



Press Release

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BABE RUTH FAMILY HEIRLOOM HEADING TO AUCTION BLOCK

SCP Auctions to Offer Ruth's Gold Pocket Watch Presented to Him By The New York Yankees During His Last Appearance at Yankee Stadium on June 13th, 1948



Laguna Niguel, Calif. (April 30, 2014) – SCP Auctions is honored to offer Babe Ruth's gold pocket watch from the 1948 celebration of the 25th anniversary of the opening of "The House That Ruth Built" as part of SCP Auctions' Spring Premier Auction, running today through Saturday, May 17, at www.scpauctions.com. Ruth's pocket watch is the only significant Ruth artifact ever offered directly to the public by the Ruth family.

"This watch represents one of the most significant events in the Babe's storied life," said a direct descendent of Ruth speaking on behalf of the family. "Although most of his personal memorabilia was given away at his consent before and shortly after he passed away, this watch has been kept as one of our family's most cherished heirlooms."

Culminating the historic event on June 13, 1948, the Yankees ceremoniously retired Ruth's uniform No. 3 and presented him with the gold watch. The 14-karat gold Longines pocket watch features engravings on the back that read: "Babe Ruth – Silver Anniversary – Yankee Stadium 1923-1948 'The House That Ruth Built.'" Since his death on Aug. 16, 1948, the watch has been carefully preserved by Ruth's family. It is well documented that the vast majority of Ruth's personal memorabilia was gifted to the National Baseball Hall of Fame shortly after his death. The watch is estimated to sell for upwards of \$750,000. Earlier this year, Babe Ruth's 1923 World Series pocket watch sold at auction for \$717,000.

"This is the most significant item among only a handful of Babe Ruth's personal mementos that his family has retained," said Dan Imler, Vice President of SCP Auctions. "It is difficult to overstate the magnitude of this item. It represents the 25th anniversary of Yankee Stadium - baseball's grandest cathedral, the 25th anniversary of the Yankees first World Championship, the retirement of Ruth's iconic number, and Ruth's final Yankee Stadium appearance and emotional farewell to his beloved fans. In a way, the watch could be perceived as Babe Ruth's 'Lifetime Achievement Award' from the Yankees."

Two months prior to his death, Ruth returned to Yankee Stadium for the last time on June 13, 1948 as part of the 25th anniversary of the opening of “The House That Ruth Built.” One by one, his old friends and former teammates, including those from the Yankees first championship team in 1923, were introduced to the nostalgic cheers of the capacity crowd. Finally, announcer Mel Allen’s voice boomed from the loudspeakers, “Ladies and Gentlemen, George Herman Ruth...Babe Ruth!” Amidst a raucous ovation, the weakened Ruth, frail and ailing with throat cancer, stepped for the last time onto the infield grass, bat in hand, into what W.C. Heinz unforgettably described as “the cauldron of sound he must have known better than any other man.” Draped in his old uniform, he struggled forward, helped by the support of the bat borrowed from then future Hall of Famer Bob Feller, to address the crowd of 49,647 as they showered their hero with one final roar of affection and an ebullient singing of “Auld Lang Syne.” Nat Fein, a photographer for the New York Herald Tribune, immortalized the moment with a Pulitzer Prize-winning photograph that endures as perhaps the most famous image in sports history, aptly titled “The Babe Bows Out.”

The Ruth gold watch will highlight SCP Auctions’ May Spring Premier Auction along with hundreds of other significant items of sports memorabilia and cards, including an important 1939 Lou Gehrig three-page signed personal letter to his Mayo Clinic doctor, the Newport Sports Museum Collection and The Delbert Mickel Estate Collection of important baseball jerseys. Bidding will open to registered bidders Wednesday, April 30 and conclude Saturday, May 17. The auction will be conducted online at SCP Auctions.com. For more information on how to participate, visit www.scpauctions.com or call (949) 831-3700.

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Note: High-resolution photos available upon request.