

These three dimensional views of the stadiums bring out some of the differences in the presence of each. The view from behind the left field bleachers at Griffith Stadium highlights how much the stadium was part of the neighborhood. The seating areas had roofs, but were open in back, and the bleachers were completely open, offering patrons views of the surrounding area. The overhead view of RFK Stadium, meanwhile, presents the very different relationship it has with the area around it. It is completely closed off with only an opening at the top, offering its patrons a view of the sky alone. There are no unique angles in its “cookie-cutter” shape, as it roams across the margins of the city. Not just the location of these stadiums, but the approach to their design tells us a lot about how baseball fit into the District’s daily life.

The interior spaces of the two stadiums offered fans very different experiences. In the first image we see the intimacy fans were offered at Griffith Stadium. The action was close, bringing the speed and power of the game into focus. And the stadium’s large outfield dimensions were couched by neighborhood entities, such as the tree in center, which offered perspective. Conversely, the circular, multipurpose seating of RFK pushed fans far from the field. Even from the prime seats behind the dugout, as pictured here, the players look small. Similarly, despite its smaller dimensions than Griffith, the outfield fences of RFK seem extremely distant, in part because there is no frame of reference. The game appears to be swallowed by the stadium.

