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**Founder's Message: Go Yankees. I mean go Red Sox. I mean...???**

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Roland Hopkins, NEREJ

I was born in New England, grew up in New England, and have always been a Red Sox fanatic. Babe Ruth began his career with the Red Sox and led them to two World Series. He then was traded to the Yankees and led them to many, many World Series. Twenty years ago I attended a baseball dinner honoring several retired players and found myself sitting beside Babe Ruth's daughter. Two weeks ago she threw out the first ball at Fenway Park honoring the park's 100th anniversary. She's 90.

What does all this have to do with commercial real estate? Nothing, but once a year I like to write about the two teams that have been arch rivals since Ruth was traded to the Yankees in 1919. In 1991, I was fortunate to attend the weekend Hall of Fame ceremonies at Cooperstown. Ted Williams and Joe DiMaggio were traveling around being honored for the 50th anniversary of Ted's batting .406 - and Joe hitting in 56 straight games. When they entered a room filled with reporters I handed my wife a camera and said, "Get ready to take a picture." I stepped in front of him and said, "You and I have a friend in common, Sam Tamposi." Sam was New Hampshire's number one real estate developer, owned a small piece of the Red Sox, was one of Ted's best friends and one of my best clients. He was also one of the nicest men I had ever met. Ted stopped, smiled, and put his arm around me. My wife took the picture that is now framed on my living room wall and used as my Facebook photo.

Joe followed and I took from my wife the camera and quickly tried to figure out something I could say to get his attention. So I said, "Hello Mr. DiMaggio - congratulations on hitting in 56 straight games, and I understand that you like blondes." For those of you who don't recall, he had married Marilyn Monroe. He stopped, smiled, looked down at the top of my blonde wife's head (she was 4 ft. 11, very pretty, and a former famous race track jockey). He surprised me and put his arm around her as I took that picture that now hangs in my living room next to Ted.

I think the Red Sox and Yankees have been the greatest sports rivalry since Babe Ruth who was the greatest Red Sox player (Ted second) and Joe the second greatest Yankee player. Under the Tom Yawkey ownership the Sox reached the World Series twice but came away ringless. I can't count how many rings the Yankees won in that time period thanks to people like George Steinbrenner, Mickey Mantle, DiMaggio, Yogi Berra, Whitey Ford, Jeter, Clemons and Alex Rodriguez. Too many more stars to mention here.

So in 2003 the Red Sox finally broke the Curse of the Bambino (that's Babe Ruth's curse) beating the Yankees in a playoff and then going on to win two more World Series since. Is it a new dynasty? Maybe not. The Sox finished in last place in 2013, and with two thirds of the season gone are in last place now. The Yankees finally resemble the Yankees of old leading the league with stars like Rodriguez (24 home runs), Teixeira (26 home runs) and baseball's best lead off hitter, Jacoby Ellsbury. I wonder where they picked him up.

The Red Sucks (I mean Red Sox) have no ace starting pitchers, and other than 39 year old David Ortiz, have no home run hitters, except one who they signed for millions of dollars and has forgotten

how to hit homeruns. So here's the prediction. Yankees win their division easily and go on to win the World Series. The Yankees of old are finally back, but I'm still a Red Sox fan.

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