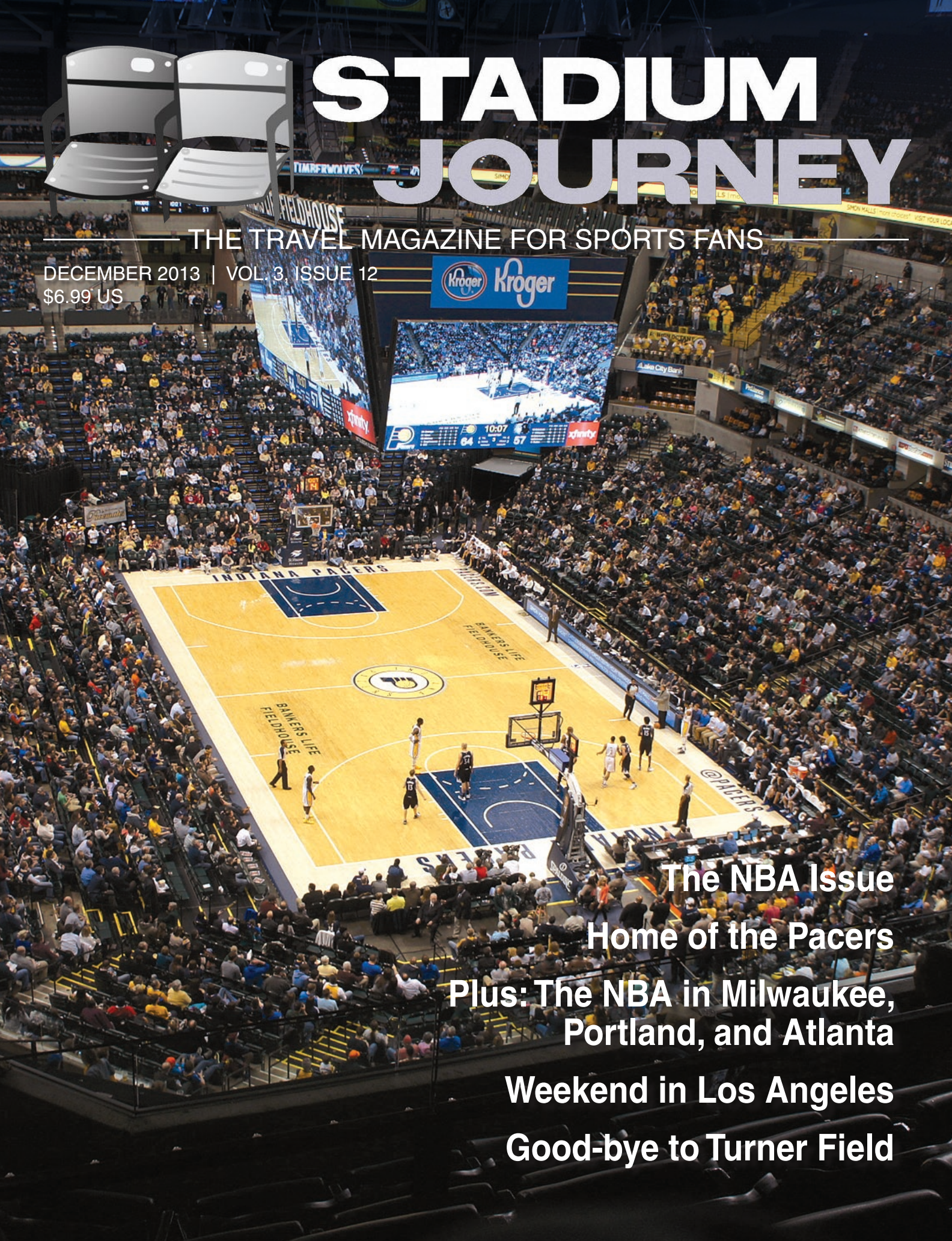




STADIUM JOURNEY

THE TRAVEL MAGAZINE FOR SPORTS FANS

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The NBA Issue
Home of the Pacers
Plus: The NBA in Milwaukee,
Portland, and Atlanta
Weekend in Los Angeles
Good-bye to Turner Field

Contributing Authors:

Bryndon Coughlin, *Regional Correspondent*

James Flannery, *Associate Editor*

Brian Jones, *Regional Correspondent*

Melissa Phillips, *Regional Correspondent*

Zac Richardson, *Special Correspondent*

Kurt Smith, *Special Correspondent*

Marc Viquez, *Regional Correspondent*

Stadium Journey Leadership:

Paul Swaney, *President & Co-Founder*
paul@stadiumjourney.com

Conrad Klank, *Business Development*
conrad.klank@stadiumjourney.com

George Dinsmore, *Managing Partner*

Layout & Design:

Doug Conboy, *Design Consultant*

Marc Viquez, *Cover Photo*

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**FOR WEB AND PRINT ADVERTISING
INFORMATION, CONTACT:**
conrad.klank@stadiumjourney.com

2013 comes to a close, and what a great year it has been for stadium travelers. We hope that our publication has inspired you to go somewhere new, and experience a city through its sports, and stadiums.

Sports is one of the few entertainment options where you can both watch the action in front of you, but also converse with a friend, or someone in a nearby seat who you may have never met before. Sometimes, it is these experiences which elevate a game experience.

There are so many other factors which can go into a great experience. A local food item in the arena, a special tradition, a neighborhood bar or restaurant, knowledgeable fans, catching a souvenir, or seeing a game decided in the final seconds.

We want to know where you plan to go in 2014. Send me a note about the stadium you plan to visit in the next year, or a special experience you had in 2013. We may share it with our readership in our January issue. Thanks for coming along with us this year. Happy Holidays, and of course, Happy Journeys!

Paul

Paul Swaney
President & Co-Founder
www.StadiumJourney.com



Three Days in L.A.

By Zac Richardson, Special Correspondent

Possibly it's to treat a case of football overkill, at the end of a long Bowl season and as the NFL playoffs kick into gear. Perhaps there's a desire to jumpstart focus on the other, often overlooked seasons also in play (the NBA, NCAA basketball, the NHL). Or maybe there's just a desperate need to escape the winter doldrums. Regardless, arguably the all-around best, and most accessible sports getaway in January, can be found in Los Angeles during the second weekend of the month.

Kicking things off, Friday night, January 10th is the first installment of the 2013-14 NBA season's "Battle for L.A.," with the Clippers this time playing as host. Under new coach Doc Rivers, this means, of course, that the Lakers' banners will be obscured – but it is still the Staples Center, regardless, so statues of Magic

Johnson, Jerry West, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, and former broadcaster Chick Hearn will be on full view outside in the Star Plaza. And championship pedigree or not, Stadium Journey has found Clippers games nearly on a par with (and easier to get into than) the Lake Show.

Saturday night calls for a return trip to Staples – this time to see the 2011-12 NHL Champion Los Angeles Kings go up against the perennially powerful Detroit Red Wings (and only a few short weeks before the league breaks so that players can compete in the Sochi Winter Olympics). A swing by Wayne Gretzky's statue in the Star Plaza is definitely in order, here, and while the stadium packaging may not contrast that much from the basketball game day experience (the Kings' championship banners and retired numbers

hang proudly from the rafters, but they are also clearly overshadowed by the Lakers' pennants), the main attraction is of course a whole different ballgame – especially in this clash between the NHL's new and old money.

Next there is a choice, with both the UCLA and USC men's basketball programs in action on Sunday. New coach Steve Alford's Bruins were an Associated Press preseason Top 25 pick, and play host to Arizona State's Sun Devils. The USC Trojans also boast a new coach – Andy Enfield, on the heels of his Florida-Gulf Coast "Dunk City" run to the Sweet 16 – as well as the presumably better opponent (preseason #6 Arizona). A tiebreaker between these options could tilt towards the history witnessed (and nicely documented) in UCLA's recently-renovated Pauley Pavilion – home to all but one of John Wooden's ten NCAA National Championship teams, site of Mary Lou Retton's 1984 Summer Olympics triumph, etc. – but either scenario has its appeal.

A significant benefit of this Southern California trip is the nice weather to enjoy in-between these great sports offerings, especially in the dead of winter. This is something of a dealer's choice, and can encompass everything from window shopping on Rodeo Drive and perusing the Hollywood Walk of Fame, to people watching at Venice Beach or heading to the hills to hike and check out the views (smog-permitting).

But in-between the games, and in addition to the pleasant climate, there is of course a wealth of entertainment and cultural opportunities to soak up as well. For example, sports fans in particular are apt to enjoy the Petersen Automotive Museum. Here, rotating and permanent displays touch on the history of motorized vehicles in various shapes and sizes, functions and contexts. This includes the symbiotic connection of automobiles to a city where, as the saying goes, "nobody walks" – as well as the role of vehicles in L.A.'s most famous industry, films. And at once similar and distinct, the Nethercutt Collection and Museum exhibits an array of collectibles



Photos by Drew Cieszynski



and mechanical wonders (free of charge) that range from a steam locomotive and Pullman Car, to a large and wide array of particularly stylish automobiles throughout history, to items like Nickelodeons, pipe organs, and phonographs.

A presentation sure to thrill the extreme sports fan can be found at the California Science Center, focusing on Felix Baumgartner's 2012 historic jump from the stratosphere down to the New Mexico desert. The exhibit, like the original project, is called Red Bull Stratos, and demonstrates the equipment and science behind the experiment (this museum and display is also free to visitors). Exploits such as Baumgartner's, as well as those witnessed on the hardwood and ice over the weekend, also put one in mind of an exhibition at the great Getty Museum – entitled Gods and Heroes, which shines a light on “some of the mythological stories and

Friday, January 10th
Los Angeles Lakers @
Los Angeles Clippers
7:30pm at Staples Center

Saturday, January 11th
Detroit Red Wings @ Los Angeles Kings
7pm at Staples Center

Sunday, January 12th
Arizona Wildcats @ USC Trojans
6pm at Galen Center

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Arizona State Sun Devils @ UCLA Bruins
7pm at Pauley Pavilion

characters that have been central to Western culture.”

There is even a decent share of entertainment and culture near the grounds of the Staples Center itself, where the L.A. Live complex boasts movie theaters, bars, and restaurants, as well as a shiny new Grammy Museum (currently featuring exhibits on Bob Dylan, Barry White, Cheap Trick, and Michael Jackson, among others).

The list of options could obviously go on and on, and references like tripadvisor.com are invaluable to help with narrowing things down – as well as, in a specific case such as this, a website like discoverlosangeles.com. One way or another, filling time between games clearly will not be a problem. So if the mood strikes, and the opportunity/resources exist, a terrific Los Angeles sporting weekend in January awaits. And if nothing else, it makes for a good wintertime daydream...

