

## Cow Palace—Sports timeline

The Cow Palace has hosted the complete range of sports, from basketball to roller derby. This comprehensive timeline shows you how important and sometimes quirky that sports history can be.

### Basketball

- 1947. Inter-Collegiate Basketball debut UC Berkeley vs. USF and St. Mary's vs. Oakland Bittners.  
**Fan Fact:** The opening night double header featured UC Berkeley vs. USF, and St. Mary's College vs. Oakland Bittners. (USF and St. Mary's continued to play at regular intervals in the Cow Palace Arena).
- 1956. All Pacific Coast intercollegiate basketball, featuring USF vs. St. Mary's College.  
**Fan Fact:** This game broke both attendance and paid gate records—15,742 and \$19,649 respectively.
- March, 1958. NCAA West Regionals. **Fan Fact:** Seattle University, led by Elgin Baylor, upset CAL to advance to the Final Four.
- 1960. NCAA Basketball Finals.
- 1962. The NBA San Francisco Warriors began play at the Cow Palace through 1964.  
**Fan Fact:** Originally playing in Philadelphia, the Warriors relocated to San Francisco in 1962. They became the San Francisco Warriors (NBA) and called the Cow Palace home from 1962 to 1964, and again from 1966 to 1971. Wilt Chamberlain—the undisputed star of the San Francisco Warriors throughout the 1960s—was known as "Wilt the Stilt" and considered one of the greatest players in basketball history.
- 1964. NBA Finals – Boston Celtics vs. San Francisco Warriors.
- 1966. San Francisco Warriors moved back to the Cow Palace and played through 1971.
- 1967. NBA All-Star Game.
- 1967. NBA Regional Basketball Playoffs with Warriors vs. Lakers. (This was the first nationally televised sports event for the Cow Palace.)
- 1975. Warriors captured the NBA Championships over the Washington Bullets. (Home court Oakland Coliseum was not available.)

### Boxing

- 1949. US Heavyweight Championship Ezzard Charles vs. San Franciscan Pat Valentino.
- 1951. Joe Louis vs. Andy Walker and Joe Louis vs. Cesar Brion.
- 1954. Bobo Olson vs. Rocky Castellano. (This was the first live broadcast of an indoor sports from West Coast.)
- 1960. USA Olympic Boxing Finals.
- September 25, 1962. Heavyweight Championship Floyd Patterson vs. Sonny Liston. This was the first time the Cow Palace used for a CCT event. (Viewers were in Cow Palace. The fight was in Chicago.)

## Roller Derby

- 1955. Bay Bombers debut at the Cow Palace.  
**Fan Fact:** Roller Derby was founded in 1935 by Leo A. Selzer and was first televised in 1948. It became wildly popular with its exaggerated hits and falls. (Pro wrestling was a copycat). The Cow Palace was home to the famous (and infamous) San Francisco Bay Bombers. Stars on this team eventually included Charlie O'Connell, Joanie Weston (the "Blonde Bomber"), and Ann Calvello. The Bombers ruled the banked track at the Cow Palace until they moved to Kezar Stadium.

## Tennis

- 1957. International Professional Tennis Tour launched, featuring Pancho Gonzales and Australia's Ken Rosewall.
- 1974. \$100,000 Firemen's Fund Open Tennis Tournament was introduced at the Cow Palace.

## Skating/Hockey

- 1961. Installation of a permanent ice floor. San Francisco Seals at Cow Palace home through 1967.  
**Fan Fact:** The Cow Palace hosted the San Francisco Seals from 1961 to 1967. The Seals were a minor league hockey team that played in the Western Hockey League. Their games against the rival Portland Buckaroos had the atmosphere of a heavyweight title fight, with games between the two teams routinely attracting crowds of 8,000 or more.
- 1991. San Jose Sharks begin a new era at the Cow Palace through 1993.  
**Fan Fact:** In 1991 the San Jose Sharks of the National Hockey League debuted at the Cow Palace, which hosted the team from 1991 to 1993. The Sharks then moved to their new arena in San Jose.
- 2012-14. The San Francisco Bulls played at the Cow Palace. The Bulls were a professional minor ice hockey team of the ECHL, and an affiliate to the San Jose Sharks.
- 1994. San Francisco Spiders Hockey Team plays a season.
- 2012. San Francisco Bulls, a professional minor-league hockey team for the ECHL, a San Jose Shark affiliate, played at the Cow Palace through 2014.

## Soccer

- 1975. San Jose Earthquakes soccer team.
- 1980. San Francisco Fog (MISL)  
**Fan Fact:** The Major Indoor Soccer League came to the Cow Palace for the 1980–81 season, when David Schoenstadt relocated his Detroit Lightning there and renamed them the San Francisco Fog. After a dismal season with an 11-29 record and less than a thousand fans per game, Schoenstadt moved the franchise to Kemper Arena in Kansas City, Missouri, where the team flourished as the Kansas City Comets.

## Other events

- 1974. Pro Indoor Track Meet.
- 1974. The Soviet Union's Olga Korbut made her Cow Palace debut.
- 2020. San Francisco Shock (OWL), an esports team.