



Ty Cobb: A Terrible Beauty

Charles Leerhsen

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A fascinating and authoritative biography of perhaps the most controversial player in baseball history, Ty Cobb—“The best work ever written on this American sports legend: It’s a major reconsideration of a reputation unfairly maligned for decades” (*The Boston Globe*).

Ty Cobb is baseball royalty, maybe even the greatest player ever. His lifetime batting average is still the highest in history, and when he retired in 1928, after twenty-one years with the Detroit Tigers and two with the Philadelphia Athletics, he held more than ninety records. But the numbers don’t tell half of Cobb’s tale. The Georgia Peach was by far the most thrilling player of the era: When the Hall of Fame began in 1936, he was the first player voted in.

But Cobb was also one of the game’s most controversial characters. He got in a lot of fights, on and off the field, and was often accused of being overly aggressive. Even his supporters acknowledged that he was a fierce competitor, but he was also widely admired. After his death in 1961, however, his reputation morphed into that of a virulent racist who also hated children and women, and was in turn hated by his peers.

How did this happen? Who is the real Ty Cobb? Setting the record straight, Charles Leerhsen pushed aside the myths, traveled to Georgia and Detroit, and re-traced Cobb’s journey from the shy son of a professor and state senator who was progressive on race for his time to America’s first true sports celebrity. The result is a “noble [and] convincing” (*The New York Times Book Review*) biography that is “groundbreaking, thorough, and compelling...The most complete, well-researched, and thorough treatment that has ever been written” (*The Tampa Tribune*).

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