

# 9/11 MEMORIAL & MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 27, 2018

## NEW EXHIBITION “COMEBACK SEASON: SPORTS AFTER 9/11” OPENS TODAY AT 9/11 MEMORIAL MUSEUM

*The exhibition explores how sports helped to unite the country following the 2001 attacks through iconic artifacts and all-new interviews with sports greats*

(New York) June 27, 2018 – The new special exhibition “Comeback Season: Sports After 9/11” opened today at the 9/11 Memorial Museum, showing visitors of all ages how sports helped to inspire and heal a grieving nation after the 2001 attacks.

The immersive exhibition revisits a time nearly 17 years ago when sports became a reason for people across the country to unite, celebrate again, and find solace in the games they love.

“Through the lens of sports, this exhibition celebrates the strength of the human spirit and our capacity to come together and support one another through unimaginable grief,” 9/11 Memorial & Museum President Alice M. Greenwald said. “This story provides additional points of entry into the complex story of 9/11, to better understand our history and the impact it had on our world today, to reflect on our own lived memories from that time, and to feel inspired by stories about the best of humanity.”

Hall of Fame Mets catcher Mike Piazza recalls what the first professional baseball game in New York meant for people who struggled to process the number of the victims killed in the attack and the devastation it caused. He would hit a two-run homer to win that contest.

“The biggest anxiety we had had to think about, for us, was ‘Is it time? Should we wait?’ And after that game we knew it was a place where we should have been,” Piazza said. “It showed the true character of the city, the strength of the city, the toughness, compassion, love, family and friends. In that first game back, the home team came back and won. That’s exactly the lesson the city, the country and the world needed to see that night. You can never count out New York.”

Carol Gies, whose husband, FDNY Lt. Ronnie E. Gies was killed in the attacks, attended that first post-9/11 Mets game with her three sons. They celebrated the moment in the stands.

“When that ball went over the wall, I saw my children smile for the very first time since they lost their dad,” she said in an oral history recording that is part of the sports exhibition. “9/11 went away for that one split minute. One split second. And to

**NATIONAL SEPTEMBER 11 MEMORIAL & MUSEUM**

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see my children excited and smile—and I was like, ‘You know what? We’re going to do this. We’re going to get through this.’”

Click here to view high-res photos of “Comeback Season.”

While the exhibition has a particular focus on sports in season at the time of the attacks, it spans events and various sports, including baseball, football, hockey, NASCAR, soccer, the New York City Marathon and the 2002 Winter Olympics.

The story arc for the exhibition is told in nine chapters, immersing visitors in bold imagery, archival sports footage and testimonies from athletes, coaches and 9/11 family members. These chapters include:

- **Timeout:** The time of shock and disbelief after the attacks, with sporting events canceled or postponed and the nation’s new priorities deeming sports as unimportant in the immediate aftermath of this terrible event.
- **Sports on the Sidelines:** Immediately after the attacks, New York area sports venues and stadiums were used as recovery and supply sites, and a prayer ceremony was held at Yankee Stadium.
- **Swinging Back into Action:** The New York Mets face the Atlanta Braves at Shea Stadium in New York’s first major sporting event after 9/11. The game includes many commemorative acts, such as Mets players wearing NYPD, PAPD, FDNY and NYS Court Officers caps instead of team caps to acknowledge the efforts of first responders and rescue workers.
- **More Than a Game:** Primarily focused on ice hockey, and how the ensuing games served as an outlet for families to commemorate the victims of 9/11.
- **Rivalries Dissolve:** Covering football and other sports, and how feelings of unity which swept the country were also on display between teams.
- **One Team:** A look at NASCAR, highlighting one of the biggest post-9/11 sporting events which drew an enormous crowd and put national pride on display.
- **Home Field:** President George W. Bush threw a perfect ceremonial first pitch at Yankee Stadium at the 2001 World Series between the Yankees and Arizona Diamondbacks. While the Yankees ultimately lost the series, they had some heroic come-from-behind victories, and those highs effectively lifted the city back up.
- **Field of Honor:** The story arc of recovery and hope continues into 2002 with special commemorations at Super Bowl XXXVI and the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, Utah in February.
- **A Marathon, Not a Sprint:** The exhibition ends on a high note with the 2001 New York City Marathon, a celebratory demonstration of the city’s resilience and diversity with 30,000 runners and 2,000,000 spectators.

“Comeback Season” will require a free ticket with museum admission because of limited capacity in the special exhibition gallery. Reserving tickets in advance is highly recommended as walk-up tickets will be limited. Go to [www.911memorial.org/ComebackSeason](http://www.911memorial.org/ComebackSeason) for more information.

The exhibition has been made possible in part through the support of the Anheuser-Busch Foundation, Major League Baseball and the New York Mets/Jeff Wilpon.

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## **Sports Commissioners Serve as Honorary Exhibition Chairs**

The 9/11 Memorial & Museum is joined in sharing this uplifting story of resilience by Allan H. “Bud” Selig, Major League Baseball Commissioner Emeritus; Paul Tagliabue, former National Football League Commissioner; David J. Stern, National Basketball Association Commissioner Emeritus; Gary Bettman, National Hockey League Commissioner; Don Garber, Major League Soccer Commissioner; Mike Helton, NASCAR Vice Chairman; and Val Ackerman, former President of the Women’s National Basketball Association and current Big East Conference Commissioner, who serve as exhibition chairs.

## **Credits**

Exhibition Design and Media Production: C&G Partners

Exhibition Fabrication: Maltbie, a kubik company

Audiovisual Systems Integration: Electrosonic, Inc.

Mounts: Object Mounts

Museum Architect: Davis Brody Bond, LLP

Museum Mechanical Engineer: JB&B Consulting Engineers

The 9/11 Memorial & Museum is also grateful to the many individuals and institutions who generously donated or loaned artifacts, media resources and other materials for presentation in this exhibition.

## **ABOUT THE NATIONAL SEPTEMBER 11 MEMORIAL & MUSEUM**

The National September 11 Memorial & Museum is the nonprofit organization that oversees operations for the 9/11 Memorial and 9/11 Memorial Museum. Located on eight of the 16 acres of the World Trade Center site, the Memorial and Museum remember and honor the 2,983 people who were killed in the horrific attacks of September 11, 2001 and February 26, 1993. The Memorial plaza design consists of two reflecting pools formed in the footprints of the original Twin Towers surrounded by swamp white oak trees. The Museum displays more than 900 personal and monumental objects while its collection includes more than 60,000 items that present intimate stories of loss, compassion, reckoning and recovery linked to the events of 9/11 and the aftermath. The Museum also explores the global impact of 9/11 and its continuing significance through education programs, public programs, live talks and film features that cover contemporary topics designed for diverse audiences. For more information or to reserve a ticket to the 9/11 Memorial Museum, please visit [911memorial.org](http://911memorial.org).

## **MEDIA INQUIRIES**

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## **STAY CONNECTED**



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