

= History of the New York Yankees =

The history of the New York Yankees Major League Baseball (MLB) team spans more than a century . Frank J. Farrell and William Stephen Devery bought the rights to an American League (AL) club in New York City after the 1902 season . The team , which became known as the Yankees in 1913 , rarely contended for the AL championship before the acquisition of outfielder Babe Ruth after the 1919 season . With Ruth in the lineup , the Yankees won their first AL title in 1921 , followed by their first World Series championship in 1923 . Ruth and first baseman Lou Gehrig were part of New York 's Murderers ' Row lineup , which led the Yankees to a then @-@ AL record 110 wins and a Series championship in 1927 under Miller Huggins . They repeated as World Series winners in 1928 , and their next title came under manager Joe McCarthy in 1932 .

The Yankees won the World Series every year from 1936 to 1939 with a team that featured Gehrig and outfielder Joe DiMaggio , who recorded a record hitting streak during New York 's 1941 championship season . New York set a major league record by winning five consecutive championships from 1949 to 1953 , and appeared in the World Series nine times during the next 11 years . Mickey Mantle , Yogi Berra , and Whitey Ford were among the players fielded by the Yankees during the era . After the 1964 season , a lack of effective replacements for aging players caused the franchise to decline on the field , and the team became a money @-@ loser for owners CBS while playing in an aging stadium .

George Steinbrenner bought the club in 1973 and regularly invested in new talent , using free agency to acquire top players . Yankee Stadium was renovated and reopened in 1976 as the home of a more competitive Yankees team . Despite clubhouse disputes , the team reached the World Series four times between 1976 and 1981 and claimed the championship in 1977 and 1978 . New York continued to pursue their strategy of signing free agents into the 1980s , but with less success , and the team eventually sank into mediocrity after 1981 . In the early 1990s , the team began to improve as their roster was rebuilt around young players from their minor league system , including Derek Jeter and Mariano Rivera . After earning a playoff berth in 1995 , the Yankees won four of the next five World Series , and the 1998 ? 2000 teams were the last in MLB to win three straight Series titles .

As the 2000s progressed , the Yankees ' rivalry with the Boston Red Sox increased in intensity as the sides met multiple times in the American League Championship Series (ALCS) , trading victories in 2003 and 2004 . New York regularly reached the postseason , but were often defeated in the first two rounds . In 2009 , the Yankees opened a new Yankee Stadium and won the World Series for the 27th time in team history . The furthest the Yankees have gone in the postseason since then is the ALCS , in 2010 and 2012 .

= = Pre @-@ World War II = =

= = = Background : 1901 ? 02 Baltimore Orioles = = =

At the end of the 1900 baseball season , the Western League was positioned by its president , Ban Johnson , as a new major league that would compete with the established National League (NL) . The league was reorganized and renamed the American League (AL) , and eight cities fielded teams in the 1901 season . A Baltimore team had played in the NL through the 1899 season , after which the club was shut down by the league . Baltimore was one of three former NL cities where the AL placed teams in an effort to reach underserved fans . The new Orioles ' first manager was John McGraw , who had held the same position for the previous Baltimore team in 1899 ; McGraw also held an ownership stake .

In 1901 , their first season , the Orioles had a 68 ? 65 win ? loss record and finished in fifth place in the AL . During the season , there were numerous disputes between Johnson and McGraw over disciplinary issues , which continued into the following year . Rumors began to spread that Johnson was interested in relocating the team to New York City , in an attempt to compete directly with the

NL . McGraw left the Orioles and joined the New York Giants as their manager ; he transferred his interest in the Baltimore team to the Giants as part of the deal . Several Orioles ? including Roger Bresnahan and Joe McGinnity ? joined the Giants after McGraw 's departure , and the Giants gained a majority of the Orioles ' stock . The league managed to take back control of the team from the Giants ; after the Orioles forfeited a game because they lacked enough active players , Johnson ordered that the team be " restocked with players essentially given away by the other teams in order to play out the schedule " , according to author Marty Appel . The Orioles finished last in the league both in the standings and in attendance .

The AL and NL signed an agreement after the 1902 season that ended the leagues ' battles for players , which had led to increasing salaries . Johnson sought the right to locate an AL team in New York City , which was granted as part of the leagues ' peace agreement . His intention was for the team to play in Manhattan , but the idea was opposed by Giants owner John T. Brush and former owner Andrew Freedman , who were connected to the city 's Tammany Hall political organization . They blocked several potential stadium locations , before a pair of Tammany Hall politicians , Frank J. Farrell and William Stephen Devery , purchased the New York franchise in the AL . The pair paid US \$ 18 @, @ 000 for the team . It is not clear whether Farrell and Devery purchased the remains of the Orioles and moved them to New York , or if they received an expansion franchise . It was the last change in the lineup of MLB teams for half a century .

= = = 1903 ? 12 : Early years = = =

The ballpark for the New York team was constructed between 165th and 168th Streets , on Broadway in Manhattan . Formally known as American League Park , it was nicknamed Hilltop Park because of its relatively high elevation . The team did not have an official nickname ; it was often called the New York Americans in reference to the AL . Another common nickname for the club was the Highlanders , a play on the last name of the team 's president , Joe Gordon , and the British military unit , the Gordon Highlanders . The team acquired players such as outfielder Willie Keeler and pitcher Jack Chesbro . The player @-@ manager was Clark Griffith , obtained from the Chicago White Sox . On April 22 , 1903 , the Highlanders began their season with a 3 ? 1 loss to the Washington Senators ; eight days later , they won their first game in Hilltop Park , defeating the Senators 6 ? 2 . New York fell out of contention for the AL pennant in May , falling to seventh place after playing games away from Hilltop Park for a 24 @-@ day period while construction on the stadium concluded . With a final record of 72 ? 62 after wins in 19 of 29 games played in September , New York finished in fourth .

Chesbro won 41 games in New York 's 1904 season , still an AL record . New York contended for the AL pennant with the Boston Americans (later nicknamed the Red Sox) ; Johnson aided New York by helping the team acquire multiple players in trades , including Boston 's Patsy Dougherty . Boston and New York faced each other in a season @-@ ending five @-@ game series that decided the pennant winner , and was played from October 7 ? 10 . Boston won two of the first three games , which meant that New York needed to win the two contests scheduled on October 10 to win the AL title . With the score of the first game tied 2 ? 2 in the ninth inning , Chesbro threw a wild pitch that allowed a runner on third base to score , giving Boston a 3 ? 2 victory that clinched the AL pennant ; New York won the now @-@ meaningless second game .

New York 's performance declined in 1905 , as numerous pitchers dealt with arm injuries and conditioning issues . After losing 18 of 25 games in May , the Highlanders ended the season in sixth . In its 1906 season , New York again contended for the AL championship . With 13 games left , the team held a one @-@ game lead over the White Sox , but finished in second place three games behind Chicago . According to Appel , " What would follow would be a string of mediocre to bad seasons and not a very good attraction for baseball @-@ crazed New York fans . " New York recorded a fifth @-@ place finish in 1907 , with 70 wins , 22 fewer than the league champion Detroit Tigers . The 1908 and 1909 teams finished last and fifth , respectively , and there were multiple managerial changes in the period .

New York had a second @-@ place finish in 1910 , but did not seriously contend for the pennant .

Manager George Stallings and first baseman Hal Chase , the team captain , clashed towards the end of the season ; facing opposition from Ban Johnson , who wanted him to resign as manager , Stallings left the position . Chase managed New York 's last 14 games . The following season , New York had a sixth @-@ place finish . Early in the season , New York allowed the Giants to play in Hilltop Park after the Giants ' stadium , the Polo Grounds , burned down ; the arrangement lasted until June 28 , when the rebuilt Polo Grounds opened . Chase resigned as manager before New York 's 1912 season ; Harry Wolverton accepted the position . That year , New York had a last @-@ place finish with a record of 50 ? 102 , the winning percentage of .329 the lowest @-@ ever for the club .

After their first couple of seasons in New York City , team ownership infrequently invested in new players . The ownership group of Farrell and Devery spent their money on personal pursuits such as gambling , leaving them with little to put into the team . New York 's star player , Chase , consorted frequently with gamblers . Author Jim Reisler dubbed him " the most crooked player to ever play the game " because of reports that he took part in game fixing . The club also had difficulty drawing fans to Hilltop Park . Appel wrote that " maybe the best thing you could say about the ballpark was that it never burned down . " By the end of the 1912 season , Farrell was searching for a site to build a new stadium on .

= = = 1913 ? 20 : New ownership and acquisition of Babe Ruth = = =

New York started playing home games at the Polo Grounds in 1913 as tenants of the Giants . Before the 1913 season , the team gained an official nickname for the first time . Either " Yankees " or " Yanks " had been used frequently since 1904 in newspapers such as the New York Evening Journal , since " Highlanders " was hard to fit in headlines . Such unofficial nicknames were common during that era , but thereafter the official name took hold ? the New York Yankees .

A third major league , the Federal League (FL) , began play in 1914 and lasted for two years . While the Yankees did not have to contend with direct competition for fans , as the FL chose to place its New York City franchise in Brooklyn instead of Manhattan , the team nearly lost leading pitcher Ray Caldwell to the rival league after the 1914 season . With the Yankees finishing seventh in 1913 and sixth in 1914 , Farrell and Devery sold the team to brewery magnate Jacob Ruppert and former United States Army engineer Tillinghast L 'Hommedieu Huston . The Yankees had rarely been profitable over the previous 10 years , and carried debts of \$ 20 @,@ 000 . The sale was completed on January 11 , 1915 , as the pair paid a combined \$ 460 @,@ 000 . Ruppert called the team " an orphan ball club , without a home of its own , without players of outstanding ability , without prestige . " The new owners intended to spend freely to improve the club 's talent level and made a major purchase in 1915 , buying pitcher Bob Shawkey from the Philadelphia Athletics . In spite of this , the Yankees ' 69 wins were only enough for fifth in the league . After wearing different designs during the Highlanders years , in 1915 the Yankees introduced white uniforms with pinstripes and an interlocking " NY " logo during games at the Polo Grounds ; this remains their home uniform design today . For road games , the team began to wear gray uniforms with " New York " across the chest from 1913 ; the Yankees still wear similar garb .

Following the acquisition of third baseman Frank " Home Run " Baker from the Athletics , the 1916 Yankees had 80 wins and contended for the AL pennant for most of the season , before suffering a run of injuries to key players , including Baker . In the Yankees ' 1917 season , New York finished in sixth ; Bill Donovan , the club 's manager since 1915 , was fired in the offseason . Ruppert replaced him with Miller Huggins , completing the hire while Huston was overseas fighting in World War I. The Yankees contended for first place in the war @-@ shortened 1918 campaign along with the Red Sox and Cleveland Indians , but lost numerous players to military service and were fourth at 60 ? 63 . After the season , the Yankees acquired three players ? including outfielder Duffy Lewis and pitcher Ernie Shore ? in a trade with the Red Sox , the winners of the 1918 World Series . In 1919 , the club made another trade with Boston , acquiring pitcher Carl Mays for two players and \$ 40 @,@ 000 . The midseason deal provoked a dispute between the teams and Ban Johnson , who unsuccessfully attempted to block it . Mays had a 9 ? 3 pitching record as a Yankee , and the team

improved to 80 ? 59 for the season ; the mark was good for third in the AL .

The 1919 season was the first in which the Yankees played games at the Polo Grounds on Sundays ; until then , blue laws had banned Sunday baseball in New York state . The Yankees ' attendance more than doubled in 1919 , rising to about 619 @, @ 000 . The Giants soon moved to force the Yankees out of the Polo Grounds , in an effort to secure more Sunday home games . On December 26 , 1919 , the Yankees made an agreement with the Red Sox to purchase outfielder Babe Ruth for \$ 25 @, @ 000 cash and \$ 75 @, @ 000 in promissory notes . The deal , which was announced on January 5 , 1920 , was called " the most famous transaction in sports " by author Glenn Stout . After tying for the MLB home run lead in 1918 with the Athletics ' Tilly Walker (with 11) , Ruth broke the single @-@ season record with 29 in 1919 . At the same time , he sought a new contract that would double his \$ 10 @, @ 000 yearly salary . After the trade , Boston did not win another World Series championship until 2004 ; an alleged jinx against the Red Sox , which was known as the Curse of the Bambino (after a nickname for Ruth) , was first brought up when they lost the 1986 World Series and became widely discussed after Dan Shaughnessy authored a book with the title . The deal became a symbol of " how things [would] always go wrong for the Red Sox and right for the Yankees " , according to Stout .

With Ruth in the lineup , the Yankees ' fortunes were transformed . Playing on four World Series champion teams , Ruth hit 659 home runs and scored 1 @, @ 959 runs ; both marks are team records as of 2016 . He is second in club history with 1 @, @ 978 runs batted in and accumulated 2 @, @ 518 hits as a Yankee , third on the team 's all @-@ time list . As well as prowess on the field , Ruth had a larger @-@ than @-@ life personality , bringing him and his team a huge amount of press and public attention . The addition of Ruth helped the Yankees increase their attendance to 1 @, @ 289 @, @ 422 for the 1920 season ; it was the first time that any MLB team drew more than one million fans in a year . His skills and charm appealed to large segments of the New York City population ; Stout wrote that " He belonged to everyone . " New York was the AL attendance leader for 13 of Ruth 's 15 seasons with the team ; the Yankees became solidly profitable as well , making over \$ 370 @, @ 000 in 1920 and remaining in the black for the rest of the decade .

In 1920 , Ruth hit 54 home runs for a new record ; his total was higher than that of all other MLB teams but the Philadelphia Phillies . New York had 95 wins , the most in team history to that point , but fell three wins short of the AL championship and finished third . In an August 16 game against the Indians , a pitch from Mays hit Indians shortstop Ray Chapman in the head , leading to his death ; the Yankees slumped after the incident as Cleveland captured the pennant . After the season , the Yankees hired general manager Ed Barrow from the Red Sox . Barrow made numerous trades with his former club , including one immediately after his departure that brought catcher Wally Schang and pitcher Waite Hoyt to New York . The Yankees also became involved in another dispute with Ban Johnson , this time over the replacement of baseball 's existing governing body , the National Commission , after reports came out that the 1919 World Series had been fixed . The Yankees and 10 other franchises ? including the entire NL ? supported the idea of a three @-@ man committee drawn from outside baseball running MLB , and for a time a move by the Yankees to the NL was rumored ; ultimately , Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis was named MLB 's first commissioner .

= = = 1921 ? 28 : First World Series win and Murderers ' Row = = =

The 1921 season began a 44 @-@ year period in which the Yankees were , according to author Richard Worth , " The greatest sustained winning ' empire ' in sports " . Ruth surpassed his own record by hitting 59 home runs . He also led MLB in on @-@ base percentage with a .512 mark for the season . The Yankees won the AL pennant for the first time , winning 98 games in the regular season ; the total gave them the league championship by a margin of 4 1 ? 2 games over Cleveland . In the best @-@ of @-@ nine 1921 World Series , they faced the Giants and won the first two games , but their opponents claimed the Series title when they won four of the next five games . Ruth suffered an arm infection , which limited his playing time in the later part of the Series . He and Bob Meusel participated in exhibition games during the offseason , in violation of MLB rules forbidding players on pennant @-@ winning teams from barnstorming after the World Series .

Season @-@ long suspensions were considered a possibility , but Landis decided to suspend the pair for six weeks . Despite the setback , New York had 94 wins and repeated as AL champions . The St. Louis Browns were the closest pursuers , finishing one game behind New York . In the World Series , the Yankees again faced the Giants in an all @-@ New York matchup ; the Series changed to a best @-@ of @-@ seven format that year . The Giants defeated the Yankees in five games , including one that ended in a tie when it was suspended because of darkness .

By 1923 , the teams no longer shared the Polo Grounds , as Giants owner Charles Stoneham had attempted to evict the Yankees in 1920 . Although the attempt was unsuccessful , and Stoneham and the Yankees ' owners agreed to a two @-@ year lease renewal , the Giants indicated that the Yankees would not receive an extension after 1922 . The treatment pushed the Yankees into seeking their own stadium . In 1921 , the team bought a plot of land in the Bronx , and the construction crew finished the new ballpark before the 1923 season . Yankee Stadium , a triple @-@ deck facility , was originally designed to hold more than 55 @,@ 000 spectators ; it was later able to hold over 70 @,@ 000 . Writer Peter Carino called the stadium " a larger and more impressive facility than anything yet built to house a baseball team . " At Yankee Stadium 's inaugural game on April 18 , 1923 , Ruth hit the first home run in the stadium , which sportswriter Fred Lieb named " the House That Ruth Built " as the Yankees would not have needed such a large stadium without the Ruth @-@ driven attendance . Ruth himself had a resurgence after receiving vocal criticism for his 1922 World Series performance . He shared the MLB lead with Cy Williams by hitting 41 home runs in the 1923 season , and had a career @-@ best .393 batting average ; his performance earned him the AL Most Valuable Player (MVP) Award . The Yankees finished first for the third consecutive year , and faced the Giants again in the 1923 World Series . Giants outfielder Casey Stengel hit game @-@ winning home runs in two of the first three games of the World Series , but Ruth 's three home runs helped the Yankees win in six games for their first MLB title . Off the field , Ruppert purchased Huston 's share of the Yankees for \$ 1 @,@ 250 @,@ 000 , assuming full ownership of the club .

The Yankees did not return to the World Series in either of the following two seasons . By 1925 , New York had fallen to seventh place . That year marked the team 's last losing season until 1965 ; the 39 @-@ year streak of winning seasons is an MLB record . First basemen Lou Gehrig debuted in 1925 , earning a spot in the lineup he would not relinquish for almost 15 years , a then @-@ record consecutive games played streak . The Yankees made more talent upgrades before their 1926 season , which included the signing of infielder Tony Lazzeri , who spent over a decade with the club . New York 's performance on the field surpassed preseason expectations , and a 16 @-@ game winning streak in May gave the team a substantial lead . With a three @-@ game final margin over the Indians , the Yankees won the pennant and a spot in the 1926 World Series against the St. Louis Cardinals . After the Yankees took a 3 ? 2 series lead , the Cardinals won the final two games in Yankee Stadium to claim the Series title . Ruth hit three home runs in the fourth game , but made the final out of the Series on a failed stolen base attempt .

The Yankees ' lineup in the 1927 season , which featured Ruth , Gehrig , Lazzeri , Meusel , Mark Koenig , and Earle Combs , was known as Murderers ' Row for its power hitting . The team led in the standings throughout . The Yankees took first place in early May , and by the end of June had posted a 49 ? 20 record , giving them a large lead in the AL standings ; by mid @-@ September , they had clinched the pennant . The 1927 Yankees had a 110 ? 44 record in the regular season , and broke the AL record for wins in a year . Ruth 's total of 60 home runs set a single @-@ season home run record that stood for 34 years . Gehrig added 47 home runs and his 175 RBI topped the AL ; he won the first of his two AL MVP Awards . The Yankees completed the season by sweeping the Pittsburgh Pirates in the 1927 World Series . The 1927 Yankees squad is included among the great teams in baseball history .

To begin the 1928 season , the Yankees went on a 34 ? 8 run and took a sizable lead . The Athletics chased them for the AL pennant towards the end of the season , but New York won the title again and faced the Cardinals in the 1928 World Series , sweeping them in four games . Coming off a 54 @-@ home run regular season , Ruth had three more and a .625 batting average in the Series , while Gehrig batted .545 with four home runs . With the Yankees ' run of three straight

league pennants and two World Series titles came criticism from fans of other teams , who decried the team 's dominance . Calls to " Break up the Yankees ! " were made , and critics hoped that the team would sell Gehrig to separate him from Ruth ; Ruppert declined to do so .

= = = 1929 ? 35 : Hiring of Joe McCarthy and Ruth 's called shot = = =

The Yankees ' run of pennants was broken up by a rising Philadelphia Athletics team , which denied the Yankees a fourth straight AL championship in 1929 . The team 's manager , Huggins , died on September 25 . After Art Fletcher managed for the rest of the year , Shawkey took the position for the 1930 season , in which the Yankees had a third @-@ place finish . The Yankees fired Fletcher and hired Joe McCarthy ; in his first season as manager , the team won 94 games but finished second behind the Athletics . McCarthy 's team was undergoing a transition from Murderers ' Row ; new contributors included Bill Dickey , who had first played for the Yankees in 1928 , and pitchers Red Ruffing and Lefty Gomez . Ruffing , who had a 39 ? 96 record with the Red Sox before being traded to New York , ended up 231 ? 124 in his Yankees career .

In 1932 , McCarthy 's Yankees returned to the top of the AL with 107 wins , enough for a 13 @-@ game margin over the Athletics . The Yankees met the Chicago Cubs in the 1932 World Series and swept them four games to none . Gehrig had three home runs , eight RBI , and a .529 batting average for the Series , while Ruth contributed a pair of home runs in the third game at Chicago 's Wrigley Field . The second of Ruth 's home runs was his " called shot " ; after pointing towards the center field stands , according to some post @-@ game press reports , Ruth homered to break a 4 ? 4 tie in the fifth inning . Although accounts of the incident vary greatly , author Eric Enders called the home run " the most talked @-@ about hit in baseball history " .

The Yankees began cutting their payroll in 1933 , as their finances were strained by the Great Depression . Regardless , the makeup of the team was minimally impacted in comparison to the Athletics , who were forced to sell key players to lower their expenses . From 1933 to 1935 , the Yankees posted three consecutive second @-@ place finishes . Ruth 's performance declined from previous seasons in 1933 and 1934 , his final years with the team . The Yankees released Ruth from his contract before the 1935 season , and Gehrig took a leadership role for the club ; he was named New York 's captain . New York was beginning to see results from an initiative to buy minor league teams in an effort to reduce the cost of obtaining players ; after buying their first minor league club in 1929 , the Yankees had a 15 @-@ team system by 1937 . Players developed in the farm system entered the Yankee lineup beginning in the mid @-@ 1930s , and into the early 1960s this remained the team 's primary player acquisition method . McCarthy worked to regulate player behavior in areas such as mental focus and off @-@ field attire ; the Yankees acquired a " corporate image " that they retained for many years .

= = = 1936 ? 41 : Renewed domination = = =

New York 's 1936 season was Joe DiMaggio 's first with the club . The young center fielder was signed in 1934 from the Pacific Coast League 's San Francisco Seals , and made his debut with the Yankees in 1936 , gaining an extra year 's experience with the Seals . DiMaggio had a .323 batting average , 29 home runs , and 125 RBI in his rookie season . Gehrig won the AL MVP Award for his season , in which he hit a career @-@ high 49 home runs , with a .354 batting average and 152 RBI . Behind these performances , the Yankees had a 102 @-@ win season and won the AL pennant , before defeating the Giants in the 1936 World Series , four games to two . After a second consecutive 102 @-@ win regular season and AL championship in the 1937 season , the Yankees again defeated the Giants in the Series ? this time winning 4 ? 1 . The 1938 Yankees had 48 victories in 61 games during one stretch , and won the team 's third straight AL championship despite a drop in batting performance by Gehrig . In the 1938 World Series , the Yankees swept the Chicago Cubs in four games . Ruppert died early in 1939 ; before his death , he sold his ownership interest to Barrow , who took over as the Yankees ' president . Financially , the club 's position had improved from earlier in the decade ; after posting a net loss of around \$ 170 @, @ 000 from 1931 to

1935 , the team made over \$ 1 million during the next four years .

The 1939 Yankees lost the services of Gehrig early in the season . After starting the year poorly , he ended his streak of 2 @,@ 130 consecutive games played ; he was later diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis , which forced him to retire . Despite the loss of Gehrig , New York fielded a team that posted 106 victories in 1939 , 17 more than the second @-@ place team . DiMaggio was named MVP of the league ; he led the AL in batting average (.381) and was second in RBI (126) . Ruffing led the Yankees ' pitchers with 20 wins . In the 1939 World Series , the Yankees swept the Cincinnati Reds in four games for the club 's fourth consecutive Series championship . Writers have given the 1936 ? 39 Yankees acclaim for their success in regular season and World Series play ; Stout wrote that the 1939 squad was " magnificent " , and that their campaign was " wholly without drama " besides Gehrig 's departure from the lineup . In response to the Yankees ' dominance , after the 1939 season the AL temporarily barred most transactions between the last pennant winner and other league teams in an attempt to prevent New York from improving its roster . The Yankees ' run of championships ended in 1940 ; the team had 18 more losses than in the previous season and finished second , two games behind the Tigers .

DiMaggio recorded base hits in 56 consecutive games for the Yankees during the 1941 season , breaking the MLB record of 44 games that had been set by Willie Keeler in 1897 . His hitting streak lasted from May 15 to July 17 , when DiMaggio failed to record a hit during a game against the Indians at Cleveland Stadium . After winning the AL pennant , the Yankees met the Brooklyn Dodgers in the 1941 World Series , prevailing in five games . In Game 4 , the Yankees trailed 4 ? 3 in the ninth inning and were on the verge of defeat when Tommy Henrich struck out ; Dodgers catcher Mickey Owen was unable to field the pitch , allowing Henrich to reach base . That began a four @-@ run game @-@ winning rally , and New York won the championship in Game 5 the following day .

= = World War II to free agency = =

= = = 1942 ? 47 : Pre @-@ Stengel era = = =

The attack on Pearl Harbor occurred during the offseason , and some baseball players immediately joined the Armed Forces . Most of the Yankees ' roster remained with the team in 1942 , and the club repeated as AL champions despite Gomez 's departure . In the 1942 World Series , the Cardinals gave the Yankees their first Series loss since 1926 , after winning in eight consecutive appearances . DiMaggio and other Yankees entered the military before the 1943 season , but the club won the AL championship for the 14th time and 7th since 1936 . The Cardinals met the Yankees in a World Series rematch , and New York won four games to one .

After 1943 , more of the team 's players were drafted into military , and the Yankees ended 1944 in third place , one position higher than they finished the following season . A group consisting of Larry MacPhail , Dan Topping , and Del Webb bought the Yankees , their stadium , and the franchise 's minor league teams for \$ 2 @,@ 800 @,@ 000 in 1945 . Under the new ownership , Yankee Stadium underwent extensive renovations that included the installation of lights . With the war over and the return of players from overseas , the Yankees set an MLB single @-@ season home attendance record by attracting 2 @,@ 265 @,@ 512 fans in 1946 . McCarthy resigned as manager early in the season . The Yankees used two other managers during the year (Bill Dickey and Johnny Neun) , and ended 1946 in third place . Catcher Yogi Berra made his Yankees debut that year ; in his 18 @-@ season career , Berra won the AL MVP Award three times . Bucky Harris was brought in to be the manager , and his 1947 team won the AL pennant and defeated the Dodgers in a seven @-@ game World Series . After the end of the Series , MacPhail sold his share of Yankees ownership to Topping and Webb for \$ 2 million .

= = = 1948 ? 56 : Stengel hire and five straight World Series wins = = =

Despite contending late into the season , the 1948 Yankees finished in third place . Harris was released and the Yankees brought in Casey Stengel to manage . At the time , Stengel had " a reputation as a bit of a clown " , according to Appel , and had been unsuccessful in two previous MLB managing stints . As the Yankees ' manager , he optimized matchups by using a platoon system , playing more left @-@ handed batters against right @-@ handed pitchers . Numerous injuries affected the team during the 1949 season but it battled with the Red Sox for the AL pennant ; before a season @-@ ending two @-@ game series at Yankee Stadium , New York trailed Boston by one game and needed a pair of wins . By scores of 5 ? 4 and 5 ? 3 , the Yankees won the two games and the league championship . New York won a World Series rematch with the Dodgers in five games . Stengel was named AL Manager of the Year in his first season . The Yankees faced another competitive pennant race in 1950 , as the Tigers joined New York and Boston at the top of the AL . Late in the season , the Yankees broke a tie with the Tigers for first place and went on to win the pennant . In the 1950 World Series , the Yankees swept the Phillies ; the second game was decided by a DiMaggio home run in the tenth inning . Following the season , Yankee Phil Rizzuto was named AL MVP after recording 200 base hits during the regular season .

Fan interest in attending games had begun declining throughout MLB in the late @-@ 1940s , and the Yankees faced a drop @-@ off in their crowds after 1947 , when they sold about 2 @. @ 2 million tickets . By 1957 , season attendance was down by over 700 @, @ 000 . New York baseball fans had the option of watching games on television instead by the early 1950s . The Yankees joined the other New York City franchises in allowing game telecasts . This was a departure from the team 's strategy when radio broadcasts were introduced . Regular season games of the Yankees were not broadcast until 1939 , as management believed that fewer fans would attend games if they could listen on radios .

DiMaggio played his final MLB season in 1951 , while highly touted outfielder Mickey Mantle made his debut for New York . Pitcher Allie Reynolds threw two no @-@ hitters during 1951 , as the Yankees claimed the AL pennant for the third straight year . They then won the 1951 World Series against the Giants , four games to two . When their 1952 team took the AL pennant , the Yankees had an opportunity to match the four straight World Series championships won by the team from 1936 to 1939 . In another Yankees ? Dodgers matchup , New York fell behind three games to two , but victories in games six and seven gave the Yankees the title . New York and Brooklyn were matched again in the 1953 World Series , and a Billy Martin base hit that decided the sixth and final game of the Series gave the Yankees another four games to two victory and a fifth title in a row . As of 2016 , the 1949 ? 1953 Yankees are the only MLB teams to win five straight World Series ; no team since has won more than three in a row .

The Yankees won 103 games in 1954 , the most yet for a Stengel @-@ managed team , but the Indians took the pennant with a then @-@ AL record 111 wins . One year later , the 1955 Yankees faced the Dodgers in the World Series . After the teams split the first six games of the Series , the Yankees lost the seventh and final game 2 ? 0 , giving the Dodgers their first Series win . Elston Howard , the first African American player in Yankees history , made his debut in 1955 . His arrival came eight years after MLB 's color line had been broken , as the Yankees ' management had sought to avoid integrating the club 's roster . As teams such as the Dodgers added black players , the Yankees turned down numerous opportunities to acquire Negro league talent . Management feared alienating white fans and harbored stereotypes of African American players . Author Robert Cohen called these views " symbolic of the overall arrogance of Yankee ownership and management , as well as their prevailing racial attitudes . "

In 1956 , Mantle won the MVP award for a season in which he led the AL and MLB in batting average (.353) , home runs (52) , and RBIs (130) , becoming the second Yankee (after Gehrig in 1934) to win a Triple Crown . The 1956 Yankees won the franchise 's seventh AL championship under Stengel and advanced to a World Series rematch with the Dodgers . In Game 5 , with the Series even at 2 ? 2 , Yankees pitcher Don Larsen threw a perfect game . In seven games , the Yankees won the Series .

= = = 1957 ? 64 : Continued success = = =

By 1957 , the Yankees had won 15 of the last 21 AL pennants . The team 's minor @-@ league system had been reduced to 10 teams from a peak of 22 , and its scouting system was acclaimed by Sports Illustrated 's Roy Terrell as " the best in all baseball . " Instead of signing many players for their organization , the Yankees concentrated on acquiring a smaller number of highly skilled players , according to head scout Paul Krichell . The club recruited players by selling them on the " fame , fortune and fat shares of a World Series pot " that came with making New York 's roster .

The 1957 Yankees reached that year 's World Series , but lost in seven games to the Milwaukee Braves . Following the Series , the Giants and Dodgers left New York City for California , leaving the Yankees as New York 's only MLB team . Despite their status as the sole New York City @-@ based franchise , the Yankees ' 1958 attendance decreased from previous seasons as the team could not attract bereft Giants and Dodgers fans . In the 1958 World Series , the Yankees had an opportunity to avenge their defeat to the Braves . The Yankees fell behind by losing three of the first four games , but won the final three games of the Series to claim another championship . The Yankees were unable to defend their AL and World Series championships in 1959 , as they ended up with a 79 ? 75 record , their worst record since 1925 , good for third place .

When Arnold Johnson (a friend of Topping and Yankees general manager George Weiss) became the owner of the Kansas City Athletics in 1955 , his new team made many transactions with the Yankees . From 1956 to 1960 , the Athletics traded many young players to the Yankees for cash and aging veterans . The trades strengthened the Yankees ' roster , but brought criticism from rival clubs . Before their 1960 season , the Yankees made one such trade with the Athletics in which they acquired outfielder Roger Maris . In his first Yankees season , Maris led the league in slugging percentage , RBIs , and extra base hits , finished second with 39 home runs , and won the AL MVP Award . The 1960 Yankees won the AL pennant for the 10th time in 12 years under Stengel , and outscored the Pirates 55 ? 27 in the seven World Series games . However , the team lost four of them , falling short of a Series championship after Bill Mazeroski hit a walk @-@ off home run in the final game , ending a contest that Appel called " one of the most memorable in baseball history . " The season turned out to be Stengel 's last as Yankees manager ; he indicated that his age played a role in the team 's decision , saying , " I 'll never make the mistake of being seventy again . "

Ralph Houk was chosen to replace Stengel . During the 1961 season , both Mantle and Maris chased Ruth 's single @-@ season home run record of 60 , and the pair attracted much press attention as the year progressed . Ultimately , an infection forced Mantle to leave the lineup and bow out of the race in mid @-@ September with 54 home runs . Maris continued , though , and on October 1 , the final day of the season , he homered against Red Sox pitcher Tracy Stallard into the right field stands of Yankee Stadium , breaking the record with 61 . Commissioner Ford Frick decreed that two separate records be kept , as the Yankees played a 154 @-@ game schedule in 1927 (beginning in 1961 , AL teams played 162 games to accommodate the league 's expansion to 10 teams) . MLB did away with the dual records 30 years later , giving Maris sole possession of the single @-@ season home run record before it was broken in 1998 by Mark McGwire . The Yankees won the pennant with 109 regular season wins , at the time the club 's second @-@ highest single @-@ season total , and defeated the Cincinnati Reds in five games to win the franchise 's 19th World Series . The team hit 240 home runs to break the MLB single @-@ season record . Maris won another AL MVP Award , while Whitey Ford captured the Cy Young Award , having posted a 25 ? 4 record . The team gained a reputation as one of the strongest the Yankees had fielded , along with the 1927 and 1939 Yankees . New York returned to the World Series in 1962 , facing the San Francisco Giants . After exchanging victories in the first six games of the Series , the Yankees won the decisive seventh game 1 ? 0 to clinch the title .

The Yankees again reached the World Series in their 1963 campaign , but were swept in four games by the Los Angeles Dodgers . Houk left the manager 's position to become the team 's general manager and the newly retired Berra was named manager . After dealing with player injuries and internal dissension , the Yankees rallied from third place late in the 1964 season and won the AL pennant by one game over the White Sox . It was their fifth straight World Series appearance and fourteenth in the past sixteen years . The team faced the St. Louis Cardinals in a series that

included a walk @-@ off home run by Mantle to end the third game . Despite Mantle 's game @-@ winning hit , the Yankees were defeated by the Cardinals in seven games , and Berra was fired .

= = = 1965 ? 72 : New ownership and decline = = =

In 1964 , CBS announced that it was purchasing 80 percent of the Yankees for \$ 11 @. @ 2 million . The television network bought the remaining 20 percent , originally retained by Topping and Webb , during the next two years . Topping left as team president after the sale ; CBS executive Mike Burke replaced him . From 1962 to the sale , Topping and Webb had sharply curtailed the Yankees ' investment in their minor league system , to show greater profits . As a result , the team lacked capable replacements for its aging players . Other factors affected the club 's fortunes as well . The team had been slow in signing African American players even after Howard , and lost the opportunity to sign future stars . As most American League clubs dragged their feet in integrating their rosters , the rapid decline of the Yankees ' white stars left them on the same footing as the rest of the league . Also , the 1965 introduction of the MLB draft , which allowed the clubs with the worst records to have the first selections , meant that the Yankees could not outbid other teams for young talent . Their trade pipeline with the A 's had dried up by 1960 , as new A 's owner Charlie Finley announced his intention to avoid trading with New York . Competition for the attention of local fans had been provided by the expansion New York Mets , founded in 1962 . By 1964 , the new club started a 12 @-@ year streak of outdrawing the Yankees ; the Mets also won the 1969 World Series .

The Yankees had a record of 77 ? 85 in 1965 , and their sixth @-@ place finish was their lowest since 1925 . It was only their second finish in the second division since 1918 . Johnny Keane , who was hired to succeed Berra as manager , was fired after the Yankees lost 16 of 20 games to start their 1966 season ; Houk named himself as Keane 's replacement . A last @-@ place finish ? their first since 1912 ? followed at season 's end , and the Yankees ended up one position higher , ninth , the following season . Ford , Howard , Mantle , and Maris all retired or were traded to other clubs between 1966 and 1969 . Attendance at Yankee Stadium fell to between 1 and 1 @. @ 3 million fans per season from 1965 to 1971 , and dropped below 1 million in 1972 . One 1966 game had a crowd of 413 fans ; television announcer Red Barber was fired by the Yankees after discussing the low attendance during his telecast .

After fifth @-@ place finishes in 1968 and 1969 (the latter in the newly created six @-@ team American League East division) , the 1970 Yankees improved to second in the AL East with a 93 ? 69 record , finishing behind the Baltimore Orioles . Catcher Thurman Munson played his first full season for the Yankees and won AL Rookie of the Year honors for 1970 . New York had 11 more losses during their 1971 season than they had in 1970 , but in 1972 they contended for the AL East title and a playoff berth . Late in the season , the Yankees were in a four @-@ way tie for the most wins in the division , but a slump caused them to fall to fourth by the end of their campaign with a record of 79 ? 76 .

= = = 1973 ? 76 : Steinbrenner takes over = = =

Less than a decade into its ownership of the Yankees , CBS moved to sell the team in 1972 . In eight years , the team posted an \$ 11 million loss under CBS ; losing money in all but two years . Along with the decrease in attendance , the Yankees ' television revenues fell by more than 80 percent from their peak , and in 1973 were more than \$ 1 million below what the Mets earned from their broadcasting agreement . A group of investors , led by Cleveland @-@ based shipbuilder George Steinbrenner , purchased the club from CBS on January 3 , 1973 for \$ 10 million . Despite an initial promise that he would " stick to building ships " and remain in the background , Steinbrenner proved to be a hands @-@ on owner , clashing with Burke and forcing him out of his leadership position . Describing the level of control displayed by the lead owner , investor John McMullen stated , " There is nothing in life quite so limited as being a limited partner of George Steinbrenner . "

The 1973 Yankees held the AL East lead entering August , but faded and ended the year fourth . The 1973 season was the team 's last in Yankee Stadium before the building was renovated . The Yankees had become concerned about the drop in attendance and the poor conditions of the stadium 's surroundings . For a time , New Jersey sought to attract sports teams to the Meadowlands Sports Complex , and New York City acted to prevent the Yankees from moving . The city paid \$ 24 million to buy Yankee Stadium and the adjacent land , and in 1972 agreed to renovations . Work on the stadium finished in 1976 , and the Yankees were required to play at the Mets ' home field , Shea Stadium , in 1974 and 1975 . During the first of those seasons , the team nearly won the AL East , finishing behind the Orioles in a race that was decided in the final games . The Yankees were helped by an early @-@ season trade that brought first baseman Chris Chambliss to the team , and improved to 89 wins from 1973 's 80 victories .

After the 1974 season , star pitcher Catfish Hunter was declared a free agent because of a skipped insurance payment . The Yankees signed him to a \$ 3 @. @ 75 million , four @-@ year contract . It was the beginning of a long @-@ term franchise philosophy of using free agency to acquire talent ; Stout writes that they " were the first team to comprehend what free agency meant " , as it provided an advantage over lower @-@ spending rivals and generated fan and media interest . Hunter had 23 wins during the Yankees ' 1975 season , but the team did not contend for the playoffs after July . New York fired manager Bill Virdon in August and hired Billy Martin as his replacement . With Martin as the helm , the Yankees returned to the postseason in their first season in the renovated Yankee Stadium , winning the 1976 AL East title by a 10 1 / 2 @-@ game margin over the Orioles . Munson was named AL MVP , with a .302 batting average and a total of 105 RBIs that was second @-@ best in the AL . The 1976 American League Championship Series (ALCS) between the Yankees and Kansas City Royals went to a deciding fifth game , which was won by New York on a walk @-@ off home run by Chambliss . The Yankees did not win a game against the Cincinnati Reds in the 1976 World Series .

= = Free agency era = =

= = = 1977 ? 81 : " The Bronx Zoo " = = =

Free agency was introduced more fully from the 1976 offseason ; outfielder Reggie Jackson , who had spent one season with the Orioles after being traded by the Athletics , was the most significant player available in that first offseason . Steinbrenner signed Jackson to a five @-@ year , \$ 2 @. @ 96 million contract , giving the Yankees a key player , but one who had difficulty fitting in with the rest of the team . Martin had opposed Jackson 's signing , and many players were angered by comments Jackson made that were critical of Munson . Jackson and Martin nearly came to blows in the Yankees ' dugout during one game against the Red Sox , in which Martin removed Jackson for being slow to field a ball . The incident sparked media reports of disputes between Martin and Steinbrenner , and further conflict between Martin and Jackson . The Yankees of the late @-@ 1970s , noted for clubhouse conflict and on @-@ field success , were later nicknamed " The Bronx Zoo " , after a book of the same name by pitcher Sparky Lyle , and at the time , New York and the baseball world were agog at their antics . The 1977 Yankees won the AL East and defeated the Royals in the 1977 ALCS . Trailing 3 ? 2 in the top of the ninth inning of the decisive fifth game , the Yankees scored three times to gain a berth in the World Series . Against the Dodgers , the Yankees prevailed in six games for their first Series championship since 1962 . Jackson hit a record five home runs in the Series , including three in Game 6 on consecutive pitches , against three different Dodgers pitchers . Jackson gained his own candy bar and the nickname " Mr. October " .

Before their 1978 season , the Yankees added relief pitcher Goose Gossage , even though their closer was reigning Cy Young Award winner Lyle . By the middle of July , the team was 14 games behind the Red Sox and infighting had begun again . After making comments to reporters criticizing both Jackson and Steinbrenner , Martin resigned and Bob Lemon was hired as manager . The Yankees closed the gap that Boston had opened on them , and by the start of a four @-@ game

series at Fenway Park on September 7 , the Red Sox ' lead was down to four games . Over the course of the series , nicknamed " The Boston Massacre " , the Yankees outscored the Red Sox 42 ? 9 , winning each game . The teams finished the regular season with identical records , and an AL East tie @-@ breaker game was held on October 2 . Losing 2 ? 0 in the seventh inning , the Yankees took the lead on a three @-@ run home run by shortstop Bucky Dent , and eventually won 5 ? 4 . After beating the Kansas City Royals for the third consecutive year in the ALCS , the Yankees faced the Dodgers again in the 1978 World Series . They lost the first two games on the road , but then returned to Yankee Stadium and won three consecutive games before clinching a Series championship in Game 6 in Los Angeles . Pitcher Ron Guidry was the Cy Young Award winner in 1978 , having posted 25 wins against 3 losses with a 1 @.@ 74 ERA , and 248 strikeouts . Eighteen of his strikeouts came in his June 17 appearance against the California Angels , which broke the franchise record .

On August 2 , 1979 , Munson was killed in a plane crash . Martin , who had returned as manager after Steinbrenner fired Lemon in June , said that with his death , " The whole bottom fell out of the team . " The 1979 Yankees finished fourth with an 89 ? 71 record . Steinbrenner fired Martin after the season and replaced him with Dick Howser , who led the Yankees to 103 wins and the AL East title in 1980 . Jackson led the AL with 41 home runs and posted a .300 batting average for the Yankees , who finished three games ahead of the Orioles . Their stay in the postseason was brief , as the Royals beat them in three straight games to win the ALCS . Before their 1981 campaign , the Yankees signed Dave Winfield to a 10 @-@ year contract worth \$ 23 million , a record at the time . The season was shortened by a strike , and the Yankees qualified for the playoffs by virtue of leading the AL East when the work stoppage began . They defeated the Milwaukee Brewers in a divisional playoff round in five games. and won the AL pennant with three straight wins over the Athletics in the ALCS . The Yankees won the first two games of the 1981 World Series against Los Angeles , but the Dodgers won the next four games and the championship .

= = = 1982 ? 95 : Struggles and return to postseason = = =

Following the team 's loss to the Dodgers in the 1981 World Series , the Yankees had a 15 @-@ year absence from the World Series , the longest since the time before their initial appearance in 1921 . As the 1980s progressed , the Yankees regularly spent heavily on free agents who were often aging and proved to be declining in performance . The atmosphere of turmoil around the club discouraged some players from signing contracts with New York ; they either ignored the Yankees ' offers or used them to get more money from other teams . Steinbrenner traded prospects for veterans ; sportswriter Buster Olney called this " a practice that ultimately inflicted serious damage on the organization , leaving the team without the needed influx of young and cheap talent . " With Steinbrenner at the helm , the team continued to change managers frequently ; there were 21 managerial changes in his first two decades of ownership ; Martin served five separate stints as New York 's manager .

The 1982 and 1983 Yankees were fifth and third , respectively . Henry Fetter wrote of the following year 's team , which had several aging players , " The 1984 Yanks had assembled an all @-@ star lineup ? but it was that of 1979 . " In what became a trend in future seasons , the Yankees lacked effective pitching , undoing the efforts of a top @-@ tier offense that included players such as Winfield and first baseman Don Mattingly , one of the few star hitters produced by the farm system during the era . Mattingly led the AL in batting average in 1984 ? beating out Winfield for the league lead . The Yankees ' 1985 season began with a batting lineup improved by an offseason trade for Rickey Henderson , the future MLB career stolen base and runs scored record holder . Mattingly was AL MVP in 1985 , with 145 RBI and a personal @-@ best 35 home runs , while Guidry won 22 games . The Yankees had 97 wins , two off the division leader Toronto Blue Jays . The 1986 side 's win total fell to 92 , but it was only enough for second place again behind Boston . Mattingly hit an MLB record six grand slam home runs in 1987 , but dealt with back pain that limited his effectiveness in his remaining years . The Yankees fell to fourth , beginning a six @-@ year streak of fourth or worse . The Yankees had the most wins of any MLB team during the 1980s , but missed

the playoffs eight times during the decade and did not win a World Series . Many New York baseball fans chose to support an exciting Mets team . From 1984 to 1992 , a period that featured their 1986 World Series victory , the Mets ' attendance topped that of the Yankees every year . Despite falling attendance , the Yankees ' finances were not significantly harmed , as they had a 12 @-@ year television rights contract with the Madison Square Garden network that gave them a record \$ 500 million and flexibility to increase their payroll if desired .

Winfield 's tenure with the team ended when he was traded in May 1990 . The 1990 team lost 95 games to finish at the bottom of the AL East , and its .414 winning percentage was the franchise 's worst since 1913 . The Yankees underwent a dramatic change in their front office that year , which Glenn Stout cites as a turning point for the club . Winfield had become a target of Steinbrenner in previous years . At one 1985 game , he criticized Winfield by calling him " Mr. May " , that is , a player who only performed well early in the season . Steinbrenner also resented Winfield 's salary as too high , and was critical of a charitable foundation run by him . A gambler was paid by Steinbrenner " for damaging information " about Winfield , an incident that resulted in an indefinite suspension from then @-@ commissioner Fay Vincent in 1990 . Under new general manager Gene Michael , the Yankees allowed their minor league talent more time to improve their skills and more of a chance to play for the Yankees if they were good enough . Michael focused on on @-@ base percentage in deciding which hitters to pursue , and emphasized left @-@ handed batters who might take advantage of Yankee Stadium 's short right @-@ field porch . The players developed by the team during its rebuilding years included outfielder Bernie Williams , a future AL batting average leader , and a group ? Derek Jeter , Andy Pettitte , Jorge Posada , and Mariano Rivera ? that became the centerpiece of the championship teams of the 1990s , and was later nicknamed the " Core Four " .

After a 71 @-@ win 1991 season , the Yankees replaced their incumbent manager , Stump Merrill , with Buck Showalter , who increased the playing time given to young players . While the 1992 Yankees were 20 games behind the AL East winner , offseason acquisitions ? third baseman Wade Boggs , pitcher Jimmy Key , and outfielder Paul O 'Neill ? helped the 1993 team to an 88 ? 74 record and New York 's highest finish (second) in seven seasons . By 1994 , the Yankees had progressed to the point where they led the AL with a 70 ? 43 record going into the homestretch of the regular season . Their campaign was cut short by a players ' strike , which resulted in the cancellation of the playoffs and 1994 World Series . Many media members believed that the Yankees might have reached the World Series if not for the strike . A year later , the team reached the playoffs and gave Mattingly his first career postseason appearance by winning the first AL wild card berth , but it was eliminated in a five @-@ game Division Series (ALDS) against the Seattle Mariners .

= = = 1996 ? 2001 : Championship run = = =

Mattingly did not return to the Yankees for their 1996 season , and the club replaced Showalter with Joe Torre . Although the managerial change met with a mixed reception by the press , Torre received praise for his handling of players as his managerial career progressed ; Olney remarked that he was able to " defuse powder @-@ keg issues and serve as a buffer between Steinbrenner and the players . " Jeter won the AL Rookie of the Year Award in his first full season with the Yankees , and Pettitte with 21 wins was second in AL Cy Young Award voting and Rivera posted an 8 ? 3 record and 2 @. @ 09 ERA as the club won a division title . New York reached the 1996 World Series , where they lost the first two games at home to the Atlanta Braves by a combined score of 16 ? 1 . But New York won three straight contests in Atlanta , including a Game 4 in which they scored eight straight runs to rally from a 6 ? 0 deficit . With a 3 ? 2 win in Game 6 , the Yankees won the World Series for the first time in 18 years . For 1997 , the Yankees signed starting pitcher David Wells and allowed closer John Wetteland to leave in free agency , enabling Rivera to inherit the role . The 1997 Yankees earned a wild card playoff berth , but lost three games to two against the Cleveland Indians in the ALDS .

In preparation for their 1998 season , the Yankees replaced general manager Bob Watson with

Brian Cashman . The club made many player acquisitions , gaining the services of third baseman Scott Brosius , second baseman Chuck Knoblauch , and starting pitcher Orlando Hernández . The Yankees won 28 of their first 37 games ? a stretch that concluded with a perfect game pitched by Wells ? and by August were 76 ? 27 . The 1998 Yankees are considered by some writers to be among the greatest teams in baseball history , having compiled a then @-@ AL record of 114 regular @-@ season wins against 48 losses . After playoff series wins over the Texas Rangers and Indians , New York defeated the San Diego Padres in four consecutive World Series games for their 24th Series title .

After the 1998 season , Wells was traded to the Toronto Blue Jays for Roger Clemens , who had just completed two consecutive Cy Young Award @-@ winning seasons . In a regular season that included another perfect game by a Yankees pitcher , this one by David Cone , New York led the AL East with 98 wins and beat the Rangers in the ALDS . This led to an ALCS against the rival Red Sox . New York won the first two games en route to a 4 ? 1 series win , and went on to sweep the Braves in the 1999 World Series . The postseason results gave the 1998 ? 99 Yankees a 22 ? 3 playoff record , and the team held a 12 @-@ game winning streak in World Series competition dating back to 1996 . Although the 2000 Yankees had an 87 ? 74 regular season record that was the worst among playoff qualifiers , the team won consecutive playoff series to claim the AL championship . New York 's pennant placed them in the 2000 World Series against the cross @-@ town Mets , the first Subway Series in 44 years . With a four games to one victory , the Yankees gained their third successive title . As of 2016 , the 2000 Yankees are the most recent MLB team to repeat as World Series champions and the Yankees of 1998 ? 2000 are the last team to win three consecutive World Series .

Free agent pitcher Mike Mussina signed with the Yankees before their 2001 season began , and the club pulled away from the Red Sox as the year progressed to claim another divisional championship , as Clemens won 20 games . The September 11 attacks interrupted the season , and the resumption of baseball in New York became a symbol of how the city recovered from the destruction of the Twin Towers . After falling behind 2 ? 0 in the ALDS against the Athletics , the Yankees won three straight contests to advance to the ALCS . They prevailed in five games against the Seattle Mariners , who had tied a single @-@ season MLB record with 116 regular season wins , for the team 's fourth straight AL pennant . The Arizona Diamondbacks gained a two @-@ game lead in the 2001 World Series before the Yankees won three consecutive ballgames ; New York home runs with two outs in the ninth inning of Games 4 and 5 led to extra inning wins in both games , with Game 4 ended by a Jeter home run . The Yankees ' championship streak ended , though , as the Diamondbacks won the Series in seven games with a late rally in the final inning of Game 7 .

= = = 2002 ? 08 : Final years in old Yankee Stadium = = =

After the 2001 season , several players from the late 1990s and early 2000s Yankees teams departed . New York won their fifth AL East title in a row in its 2002 campaign , but the Anaheim Angels defeated the Yankees in the ALDS . The Yankees ' major acquisition in the offseason was leading Japanese hitter Hideki Matsui of the Yomiuri Giants . Another signing , that of Cuban pitcher José Contreras , led to complaints from Red Sox CEO Larry Lucchino , who dubbed his team 's rivals " the Evil Empire " . Tensions between the rivals increased in the coming seasons , and writers called the rivalry one of the most intense and well known in North American professional sports . By 2003 , New York 's overall payroll had reached almost \$ 153 million , more than the Padres , Brewers , Royals , and Tampa Bay Devil Rays combined . Criticism of the Yankees ' spending such as Lucchino 's was frequently raised ; during a 15 @-@ year stretch from 1999 to 2013 , they had the biggest MLB player payroll every year .

Jeter became the Yankees ' captain in their 2003 season . The team faced the Red Sox in the ALCS . The series came down to a seventh game , and the Yankees fell behind before three eighth @-@ inning runs forced a 5 ? 5 tie and extra innings . Aaron Boone , a third baseman acquired by New York in a mid @-@ season trade , hit a walk @-@ off home run in the eleventh inning to give New York the pennant . The Yankees were then defeated by the Florida Marlins in the World Series

, four games to two . The Yankees added power hitting to their lineup in the offseason , signing free agent Gary Sheffield and trading for shortstop Alex Rodriguez , who became a third baseman with New York . Three of the starting pitchers from the previous season ? Clemens , Pettitte , and Wells ? left the team before the season . Despite the losses , the 2004 Yankees managed to top the AL East with 101 wins and defeat the Twins three games to one in the ALDS . The victory set up an ALCS rematch with the Red Sox . The Yankees took a 3 ? 0 series lead before losing four consecutive games , becoming the first team in MLB history to lose a best @-@ of @-@ seven series after winning the first three games .

The 2005 season featured an AL MVP performance by Rodriguez , who hit a league @-@ leading 48 home runs with 130 RBIs and a .321 batting average . The Yankees beat the Red Sox for the division title because they won 10 of their 19 contests against Boston ; both teams had 95 ? 67 records . The Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim defeated the Yankees in five games in the first round of the postseason . The 2006 Yankees kept at the same level , as they won the AL East for the ninth straight year but were eliminated in the ALDS by the Detroit Tigers three games to one .

Rodriguez again won the AL MVP award in 2007 , as his 54 home runs and 156 RBIs topped the AL ; he scored 143 runs , the highest single @-@ season number by a player since 1985 . After starting the year 21 ? 29 , the Yankees rallied to win the AL 's wild card berth ; it was the first time in 10 seasons that they did not win the AL East . New York 's season ended in the first round of the playoffs ; the Indians won the opening two games of the ALDS and finished the series in four games . Manager Torre did not re @-@ sign after the season , and Joe Girardi took his place . Rodriguez , who used an opt @-@ out clause in his contract to become a free agent , stayed with the Yankees by signing for \$ 275 million over 10 seasons , an MLB record . The 2008 season was the Yankees ' last in which they played at the original Yankee Stadium . The club had sought a new stadium to increase revenues , following the example set by other MLB teams . It was also the first in which Hal and Hank Steinbrenner ran the team as general partners ; though George Steinbrenner was still the principal owner on paper , he yielded operational responsibilities during the 2007 offseason . Yankee Stadium was the site of the 2008 All @-@ Star Game , but for the first time in 14 years did not host playoff action . New York ended the year third in the AL East and failed to qualify for the postseason .

= = = 2009 ? present : New stadium and 27th championship = = =

The new Yankee Stadium , which cost a record \$ 1 @.@ 5 billion , was constructed near the old facility . As built , it had a capacity of approximately 52 @,@ 000 , with 52 luxury suites . Monument Park , which holds plaques and monuments honoring former Yankees personnel , was built beyond the center field fence ; its collection was transplanted from the old stadium . For the 2009 season , the team committed over \$ 400 million in future salaries to three free agents : pitchers CC Sabathia and A. J. Burnett , and first baseman Mark Teixeira . New York won 90 of its last 134 games , and broke the franchise single @-@ season record by hitting 244 home runs . Another club record was broken by Jeter , who passed Gehrig as the Yankees ' all @-@ time hits leader on September 11 . New York posted 103 wins in 2009 and beat out the Red Sox for the division title by eight games . In the AL playoffs , the Yankees defeated the Twins in the ALDS and the Angels in the ALCS , advancing to the 2009 World Series . There they faced the Philadelphia Phillies , the defending Series champions . Behind a six @-@ RBI effort by Matsui in the sixth and final game , the Yankees defeated the Phillies to win the franchise 's 27th Series championship .

George Steinbrenner died in July 2010 . The Yankees won the league 's wild card berth , but their title defense was ended by the Texas Rangers in the ALCS . Multiple Yankees players set individual marks in 2011 . Jeter joined the 3 @,@ 000 hit club on July 9 ; he was the first player to do so while playing for the club . Later in the season , Rivera posted the 602nd save of his career , breaking the all @-@ time record that had been held by Trevor Hoffman . The Yankees won the AL East , but lost in the ALDS to the Tigers . Rivera suffered a season @-@ ending injury to his right knee in May 2012 while catching fly balls before a game against the Royals . Even without their longtime closer , the 2012 Yankees gained a 10 @-@ game lead by mid @-@ July , and held off the Orioles to win

the division title by a final margin of two games . After defeating the Orioles in a five @-@ game ALDS , the Yankees were swept by the Tigers in the ALCS .

During Game 1 of the 2012 ALCS , Jeter broke his right ankle while attempting to field a ball . He was one of many Yankees to miss playing time during the club 's 2013 campaign ; 20 players were placed on the disabled list at least once . The team had an opportunity to win a wild @-@ card playoff spot , but faded late in the season . It was only the second time since 1995 that New York did not qualify for postseason play . In the offseason , second baseman Robinson Canó departed New York for the Mariners in free agency , but the Yankees signed starting pitcher Masahiro Tanaka , who was coming off a 24 ? 0 year with Japan 's Tohoku Rakuten Golden Eagles , to a seven @-@ year contract . Rodriguez was suspended for the 2014 season by MLB for using performance @-@ enhancing drugs . The 2014 Yankees , the last with Jeter in their lineup , fell four games short of a postseason berth with an 84 ? 78 record . Despite signing several new hitters prior to the season , the team finished third from last in the AL in runs scored . The offense improved in 2015 , ending the regular season with the second @-@ most runs in MLB . New York gained a wild card berth with a second @-@ place finish , but was defeated by the Houston Astros in a one @-@ game playoff .

As of 2016 , the Yankees ' 27 World Series championships are 16 more than the number won by the St. Louis Cardinals , who have the second @-@ most titles among MLB teams . New York 's championship total is the highest of any franchise in a major North American league ; the National Hockey League 's Montreal Canadiens are second behind the Yankees with 24 Stanley Cup wins . The 40 AL titles won by the Yankees places them 17 in front of the Cardinals for the most pennants won by an MLB team . The Giants and Dodgers are the only other clubs with 20 or more pennants . The Baseball Hall of Fame has inducted over 40 players and managers who have worn Yankees pinstripes . Forbes magazine has labeled the Yankees the most valuable team in baseball every year since 1998 ; the franchise was worth an estimated \$ 3 @.@ 4 billion in 2016 .

In Glenn Stout 's Yankees history book , the author wrote :

More often than not , they have shown just how the game of baseball is supposed to be played . Ruth , Gehrig , DiMaggio , Mantle , Mattingly , Jeter , and dozens of other players impossible to forget have worn their uniform . Yankee Stadium has been their stage . The very definition of a dynasty , they have created the collective memories that make friends of strangers , given their city a face , and displayed its heart and soul .