

'Giants Win... and the Place Is Going Crazy'

Russ Hodges' Broadcast Captures Excitement of Thomson's Homer

EDITOR'S NOTE: The explosive excitement of Bobby Thomson's homer, which won the National League playoff and pennant for the Giants, was captured by Russ Hodges, Giants' play-by-play announcer, in his broadcast of the game. The following narration of the dramatic climax was taken from a recording of the broadcast by Hodges, named by The Sporting News as the No. 1 National League announcer of 1950 and the senior major's outstanding television announcer of 1951. The account starts with one out in the ninth inning for the Giants, Alvin Dark on third base, Don Mueller on first, and Whitey Lockman at bat.

Well, light up a Chesterfield and we'll see what will happen here. Whitey Lockman has one hit today and a sacrifice. Newcombe's out talking to Reese and over talking to Robinson. They're talking about the way to pitch to Lockman. Bobby Thomson is off to the right of home plate. First and third occupied, one down.

Lockman is the fellow who has to get on. He represents the tying run. Big Newk stretches. The pitch to Lockman and he swings and fouls it back as he went for a high, fast ball. That's the kind of ball that Whitey can hit for distance.

It's 4 to 1 Brooklyn. This is the last of the ninth inning, and with one out. It's the last of the ninth inning in more respects than you've ever seen. It's the last of the ninth inning of 1951.

Mueller with his lead, Alvin Dark going wide down the third base line. The pitch to Whitey. There it goes—a line drive base hit to left field. Here comes Al Dark scoring. Don Mueller tries for third, Lockman tries for second. Lockman is in

there. He represents the tying run and the Dodgers' lead now is 4 to 2.

Don Mueller might have hurt himself sliding into third. Whitey Lockman doubled into the left field corner and Bobby Thomson will be the Giant batter. Don jammed his ankle sliding into third and Doc Bowman is out there. Whitey doubled over third base. Chuck Dressen walks out slowly. Whitey Lockman, with time out, goes over to look at Don Mueller, the boy that the Giants and Giant fans liken to Mandrake.

Bobby Thomson, with the score 4 to 2, will be batting with runners at second and third, and Lockman, at second, one of the fastest of the Giants, represents the tying run. I've never seen anything like this one in a long, long time. It's something like a hundred years, and I've been around for only 99.

Mueller Carried Off Field

Mueller seems to have hurt himself and Doc Bowman is working on him. Are they going to bring the stretcher out? Yes, they are. They're going to have to take Mueller out of the game. Dr. Anthony Palermo, the Giants' physician, goes down to look Mueller over, along with Doc Bowman. Mueller seems to be suffering quite a bit. It's really a tough break to have this happen in the last inning.

Well, it might not be the last inning. If the Giants tie it up, we'll certainly go on into ten. But it's the last ball game of the year. Don is going to be removed from the field on a stretcher.

The Dodgers have another conference out there. Chuck Dressen is making up his mind whether to bring in Powerhouse Ralph Branca, Carl Erskine or Clem Labine. And he is going to make the pitching change. Don Mueller is

'Don't Go Away'



Russ Hodges

being carried off the field and he will get a tremendous ovation from this big crowd at the Polo Grounds. And Ralph Branca will come in. They're going to put Clint Hartung in to run for Mueller. Hank Schenz returns to the bench, and Ralph Branca makes the long walk from the bull pen.

Don Newcombe has come up with a tremendous effort. The Giants have the tying runs at second and third as they have come up with three hits in this inning. Alvin Dark beat out a hit off the glove of Gil Hodges. Don Mueller singled Dark to third. Monte Irvin popped to first. Whitey Lockman got his

second hit of the day—a line drive double to the left field corner.

Then Newcombe leaves the game. As he leads by a score of 4 to 2, he cannot become the losing pitcher, although the tying runs are his responsibility. And big Ralph Branca is in to pitch for Brooklyn.

Newcombe worked a total of 8½ innings and has given up a total of seven Giant hits. Newcombe, in his time out there, struck out two men and walked two.

Clint Hartung is at third base, Whitey Lockman is at second, the Dodgers lead, 4 to 2, and Ralph Branca, who has won 13 ball games, is on the hill—13 and 11. He's given up 18 home runs. Bobby Thomson against the Brooklyn club has hit a lot of the long ones this year. He's had seven homers.

So don't go away. Light up that Chesterfield, stay right with us and we'll see how Ralph Branca will fare against Bobby Thomson and then Willie Mays to follow.

Jim Hearn goes into the bull pen. Jack Lohrke runs down to the bull pen to warm up, indicative of the fact that if the Giants tie it and go into the top of the tenth inning, they'll put Bobby Thomson into the outfield and Lohrke will play third base. Jim Hearn warming up in the bull pen. He has not appeared in relief this year. Clem Labine throws in the bull pen, along with Carl Erskine.

Bobby Thomson is on the biggest spot of his entire baseball career. He'll be up there against Ralph Branca swinging. A home run would win it and win the championship. A single to the outfield would more than likely tie up the ball game and keep the inning going.

So Leo Durocher runs over and talks to Bobby. The Dodgers' lead is 4 to 2. Willie Mays walks slowly out of the dugout to be the next Giant hitter. Branca's on the spot—he knows it. The big boy from Mt.

Vernon, N. Y., with a slight cold, wipes the perspiration from his brow and the Dodgers play their infield deep. There's no double play possibility on a ground ball. Billy Cox is deep.

Bobby Thomson has two out of three. Jim Hearn in the Giants' bull pen. Bobby Thomson up there swinging. He's had two out of three—a single and a double—and Billy Cox is playing him right on the third base line. One out and the last of the ninth.

'It's Gonna Be, I Believe...'

Branca pitches and Bobby Thomson takes a strike called on the inside corner. Bobby's hitting at .292. He's had a single and a double and he drove in the Giants' first run with a long fly to center. Brooklyn leads, 4 to 2. Hartung down the line at third, not taking any chances. Lockman without too big a lead at second, but he will be running like the wind, if Thomson hits one.

Branca throws. There's a long fly—it's gonna be... I believe... the Giants win the pennant! The Giants win the pennant! The Giants win the pennant!

Bobby hit into the lower deck of the left field stands. The Giants win the pennant and they're going crazy, they're going crazy. I don't believe it, I don't believe it, I will not believe it.

Bobby Thomson hit a line drive into the lower deck of the left field stands and the place is going crazy. The Giants—Horace Stoneham's got a winner. The Giants win it by a score of 5 to 4. And they're picking up Bobby Thomson and carrying him off the field. And the Dodgers cooled off—and if you want to put a little frosting on the cake—Bobby Thomson drove in three runs for a total of 100.

Season's High and Low Spots

Traders Missed on Fain, But He Didn't Miss Bag

By BOB BURNES

Of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat ST. LOUIS, Mo.



Ferris Fain

Worst Trading Guess—Tigers, Yankees, maybe some others who had a chance to get Ferris Fain of the Athletics last winter. A's had Lou Limmer, home run hitting first sacker, coming up from St. Paul, offered the expendable Fain as trading bait. Other teams rejected offers, saying: "A's demands are too high; they must think Fain is a great ball player." Known previously for his fielding, Fain went out and won the league batting championship.

Silliest Accident—Same guy, Fain. Disgusted when he popped out in a game at Chicago, Fain aimed a kick at the first base bag when he took his position, broke a couple of bones in his foot. Out over a month, he barely got in enough games and times at bat to claim the hitting championship.

Most Embarrassed Players—Tie between Whitey Lockman of Giants and Willie Jones of Phils, both of whom were victims of baseball's old gimmick, the hidden ball trick. Perpetrators were Connie Ryan of the Reds (against Lockman) and Earl Torgeson of Braves (against Jones).

Worst Start—By New York Giants, who won one, lost one, won another, then lost 11 in a row.

... And Best Finish—Same club, which won 16 in a row in August and 23 of its last 47 to come from 13½ games back to pull out National League pennant.

Top Quick-Change Artist—Bobby Thomson of Giants, who moved from goal to hero with one swish of bat.

'Nothing Like It in 40 Years'—Salsinger

H. G. Salsinger, Detroit News: "It was the third and final game of the National League playoff, at the Polo Grounds in New York, on the sunny and balmy afternoon of October 3.

"The Giants had won the first game, 3 to 1, and the Dodgers the second, 10 to 0, and now in the third game the Dodgers were leading, 4 to 1, going into the home half of the ninth inning. Brooklyn was beginning to, celebrate another pennant victory.

"Don Newcombe, the Dodgers' giant righthander, had held the Giants to four hits and one scratch run in eight innings and he looked big and strong enough to handcuff them one more inning, protecting his three-run lead.

"Alvin Dark opened the home ninth with an infield single. Don Mueller singled cleanly to right, sending Dark to third. Monte Irvin, the Giants' strong man, went out to Gil Hodges unassisted at first base. Whitey Lockman followed with a double to left, a hit that scored Dark from third and moved Mueller ahead two bases, but Don was injured sliding into third and Clint Hartung ran for him.

"The Dodgers were still two runs ahead, but the Giants had a runner on third and the tying run on second, so Charlie Dressen removed Newcombe and substituted Ralph Branca, who had started and lost the first game of the playoff when Bobby Thomson, the Giants' third baseman, hit a home run with a runner on base.

"In came Branca, one of the game's unluckiest pitchers, and the first man who faced him was this same Thomson. Branca threw a called strike. He tried another. This time Thomson swung and the ball landed in the lower deck of the left field pavilion. Three runs scored on the hit and the Giants were champions of the National League.

"It was a minute or more before the crowd realized that one hit had turned defeat into victory, one pitched ball had lost a pennant and the same pitched ball had won one. Then, as the reporters are fond of saying, pandemonium broke loose.

"I have watched major league baseball for more than 40 years but never a more dramatic game than this one."

Stiles Saw His Pets, Rams, Win Title on 50th Birthday

Maxwell Stiles, Los Angeles Mirror: "There's no thrill in sports quite the equal of having a man or a team for whom you root, with whom you live and whom you count among your closest friends, win the highest honors within reach. I live and travel with and root for the Los Angeles Rams, for they are my job from early July until mid-December of each year.

"On December 23 I was able to celebrate my fiftieth birthday by watching the Rams defeat the mighty Cleveland Browns for the football championship of the world. That was my sports thrill of the year.

"No team ever before had beaten the Browns in an important game when the blue chips were down. Jumbo Joe Stydahar's team was the first to do that. It was, indeed, a Merry Christmas for Joe and his men, and a happy birthday for one whose golden years ended on a golden moment."

Johnny Tobin of Browns was walking to the mound trailing a long rope back of him. ("To ring a bell to let this guy know he's done," was Tobin's answer.) First game of Sunday double-header,

Thomson's Blow Frosting on Cake for Russ Hodges

"Looking back on my most thrilling baseball season, I'll have to go along with Bobby Thomson's million-dollar homer as the frosting on the cake," says Russ Hodges, broadcaster of Giants' games. "But there were so many big moments crowded into the last two months of the campaign that I'm just like a kid on Christmas morning—just too darn many surprises. THE SPORTING NEWS' TV award came along to make me delirious with pride and joy—right at the time the Giants were on their 16-game streak that startled the entire baseball world. Then I wound up as one of the announcers at the World's Series. But I must admit that when Bobby the Hawk exploded, all my baseball dreams came true."

apparently being through because of illness and injury.

Biggest Disappointments—Two husky first basemen, Walt Dropo of Red Sox, Ted Kluszewski of Reds, neither of whom approximated 1950 work in 1951. In teams, the Red Sox, as usual, and the Phils, who never threatened to repeat.

Best Manager—Leo Durocher, easily, with low bows to Casey Stengel, Paul Richards and Jimmie Dykes for fine work.

Most Improved Player—Solly Hemus of Cards, who hated to see the season end; Nelson Fox of White Sox.

Most Distressed—Chuck Dressen of Dodgers, who called his team "the greatest" in June, still doesn't know what happened.

Best and Briefest Description of Year—By Martin Haley of Globe-Democrat staff who, after Steve Bilko, Don Bollweg, Glenn Nelson and Nippy Jones had failed with Cardinals, summed up the whole thing in one word: "Stan Musial made his ANNUAL return to first base last night."

Year's Best Explanation—By Glenn Nelson, formerly of the Cardinals, while with the Pirates. Attempted to steal home one night with Pirates several runs behind in late inning. Pressed for an explanation by harassed manager, Bill Meyer, Nelson simply said: "That's why they call me 'Rocky,' I guess."