

THE PERFECT FATHER'S DAY GIFT

LEFTY

An American Odyssey



Babe & Lefty



Bill Dickey, Lefty Gomez & Lou Gehrig

"Baseball fans everywhere will appreciate this book."
-- Steven Tellefsen, CEO, Babe Ruth League, Inc.

"Gomez recaptures the magic of a time when Baseball and Broadway were our true national pastimes."
-- Mike Greenberg, ESPN's Mike and Mike in the Morning

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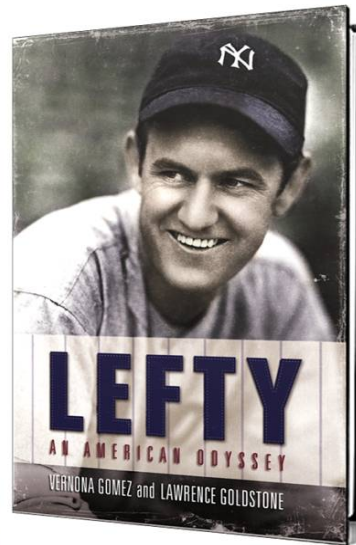
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Visiting With Author Lawrence Goldstone...

Biography is a unique exercise for a writer. By the time you've finished researching your subject, you feel almost like a member of the family, which can sometimes be a mixed blessing. When Vernona Gomez first approached me about collaborating on a book about her dad, I wasn't certain how I'd feel when it was done. I'd hear of Lefty, of course, mostly through his one-liners and antics. But growing up in Brooklyn and venerating the Dodgers, I also knew he was a dominant pitcher for the hated Yankees, helping them to win a bunch of World Series while we waited, painfully and fruitlessly, for our first. (Life got a lot better after 1955, but even that was short-lived as the team moved to Los Angeles three years later.)

About Lefty the man, however? Nothing. I did know that many of the world's funniest and most gregarious people in public could be gloomy and even abusive in their private lives. Would Lefty Gomez be one of those? If he was, how could I write a book with his daughter? I need not have worried. Vernon Louis Gomez turned out to be every bit as unique out of the spotlight as in. His generosity, often to strangers, was astonishing. He once literally gave a man on the street the coat off his back. He always had time to talk, to counsel, to give advice. Often, he inspired.

Lefty was also a far more complex man than his "El Gofo" persona would have implied. His wit was incisive and fast, born of high intelligence and keen observation. That he chose to make himself the butt of many of his jokes sprung from an essential kindness and sense of fair play. He had almost total recall. I read through hours and hours of interviews that Lefty had done with Vernona and discovered that I was most drawn to his life before the major leagues. His childhood in rural California seemed to combine elements of John Steinbeck and Mark Twain. His recollections of his friends, siblings, parents, and even Anastasia Dean, the elementary school principal who rapped him across the knuckles with a ruler until he learned to write right-handed, were irresistible.

Of course, Lefty's love of baseball and generosity of spirit are no secret to Babe Ruth League players, volunteers, and officials. And that's as it should be. Because I learned of all he achieved in his life, all the celebrities who knew and admired him, from Jack Dempsey to Ernest Hemingway, there was absolutely nowhere that Lefty Gomez would rather be than on a ball field with a bunch of kids.

Baseball fans everywhere will appreciate the book, LEFTY: AN AMERICAN ODYSSEY. A baseball legend distinguished by his competitive nature, quick wit, and generous spirit, Lefty Gomez was one of a kind. Told for the first time, this is his remarkable story. Get your copy today.