

For Immediate Release
Tuesday March 21, 2023

For more information and interviews contact:
Ken Reed at League of Fans at (720) 635-3925
Ralph Nader at (202) 387-8034

NEW SURVEY FINDS CUBS, ROCKIES AND YANKEES WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF IN-GAME ADS. NADER AND LEAGUE OF FANS CALL ON MLB TO BAN IN-GAME ADS DURING BASEBALL RADIO BROADCASTS

Consumer advocate Ralph Nader and Ken Reed, sports policy director of League of Fans, today called on Major League Baseball Commissioner Robert Manfred to ban ads broadcast during baseball radio broadcasts.

“There’s a time and place for everything,” Nader and Reed wrote. “And the time and place for commercials on the radio during baseball broadcasts is before the game, after the game and between innings.”

“There is no place for commercials during the actual broadcast of the game.”

“We call on you to prohibit in-game ads, as they are known in the advertising business.”

Nader and League of Fans released a survey of all thirty broadcasts on one day last year – April 9, 2022 – when all thirty teams played.

“And what we found was disturbing – a total of 847 in-game ads – or an average of 28.2 ads per game per team,” they wrote.

“In 2012, we conducted a similar survey of in game ads for a New York Yankees broadcast and found 22 in game ads in one game. But our survey for the game last year found that the number had more than doubled for a Yankees game to more than 50.”

“The three worst offenders in our recent survey – the Chicago Cubs (60), the Colorado Rockies (53) and the New York Yankees (51) – each had more than 50 in-game ads in the game.” (See below for a complete ranking of teams from most to least in-game ads.)

“We remember listening with pleasure to Mel Allen’s radio broadcasts of the New York Yankee games,” Nader wrote.

“The commercials were reserved for the commercial breaks – between half innings.”

“Now, the commercials have become a significant part of the broadcast.”

“They disrupt the flow and excitement of the game broadcast, irritate the listeners to no end, and undermine your responsibilities as a guardian of the national pastime. You’re a Yankee fan. Try listening to a radio broadcast some day and let me know what you think.”

“What’s next, uniforms pasted with ads?” Nader and Reed wrote.

“Wait, that’s already happening.”

“A number of teams have already struck sponsorship deals with major corporations.”

“This year, the Houston Astros will be walking billboards for Occidental Petroleum. The world champions will be required to wear an Oxy patch every game of the year. The Red Sox have a similar deal with MassMutual, the San Diego Padres with Motorola.”

“By allowing ads to spread into the radio broadcast booth and now onto the field, you are damaging the integrity of the game. Do you wish to associate teams with the multiple dark sides of these large corporations?”

“As advertising agencies have known for years, the more ads jammed into a set time period, the less response to each ad by listeners – that is, if they don’t tune out altogether.”

“Clearly, this is not in the best interests of baseball,” they wrote.

“Baseball fans are historically finicky,” they wrote. “Step over the line once too often,

and who knows – baseball fans could start turning off the game or the advertisers or both.”

“As advertising agencies have known for years, the more ads jammed into a set time period, the less response to each ad by listeners – that is, if they don’t tune out altogether.”

“Please take a look at the new comprehensive survey we have compiled and give us a call to discuss steps you might take to reign in this ever expanding corporate advertising surge.”

“Finally, why don’t you poll your radio broadcast fans and see what they think?”

**Most in-game ads to least in-game ads from
15 games (30 game broadcasts) on April 9, 2022.**

Cubs, CHC-WSCR: 60 ads
Rockies, COL-KOA: 53 ads
Yankees, NYY-WFAN: 51 ads
Mets, NYM-WCBS 880: 49 ads
Reds, CIN-WLW: 43 ads
Brewers, MIL-WTMJ: 41 ads
Nationals, WSH-WJFK: 41 ads
White Sox, CWS-WMVP: 41 ads
Red Sox, BOS-WEEI: 39 ads
Giants, SF-KNBR: 39 ads
Blue Jays, TOR-SN590: 37 ads
Rangers, TEX-KRLD: 35 ads
Mariners, SEA-KIRO: 31 ads
Guardians, CLE-WTAM: 31 ads
Marlins, MIA-FOX940AM: 31 ads
Padres, SD-KWFN: 25 ads
Cardinals, STL-KMOX: 23 ads
Angels, LAA-KLAA: 23 ads
Dodgers, LAD-570: 19 ads
Tigers, DET-WXYT-FM: 18 ads
Orioles, BAL-98 Rock: 17 ads
Pirates, PIT-KDKA: 16 ads
Rays, TB-WDAE: 14 ads
Braves, ATL-680 AM: 14 ads
Diamondbacks, AZ-98. 14 ads
Astros, HOU-KBME: 12 ads
Twins, MIN-TIBN: 11 ads
Phillies, PHI-WIP: 8 ads
Royals, KC-KCSP: 6 ads
A’s, OAK-A’S CAST: 5 ads