



## Turning Renovations into \$

By: Roy Lubovsky, Indiana University

We all cringe when we hear that one of our venues will be going through major renovation. Normally this means a lot of displacement during construction while more times than not concessions and food service gets little or no consideration as to our needs. Having gone through two and a half year renovation of the newly rededicated Simon Skjot Assembly Hall I can tell you that it is your job as concessionaire to fight for changes in your area.

During the forty five million dollar renovation repeatedly I was told that the only thing that concessions would get out of the package was to lower our counters, to make them ADA compliant. Numerous times I presented my wish list for the construction, really, a very simple list.

1. To bring out counters out 35 inches out to create three hundred and fifty extra feet inside each stand. This allowed us to install a third coke fountain machine and a fifth and six cashier at each stand
2. To add flat screen menu boards/TV's above all concession stands. I asked for three monitors per stand and ended up with six, forty five inch monitors (3 menu boards, 3 TV's). By doing this I argued that fans would leave their seats prior to halftime to make their food purchases, alleviating half time lines.

Simple requests right? It took no less than eight in person meetings, dozens of phone calls and hundreds/thousands of emails with the architects to finally convince them why we needed these improvements. It is very important to have your facts in order to present your requests/needs in a matter of fact business manner. These simple changes increased our point of sales from 34 to 70 which has not only reduced/eliminate our long half time lines it has increased our sales. With four games left in our home season we have increased our per cap from \$3.10 to \$3.73 this season. Our total concession sales this year will increase at MBB by \$145,000.00

2. President's VIP Suite; although these area only seats eleven guests, these guests are the VIP's of the VIP's.
3. Champion Locker Room: This area is for two hundred donors and features a pre-game buffet and a post-game reception area complete with cash bar
4. New Press Row Seating: Located high within the seating bowl in a dedicated press area complete with two buffets for seventy five working media
5. AD's locker room: Area where our Athletic Director can entertain up to thirty guests.

These new areas have increased our number of caterings during MBB games from 4 to 13-16 per game. This has increased our basketball caterings during its first year by over \$150,000.00, when you add in the increase in concession revenue overall sales in the newly remodeled arena to \$300,000 in its first year.



In conclusion, no one is going to fight for construction changes for your area harder than you will. No one will be able to make arguments for what you want to see in your area better than you will be able to. Make sure you do your homework first and make sure you are persistent and make as much noise as possible to convince those in charge that these changes are in the best interest of the overall project. It is your responsibility as concessionaire/caterer to fight for ways to improve your venues and subsequently to find ways to increase your revenue during any (all) renovation projects.



With the newly renovated arena we added several new catering areas, these areas include:

1. Henke Spirit of 76 Suite, Seating for 82 high profile donors which features a common area for our guests. Located in this common area are two cash bars, food buffet and presentation station staffed by one of our chefs.





with custom tours of both facilities! We'll have an opportunity to tour the luxury suites of both stadiums, observe several Concession Stands, see behind-the-scenes warehouse and kitchen areas, and even



## Welcome to North Texas

By: John Gibson, University of North Texas

As we scurry through the Winter and the heart of Conference basketball season, our minds turn to the Spring and Summer months. Not too long from now, the weather will turn warmer as the snow and the cold melt away.

With the warmer wather, June will come up quick on the calendar. The North Texas Concessions staff is busy preparing for another fantastic NACC Conference. Our team is excited to host the 2017 event in Denton, TX on the University of North Texas campus. With interesting and insightful educational sessions lined up, plentiful events, fun activities and delicious meals scheduled, we are working hard to provide you all an NACC Conference experience you'll never forget!

We will start off the Conference on Monday, June 12th, with our annual Advisory Board Committee. This group of pre-selected University members will be able to interact with Vendors who sign-up to participate. Each vendor will have 45 minutes to present their products and/or services to the panel, who will then have an opportunity to share their opinions and ask questions to the Vendor. This panel has created strong dialogue between NACC Members and Vendors alike, and has been a beneficial addition to our Association. Vendors, if you are interested in signing-up for this one-of-a-kind opportunity, please reach out to Theresa Traulsen.

Our host hotel for the NACC Conference is the Courtyard Marriott. Located on the Southeast side of town (just shy of 5 miles to campus), the Courtyard Marriott is one of three hotels in the area, with several restaurants/bars nearby.



The Conference gets rolling on Tuesday, June 13th. The NACC has been able to partner with the Foodservice Operations at AT&T Stadium (Dallas Cowboys) and Globe Life Park (Texas Rangers) to provide our group



have a chance to view the field, step in a dugout and checkout the locker-rooms! In-between both tours, there will be a Tex-Mex lunch provided by the Delaware North Sportservice

Team in the Hyundai Club at Globe Life Park.

Our opening night Welcome Reception and Dinner will take place at the Circle R Ranch, a one-of-a-kind experience! The Circle R Ranch will feature down home Texas Hospitality with a delicious BBQ Dinner, and plenty of entertainment including backyard games of horseshoes and washers, a bull-riding setup, and a Quick Draw Competition!



Beginning on Wednesday, June 14th, the Conference will kick off with our "Welcome to North Texas" speaker and a tour of Apogee Stadium and the North Texas Concessions operations. Afterwards, our wonderful Vendor partners will hold our annual Tradeshow in the Club Level of Apogee Stadium, demonstrating many new products and items for University members to learn more about. The day wraps up with a General Board Session and Round Table Discussions with topics including: Social

**NACC 2017 Conference and Tradeshow**  
**Hosted by: University of North Texas**  
**June 12-15, 2017**  
**For more information visit our web site at:**  
**www.NACC-Online.com**



Media in Concessions, NPO Scheduling and Training, and Catering Cutting Edge trends. Dinner Wednesday night will be held at L.S.A. Burger Co. We will party on the roof-top of this downtown Denton establishment, taking in the culture and history of Texas music, listening to the performance of a live band, and eating some delicious custom burgers and food! Afterwards, you'll have the option to immerse yourself in downtown Denton and visit a myriad of local establishments. The UNT Staff will have transportation running until midnight to get you back safely to the hotel.



Our final day of the Conference will feature North Texas alumnus, former Mean Green and NFL football player, and current USA Bobsled Team Member Johnny Quinn! He will share his journey and motivating message to our group in his own fun and exuberant style. You may remember his "heard-round-the-world" experience during the 2014 Sochi Olympics. We also have several interesting presentations and Round Table topics to share, including NPO Management, Food Trucks at Sporting Events, re-branding your Concessions Operation, Inventory Control Procedures and How to create "Buzz" or "Wow" items at your event. We will wrap up the final day with dinner on the campus of UNT, provided by Babe's Chicken Dinner House. After dinner, a fun Casino night will be provide a chance to kick back, relax and have some fun before traveling back home.

The North Texas staff is excited to welcome you all to North Texas this June. We will do everything we can to show you a great time, create a memorable experience and to show you all what Denton, TX has to offer. We look forward to seeing you soon!



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## Hot Chocolate in the desert

By: Shawn Corr, UNLV

I have heard these stories about football games where certain Universities have sold hundreds of gallons of Hot Chocolate. Here at UNLV, we don't have many events where Coffee and Hot Chocolate are needed, but when the Las Vegas Bowl rolls around in mid-December we have to decide whether we have Full bars or Cocoa bars. When BYU played Utah last year in the Las Vegas Bowl the temperature was going to be in the upper 40's to mid-50's. For a Vegas fan that is cold and Hot Chocolate is called for, but is that cold for a BYU fan?? I reached out to Aaron from BYU and asked his opinion...his answer was, "At those temperatures, don't be surprised if you see people in shorts." We discussed it, and despite Aaron's input, we went forward with converting one of our Beer portables to a Hot Chocolate portable. We didn't put a lot of work into it, just got some marshmallows, whipped cream and toppings. We made a little sign that had cute picture of a steaming cup and put the price on it. If I had to base future Hot Chocolate on that year, we would never do it again. Aaron was right, we didn't sell nearly what we expected.

Flash forward a year to this past years Las Vegas Bowl, Houston was playing San Diego. Temperatures would be about the same and the teams were different demographic. Let's give this Hot Chocolate portable another try... but let's make it an experience. We took what was normally a full bar cart and decorated it with tinsel and wreaths, thank you Sheila and Candice. We had Christmas inflatables playing football, had an inflatable cheerleader that had motion. We went out and bought Christmas hats for the employees working the cart. We dedicated a stand to the production of the Hot Chocolate. We were ready to break records on Hot Chocolate sales. We sold more than twice what was sold the previous year, but more than that the customers enjoyed the experience that we had created. This is one of those times where making a little profit, but making the customer happy was accomplished. I posted pictures on Facebook and got some great responses, even had someone come to the portable at the game because someone forwarded them the picture.



There are a few things that I have learned from this experience. First off, it was nice to know that there are other members out there that are willing to give me input when asked. Thank you Aaron and Hope for your input. Secondly, I realized that sometimes a little effort can go a long way to creating a wonderful guest experience. The final thing that I learned is that Las Vegas has no idea what cold is, both years there were people wearing shorts and t-shirts and we were all bundles up. Knowing your event demographic is very important to having success.

## NACC membership can lead to new opportunities

By: Chris Lauber, R.E Arena

Can the NACC help you get a new job? You betcha! Last June right before the NACC Conference in Las Vegas, I applied for the Concessions Manager Job at Ralph Engelstad Arena in Grand Forks, North Dakota. I found out about the job due to the NACC Forum. The arena used the forum to send out the job announcement and it my email before the job popped up on other job boards. (By the way, if you haven't set up your NACC account to send the forum posts to your email, do it now!) I wasn't looking for a new job at the time, but when the email came through I was excited.

Ralph Engelstad Arena was a place I had from time to time checked out to see if they were hiring. The bulk of my career had been spent at the University of Denver Pioneers working hockey games; however I spent the last three seasons working at the Oregon Ducks. This was an opportunity for me to get back to a premier college hockey program (they were the 2016 NCAA Men's Hockey Champions) but more importantly to move closer to family. So how did the NACC help me get the new job?

Like I said, the job post came through the NACC forum directly to my email. The NACC also helped me other ways as well. First off, the Ralph Engelstad Arena is a proud member of the NACC and my membership was an asset. Next, through the two conferences I attended at BYU and Maryland I had the opportunity to meet the former concessions manager and talk to him about the arena, the operation and the management. Through this relationship, in the prior summer, I was able to visit the arena and get a tour of the building and the concessions operation and gain insight and information other job candidates might not have. Finally, there were several NACC members that supported me throughout the interview process that made it that much easier, including some that I was able to use as references.

There are a variety of different reasons I like the NACC and this past summer I found even more. I encourage all members to explore the NACC and what it can do for you. It helped me get a job closer to family which is very important. For now, have a great spring sports season and I look forward to seeing many of you in North Texas this June!

### Receiving NACC Emails

***If you haven't joined the NACC mail list server you have NOT been receiving any email notices from the NACC. To subscribe you will need to login to the NACC-Online Website and go to "My Account". Scroll down the page to find the form to either subscribe or un-subscribe from the email list. The system will then send you an email to verify that you wish to subscribe, click on the link in the email and you will then be added.***

## Heart of Dallas Bowl Concessions Experience

By: John Gibson, University of North Texas



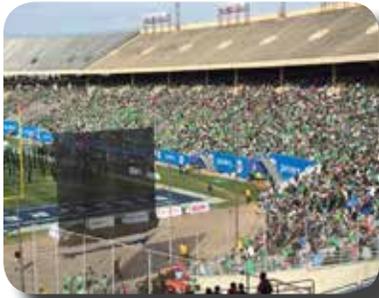
On December 27th, the North Texas Mean Green took part in the Heart of Dallas Bowl vs the Army Golden Knights. I was excited to make the trip to Dallas for two reasons: to cheer on the Mean Green in a bowl game, but also to check out the Concessions Operation at the original Cotton Bowl. This same venue holds the annual Texas vs Oklahoma game each fall, so I was interested to see what menu items and beverages were offered in this stadium that has witnessed several legendary collegiate games.

As my daughter and I entered the Cotton Bowl gates shortly before 11 AM, we decided to grab a hot dog and beverage before getting to our seats. When walking up to the concession stands, the blue and white graphics above each brick and mortar location "popped" out to the fans in the concourse, advertising different menu choices such as a BBQ Beef Sandwich, Chicken Fajitas, Popcorn and more. We walked up to the closest cashier and ordered two hot dogs, a bag of Cheetos, one Dr. Pepper fountain drink and a bottled water. To my surprise, all of the Concession Stands were cash only. So, I quickly ventured over to the nearest ATM line (6-7 deep) to get some cash. I suppose in this day-n-age, I was naïve to assume that this facility accepted Credit Cards at their venue, but I was still surprised to see a Cash-only operation. Nevertheless, I quickly withdrew some cash and we made our way back to the concession stand. After requesting our order a 2nd time, I was surprised to see that only one size beverage was offered. While the menu boards listed a Regular drink at \$4.00 and a Large Drink for \$6.00 drink, the only option available that day was a 24 oz drink in a Styrofoam cup. Regardless, I still wanted my Dr. Pepper, so we completed the transaction and took our hot dogs to the Condiment tables to dress with ketchup, mustard, relish packets and grab some napkins. The hot dog wasn't anything special, a standard 6-1 frank, cooked in a steamer and wrapped in a foil bag.





As we made our way to our seats, I was amazed and proud to observe the "Sea of Green" filling the Away side of the Cotton Bowl. The Mean Green Nation turned out strong to support Coach Littrell, NT players and staff! As enthusiastic as I was at that moment, my heart sank when my daughter's hot dog slid out of her hand and onto the concrete floor. So, I did what any good father would do; I gave her my hot dog and let her enjoy the snack.



As the game went on, my daughter and I wanted to venture out and check out the rest of the stadium and Concessions Operations. She enjoys Concessions fare as much as I do, and she was getting hungry for some popcorn. It was mid 2nd quarter at the time.

Evidently, the Concessions Operation was not prepared for such a large Mean Green crowd. All of the 4 concession stands I could observe on the away side of the stadium were out of hot dogs and pretzels by mid- 2nd quarter, and we were all told by staff that the wait was approximately 10-15 minutes for more of both products. As we settled in a line, we decided to purchase our popcorn only. Each transaction at this location was running at least 2-3 minutes each, as I'm sure the hot dog supply issue was slowing down the pace. We waited in line for a single popcorn just shy of 20 minutes, with only 6 Customers in front of us.

Despite the long wait time, it provided me a great opportunity for Concessions' observations. When looking at the stands, I really liked the uniformity of the Concessions Staff. The groups volunteering at the stands wore a clean white shirt with a solid blue apron and blue hat. These uniforms reflected the colors and branding of the Cotton Bowl nicely and presented a nice consistent and professional look! The staff was also friendly and made sure to thank each Customer. The stands in this area offered your standard fare of Hot Dogs, Pretzels, Popcorn, drinks and peanuts. Some specialty items rotated between the stands such as: BBQ Sandwiches, Deluxe Nachos, and Stromboli. Prices were higher when compared to my operation at North Texas, but that was expected. Beer was available for sale at kiosk locations, on the other side of the concourse, but only two choices were available (Bud and Bud Light bottles for \$8.00 each). The only other satellite kiosks in the stadium offered



\$6.00 jumbo Corn Dogs. Lines in this part of the stadium quickly grew long longer as we moved closer to halftime, filling the concourse and walkway.

My daughter and I decided to venture to the South End Zone area, which was roughly 75% to capacity with both North Texas and Army fans. As we walked through this area, it was apparent the Concessions Operator was not expecting this crowd size in the end zone either. Only half of the available stands were open to fans. While the menu from these stands offered some additional items not available on the Away Side (Southern Style Chicken Sandwich, Hamburgers and Philly Cheesesteaks), the lines were quite long with observed wait times over 3 minutes per transaction. The beer kiosk lines were also lengthy in this area, stretching over 20 Customers deep. Soon after, a "Drinks Only" stand opened up to offer quick service to Customers just wanting beer or bottled water and fountain drinks. However, it was clear that revenue opportunities were impacted by not having all available stands open in this area of the stadium.



Overall, I was impressed with the menu variety of a stadium that is only used a handful of times a year. I was expecting a more generic offering of Hot Dogs, Nachos and Popcorn. The Philly Cheesesteaks and Southern Style Chicken Sandwiches were nice menu additions. The Volunteer Groups staffing the stands were very friendly and gracious in a stressful situation. However, the inability to take Credit Card payments, the expensive 24 oz soda in a styrofoam cup, and the lack of quick moving points of sale were negative experiences that stood out. Attendance was announced at just over 38,000 fans for the day. Despite the Mean Green coming up a bit short, my daughter and I, as well as my brother had a great time at the Dallas Cotton Bowl and were glad to take part in a fun bowl game experience!

#### Observed Menu Items and Prices:

Hot Dog - \$5.00  
 Stromboli - \$8.00  
 BBQ Beef Sandwich - \$8.00  
 Hamburger - \$8.00  
 Southern Style Chicken Sandwich - \$8.00  
 Philly Cheesesteak - \$10.00  
 Corn Dog - \$5.00  
 BBQ Nachos - \$9.00  
 Deluxe Nachos w/ Chili and Cheese, Guacamole and Lettuce - \$9.00  
 Pretzel - \$6.00  
 Popcorn (46 oz Tub) - \$5.00  
 Peanuts - \$5.00  
 Fountain Drink (one size, Styrofoam cup) - \$6.00  
 Bottled Water - \$4.00  
 Hot Chocolate and Coffee (12 oz Cups) - \$4.00  
 Bud and Bud Light Beer - \$8.00 bottles

## Your Biggest Event Of The Year!!!

By: Joe Blando, Dynamic Drinkware

Bowl games, Super Bowl, playoffs, concerts and that last minute scheduled event you just found out about.... These are the events that can make or break a year from a financial standpoint, and the ones that keep Concession Managers up at night.

I would like to share my experience as a vendor supporting these high visibility events for the past several years. I also want to suggest some ideas that might help you be better prepared. Plus, I'll share some questions you should ask your vendor that will certainly help you out the next time you have to support a big event.

Each year we come across these same big events. Without question they always pose the biggest challenges. In 2016 our company supplied the souvenir cups to just about all of the major sporting events to include the majority of bowl games. In each case the venues had these games on their schedule a year in advance. However, in just about every case we experienced difficulties in getting final approvals.



How does this happen? Why does this happen? What can we do to improve.....

As a Concessions Manager you are responsible for making these highly viewed events your best of the year. You're expected to have souvenir items specifically related to these often one-day events. Failure to do so may put you in a bad place with your customer. So how do you excel for the biggest event of the year. The answer is pretty simple... Plan ahead and maximize your resources.

The planning ahead part is easy. You establish a timeline and identify who the key leaders are. You specifically identify the approving authorities. This can be the single most important part of ensuring you stay on time with approvals. When it comes to souvenir items, who is the final approving authority? How many different organizations have approval authority?

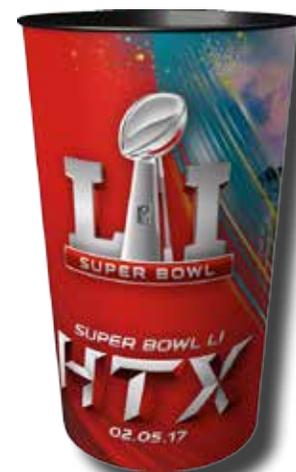
In the case of this year's national championship game there were several organizations that had to provide approval of the souvenir cup design. This included both teams, the College Football Playoff Committee and Raymond James Stadium that is home to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Knowing exactly who those approving authorities are will certainly save time and money. The fact that you have this event scheduled well in advance will allow you plenty of time to sort out who approves what and when. Don't forget about the fountain rights in your venue! That partner will certainly want to okay the placement of their logo.

Maximizing your employee resources is often difficult because they don't show until the last minute. Equipment resources can be just as difficult. However, I would challenge you to look at other options for those additional

resources. The first that comes to mind is your vendors.

How can your vendor help? Let me explain. Each November our staff at Dynamic Drinkware reaches out to each of the major bowl game venue concessionaires. We lay out a very detailed timeline for souvenir cups that if followed, always results in on-time delivery with a quality product. Because we have years of experience with bowl games, we take it upon ourselves as a company to help our customers get through this challenging time. You should expect this service from all of your vendors. They likely have that same level of experience and may have recently serviced a similar type event. Simply ask several months out for a timeline for success. If the event is new to you, ask your vendor if they have ever supplied products for this type of event. Ask for details of those past experiences. What went well and not so well. Knowing this information will keep you from making the same mistakes other have in the past at the same event.

Since the Super Bowl is played at different venues each year, we knew our customer would not have had previous experience with an event of this magnitude. For this year's Super Bowl in Houston we reached out to the venue six months in advance to discuss style-guides and timelines. The customer was just beginning pre-season and had not planned on getting started so early for an event that would take place several months later. We knew better and pushed to get the process going to at least establish initial timelines.



You may look at this service we provide as going above and beyond as a vendor. I would have agreed when I started in the business but now feel that a concessionaire should expect this service from vendors. All of your suppliers should be reaching out to you well in advance and coming up with a plan to make you successful. You're certainly not asking too much. Don't feel it is too demanding to expect this service of your vendor. They are getting the benefit of your business and their product visibility at a major sporting event. Your part as the concessionaire is to follow the set timeline and get your vendor the information they need in a timely manner.

Your biggest event of the year, this coming year, will be a success! Plan ahead, maximize your resources and let your vendors help you each step of the way.

### Advertising in Concession Bites

**If you would like to see your company advertised in this space for the July 2017 Newsletter, please contact Theresa at the NACC office (206) 440-9203 for pricing and size information.**

## Updating the NACC website

By: Matt Drummond, Blackboard

A healthy and growing organization relies on several factors including the participation and engagement of their members. One vital resource to provide this opportunity is a well maintained and interactive website. The NACC Executive Board understands this value and is commissioning a project to update the current NACC website to a more modern look and feel, ease of use and features to ensure members continue to receive the most value from their membership.

The project will replace the current website with a new infrastructure and build off the key components which have been the most useful from the current website. The project will span a few months through 2017 and the goal is to provide a preview of the new site at the upcoming Annual Conference in June.

The Board has elicited some feedback already from the membership and we thank each one of you with your responses. We are listening to you as we build out the website as it is only as successful as it brings great value to its members.

Based on some initial feedback, members have indicated they would like the new website to highlight member schools and vendors via profiles as well as interesting articles about the latest trends in the industry through interactive discussions like blogs. There is also interest in a section to provide notifications about career opportunities and open RFPs. Additional feedback identified the most valuable things from the current site such as the forum, surveys, conference related items and member contact information.

The intention of the new site is to establish a modern design using more imagery, social media feeds and easier navigation to find the information you need. There will also be a member's section requiring a login providing additional resources such as the forum and member survey and contact information.

The Executive Board feels the value of this new website to help grow the organization will achieve its return on investment. By creating a new website with more interactive features will increase the use by its current members leading to additional revenue sources by attracting new vendors and sponsorship opportunities.

The board wants to create a place where its members can network and learn year-round and not just at the annual conference. It is every member's responsibility to continue to advance this organization to be the top resource for professionals in collegiate concessions. We still need your continual feedback as we progress through the project to make sure we are still on target to make this the best resource possible.

If you have any suggestions or feedback on what you would like to see with the new website, please email them to [info@nacc-online.com](mailto:info@nacc-online.com).

## Be sure to thank our sponsors

By: NACC

Below is the list of 2016 trade show vendors and sponsors.

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**ByPass Mobile - Sponsor**  
**Casio America**  
**Churchill Container - Sponsor**  
**Concession Solutions, Inc.**  
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**Cres Cor - Sponsor**  
**Dippin Dots**  
**Dynamic Drinkware - Sponsor**  
**Duke MFG**  
**Evo Inc./Ikoniq Carts- Sponsor**  
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## Concessions in China

By: Theresa Traulsen, Concession Solutions, Inc.

As I turned off my phone, email and all other contact with the world December 26th for a 10 day trip with my 17 year old daughter on a once in a life time softball experience in China. The last thing on my mind was observing concession operations in China.

The cultural differences we experienced from the time we arrived in Guangzhou and then Beijing were amazing and fun to experience. Just in case you ever visit Beijing, when their weather says "haze" it is a thick smog like you have never experience in the USA, even L.A. on its worse day cannot compare.

Even when I didn't expect to think about work for 10 days, I found myself sneaking a peak at Chinas version of concessions, how did they display products, menu boards, and what were the most popular menu items among the locals. I would say cans of Pringles and noodle bowls were the top picks for locals.

We visited some great historic locations and a few even had concessions, snack trailers, and street vendors selling the chinese version of concession fare.

Yes, as a matter of fact they do sell hotdogs in China. They are smaller and sweeter than what we are used to serving in our sports venues. Ice Cream, bottle beverages and a lot of packaged products are sold. Sweet treats on a stick were at several of the locations we visited.

Prices were very reasonable in comparison to sports venues in the USA. Most prices were \$1.50 - \$3.00 USD. Judging from the volume of ice cream bars consumed by 22 teenage softball players, the ice cream was awesome!

Thank you Sharon Traulsen for letting mom share a once in a lifetime trip with you!



Good, friendly customer service is the same no matter where you are in the world.