

A Giant Victory

One proud organization honors another as Tiffany designs the Super Bowl rings for the New York Giants.



Many said it would never happen, but with a final score of 17 to 14, the New York Giants defeated the New England Patriots in Super Bowl XLII, resulting in one of the biggest upsets in National Football League (NFL) history. On May 29, the world champions were given yet another reason to celebrate when they were invited to Tiffany's New York flagship to receive their custom-designed Super Bowl rings—the final gem in a crowning achievement. And just like their championship, it was certainly worth the wait.

Winning the Sale

Tiffany isn't new to the business of designing rings for the Super Bowl, having created three previously—two for the Washington Redskins in the 1980s, and one for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in 2003. However, the fact that the New York Giants are a local team definitely made it all the more special.

"Mike Kowalski and I had a discussion about the possibility of making their Super Bowl rings," explains Tom O'Rourke, Vice President - Business Sales. "We decided the best approach would be for him to send Giants ownership a letter congratulating them on their win and mentioning the idea of Tiffany creating the rings." But before Kowalski had a chance to send the letter, Tiffany was contacted by the team about that very topic.

"We explained that if the Giants organization was interested in a quality ring from Tiffany, then we would love to make the ring," O'Rourke says. "However, if they just wanted the biggest, gaudiest ring out there, then Tiffany was not the company for the job."

The Mara and Tisch families, owners of the New York Giants, have a great respect for the core values of Tiffany & Co., so it didn't take long to come to a final decision: they really wanted a Tiffany ring to mark their accomplishment.

The Design

Like the victory, the design of the Giants Super Bowl ring was a team effort. Thirteen members of the Giants organization gave their input, including Coach Tom Coughlin and players Amani Toomer, Michael Strahan, Shaun O'Hara and Eli Manning. Tiffany designers Tim Purus, Kacper Dolatowski and Corrine Grealish worked closely with the team to make sure the design was the best it could be.

The first step in the process was determining the elements that were important for the Giants to incorporate into the ring's design. "They definitely wanted their three championships recognized," O'Rourke explains. "They also wanted their 'NY' logo to be prominent, and they wanted their NFL record of 11 straight wins on the road included as well."

Approximately 14 designs were presented to the team. Those were eventually narrowed down to three, which were made into samples. One of these was ultimately chosen.

"Considering how many people were involved, I was really surprised by how smooth the process went," O'Rourke says.

The final design features three Vince Lombardi trophies, signifying the Giants' Super Bowl victories in 1987, 1991 and 2007. The team's "NY" logo is set in round brilliant diamonds, while "World Champions" is emblazoned in raised letters on the top and bottom bezels, with channel-set diamonds on the left and right bezels. "Eleven Straight on the Road," the NFL shield, and the player's name and number appear on one shank. The final score, "Super Bowl XLII," "02.03.08" and "AZ" appear on the other shank.

Making the Ring

A wax-casting process was the primary technique used in the manufacture of the rings. Because each one is personalized with the player's name and number, a mold had to be created for every ring. The rings were created in batches of five, with each batch taking approximately five days to complete.

The rings are 14 karat white gold and feature three marquise-cut diamonds in the footballs on the top bezel (1.85 total carat weight). The center stone is .27 carats and the other two are .2 each. They are valued at \$15,000 each; however, as O'Rourke says, "at the end of the day, the rings are priceless since the only way you can get one is to have won Super Bowl XLII."

Tiffany had just 17 weeks to complete this project from start to finish—an extremely aggressive schedule. "Much like the Giants, when Tiffany employees come together to accomplish a goal, it is truly amazing how we as an organization work," O'Rourke says. "So many people had to drop what they were working on to make this happen." And the result was certainly worthy of the hard-won world championship it represents. ■

BY JUANITA ROBINSON

Tiffany Creativity focuses on high-profile or unusual commissions, customer orders or product requests.