

Scout, Seeing Reese, Feared Eyes Fooled Him

Passed Up By Red Sox, He Became Dodger Star

Evans Planned to Buy Louisville Club to Get Shortstop; Now 'Pale Little Fellow' Is Captain of Brooklyn Team

By TOM MEANY

Of the New York Morning Telegraph
NEW YORK, N. Y.

When Ted McGrew, scouting for the Dodgers, first saw Pee Wee Reese playing for Louisville, he couldn't believe it. And when Ted told Larry MacPhail, the Brooklyn boss, he didn't believe it, either. So Larry sneaked Andy High into the American Association to double-check on McGrew's report. When High, more conservative than the ebullient McGrew, came back and okayed Ted's report, Larry decided that it was true what they said about Pee Wee.

The details of the acquisition of Reese by the Dodgers would make a fairly good script for a musical comedy. McGrew finally clinched the deal by nailing Frank McKinney on a golf course while Clarence Rowland, scout for the Cubs, was sitting serenely in the ante room of McKinney's office, awaiting Frank's return from the links. The Red Sox, at the time, were planning to purchase the entire Louisville franchise so as to have first call on Reese, because Billy Evans, then general manager of the Sox, figured Pee Wee was just the boy to understudy Joe Cronin, whose underpinning wasn't what it had been.

Cronin decided that there was life in the old boy yet and permitted the sale of Reese to the Dodgers, an act which caused Evans to decide that the Red Sox post wasn't the best of all possible jobs. By a marvelous stroke of luck, Louisville came through with another first shortstop in Johnny Pesky, so Boston did find a replacement for Cronin after all.

Not since Portland had its great run of shortstops with Roger Peckinpaugh and Dave Baneroff had any minor league club furnished anything like the Reese-Pesky succession.

Cost \$10,000, Plus Players

Brooklyn gave \$40,000 for Reese, plus some athletes rather optimistically listed in that catch-all phrase which goes with cash deals at "and players." It was a lot of money for the Dodgers to spend—particularly since it was on a note from the bank—and McGrew, not knowing he had been double-checked by High, was on the anxious seat in Clearwater in the spring of 1940 as he awaited the arrival of Pee Wee. The kid had better be good or else.

McGrew, a convivial soul and a good scout in both senses of the term, had ticked all winter to the Brooklyn writers about Reese. They were just as eager to see Reese as McGrew was. They were in for a shock when Pee Wee finally showed up at Clearwater. Accustomed to shortstops who were big men of the Glenn Wright pattern, the Dodger Bosswell weren't prepared for Reese.

A couple of inches under six feet, Reese couldn't have weighed much more than 150 pounds when he joined the Dodgers. Taffy-colored hair, brown eyes and a sort of elfin face made Reese look much younger than his 20 years.

The other players, who had been under the Florida sun some days ahead of Reese, looked bronzed and brawny by comparison. As Pee Wee trotted out to short, looking for all the world like the captain of the neighborhood high school team, one of the writers took in Pee Wee's slight build and his pallor and asked: "Where the hell has the kid been all winter, Ted—in sun?"

Hard Luck in First Year

McGrew could have spared himself the worry about Reese. From the beginning, Pee Wee turned out to be a good enough shortstop to satisfy even the exacting MacPhail. A beaming and an ankle fracture sidelined him for almost half of his first season, but he was a key man on the 1941 club, which won the pennant. And, incidentally, Reese today is the sole survivor of that team still with the Dodgers.

When the Dodgers were in St. Louis at the start of their recent western trip, Cardinal fans heard a rumor, attributed to Branch Rickey, that he wouldn't swap Reese for Stan Musial, even up.

Knowing Branch, I'm sure he didn't say it and, not knowing Branch—I don't think he'd make the deal,

Asked for 'Pee Wee,' Came Out With 'Hal' on His Bats

BROOKLYN, N. Y.—If you ever take a look at the Hillerich & Bradshy bat Pee Wee Reese uses, you will note that it says "Hal Reese model," instead of bearing his nickname.

The reason for that inscription is that when Reese went into the Louisville factory to order his bats, he was asked what autograph he wanted on them.

"Pee Wee Reese," said the player. "Who do you think you're kidding?" said the Louisville Slugger official. "We can't turn out a bat with a name like that."

Reese's full name is Harold Henry Reese.

either. This does not mean that Pee Wee is more valuable than Stan the Man, but he would be harder to replace than Musial. An outfielder might be found who wouldn't be too far behind Stan in ability, but you couldn't come close to replacing Reese at shortstop today—with anybody. He is the kingpin shortstop in the game right now.

Reese is a changed and improved ball player from the shy kid who moved in on the Dodgers nine years ago, a changed and improved ball player from the Reese who played shortstop for Leo Durocher. Pee Wee has nothing but the highest admiration for Leo, but he has shown to better advantage under Barney Shotton because the Dodgers, under Leo, never employed what ball players call "the open steal." The Lip was a hit-and-run guy and Pee Wee's base stealing talent was hidden under such stratagems. Last year, Reese stole 25 bases in 27 tries and this year, in the first third of the season, he swiped 11 out of 12.

Bats in Lots of Runs

One of the phenomenal features of Reese's 1949 play has been the fact that, even though he's the Dodgers' leadoff man, he ranks among the first ten in the National League in runs batted in. Among the Dodgers, only Jackie Robinson and Gil Hodges hold an edge over the mighty mite in this department. Pee Wee modestly explains this by saying that it seems to him that every time he comes to bat with a man in scoring position, he has been able to get a base hit. "It won't last, though," he grinned.

Reese, a great ground coverer, meets the acid test in going "into the slot," fielding balls hit to his right.

He has a good arm and credits Johnny Rizzo, of all people, with his fine, accurate throwing. Pee Wee used to rear up and fling the ball overhanded on all ground balls, but Johnny pointed out that if he threw with a three-quarter motion, and got the ball away quickly, he could control his throws better and wouldn't strain his arm.

"Thanks to Johnny, I never fire the ball now unless it is a really close play," explained Reese. "He showed me that, if you got the ball away quickly, it wasn't necessary to throw it violently."

Reese is the best man in baseball at going back for a pop fly. Years ago, Roscoe McGowen was commissioned to do a magazine piece on Pee Wee and he went to Durocher, himself a great shortstop in his day, for a critical and expert appraisal of Reese's talents.

"To begin with," said Leo, with his usual disarming modesty, "when I was in my prime, Pee Wee couldn't hold my glove, but I tell you this—I never

Brooklyn Manager of the Future?



PEE WEE REESE . . . red hot number in Dodger deck

Roomie Won't Take Calls; Says 'They're All for Reese'

BROOKLYN, N. Y.—Since Pete Reiser was traded to the Braves, Pee Wee Reese has a new roommate. Johnny Jorgensen, the utility infielder, Pee Wee says the Spider is an excellent roommate, with one exception. He will not answer the phone when it rings in the room, whether it rings morning, noon or night.

"Why should I?" says Jorgensen in defense. "All the calls are for Pee Wee, anyway. Nobody ever calls me up."

saw a shortstop who could go farther for a pop fly and was surer of the catch than Reese."

If Reese has a fault, it is that he takes too many strikes. He seems unable to swing at the first pitch and usually is behind the pitcher. Pee Wee admits this fault, but says he doesn't see how he can bring himself to be a first-ball hitter. He points out that, when he follows the pitcher and the latter has just made the second out of an inning, he doesn't think it wise to offer at the first pitch. "If I hit it and go out, the pitcher has to get right back to work without having a chance to get his breath from his turn at bat," says Reese.

As the Dodger captain—the first the club has had since Dolph Camilli—Pee Wee commands the respect of his teammates.

Since his service in the Navy, Reese has matured immeasurably and now is the leader of the Flock in fact as well as in title. There is little doubt that he some day will manage the Dodgers. He has the personality and the ability. He is one of the most popular players, with the fans ever to wear a Dodger uniform, rating right up with Dixie Walker, Zach Wheat and Nap Rucker.

Jackie Robinson, who teams up with Reese to give Brooklyn the most effective keystone combination in the league, has a great admiration for Pee Wee. He says Reese has helped his second base play greatly.

Suddenly, the shortstop who looked like such a kid when he first reported to the Dodgers has become the life of the party, the Brooklyn manager of the future.

Early-Voter Corum Marks Pee Wee as Most Valuable

By BILL CORUM
Of the New York Journal-American
NEW YORK, N. Y.

Omitting pitchers in order to confine any arguments that may result from this broad statement, it is this bureau's belief that Harold (Pee Wee) Reese is the most valuable ball player in baseball today.

What can't the "Little Colonel" do, including win ball games?

Not only what can't he do? What hasn't he done since coming up with the Brooks from Louisville about a decade ago?

I can't recall that the "Mutt," who has taken over "Jeff" Marty Marion's title of Mr. Shortstop of the National League, ever has hit 300. To the contrary, it is my impression that he never has, although he's been close, and this might turn out to be the year.

But he still will drive in more runs hitting 250 than the majority of 300 hitters. He'll score more than practically anybody. He's harder to catch on the bases than a mosquito in a pitch-black bedroom.

He's practically a playing-manager to supplement bench manager Burt Shotton. He's that smart.

Personally, I'd much prefer to see him up there in a clutch than most fence-busters. Pee Wee does everything when the guddle is sizzling for the hoe-cake, and that's my kind of ball player.

And if Pee Wee can't play shortstop . . . well, then, let's just plow up the shortfield and see if we can't raise some nice wax-beans or limestone lettuce for our 1952 victory garden.

Some of you readers may not know what limestone lettuce is, maybe even Red Barber doesn't know, being so busy in the pea-patch and with the rhubarbs. But Pee Wee knows. They grow it down there around his hometown of Louisville, Ky. Which is the only place in the world that it does grow, to my knowledge.

In my opinion, it's just as far ahead of all other lettuce as, in my opinion, Reese is ahead of all other shortstops in baseball today.

I know that I couldn't have said that a year ago, when Lou Boudreau was having one of those seasons that come out of a dreambook once in a lifetime. Yet, even last season, Reese would have been the pick of my ball team.

Because Pee Wee does it the easy way and Boudreau does it the hard way. And the fellow who does it the easy way must last longer. Playing ball is just doing what comes naturally for Reese.

While we're sort of coupling Boudreau with him in the running for the purposes of this piece, I might mention that Reese also was a pretty good basketball player in his youth. Not the All-America collegiate star type of basketball player that the Cleveland manager was at the University of Illinois. He "warn't" big enough for that. But still, I repeat, a right sharp hand at hitting that hoop.

Of course, around Kentucky when a kid gets to be 6 years old and has shown no aptitude for basketball, they are out to put him in the sack and drop him in the Ohio River with the rest of the unwanted kittens. Reese, he's a believe-a-bali player.

Diamond Dossier . . . Pee Wee Reese

By JOE KING

Still Artist on Field, Little Captain Also Is Clubhouse Counselor

BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Pee Wee Reese played the role of Dodger captain in the World's Series, just as he did during the season, as if he were to the manor born. . . . The focal point of activity and discussion in the clubhouse before and after games during the season, he dispensed wisdom tactfully and thoughtfully. . . . One of the most respected men in the game, he has long been regarded as absolute king in Flatbush. . . . He was without question the popular choice when the front office went manager hunting for 1951, but he sagaciously turned away the crown. . . . He knew it could be only a crown of thorns if he attempted to manage while he played as a regular. . . . **Reese** qualifies in another way as the "old man of the mountain" in Brooklyn. . . . Did he not successfully cope with three such diverse managements as those of MacPhail, Rickey and O'Malley? . . . **Pee Wee** patterns his play after Leo Durocher, his first big league manager and mentor. . . . Joe Cronin first brought the gleam of the majors to Reese's eyes when the Red Sox manager and shortstop permitted him to be sold from Louisville to MacPhail. . . . The three Latins of Flatbush—Lavagetto, Camilli and Coscarart—were his first pals of Dodger days. . . . Now his friends are countless, and one and all vow they never again will lose faith in the captain, as they did in '50, when he appeared to be slipping and on the way down. . . . **Reese** snapped back with his greatest season in '51 and fired the Dodgers to the flag this September, capping a great year with his standout work in the Series.

They Talk It Over With Pee Wee

The regular scene after a game in Ebbets Field is **Reese** sitting before his locker, placidly puffing on his old briar pipe, with a group of Dodgers around him. They all want to talk it over with **Pee Wee**. Jackie Robinson generally is the most expressive and animated in playing over the game. **Reese** listens for the most part, until his opinion is asked, and then, in carefully chosen words, with a fine sense of tact, he will compliment or criticize, and when he speaks, his words are accepted as final. It is an old-fashioned cracker barrel scene modernized.

Only once, **Pee Wee** admits, was there nothing to discuss after a game. That bad time followed Bob Thomson's pennant-winning homer in the Polo Grounds last October.

"When he made that hit," said the captain, "I couldn't believe we were through. I stood at short, stunned I guess, for a few moments, and then as I went slowly to the clubhouse I kept repeating to myself: 'It can't happen this way—we have to get another chance to hit.'"

Reese believes the greatest thing he did the past season for his hitting was to swing the bat instead of looking at called third strikes. "I was leading off in 1950 and I had to get the walk, but got in the habit of waiting too long. Last year, at No. 2, I batted in a hit-and-run position, and with Charley Dressen encouraging me, I was able to make up my mind and swing at my ball when I got it."

Pee Wee seemed to be on the way out in '50 for a while, when he lacked his former speed after an operation for a hernia, and fell off to .260 in hitting. It was supposed his operation cramped his style.

"That was no operation," he quipped. "That was just a bad start."

Reese roared back last year to sparkle in the field and achieve his highest total in hitting percentage at .286, and in RBIs at 84. He had another slow start this season, but got in the groove in time to show Dodgers don't blow every year.

What Robinson Says

Jackie Robinson, second baseman who plays alongside **Reese**, commented: "**Pee Wee** is the team captain, and he is all of that. He has such a knowledge of a situation that no matter what comes up we can go to him and get advice. When I first came up that was especially helpful, and he tried his best to help me. He and Ed Stanky both. **Pee Wee** does a lot of little things out on the field so quietly that the fans have no idea about them.

"What impresses me is not only the way he plays, but his willingness to play even when he is hurt. He is the team captain, and he plays the part all-out. Especially in the dressing room, he knows where to be and what to say at all times."

What Dressen Says

For a critical opinion of the shortstop, we go to Dressen to assay the difference in **Reese** from five years ago and now.

"He has lost a little of his speed, I would say," Dressen replied, "and some of his strength of arm. He used to be able to throw like Rocky Bridges. But he has more than made up for those losses with his smartness. In the field and at bat, he is much more an artist.

"I would know he was the same **Reese**, though," resumed Chuck, "because he still cannot make that sacrifice bunt. I mean when you stand there and give yourself up. When **Pee Wee** does that he pops up, and always has popped up. But when he bunts to hit, he is a greater bunter.

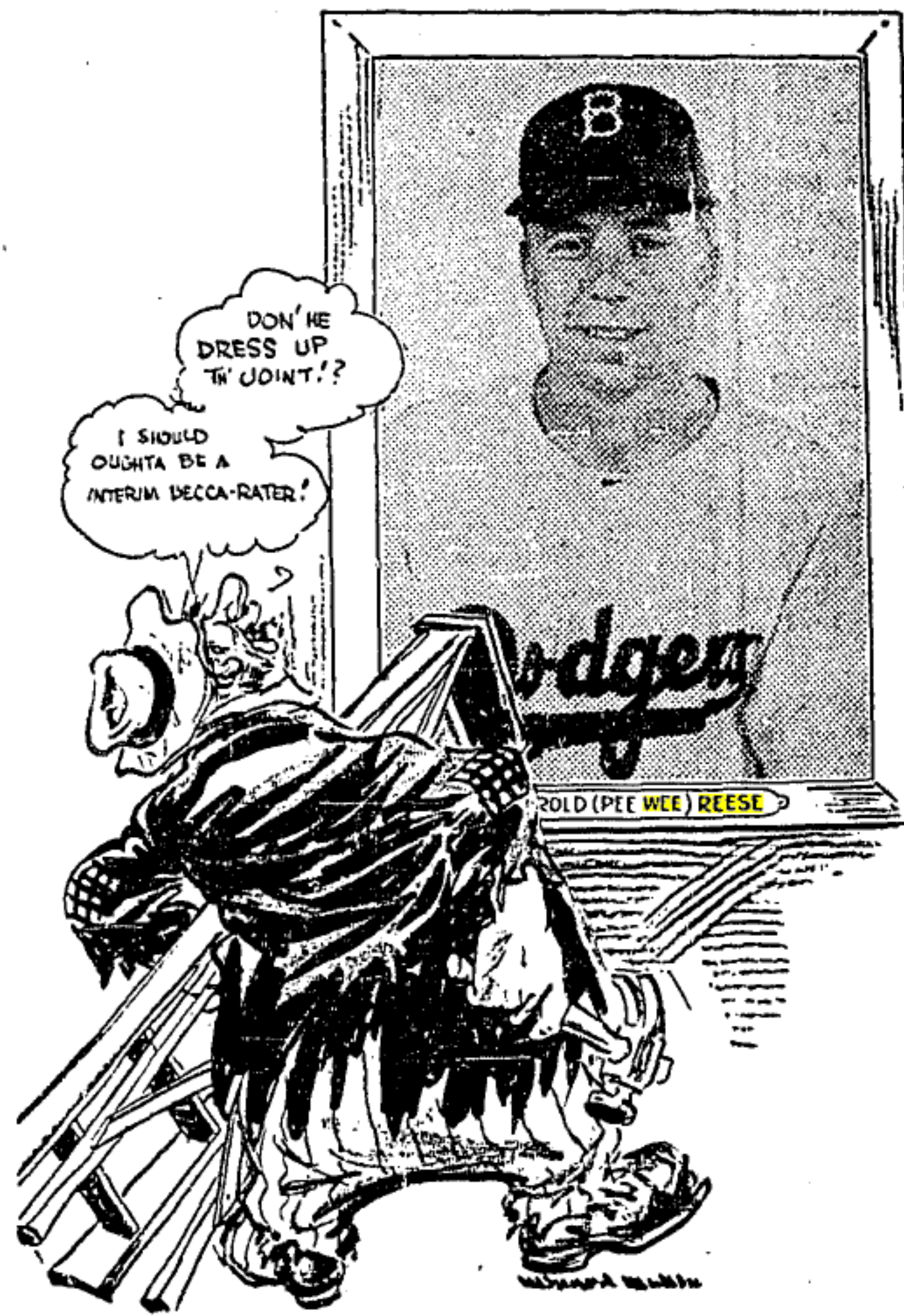
"All I have done with **Pee Wee** was encourage him to swing, because they told me when I came in that he took too many third strikes."

What Pitler Says

Jake Pitler, Dodger coach, has stood in the first base box and watched **Reese** take his lead time after time through the years, but he never fails to get a kick out of the action.

"**Reese** is absolutely the smoothest guy taking a lead off

Brooks' Balance Wheel



first I ever saw," said the coach. "**Pee Wee** gets as big a lead as anyone in the business, and I remember seeing him picked off only twice. Once it was by a Boston pitcher, maybe Spahn, when **Reese** already had started for second, and the second time I don't remember who it was.

"His secret is in never giving it away when he is going to steal," observed Jake. "He's smooth. All of a sudden he is moving—that's all. No warning. It's the timing. He knows as much about a pitcher's moves as anybody, he gets a good jump, and he is in high before anybody realizes it."

A Deal's a Deal

Whatever **Reese** does in his contract dickerings nobody ever knows. This is another facet of his character which shines as a model for players. Never has he griped, because to this self-reliant young man from Kentucky, a deal's a deal.

"Once I sign a contract I forget about it," he explained. "If I didn't get what I thought I should, I figure it is my fault."

He offers, however, interesting generalizations on the three men he has dealt with at Brooklyn. Larry MacPhail, Branch Rickey and E. J. (Buz) Bavasi.

"My father had died in 1938," he recalled, "and I had no one to consult when I came to Brooklyn. I thought it would be a good idea to see Mr. MacPhail in his office and tell him I would put the whole thing in his hands, just in a fatherly way. I thought that would go over."

"It didn't. MacPhail said: 'I am sitting on this side of the desk, and you are sitting on that side of the desk. I have a job to do, you have a job to do. I cannot help you at all.' The net result was no good and you can bet I gave up the fatherly approach then and there.

"I really believe Larry thought a lot of Pete Reiser and me, but I never made any money with him. Incidentally, at that time I thought Reiser would be better than Musial. He had everything. He was a natural."

Next—Rickey. "After service, I played good ball for Mr. Rickey, and he was very good to me. There were times when I think he could have given me less, but he went up."

Then—Bavasi. "I had a long-distance call from Bavasi at contract time in 1951 and he told me he was to sign the players, and then he popped out: 'Harold Parrott (at that time traveling secretary) tells me you had a lousy year. I had to reply: 'I guess I did, Buzzie.' He said: 'Then I'll sign you to the same contract you had last year. I said: 'That's okay with me.' And that was all there was to that deal."

This year **Pee Wee** wasn't in such a hurry, and Bavasi was more appreciative. The combination was worth a small raise of about \$2,500. After his outstanding World's Series performance, **Reese** doubtless will continue to impress Bavasi more strongly in the budget department.

One Place at a Time

Reese goes back to Durocher, in early Dodger days, as his chief mentor for infield play. He passes along, for those who care, the abiding principle Durocher gave to him: "You cannot be one place and think of being another place. Make up your mind, and concentrate on the place you are."

Pee Wee thinks it is swell advice, because it eliminates the worst fault of an otherwise technically capable infielder, and particularly shortstop—indecision.

"After being up so long I have a pretty good idea how to play certain players," **Reese** explained. "But there is always a tendency to be a little uncertain about the fellows who do not have the heavy power, but who, if righthanders, hit between the hole in short and second base. They can make you look bad.

"It's not the same with a power hitter. Take Bob Elliott for instance. He was hard to play, because while he can pull pretty good he can also push through the box or take a shot to the opposite field.

"Generally, you have to think of what the hitter likes to hit first of all. Then you got to think about your pitcher, and what he throws. If the pitcher gets behind, you consider the type

'Thrill to be a Dodger Because Other Clubs Never Let Up on Us'

of hitter and whether your pitcher will come in with the fast ball. If you think the hitter can whack that fast ball, you shade him a few steps to the right. If he has good power you go a few more steps towards third on him. But if your pitcher can get any kind of pitch over in a spot, so the hitter can't be sure of the fast ball, you can play him standard. But there are a few like that, few like our Preacher Roe."

Complicated? Naturellement! But all this goes on in Reese's head in a few seconds from pitch to pitch. Don't bring up your boy to be a shortstop if you have to teach him the game.

How It Happened

At one time, as **Reese** says, he "wasn't big enough to throw the ball across the diamond," and had to play second base. That was away back when he was noted in Louisville only for having reached the state finals at marble shooting. But he took more and more interest in baseball. Eddie Martin, now deceased, was always encouraging the kids in Reese's neighborhood to become Hall-of-Famers, and **Pee Wee** later came under the influence of Ralph Kimble, high school coach, and Keith Sparks of the church league.

He played shortstop on the winning church league team in 1937 and won a handsome prize, a trip to the Giant-Yankee World's Series. "At that time (he was 18) I had no idea I could get a job playing ball," he recalled. "But when I got back to Louisville, I was signed to a Louisville contract before I knew it."

Back-Fence Romance

"When I first played with Louisville," **Reese** reminisces, "an insurance man began chasing me. Every time he would ring the front door bell, my mother would give me the signal and I would run out the back door, hop the fence, and stay at my sister's house for a while, until I got the all-clear signal from my mother.

"On one of these trips I met my wife. She was just a kid, and I was quite the man of the world at that time, but she was hanging up the clothes in her yard, next to my sister's house, and for some reason we just began talking.

"That night I had a date and she had a date, but I made it a double date, and after that I dated her."

Dorothy Walton soon after switched to Mrs. **Reese**. The couple have a daughter, Barbara Lee, 8.

But **Reese** may not be such a nice guy after all, because he didn't look up that insurance man to thank him or buy a policy.

A Good Joe

When the Red Sox played their farm club, Louisville, in the spring of 1939, Joe Cronin, manager and shortstop of the big team, sat down with **Reese**. "He told me he had two-three more years, and while they were supposed to bring me up, there was no use in my sitting on the bench for them, and that I would probably be traded, which would be a break for me. It sure was a break," **Reese** continued. "I first learned about the deal with Brooklyn from Jimmy Finnegan of the Louisville Times on my way to the all-star game in Kansas City. I reported for training in Clearwater in 1940, and the first sight of camp there was a thrill and a picture I will never forget."

Reese was lucky again at camp; or maybe he was just a nice guy. At any rate, three fellows, and he couldn't have asked for better, led him around. They were Dolph Camilli, Harry Lavagetto and Pete Coscarart. One Kentucky guy among three Latins.

"In Havana in 1941, we four used to hang around so much together," **Reese** related. "that other infielders complained to Durocher that it was a clique, and they had no chance to break in on the club. Ted McGrew (scout) told us about it, but we didn't know what we could do about it, and did nothing. As for me, I was glad to have such friends."

His Glove Guy

Reese uses a "pancake" glove patterned after Durocher's. But his complaint is it never worked as well as it did for Leo.

"He was one of the best guys getting rid of the ball on a grounder," said **Pee Wee**. "Sometimes when I saw him field I would think the ball never hit his glove at all. He had a flat glove, a pancake glove, with hardly any pocket at all, and I tried to copy it. Pocket or not, I find that ball hard to get out of the glove sometimes, and I can fumble some, whether they hit the glove or not.

"The most difficult play for the shortstop is the deep hole play. Whenever he makes a good play there, it saves a sure hit, and maybe a run. That's the play Durocher worked with me time after time. Right now, I find my hardest chance a fast hopping grounder hit directly at me. There is no angle to judge the bounce, but if I don't keep moving in on the ball to take my chances, and sit and wait instead, it is likely to lick me."

In anything Durocher says, and anything **Reese** says, regarding the other, the mutual respect of the two men is evident.

Reese enjoyed his greatest times under Durocher, in battle with the Cardinals of '41 and '42. "Without a doubt the toughest team I ever played," said **Pee Wee**. "Everybody on the club could fly, and fight to win as hard as you could. I have always had a great thrill being a Dodger, because Dodgers always have to be ready. When Pafko came over he told me: 'Every time you fellows came into Chicago, we would say here come the Dodgers, and let's go get 'em, and no matter how lousy we had been playing, we got going to try to beat you. That's why I like to be a Dodger, because we have to beat everybody at their best.'

Reese concluded: "Maybe that's because of Leo. He wanted to beat you any way he could do it. He didn't want any club to like us, and let up on us, and I guess they still don't."

'53 Dodgers Best of Five Winners, Says Reese

Pitching Adequate, Power Tremendous, Says Pee Wee

'And Campy's Bat Gives Us Little Extra'

Vet Shortstop and Captain Recalls Battles of 1941 With Cardinals as 'Tops'

By JOE KING
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Pee Wee Reese believes this year's team is the best of the Dodger pennant winners in his time.

The Brooklyn captain is the highest authority on the subject, from an inside point of view, because he is the only man to play with all five, beginning in 1941.

Beyond that, a grandpappy critic would be needed, because Flatbush had no flag to wave from 1920 to 1941. Also, **Reese** was a vital operative on all five championship teams, and was still the balance wheel on the pennant road, although he often is obscured by more flamboyant Dodgers.

Pee Wee thinks the '53 club is the best since the '41 outfit, and better balanced than the old pro ensemble because of "deeper" pitching, "a little more" power, with a special bow to Roy Campanella, and a "darn good defense."

Before opening up, **Reese** dropped in a touch of humor.

"When you asked me to compare those teams," he revealed, "I had a sort of feeling that here we go again."

"That's because I was asked that question the last time in August of 1951, and after explaining why I believed the '51 team to be the best I had known, we hit the tailspin and lost the pennant."

'A Real Pro Team'

Pee Wee, certain this time with the pennant tucked away, tackled the subject.

"I want to be fair to the 1941 team," he stated. "I had just come up the year before we won in '41, and I might not be the best fitted critic of the great players we had on the team, because I was pretty busy taking care of myself. It was a real pro team, with names on it that I had held in respect for years."

It surely was pro, with the following among Larry MacPhail's complement: Mickey Owen, Hugh Casey, Curt Davis, Johnny Allen, Fred Fitzsimmons, Larry French, Kirby Higbe, Whit Wyatt, Dolph Camilli, Leo Durocher, Billy Herman, Harry Lavagetto, Lew Riggs, Augie Galan, Ducky Medwick, Pete Reiser, Dixie Walker and **Reese**.

It was an outstanding group of craftsmen, many nearing the end of their careers, but still competent, which MacPhail had gathered from all corners of the baseball universe. Even **Reese**—the baby—had been a Red Sox chattel at Louisville before becoming a Dodger.

"Wyatt was a real stopper pitcher," **Reese** continued. "But Carl Erskine, the way he has been going for the last few months, has certainly been as reliable a pitcher as you would want. Casey was a terrific relief pitcher. But we have had outstanding work this year from Labine, Milliken and Wade."

Stronger in Pitching

"Dressen never has to stick too long with a starter. If he would like a pinch-hitter even in the early innings, he is never afraid to take out a pitcher. He has plenty more to use. I have to say our pitching is deeper than in '41."

"There were great hitters on the '41 club," **Reese** went on, "but I think this present club has as good hitting and a little more power. Campanella is a tremendous asset, with his world of power and RBI ability, and I think he gives us something extra, although I do not mean to run down Owen (1941 catcher). Campy is something special. Our defense has been so darn good this year that I would have to sum up by saying this club is better all around, with more balance than any I have played with in Brooklyn."

Reese, as one of the senior statesmen

Brooklyn Pillar 12 Years Ago

Still Going Strong



PEE WEE REESE . . . a tender kid in '41



. . . the same Pee Wee today—a hardened vet



Rundown on '41 Dodgers—Runner-Up in Reese's Book

BROOKLYN, N. Y.—Here is the ammunition for Dodger fans who may wish to dispute **Pee Wee Reese's** opinion that the 1953 club is superior to the 1941 Dodgers.

The pitching leaders in '41 were:

	G.	IP.	W-L	ERA
Higbe	48	298	22-9	3.14
Wyatt	38	288	22-10	2.34
Davis	28	154	13-7	2.98
Casey	45	162	14-11	3.89
Hamlin	30	136	8-8	4.24
Fitzsimmons	13	83	6-1	2.06
Allen	11	57	3-0	2.53

And the regulars hit this way:

	HR.	RBI.	Pct.
Reiser	48	76	.343
Medwick	18	88	.318
Walker	9	71	.311
Camilli	34	120	.285
Herman	3	41	.285
Lavagetto	1	78	.277
Owen	1	44	.231
Reese	2	46	.228

The team was first in hitting, with 272, and 101 homers and 800 runs. It was second in fielding, with .974, and 125 double plays.

of the Dodgers, at 34, must now look to his future. What's it to be? He was the choice of many for manager when the O'Malley regime came in and deposed Burt Shotton. But **Pee Wee** firmly refused to consider an offer of the crown.

Now, he says: "I'd be dishonest if I didn't admit I think about what is to come. I have thought about it a lot, but have not come up with the answer. I own part of a business in Louisville, but have never been a working partner, and feel I am too active to sit down to a desk. The only point I'm sure about is that I would like to stay in Brooklyn. I'd hate to leave the organization."

Being a Dodger has been a thrill to **Reese** since he first participated in the tempestuous action in Flatbush under Durocher in 1940. He retains an affection for his first big league boss.

"Leo was intense. He wanted to beat every club in any way he could do it. He didn't want any club to like us, for fear we would let up. He wanted us to battle 'em so hard they would get a little mad at us."

"Those battles with the Cards under Durocher in '41 and '42 were the greatest times I have had," resumed the cap-

'He Breaks Tension'--Roe

BROOKLYN, N. Y.—Preacher Roe is one of **Pee Wee Reese's** biggest boosters.

"Gosh, I can't say how many games he's pulled out of the fire by some chance remark," Roe said. "You never can tell what he is going to say. He always startles you, makes you forget your problems, relaxes you."

"I remember in the second game of the World's Series against the Yankees in 1949. Tommy Henrich had beaten Don Newcombe with a home run in the first game. My game went 1 to 0 up to the ninth with us leading and Henrich was the last man to bat in the Yankee half. He worked the count to 3-2, fouled off a couple of balls. I was so weary I could scarcely get up enough strength for a windup and I knew that if I made one bad pitch Henrich might hit it into the stands."

"I turned around and looked toward the outfield. Maybe **Reese** sensed what was in my mind. He came jogging in. 'Hey, Preach,' he said. 'Let's talk about something.' 'What?' I asked.

"'Oh, let's talk about huntin' and fishin'—some-

thing you know something about—not pitching,'" he told me.

"I couldn't help laughing," said Roe. "I forgot all about Henrich and the ball game for a moment, relaxed, felt refreshed and Henrich flied out to left on the next pitch—just where I wanted it."

In a game against the Cardinals one night—an important one in the pennant race a few seasons ago—the lefthanded Roe was on the mound for the Brooks.

Stan Musial hit a home run with one man on base in the first inning to put the Redbirds ahead, 2 to 0. Roe's hopes sagged, his shoulders dropped, he turned to the outfield disgustedly.

Reese jogged in from shortstop, rolled his glove in his hand, looked up at Roe and said, "Well, I suppose we might just as well walk off the field. It's all over, isn't it? We can all quit if you say so."

Roe felt the anger rising rapidly in his cheeks. He turned toward the next batter, **Reese** went back to his position—and Roe blanked the Cards the rest of the way—Brooklyn winning, 3 to 2. BAUMGARTNER.

tain. "Without a doubt those Cardinals were the toughest ball club I ever played. Everybody on the club could fly, and they could fight as good as we could."

"That feeling that the Dodgers were the team to beat which Leo spread around, still exists, and that is the lasting thrill to this day of being a Dodger. We have to beat every club at their best."

"When Pafko joined the Dodgers I got a big kick when he told me the Cubs would fire up for Dodger series, no matter how lousy they might be going against other clubs."

That is the revealing insight into why **Reese** wants to remain a Dodger, in some capacity, when his playing career has ended. But don't think he figures it will be in a month, or a year, or even two years.

"I feel that I can play a few more years," he said. "Of course, if I am slipping, I guess I would be the last to find out. But I think I was able to move around pretty good this season."

"What really bothered me was the sore arm I had for a couple of weeks. It wasn't anything serious, the way it turned out, but it actually hurt me all over to have to sit on the bench when I felt fine, and my legs were in good shape."

Chuck Dressen, manager, laughs at the suggestion **Reese** may be ready for the boneyard. "He may have lost a lit-

tle of his speed from five-six years ago," said Chuck, "and he may not be able to rifle a throw as hard as he used to. But he has more than made up for that with acquired smartness."

"**Reese** through? I don't know what we'd do without him!"

Reese hit .272 last year, with 58 RBIs and a league-leading total of 30 stolen bases!

One of the Best on Bases

This year he probably will wind up with just about the same batting average and already has exceeded last year's RBIs. As a base-path thief he will be out-ranked only by flashy young Bill Bruton of the Milwaukee Braves.

Jake Pitler, first base coach who watches **Reese** shove off on his stealing adventures, marvels at **Pee Wee**: "He doesn't go down quite as often as he used to, but he is still absolutely the smoothest guy taking a lead off first that I ever saw. He can get as big a lead as anyone in the business, and I don't think I have seen him picked off more than three times. His secret is no tipoff. He's just moving, that's all. It's the timing, I guess, with **Reese** knowing his pitchers, and making his move to take fullest advantage."

As a player, **Reese** enjoys the post-mortem in the clubhouse after the

game fully as much as the action on the field.

The captain sits quietly puffing on his pipe, while a player comes to him to present a problem, ask an opinion, or replay an incident in the game.

"Only once was there nothing to talk about after a Dodger game," **Reese** reminisces. "That was the day Bobby Thomson hit the homer. (In 1951, to win the playoff for the Giants.)"

"We had nothing to say because we just couldn't believe it could happen that way. I remember walking slowly across the field to the clubhouse and telling myself, 'It can't happen like this—we have to get another chance.'"

"I remember when I met Durocher in Louisville that winter, I told him I still couldn't believe his Giants had won. So far that has happened to me only once, but that's enough."

Perhaps the finest compliment to **Reese** comes from Jackie Robinson: "**Pee Wee** is the team captain, and he is the captain all the time. He has such a knowledge of a situation that no matter what comes up we can go to him and get advice. He does a lot of little things on the field so quietly than fans have no idea about them."

"In the dressing room, he knows where to be and what to say at all times. He is the team captain and he plays that part all out."