

It's series-ous biz

Yankee stars see ad deals skyrocket

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The Yankees superstar players stand to earn big bucks from endorsements thanks to the World Series — but it's chump change compared to other sports giants.

With their popularity skyrocketing, Yankees men-of-the-moment Bernie Williams and Derek Jeter could earn as much as \$2 million this year as pitchers and nearly \$10,000 per autograph session, experts say.

That's up sharply from just a few weeks ago when these sluggers would have earned in the low six-figures for ads and less than \$5,000 per signing.

"Most of the upper-tier guys could make a half million to two million," said Brandon Steiner, who heads a sports marketing firm which matches athletes with endorsements. But they're not alone.

"Anybody on that team who wants to work can make a few hundred thousand — all the way to the last guy on the bench," Steiner said.

Major companies from Nike to General Motors will no doubt seek out these players, hoping their star power will boost sales. Other top players, like Andy Pettitte and Mariano Rivera, could earn \$25,000 and up per ad contract.

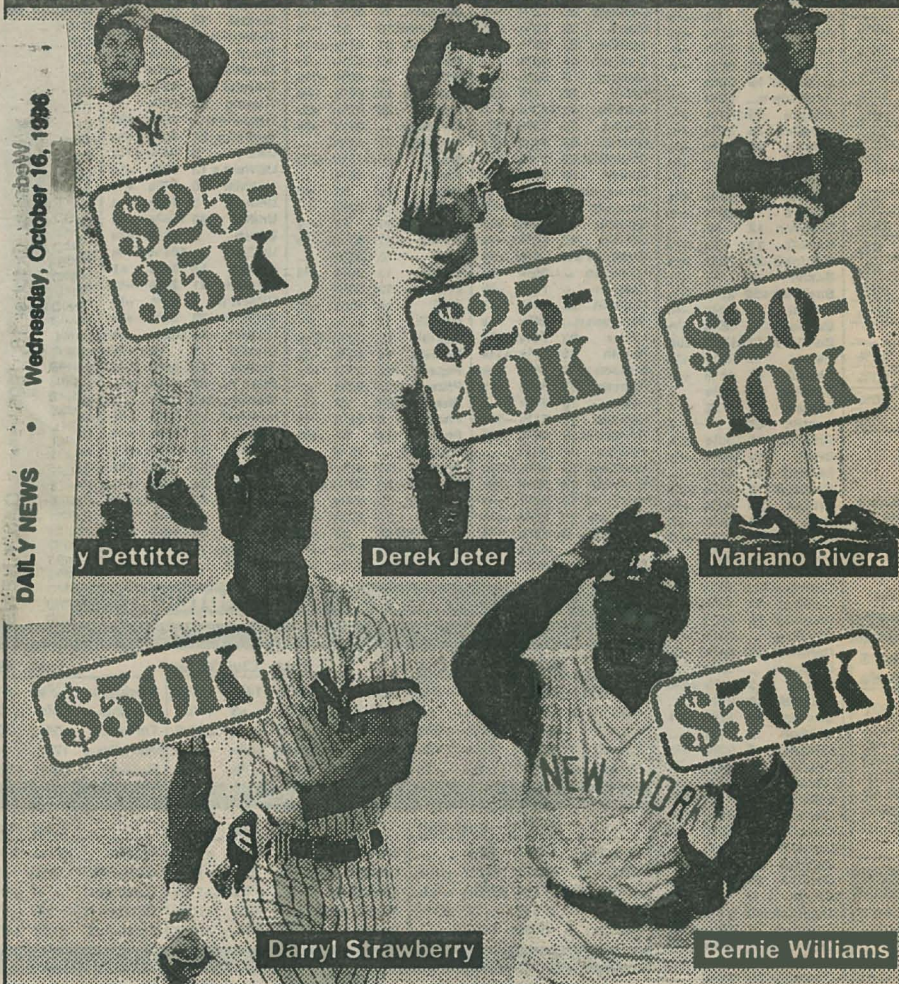
Williams, the MVP of the American League Championship Series, is predicted to earn the most, at least \$50,000 per ad contract. "He clearly has a multimillion dollar marketing opportunity," said Alex Niero of Clarion Performance Properties.

But whatever Williams and his teammates get, it will be far less than their colleagues in the NBA, where hoop stars such as Michael Jordan earn into multi-millions each year from ads.

Major League Baseball has struck out in promoting and marketing its

YANKEE ENDORSEMENTS CONTRACTS

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SOURCE: SILVERMAN MEDIA & MARKETING. FIGURES ARE PER AD DEAL

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players in contrast to other leagues, experts said. Strikes and other labor problems have marred the league's marketing prowess.

"Except for Ken Griffey Jr. I don't know of another baseball player who has a major national TV commercial," said Ira Silverman, man, president of Media & Marketing Group.

The likeliest money-making prospects for the Yanks would be autograph signings and endorsement contracts with local advertisers like car

dealers, sporting goods stores and consumer electronics chains.

Jeter has good prospects and is expected to earn between \$25,000 and \$40,000 per ad. "Everybody likes rookies," said Niero.

Darryl Strawberry, whose marketing ability has suffered because of his personal problems, could also benefit with ad pacts of \$50,000 each. "I think he could command as much money as Bernie Williams under the right circumstances," Silverman said.