

The Start of a New ERA

Yankee Stadium Curtainwall Both Complex, Straightforward

by Brigid O'Leary

The race for the MLB pennant is on, the first pitch thrown on Sunday, April 5 in Philadelphia. And though the economy isn't what it used to be, the New York Yankees spared no expense going into the 2009 season: \$423.5 million spent adding Mark Teixeira, C.C. Sabathia and A.J. Burnett to the roster and \$1.5 billion for their new home turf. It was money well-spent considering what they got in return: a facility as distinctive as the Yankee's stars-and-stripes top hat on a baseball bat emblem, completed well before opening day.

Wicked Curve Ball

That doesn't mean it was easy, especially on the outside.

"It was a confined site for the curtainwall. It was close to the street and sometimes, during the season, we couldn't work in the street," explains Greg Tedesco, president of Genetech Systems Inc., the curtainwall installer. "The wall itself was pretty straightforward. The old Yankee Stadium was across the street, so on game day or game night, it changed the working conditions for us because of the traffic."

While glazing contractors don't get a lot of say in what materials are specified for a project—especially one the size of a new sports stadium (see *Home Run, March 2009 USGlass, page 36*)—Genetech Systems Inc. was able to choose the aluminum supplier and that made a big difference.

"We picked the aluminum supplier because we've worked with them before and we knew if we brought in a pre-glazed wall, we'd close up [the entranceway] and it'd get us out of there a lot faster. That's why we went with Alumicor. We didn't want to be in the street longer than we needed to be," Tedesco says.

The company became involved in the project in the fall of 2007 when it was

awarded the job and wrapped up the exterior curtainwall installation in September 2008.

"It was just a different job, a high profile job, but other than that it was pretty straightforward," says Tedesco.

Canadian Making of a King A-Rod's Court

However, before Genetech could move on to working on the stadium's interior curtainwall, its crew had to battle the elements—and the changing traffic patterns that inevitably were affected by the Yankee's home play schedule—to install the exterior curtainwall. This portion included laminated insulating units featuring PPG's Solarban 60 bronze.

Trulite Industries Ltd. in Mississauga, Ontario, a subsidiary of Arch Aluminum and Glass Co. Inc., supplied the glass for the curtainwall and was not immune from the pressures related to the job.

"It was a very tight schedule," says Steve Martin, project manager with Trulite. "From the time we received the order to the actual supply it was probably 4 to 5 weeks. It was a very tight schedule that we were on. We first got involved in November 2007 and were fabricating glass in February 2008 to the point where our samples were approved."

The timeline was not the only thing that was out of the ordinary for the company, either. For this particular project, the interaction with a curtainwall consultant was a bit unusual.

"Because there was an emphasis on roller wave we worked closely with consultant Israel Berger on the job," Martin explains. "They were in the shop for most of the units being made and watching the pre-glaze. They were in the customer shop as well. They were very involved with the entire process. [It's] not really typical. Usually, on a large job, you might have a

couple of visits; this was a little more detailed."

That's not to say it was a bad thing; it was just necessary, given the importance of the project and the standards that needed to be met by the consulting company.

Extra Innings

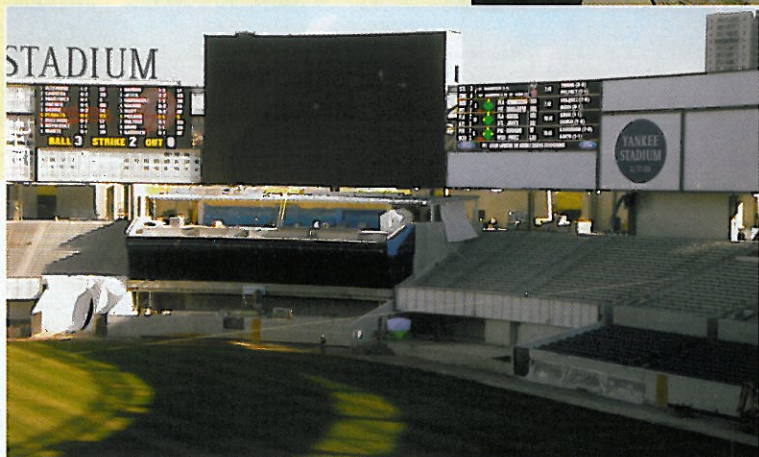
Far-reaching is one way to describe the scope of work by Israel Berger and Associates LLC (IBA). IBA is "a recognized consulting and inspection group specializing in building envelope technologies, providing services to property owners, architects and construction managers" according to the business profile on the company website. For Yankee Stadium, IBA "provided consulting and inspection services of the exterior wall on behalf of our client, Tishman Speyer," says Dan Popadynec, an associate with IBA.

"The exterior wall systems included architectural precast concrete panels with Indiana limestone, glazed unitized curtainwall and metal wall panels. Within the stadium bowl, we were also involved with the suites' glass and glazing, as well as the point-supported glass wall in center field," he adds.

Popadynec served as point of contact to the client as well as for the general contractor, architect and trades.

IBA provided what Popadynec describes as "comprehensive monitoring of the installation on the jobsite throughout 2008," which included witnessing the curtainwall tests—both at the factory and on-site—ensuring that it met AAMA and ASTM standards. "At the peak of our involvement in late 2007/early 2008, we had multiple inspectors working on this project—on-site and in the shops," Popadynec adds.

And while Tedesco found the job to



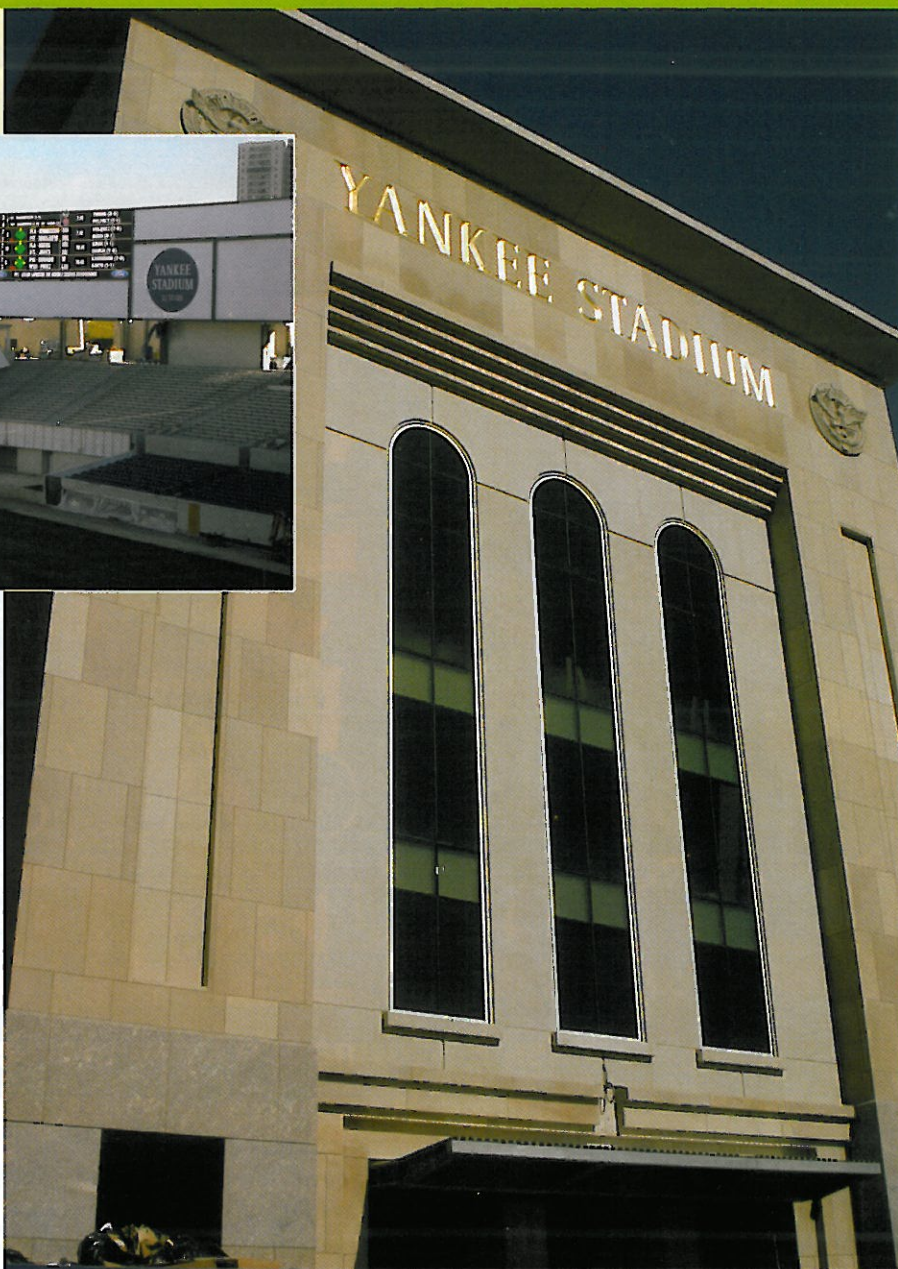
Multiple inspectors, on-site and in the shop, kept this stadium project moving without delays.

be pretty typical of what his company does—save for the environmental aspect, especially on game days—the further up the chain, the less straightforward the job.

“The principle challenge we faced was to define and locate the stadium’s ‘building envelope.’ On most of our other projects, identifying the building envelope is more straightforward. On a stadium, it was a challenge to properly seal and weatherproof these interfaces continuously,” he explains.

Though defining the building envelope was complicated, it wasn’t the only part of the job that required some creative solutions. So too was A Batter’s Eye Restaurant in straightaway center field. Popadyne explains that “the point-supported glass wall overlooking the field could not produce reflections and glare that could distract a batter from seeing the pitch. This is not something the architect could determine from 12- 12-inch samples or can easily mock-up. The glass fabricator [Trulite] did a great job with the coated glass and specially made point-support fittings.”

And if everything happens in threes, there has to be at least one more challenge, right? “The stadium’s conference room, museum and a restaurant are located very close to loud trains entering and leaving the station. To minimize the noise disruption, the curtainwall in



Glass suppliers and installers faced a tight timeline on the Yankee’s stadium curtainwall.

these rooms was designed to meet strict acoustical performance criteria as verified in an accredited laboratory,” Popadyne says.

Seventh Inning Stretch

“Many of my colleagues are life-long Yankee fans,” says Popadyne. “They had often asked to see my latest construction photos from the stadium. I am a converted Yankee fan, having grown up in Toronto.”

And what about the Trulite team, headquartered in Ontario? Are there any Yankee fans in the office eagerly anticipating opening day?

“Closet Yankee fans maybe!” Martin laughs. “It’s one of those things— it’s what Yankee stadium represents. It’s one of the most recognized stadiums in the world. There’s respect for what it is and what it stands for ... but we’re mostly Blue Jay fans here.” ■

the author



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