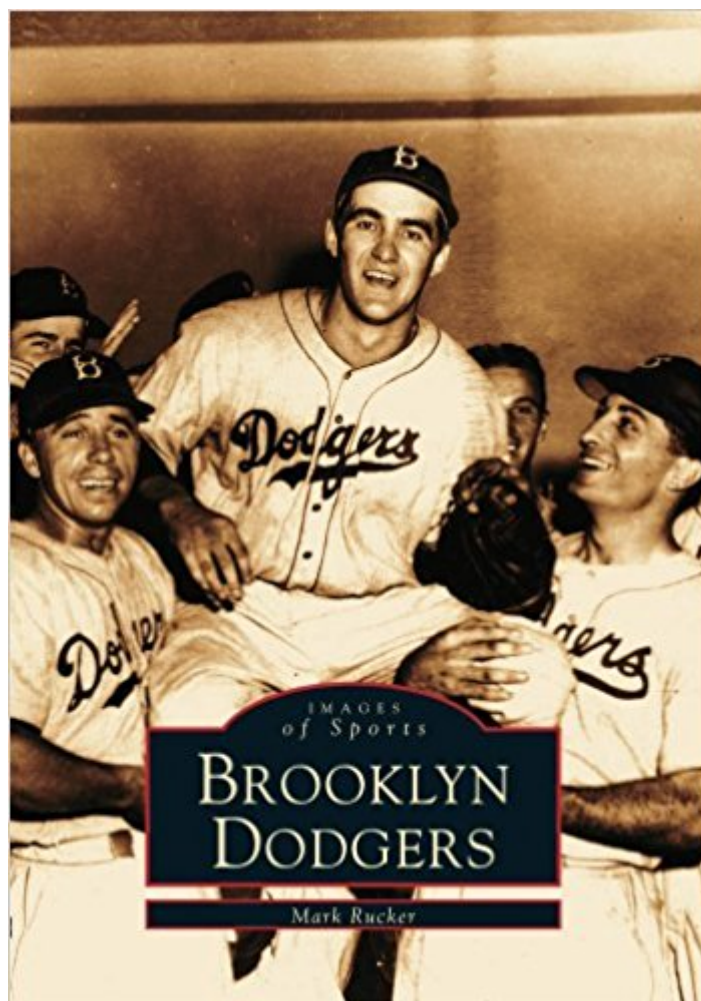


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# The Brooklyn Dodgers (NY) (Images Of Sports)



## Synopsis

If there was ever a place in America where a city and its baseball team were as close as family, it was Brooklyn. The legacy of this relationship comes down to us in stories of childhoods spent at Ebbets Field and in the stories of Jackie Robinson and Branch Rickey, whose courage changed the face of America. Baseball in Brooklyn goes back to the beginning of the sport, when a young city embraced a new game and, like missionaries, carried it to the nation. This book tells the story of that beginning and concludes with the heart-wrenching move of the franchise to the West Coast after the 1957 season. Brooklyn Dodgers carries us from the birth of baseball in the streets of Brooklyn through the decades in Flatbush when Ebbets Field was the center of the Brooklyn community. That was a time when the players lived in the neighborhoods not far from the ballpark, side by side with their followers. Duke Snider, Pee Wee Reese, Jackie Robinson, Gil Hodges, and Johnny Podres all make appearances in this exciting selection of photographs. A large part of Brooklyn Dodgers is dedicated to those teams of the 1950s and their irrepressible fans.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Mark Rucker, an author and editor, is president of the picture agency Transcendental Graphics. He was a pictorial researcher for the Ken Burns film Baseball and is a member of the Society for American Baseball Research. He has produced many sports histories, including biographies of Babe Ruth and Ted Williams.

Author Mark Rucker has gotten hold of some priceless photographs from the Dodger archives in writing *Images of Sports: Brooklyn Dodgers* for ARCADIA PUBLISHING. Rucker includes photos of some of the most significant moments in Dodgers history, including Jackie Robinson staring at home as Bobby Thomson crosses the plate to give the Giants the pennant in 1951, and the great catch by Sandy Amoros in the 1955 World Series to help preserve the game 7 win for Johnny Podres. Balancing these moments of gravitas are spring training shots of Hugh Casey wearing a huge sombrero and of Harold "Pee Wee" Reese signing some autographs at Vero Beach. The book is divided into eight chapters, with the first page of each chapter containing a single photograph that is about twice the size of the other photographs in the book. Other than the introductory pages, generally, all pages of the book have two photographs on them. Among the nuggets of information that Rucker includes in his book are naming the pitcher who Joe DiMaggio called the "meanest man" he had ever seen. (DiMaggio was referring to Whitlow Wyatt, a pitcher in the 1940s for the Dodgers, who Rucker calls an "aggressive knockdown artist.") In his chapter titled "1910-1919," Rucker provides two great shots of future manager Casey Stengel in his playing days, reminding us that Stengel could also play the game, as he hit .364 in the 1916 World Series, leading the Dodgers in batting in the series. The book is not flawless, as second baseman Jerry Coleman is identified as a shortstop on page 121 and on page 117 Rucker states Erskine held the World Series strikeout record of 14 until 1967, when in fact it was 1963 that the record was broken. Rucker fails to point out that the pitcher doing the breaking was none other than Sandy Koufax, who struck out 15 Yankees in game 1 of the World Series. In an ideal world, I would have enjoyed seeing more prose, especially in the introduction to each chapter, allowing Rucker to elaborate on the rich history of the Brooklyn franchise. All in all, this was a quick and enjoyable read. Note: The author of this review is also the author of *Spring Training with the Washington Nationals*, published by FONTHILL MEDIA in April 2015. As with the *Brooklyn Dodgers*, the book on the Nationals is 128 pages and uses some excellent photographs to tell its story. All photographs in *Spring Training with the Washington Nationals* are in color and are part of Fonthill's *Images of Modern America* series.

I expected THE BROOKLYN DODGERS: IMAGES OF SPORT to be a coffee table- sized edition. It's actually a rather slim trade paperback. Regardless of my deflated expectations, this little book by Mark Rucker is a great addition to any Brooklyn Dodger fan's library. The book is crammed with photographs, most of very high quality, and associated commentaries on Brooklyn Dodger (and

proto-Dodger) teams dating back to the 1840s, when Brooklyn appeared in a semi-pro national championship. To judge from the photos and woodcuts of the early era, baseball, if not yet the National Pastime, was Brooklyn's Pastime. Legends about Abner Doubleday aside, baseball was born in Brooklyn. Brooklyn sold the first tickets to games, invented the batting helmet, the warning track, the box score, the curve ball, the wrist snap, had the first televised games, and a host of other innovations. To be fair, some of these innovations, like yellow baseballs and games on ice (!) didn't exactly catch on. It had some of the greatest talent the game has ever seen. If Brooklyn's team struggled along in many seasons, it was only because players like Dazzy Vance or Zack Wheat stood alone as gifted stars on otherwise moderately talented or simply mediocre teams. (Rucker doesn't say whether he is related to the great Dodger pitcher of the Thirties, Nap Rucker.) It would be left to the Yankees to develop their pool of talent into an overwhelming juggernaut of perennially winning teams, at least until the Dodgers' best years in the 1950s. Rucker introduces us to a veritable army of Dodger players, some of who are memorable, like Wee Willie "Hit 'em where they ain't" Keeler, Jim Creighton, Dave Foutz, John Ward Montgomery, and Frenchy Bordagaray; some of whom are forgotten, like Jigger Staats, H.B. Polhemus, and Frank Kitson; some of whom are world-class talents, like Jackie Robinson, Pee Wee Reese, Duke Snider, Roy Campanella and Gil Hodges; and some of whom are better known for their association with other teams, like Casey Stengel and Babe Ruth. Each captioned photograph gives us a snippet of information on the represented player, his record, and his fate. Team photos are revealing as to the evolution and professionalization of the sport. The earliest antebellum tintypes might have been taken by Matthew Brady. The mustachio'd Gay Nineties players all fit the 'Casey At The Bat' stereotype. The Dodgers went through a bewildering array of changes of name and livery until settling on the blue on white script so closely identified with the Borough of Brooklyn (and still used by the Los Angeles club today). Many earlier photos have not survived the years. As a result, the bulk of photographs in the book concern the latter-day Dodgers of the Forties and Fifties. Some of the pictures are familiar, but many are not. All are priceless. Each page of this book is a small gift, to be treasured for its pleasure.

Very pleased with purchase.

My husband loved the book.

An excellent addition to this series. The Brooklyn history ends in 1957 which allows the coverage of

the team to be quite comprehensive. I enjoyed the photography that accompanied the text.

There are many better books out there about the Dodgers. This one, despite some great photos, contains some factual errors, and the text is sparse particularly as it relates to almost everybody's favorite Dodger teams of the early 50s until they split for LA. Ahh...the Duke, Gil, PeeWee, Campy, the Redding Rifle, Newk, Jackie...it was nice to "see" them again.

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