

## Sam Boyd Stadium History

### Facility History

Named after a prominent Las Vegas hotel owner and gaming pioneer, the facility has evolved over the years not only in size (from 15,000 to 32,000 and to 40,000 seats) but in the way it handled event bookings, marketing, and sponsorship opportunities.

Sam Boyd Stadium is home to the UNLV Rebel Football team, the Las Vegas Bowl and the annual AMA Supercross Series Finals and the annual Monster Jam World Finals.

**The Grateful Dead** played the Sam Boyd Stadium for five consecutive years from 1991 to 1995, all of which have set records for the top grossing and highest attended shows. The band's final performance in Las Vegas (1995) holds the #1 position, with 125,533 fans attending the concert which grossed over \$3.7 million.

Other music superstars who performed at the stadium include the **Eagles, Ozzy Osbourne, Metallica, and the Lollapalooza tour. U2 and Paul McCartney** kicked off their world tours at the facility, drawing record crowds as well as international media attention.

**The stadium celebrated its 25 th anniversary in the fall of 1996 by hosting the UNLV vs. Wisconsin football game with 41,091 fans attending the event, setting the record for the state's largest attendance at an outdoor sporting event.**

**Beginning in the fall of 1998, the Sam Boyd Stadium underwent a major \$17.5 million renovation and expansion project, adding 9,000 seats to the stadium and reconfiguring the current seating capacity to 40,000.** The improvements included a new concourse, upgraded and expanded restrooms, upgraded concession stands, a new press box, repaved parking lots, upgraded ADA access, and a new scoring system as well as a new playing surface.

### Fast Facts

The 15,000 seat facility was constructed in 1971 at a cost of \$3.5 million

- The Sam Boyd Stadium features a Monsanto retractable turf covering 80,787 square feet.
- The largest football attendance was UNLV vs. Wisconsin in 1996, drawing 41,091 fans.
- **UNLV joined the Mountain West Conference** in 1998.
- The Sam Boyd Stadium signed the XFL Outlaws in 1999 to a 3 year deal.
- Hosted the first all black college game on September 21, 2002 Grambling St. vs. Tennessee St. for 23,000 fans.
- Sold out the **Monster Jam Finals and Supercross World Finals in 2002. Total attendance 65,000 fans.**

### Milestones

- October 23, 1971 - First event held at the facility - UNLV Football vs. Weber State
- 1978 - Facility renamed Las Vegas Silver Bowl
- 1978 - Facility expands to 32,000 seats
- **1984 - Las Vegas Silver Bowl renamed Sam Boyd Silver Bowl**
- Summer 1985 - Monsanto outdoor retractable turf system installed
- April 27-28, 1991 - First of five Grateful Dead concerts take place at Sam Boyd Stadium/Grateful Dead and Santana perform to 79,000 fans

- **April 14, 1993 - Paul McCartney opens " New World Tour" at Sam Boyd Stadium**
- December 18, 1993 - First Las Vegas Bowl game played featuring Reno and Bowling Green
- **April 26, 1994 - Sam Boyd Silver Bowl renamed Sam Boyd Stadium**
- **June 18, 1994 - Record set for highest grossing concert (single performance) - Eagles  
Gross: \$1,924,570.00**
- June 29, 1994 - Inaugural pre-season game of the Canadian Football League - Las Vegas Posse vs. Edmonton Eskimos
- July 7, 1994 - Lollapalooza Tour makes first appearance at Sam Boyd Stadium
- May 19-21, 1995 - Record set for largest attendance and highest gross at a multiple performance concert - Grateful Dead/Dave Matthews Band. Attendance: 125,533, gross: \$3.7 million
- September 7, 1996 - UNLV Football plays first game as a member of the Western Athletic Conference vs. Air Force
- September 14, 1996 - Record set for **largest football attendance** - UNLV vs. Wisconsin  
Attendance: 41,041
- December 7, 1996 - Inaugural Western Athletic Conference Championship Football Game featuring BYU vs. Wyoming
- April 25, 1997 - U2 opens "Popmart" World Tour at Sam Boyd Stadium/**Record set for largest attendance (single performance)** concert. Attendance: 35,401
- July 25, 1997 - \$27 million approved by Nevada Legislature for UNLV facility improvements. \$15.5 million was devoted to Sam Boyd Stadium expansion, renovation, and upgrades. Renovation included expanded concourse, upgraded restrooms, upgraded concession stands, new press box, repaving parking lots, upgraded ADA access, a new scoring system, and a new playing surface.
- September 20, 1997 - The official UNLV Football tailgate area, known at "**Rebel Experience**" opens at Sam Boyd Stadium
- January 27, 1998 - \$2 million grant awarded to Sam Boyd Stadium to reconfigure and **expand the facility** to 40,000 seats