

## Marlins' new ballpark goes vertical

### President Samson has inside scoop on new digs

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ST. LOUIS -- In the past week, the Marlins' new ballpark went vertical.

As the project pushes forward, eventually, the frame of the park's bowl will arise from the ground.

Construction on the team's new home at the Orange Bowl grounds is pushing forward at a rapid pace. A few days ago, concrete was poured into the super columns, the large structures that will support the retractable-roof.

"We see more vertical every day," Marlins president David Samson said. "Next, we'll start to see the frame of the bowl."



Each new stage of construction brings renewed excitement. Samson noted that the frame should really be taking shape by the time Spring Training 2010 begins in February.

"You will see a frame by then," Samson said. "There is no end in sight. We're 10 percent done."

Every stage of construction on the 37,000-seat building can be viewed via the [Marlins' New Ballpark Webcam](#).

"It was very good to go on site this week and watch the concrete get poured," Samson said. "It was great to talk to some of the workers."

A conversation with one local worker struck home for Samson.

"What he said to me was fascinating," Samson said. "It stuck in my mind. He said, 'I'm always going to be able to remember pouring concrete in this super column. Now, I'm going to be able to take my family to the ballpark someday and say I poured concrete in this super column in left field, and they'll know that their daddy worked on that column.'"

"For me, it was the most glorious point of construction, because that's what having local workers was all about -- to have pride in that."

The pouring of concrete was something visible in the new park. But outside the public's view continues to be daily meetings to discuss the next stages. Discussed last week were:

- Beginning of the ballpark concession menus, and developing which concession stands will have which food on which levels. The whole process will take about a year and a half.
- "Taste of Miami" restaurants possibilities, and where they will be located.
- Discussions of placements of electrical outlets throughout the stadium. In visiting other ballparks, Marlins officials were informed of the need to offer people places to charge their devices, such as mobile phones.
  - Electrical outlets also will be placed in the lockers of players for both teams, visitors and home.

"I don't like going into the clubhouse and seeing cell phones on the floor," Samson said. "So now players can charge at their own locker."

The placement of bullpens also has been established, and both teams will be able to have their relievers warm up without being in the way of the action. Both bullpens will be beyond the outfield wall, and not in foul territory where they could possibly interfere with players.

"The visitors' bullpen is right next to the right-field foul pole," Samson said. "The home bullpen is next to the pool area, so the people in the pool area will get to see our bullpen. People in the group area down the line in right field will get to see the visiting bullpen."