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the tape

Jack Nicholson

YANKEES GAME

Biggest cheer-getter: President Bush

Celebrities: Jack Nicholson, Billy Crystal, Rosie O'Donnell, Yogi Berra

Strangest security measure: Some fans' miniature U.S. flags were seized.

Best sign: "U.S. Fears Nobody. Play Ball"

National Anthem: Sung by Max Von Essen, Broadway actor and son of city Fire Commissioner Thomas Von Essen.

Freebie: Pins depicting U.S. flag and World Series logo

Fans 'out' in 1st inning due to security

By ED ROBINSON
and MARIA MALAVE

Exceptionally tight security kept thousands of Yankee fans from seeing the first pitch of last night's World Series game.

Police reported no problems at the Stadium — but many fans were angered by the delays.

They shouted, "Refund!" and, "Let us in!" as they stood in lines that lasted an hour or more at metal-detectors set up outside the Stadium.

"I think people were getting a little hot," said Mitchell Barry, 36, of Syosset, L.I., who waited 90 minutes in line and didn't get in until the second inning.

Anne Will, 34, a computer technician from Levittown, L.I., said, "It was hell — I was out there for an hour and a half." But, like many fans, Will said she was willing to put up with the annoying delay.

"It was frustrating, but it was worth it," she said. "I'm glad they were here to make us feel protected."

"There should have been more metal-detectors," said John Backis, 34, of Athens, N.Y.

"I missed the first inning. But if that saved one life, it was worth it."

More than 1,000 police officers were assigned to the Stadium — 100 more than were assigned to Yankee and Shea stadiums during last year's Subway Series.

During the regular season, police assign 65 officers to Yankee games. As usual, Stadium security workers took bottles, cans and coolers from fans headed to the game.

But this time, security was so tight, guards even seized fans' American flags.

Octavio Matos and his girlfriend, Diana Dine, lost the little flags attached to their Yankee caps to security guards who apparently felt the tiny wooden staffs were dangerous.

"They gave us another flag once we got inside," said Dine, 27, a schoolteacher in Norwood, N.J.

Some fans who headed to the station on the elevated No. 4 train found themselves walking farther than they had planned.

As President Bush arrived, riders were ordered off the train at 149th Street, one stop south of the Stadium.

Similar measures were planned for the subway after Bush left the game.

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