Additional questions and answers with Red Wings GM Dan Mason

There were so many questions for Dan – both questions submitted in advance and questions posted in the Chat during the event – that we were unable to cover all of them. We sent a list of those questions to Dan, and he graciously provided answers to them.

Terry Callanan -- Are there any specific facets of the fan experience that you know you need to improve and are working to make better?

Dan: We are constantly trying to improve the fan experience. We feel it’s necessary to challenge everything. Always see if there’s a better way. Be that providing more food and beverage options. Servicing fans quicker and more efficiently at the ticket office or food and beverage stands. We’ll be adding a new videoboard in the next few weeks. That was something that desperately needed improvement. We’re also expanding our kitchen to service our fans better, and that project should be done by Opening day 2024. The way fans like to watch games and experience games is constantly changing, so we are always trying to stay on top of those trends.

William Nooitgedagt/Cheryl Yawman -- I would like to know how disruptive changing major league affiliates is to the Red Wings team as a whole?  How did you handle those disruptions to minimize the impact to the organization? How specifically has the change from Orioles to Twins to Nationals as parent organizations over the course of the team's history affected your role and the day-to-day operations?

Dan: To be honest not incredibly disruptive. The biggest challenge when something like that happens is getting to know the new people you’re dealing with and building those relationships. We are fortunate to have had a great relationship with the Nationals to date, and even though it feels like we’ve been working with them for many years it’s only been 3 years.  Physically moving the Twins’ property out and the Nats’ property in took about a full day for each.

Doug Brooks -- 2022 showed a drop of about 10% in attendance from the ten-year average. How much of this do you attribute to Covid's effect on society vs quality of baseball on the field (8th place finish)? Do you sense a recovery?

Dan: We started last season while Covid was still very prevalent. Our pre-season projections had us at about 30-35% less than 2019, our last season before Covid. So, to be only down 10% by the end of the season was a big win for us. We anticipated it would take us 3-4 years to get back to our 2019 levels but hopefully we’ll get there sooner than anticipated.

Dick Shroyer -- There has been a recent trend to cluster farm teams geographically close to the major league team. Among the effects are that the minor league team benefits from fans' enthusiasm for the major league team. Does the fact that Rochester's recent parent teams have been far away pose special marketing challenges and how have you dealt with that?

Dan: In our storied history we have been affiliated with Baltimore, St Louis, Minnesota and now Washington. As time goes on you have to recondition your fan base to follow your new parent club. It somewhat happens organically as fan favorites move from Rochester to MLB. As more and more Red Wings graduate to the Nats people become more and more interested in how our alums are playing for the Nats. We try and promote the Nats brand in our yearbook, radio broadcasts, social, videoboards etc. It takes time but we are already seeing many Red Wings fans transitioning to Nats fans.