

# **JIM C – SPORTS TERMS**

## **MONDAY - 08/08/2011**

**Ticket prices have skyrocketed; we can't even afford the bleachers.**

### **HOW DID THE TERM “BLEACHERS” ORIGINATE?**

***Wikipedia:*** This distinctively American term is usually defined as a roofless set of benches for the seating of spectators at sporting events, or a framework of long benches set at escalating heights.

***Origin:*** The "bench for spectators at a sports field" sense is attested since 1889; so named because the boards were bleached by the sun. The root of "bleachers" is the verb "bleach," which means "to lighten or whiten by exposure to the sun or by means of chemicals." This developed from the old English "blac," which meant "pale or shining." When "bleacher" first appeared in English around 1550, it meant "one who bleaches." By 1889, we began using it to mean "seating scaffold" or "grandstand."

***Word Detective:*** A similar term, "grandstand" at a sporting event, especially originally at a racecourse, is the principal structure for the seating of spectators, and is usually where the reserved seats and boxes are located. "Grandstand" first appeared around 1834, and by 1888 "grandstand" was also being used as a verb.

**C. W.:** Bleachers = The cheap seats at a sporting event

**Zen:** If you are going to grandstand, you can't be in the bleachers