



### **CATCH BASEBALL HISTORY THIS SPRING IN THE ST. PETERSBURG/CLEARWATER AREA**

ST. PETERSBURG (February 2003) — Spring Training is an interesting time for baseball, and with the Grapefruit League right around the corner there is no better place to be than Florida's Beach St. Petersburg/Clearwater. All the teams come back into town and try to fix the problems from last season. Even more exciting than baseball itself, the fans are given the chance to see their favorite players up close and personal. This will be a special year for St. Petersburg/Clearwater because it is the last year for historic Jack Russell Stadium, which has been home to the Philadelphia Phillies for nearly 50 years. Also, this will be the first season for the newly renovated Grant Field, which is home to the Toronto Blue Jays.

Spring Training in St. Petersburg/Clearwater is like no other time of year for the area. Within a one-hour drive, there are seven teams and dozens of spring training games to be watched. All of these games are exciting and intense as the teams begin to gear up for the regular season. The West Coast of Florida serves as a temporary home to several major league baseball teams during their training season. Teams such as the Philadelphia Phillies, Toronto Blue Jays, Tampa Bay Devil Rays, Detroit Tigers, Pittsburgh Pirates, New York Yankees, and the Cincinnati Reds all combine for one incredible baseball extravaganza.

This season is a special and memorable one for the Philadelphia Phillies. This is the last Spring Training that will take place at Jack Russell Memorial Stadium, which is also home to the Clearwater Phillies. Jack Russell stadium was built in 1955 and seats 6,942 fans.

***St. Petersburg/Clearwater Area Convention & Visitors Bureau***

Media Contact: Wit Tuttell at 800-822-6461 or 727-464-7200 • [Wit@FloridasBeach.com](mailto:Wit@FloridasBeach.com)  
14450 46th Street North, Suite 108 Clearwater, FL 33762 • Fax: 727-464-7222 • [www.FloridasBeach.com](http://www.FloridasBeach.com)

“It will truly be bitter sweet to leave Jack Russell. We have been here for 47 years and most certainly enjoyed the community around us. Unfortunately, with the community growing so rapidly, we are in need of parking,” said Clearwater Phillies General Manager John Cook.

For Spring Training 2004, the Phillies will move to their new complex, which will be located at Drew St. and U.S. 19. The new facility will seat 7,000 fans, and have more than 1,800 parking spaces.

This season is also special for the Toronto Blue Jays because it will be their first season played in their newly renovated complex. Last year, Dunedin spent \$12 million on a new spring training facility for the Blue Jays, which included a new training center, offices, hitting cages, and five full fields at the Cecil P. Englebert Recreational Complex.

St. Petersburg/Clearwater is an incredible area for Spring Training, and when the teams aren't playing there are dozens of relaxing and exciting things to do and see in the area. Take some time to visit our picturesque beaches such as Clearwater Beach, Honeymoon Island, and Caladesi Island. If you get too hot at the beach, take a drive to some of our incredible indoor attractions such as the Salvador Dali Museum or the St. Petersburg Pier, which features a second-floor air-conditioned aquarium and a wide variety of shops to stroll through.

Come be a part of this memorable Spring Training season and enjoy all the wonderful attractions our area has to offer. For more information on the St. Petersburg/Clearwater area, call 1-877-FL-BEACH (352-3224) or visit [FloridasBeach.com](http://FloridasBeach.com).

###