



Ty and The Babe: Baseball's Fiercest Rivals: A Surprising Friendship and the 1941 Has-Beens Golf Championship

Tom Stanton

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Early in the twentieth century, fate thrust a young Babe Ruth into the gleaming orbit of Ty Cobb. The resulting collision produced a dazzling explosion and a struggle of mythic magnitude. At stake was not just baseball dominance, but eternal glory and the very soul of a sport. For much of fourteen seasons, the Cobb-Ruth rivalry occupied both men and enthralled a generation of fans. Even their retirement from the ball diamond didn't extinguish it.

On the cusp of America's entry into World War II, a quarter century after they first met at Navin Field, Cobb and Ruth rekindled their long-simmering feud-this time on the golf course. Ty and Babe battled on the fairways of Long Island, New York; Newton, Massachusetts; and Grosse Ile, Michigan; in a series of charity matches that spawned national headlines and catapulted them once more into the spotlight.

Ty and The Babe is the story of their remarkable relationship. It is a tale of grand gestures and petty jealousies, superstition and egotism, spectacular feats and dirty tricks, mind games and athleticism, confrontations, conflagrations, good humor, growth, redemption, and, ultimately, friendship. Spanning several decades, *Ty and The Babe* conjures the rollicking cities of New York, Boston, and Detroit and the raucous world of baseball from 1915 to 1928, as it moved from the Deadball days of Cobb to the Lively Ball era of Ruth. It also visits the spring and summer of 1941, starting with the Masters Tournament at Augusta National, where Cobb formally challenged Ruth, and continuing with the golf showdown that saw both men employ secret weapons.

On these pages, author Tom Stanton challenges the stereotypes that have cast Cobb forever as a Satan and Ruth as a Santa Claus. Along the way, he brings to life a parade of memorable characters: Bobby Jones, Walter Hagen, Grantland Rice, Tris Speaker, Lou Gehrig, Will Rogers, Joe DiMaggio, a trick shot-shooting former fugitive, and a fifteen-year-old caddy with an impeccable golf lineage.

No other ball players dominated their time as formidably as Ty Cobb and Babe Ruth. Even today, many decades since either man walked this earth, they tower over the sport. Who was better? Who was the greatest? Those questions followed them throughout their baseball careers, into retirement, and onto the putting greens. That they linger yet is a testament to their talents and personalities.

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