

[PDF] Sandy Koufax: A Lefty's Legacy

Jane Leavy - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: Sandy Koufax: A Lefty's Legacy

Author: Jane Leavy

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Description:

From Publishers Weekly Sportswriter Leavy describes her book as not so much a biography of a ballplayer as a social history of baseball, with the former star pitcher's career as the barometer of change. While both a preface and an introduction spin Leavy's storytelling wheels, a compelling, literary social history does indeed get rolling. Koufax refused to participate in the project, so Leavy has spoken to hundreds of people with something to share on the former Brooklyn/L.A. Dodger Hank Aaron, Joe Torre, childhood friend and Mets co-owner Fred Wilpon and even the old Dodgers equipment manager among them and their testimonies make for a rich baseball pastiche and an engaging look at the game's more innocent period. Koufax capped off his first year by watching the 1955 World Series against the hated Yankees from the bench, and following the Dodgers' historic victory headed from Yankee Stadium to class at Columbia University, where he studied architecture (in case the baseball thing didn't work out). Even when Leavy's historical anecdotes are quaint, they prove timely: she details Koufax holding out for a better contract with fellow star pitcher Don

Drysdale in '66, paving the way for free agency. While Leavy's interest in Koufax's Jewish heritage at times seems to border on the obsessive, she delivers an honest and exquisitely detailed examination of a complex man, one whose skills were such that slugger Willie Stargell once likened hitting against Koufax to "trying to drink coffee with a fork."

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From Library Journal This highly anticipated book affords a lucid examination of arguably major league baseball's all-time greatest southpaw pitcher, from his bonus baby days with the world-champion Brooklyn Dodgers to his receipt of three Cy Young awards as the game's top moundsman. But Leavy's (Squeeze Play) story is far richer than simply a tale of the promising youngster who finally struck gold. Calling on her hundreds of interviews, she offers a richly drawn account of an often misunderstood yet greatly celebrated athlete. Leavy also captures a not-too-distant era in American life when the scourge of anti-Semitism never lurked far beneath the surface. Koufax comes across as a boy from Brooklyn who was comfortable with his secular brand of Jewishness but didn't need to wear it on his sleeve. He was also a naturally gifted celebrity athlete, blessed by unique musculature, long fingers perfectly suited for power pitching, and movie-star looks. At the same time, the battles Koufax endured, with his own youthful problems and his manager, made him more determined to excel in the fashion that he would, particularly in five golden years, 1962-66, when he shone as baseball's finest. Offering an apt analysis of Koufax and pitching partner Don Drysdale's role in challenging baseball's antiquated reserve clause, this biography also dispels the notion that its subject, once out of baseball, proved a tormented soul. Highly recommended.

R.C. Cottrell, California State Univ., Chico

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