Training and the St. Lucie Mets) and KeySpan Park (Coney Island, N.Y., home of the Brooklyn Cyclones).

Watch the sports business landscape closely. As more traditional sponsors drop due to the

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chilly economy, deals, such as this one with Harrah's, will continue to appear. The only thing that Harrah's didn't have in this deal was some actual form of gaming (note that "themed nights"). And don't kid yourself, if they could have had that aspect in the deal, they would have. As the pressure to retain revenues increase, the breaking of taboos will continue to erode for the league. Somewhere, Pete Rose is shaking his head.