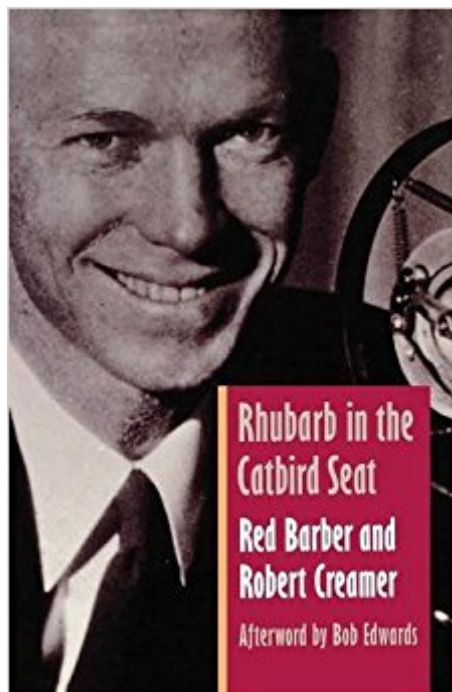


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# Rhubarb In The Catbird Seat



## Synopsis

For more than fifty years Red Barber was the voice of baseball. The game was broadcast sporadically until the late 1930s, when Barber burst into prominence by bringing it home to radio listeners, play by play. More than half a century later, he could still be heard, broadcasting over National Public Radio from his retirement home in Tallahassee. Announcing for the Brooklyn Dodgers and later for the New York Yankees, he became a legend long before his death in 1992. Red Barber's story reveals the growth and changes in baseball over the years, the demands of sportscasting, and the difference between radio and television reporting. Here is Red giving major play-by-plays of his own life and career with characteristic wit and integrity.

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## Customer Reviews

His voice was instantly recognizable. Red Barber's languid drawl was so familiar to baseball fans of the '30s through the '60s that it seemed like he'd single-handedly invented the art of play-by-play announcing. The truth is, he pretty much did: the old redhead sitting up in what he called his catbird seat, telling stories as integral to the game as the sound of horsehide on leather. His autobiography is, in a sense, the story of American sportscasting, but it is also much more than that; it is also a story of triumph over prejudice, and integrity over comfort. A son of the Old South, Barber grew up in a racist world, and took that world with him when he moved north to Brooklyn, and he experienced first-hand its head-on collision with what would be the new world of integrated baseball. Barber was the Dodgers broadcaster when Branch Rickey decided he would smash the color line; Barber was one of the first he informed of his plans. "I believe," Barber recalls in the most moving

section of a wonderful memoir, "that he told me about it so far in advance so that I could have time to wrestle with the problem, live with it, solve it ... I set out to do a deep self-examination. I attempted to find out who I was." This is remarkable candor in a sporting memoir, more remarkable for the way Barber brings us in to his own confrontation with himself, and his conclusion that Jackie Robinson ultimately did far more for him than he, as the voice that introduced Robinson to baseball fans, ever did for Robinson. Barber is helped throughout by his magnificent ability to tell stories, remember details, and turn past into present. Just as he painted full, rich, compelling pictures with his words over the airwaves, so he does on the page, bringing another series of steps in the long march of baseball to life. Barber witnessed plenty of rhubarbs from his perch in the catbird seat; fans of baseball--and autobiography--will revel in the insights Barber brings to sorting them out. --Jeff Silverman

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As a kid I listened to Red Barber and the fumbling losing Dodgers....who finally won a World Series in 1955....and this nice reminiscence by the Old Redhead who passed the baton to Vin Scully, who no longer is a kid....this is a fun book for Dodger fans and baseball lovers.

Love this book. Red Barber went to my alma mater and I worked in the newsroom named after him, but I never knew all of his back story. This is a delightful, honest, homespun account of the Ol' Redhead's humble beginnings and career. Recommend it highly for baseball fans or aspiring broadcasters.

Excellent book, excellent service.

Great seller, fantastic book. Better than expected. Wonderful bit of baseball history and

memorabilia. Red Barber is a larger than life figure, and this book captures it beautifully.

While you are reading this book you can feel the breeze coming through the open windows of a warm summer afternoon. The curtains are billowing and the radio is crackling with excitement. You can hear the crack of the bat, the sing of leather hitting wood. When on the road, going from city to city you are jostled by the motion of the train. Mr. Barber writes such a descriptive story, that you feel that you are right there as part of the story. This takes you back to a gentler time in life. I read this book at the start of every baseball season and never tire of it. I take it out of the library, I love the feel and the smell of the old yellowing pages, the black and white photographs. It puts me in the baseball mood. Sometimes, I feel as though Branch Rickey is going to join me for lunch.

THIS IS A GOOD SOLID YARN ABOUT ONE OF THE BEST RADIO MEN IN THE HISTORY OF BROADCASTING. RED BARBER WRITES ABOUT HIS LIFE AND BEHIND THE SCENES IN THE BROADCASTING INDUSTRY. HIS HONESTY AND DETAILED RENDITION MAKE THIS A GOOD READ. WISH HE WOULD HAVE WRITTEN MORE ABOUT THE GAMES HE COVERED BUT THAT IS THE ONLY REAL THING I DIDN'T LIKE ABOUT THIS. FOR ALL FANS OF BASEBALL AND BROADCASTING HISTORY BUFFS. RECOMMENDED.

Problem here is that it isn't Barber's book. Creamer, about as southern as Halifax, slicks matters. Skip this. Look at Barber's work without Creamer on 1947 or actual NPR broadcast transcripts, edited, but not intruded upon by Bob Edwards.

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