

Phillies Pass Yankees, Red Sox to Become No. 1 MLB Team in Fan Loyalty

By Rob Gloster - Mar 21, 2011

The [Philadelphia Phillies](#) have the most loyal fans in [Major League Baseball](#), surpassing the [New York Yankees](#) and [Boston Red Sox](#), a survey found.

The Yankees were second on the baseball index for the second straight year. The Red Sox, No. 1 the previous two years, fell to third. The [New York Mets](#), who fired their manager and general manager after a 79-83 season, tied with the Washington Nationals for 23rd among the 30 major league teams.

New York-based [Brand Keys Inc.](#) compiled the 19th annual Sports Loyalty Index by surveying 250 fans in each team's market and assessing the data based on factors driven by on-field success, fan bonding with players and the franchise's history and tradition. A club's effort and sense of teamwork also can have an effect.

"With the Phillies, every game seems to count to the whole team," Brand Keys President Robert Passikoff said in telephone and e-mail interviews. "They seem to take it more personally."

The [New England Patriots](#) were No. 1 among National Football League teams. The San Antonio Spurs topped the National Basketball Association rankings and the Detroit Red Wings had the highest score in the National Hockey League.

A copy of the 2011 survey results, which will be released this week by Brand Keys, was given to Bloomberg News.

The Yankees led the major leagues with attendance of 3.8 million in 2010, followed by the Phillies at 3.6 million. The Phillies sold a higher percentage (104 percent, including standing room) of their 43,651 seats at Citizens Bank Park, compared with 89 percent at 50,287-seat Yankee Stadium.

Sold-Out Phillies

The Phillies, who reached the National League Championship Series last season before signing free-agent pitcher [Cliff Lee](#) in mid-December, have sold out 123 straight home games, a streak that began during the 2009 season.

David Buck, the team's senior vice president of marketing, said the club has sold 99 percent of its seats for 2011 and expects to sell out every game again this season.

"Philly is an awesome sports town," Buck said in a telephone interview. "The place is loud and the fans take it seriously. The fans are loving it and their support is enabling us to do the things we're doing on the field."

The Brand Keys surveys were conducted a week after football's Feb. 6 Super Bowl.

The Patriots were followed by the Pittsburgh Steelers, Indianapolis Colts, Super Bowl champion [Green Bay Packers](#) and [New York Jets](#) in the NFL list. The [New York Giants](#) were ninth and the [Dallas Cowboys](#) were 21st among the league's 32 teams.

In the NBA, the Spurs topped the index for the third straight year. The two-time defending champion Los Angeles Lakers

were second, followed by the Dallas Mavericks, [Boston Celtics](#) and Phoenix Suns. The New York Knicks were 20th of 30 teams.

The [Red Wings](#) were followed by the Philadelphia Flyers and San Jose Sharks in the hockey index. The New York Rangers were 20th of the NHL's 30 teams.

TOP FIVE TEAMS IN SPORTS LOYALTY INDEX, BY LEAGUE

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MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

1. Philadelphia Phillies
2. New York Yankees
3. Boston Red Sox
4. San Francisco Giants
5. Los Angeles Dodgers

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

1. New England Patriots
2. Pittsburgh Steelers
3. Indianapolis Colts
4. Green Bay Packers
5. New York Jets

NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION

1. San Antonio Spurs
2. Los Angeles Lakers
3. Dallas Mavericks
4. Boston Celtics
5. Phoenix Suns

NATIONAL HOCKEY LEAGUE

1. Detroit Red Wings
2. Philadelphia Flyers
3. San Jose Sharks
4. Vancouver Canucks
4. Boston Bruins

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