



Roger Maris: Baseball's Reluctant Hero

Tom Clavin, Danny Peary

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Tom Clavin and Danny Peary chronicle the life and career of baseball's "natural home run king" in the first definitive biography of Roger Maris—including a brand-new chapter to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of his record breaking season.

Roger Maris may be the greatest ballplayer no one really knows. In 1961, the soft-spoken man from the frozen plains of North Dakota enjoyed one of the most amazing seasons in baseball history, when he outslugged his teammate Mickey Mantle to become the game's natural home-run king. It was Mantle himself who said, "Roger was as good a man and as good a ballplayer as there ever was." Yet Maris was vilified by fans and the press and has never received his due from biographers—until now.

Tom Clavin and Danny Peary trace the dramatic arc of Maris's life, from his boyhood in Fargo through his early pro career in the Cleveland Indians farm program, to his World Series championship years in New York and beyond. At the center is the exciting story of the 1961 season and the ordeal Maris endured as an outsider in Yankee pinstripes, unloved by fans who compared him unfavorably to their heroes Ruth and Mantle, relentlessly attacked by an aggressive press corps who found him cold and inaccessible, and treated miserably by the organization. After the tremendous challenge of breaking Ruth's record was behind him, Maris ultimately regained his love of baseball as a member of the world champion St. Louis Cardinals. And over time, he gained redemption in the eyes of the Yankee faithful.

With research drawn from more than 130 interviews with Maris's teammates, opponents, family, and friends, as well as sixteen pages of photos, some of which have never before been seen, this timely and poignant biography sheds light on an iconic figure from baseball's golden era—and establishes the importance of his role in the game's history.

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