Barber, Red (1908-1992) Encyclopedia Article

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Walter Lanier "Red" Barber was a pioneer in sports broadcasting on both radio and television. In 1934 Barber was hired by Larry MacPhail of the Cincinnati Reds to be their first play-by-play announcer. He was also a pioneer in college and professional football broadcasting. In Cincinnati Barber broadcast the first major league night game, and in 1935 he broadcast his first World Series.

Barber followed MacPhail to Brooklyn, and there he pioneered baseball on radio in New York. He was at the microphone for the first televised major league baseball game in 1939, and he was with the Dodgers when Jackie Robinson came to Brooklyn in 1947. In 1954 Barber moved to Yankee Stadium where he remained until 1966. He made the radio call of Roger Maris's sixty-first home run.

Barber retired to Tallahassee, Florida, where he wrote seven books, and began a second career as commentator on National Public Radio's Morning Edition in 1981. His popular Friday morning conversations with host Bob Edwards covered a wide range of topics, from his garden, to sports, to the foibles of humanity.

Further Reading:

Barber, Red. *1947—When All Hell Broke Loose in Baseball.* Garden City, New York, Doubleday, 1982.

——. *The Broadcasters.* New York, The Dial Press, 1970.

Edwards, Bob. *Fridays with Red: A Radio Friendship.* New York, Simon and Schuster, 1993.