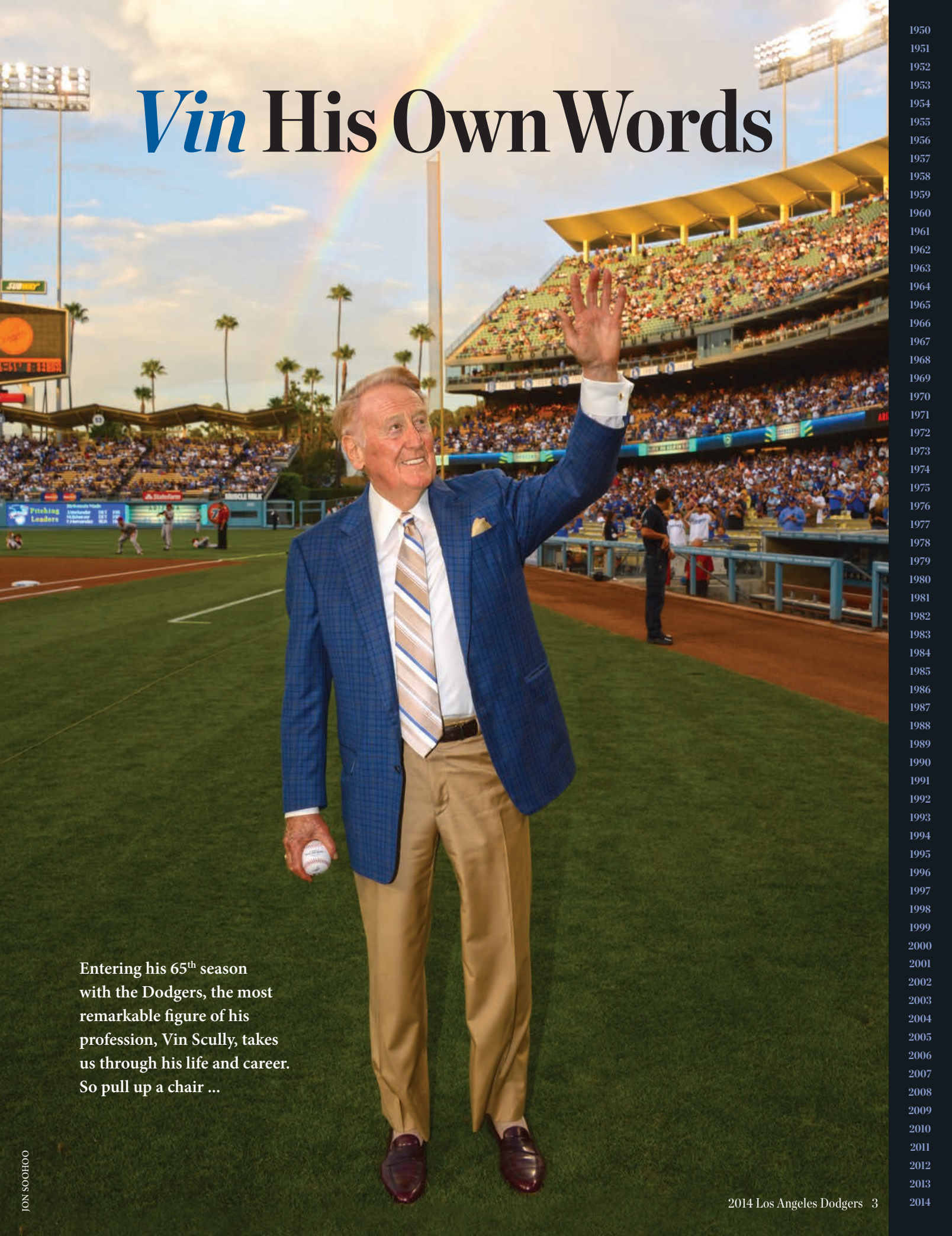


# *Vin* His Own Words



Entering his 65<sup>th</sup> season with the Dodgers, the most remarkable figure of his profession, Vin Scully, takes us through his life and career. So pull up a chair ...

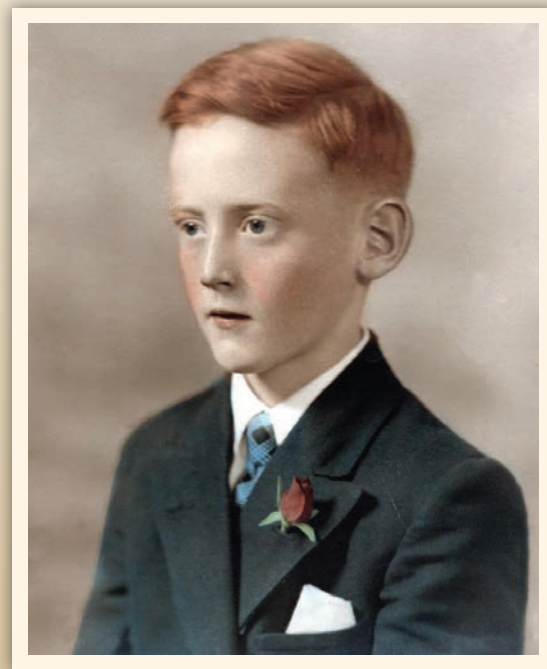
# Vin His Own Words



LAKE COUNTY MUSEUM/GETTY IMAGES

## CHILDHOOD

Growing up, Mom, Dad, myself and my baby sister, we lived in a fifth-floor walkup apartment in Washington Heights in New York. Close-knit, just four of us. We didn't do too much together because we didn't have any money. My father had spent a lifetime at sea. He was English, he had been in the British Navy and the Merchant Marine, and eventually he married my mother who was widowed – my father had passed on. And so suddenly, he was indeed a fish out of water. And he was a doorman, and you don't get a lot of money when you're a doorman. But it was a great, warm, happy life. On a Sunday we would walk across the George Washington Bridge – it didn't cost anything – and if we had had a good week, we'd have an ice cream cone at the Jersey side, and then turn around and walk back and ride the Fifth Avenue bus, up on top without the roof. Basically, those were the simple pleasures of a very simple life.



First communion

## NO TROUBLE AT ALL

Gosh, I wasn't really a trouble kind of kid. When I was in high school at Fordham Prep, they had a thing called JUG. It was mindless, which is what made it such a pain in the neck. And I was I'm sure guilty of laughing (or) talking in class, and so I was consigned to JUG, which meant walking up and down outside this building. That's all, just walking up and down. And several other bad boys would now be in the group. So one day, we were all walking up and down and I decided, 'Let's sing.' So we were singing, 'Someone's in the kitchen with Dinah,' that kind of thing. And the discipline priest came out, stopped everything and said, 'Who's singing?' And they all pointed to me. So he told the others, 'You can all go.' And then he said to me, 'You stay, you walk and you sing.' And for about an hour, I had to walk up and down outside the building on the campus, singing. That was about as bad a thing as I ever did.



Fordham Prep baseball photo

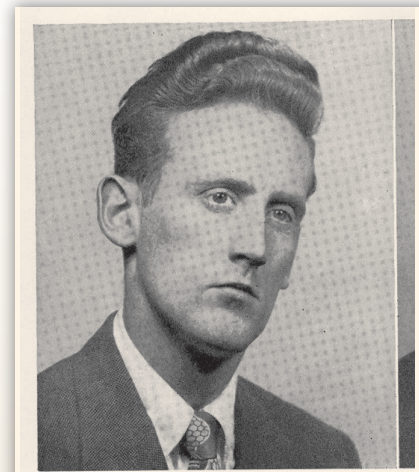
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## Vin His Own Words

### ‘VERY, VERY AVERAGE’

I was an average student. I enjoyed going to school. I think I enjoyed the camaraderie of my fellow students more than anything else. I prepared out of fear, because I didn't want to fail – I didn't want to be held up to ridicule. I've always done that – researched out of fear of sounding dumb. I read, I would not say, anything more than the average fellow. I read a little bit more as I got into college, and I tried to retain a few things – that's difficult in itself. (But) I'm not a highbrow; I'm not one of those intellectuals at all. I'm very, very average.



VINCENT SCULLY  
*Bachelor of Arts*  
Radio  
Fordham Prep



Fordham University yearbook photo (top), honored by Fordham with honorary doctorate — and special uniform — in 2000 (above)



Racing Jackie Robinson on skates during a trip in the Catskills

### INTRODUCING JACKIE ROBINSON

You didn't know anything really about him – little stuff that you might have read in the paper. And you didn't have the intimate details that television (would have) brought out. And, when I got out of school, I left New York ... and then went on to Washington D.C. to begin my career. So I kind of lost track of Jack, but only for a year. And the next thing I know I'm in Spring Training with him, and we became good friends, yeah.

## Vin His Own Words



With Walter Alton and  
Connie Desmond

## LAUNCHING A CAREER

**I**t was a 50,000-watt station, which means the big leagues – you can't get any bigger in the United States. And I was going directly from a campus radio station at Fordham University. And the names that had been at WTOP, people like Eric Sevareid and Edward R. Murrow, Charles Collingwood, Arthur Godfrey – so many big names had been there, so I was pretty overwhelmed. But the station people were wonderful and took very good care of this kid out of campus who's suddenly doing all these network and around-the-world shows.

## RED

**H**e did have an impact on me for sure – he was strict. He was a disciplinarian. In retrospect, (that) meant he cared. I wasn't just another body in the booth. I think in some ways, I might have been the son he never had, and maybe the red hair had something to do with that. He had a lovely daughter, but he treated me like a son. (But) every now and then, if he thought I stepped out of line ...

I remember one time, early, first or second year maybe, I was raving about Willie Mays, and I mentioned he's one of the greatest players I'd ever seen, and after the broadcast Red said, 'Young Scully' – which is sometimes the way he would address me – 'you haven't been around long enough to talk about the greatest players you've ever seen.' And immediately, it drew me back a little bit, and he would do that along the way. But again, it's because he cared. So he had a tremendous influence, especially on preparation, because he would always pepper me with questions before the game. 'Why is this fella hitting ahead of this fella? Yesterday he hit behind him.' And I had to find out all these answers before I went on the air. So he helped me immeasurably.



With Red Barber and Connie Desmond, 1950 (top), with Barber (above)

## Vin His Own Words



### JOB INSECURITY

**O**h, I had no idea. In all honesty, in the beginning, I just prayed I'd stay day to day. I had no idea. I was on a one-year deal, and then (after) the change of ownership when Branch Rickey left and Walter O'Malley took over, I really didn't know about my future and I was quite worried about my present.



With Roy Campanella and a Dodger sponsor (above), interviewing Larry Sherry, 1959 World Series (below)



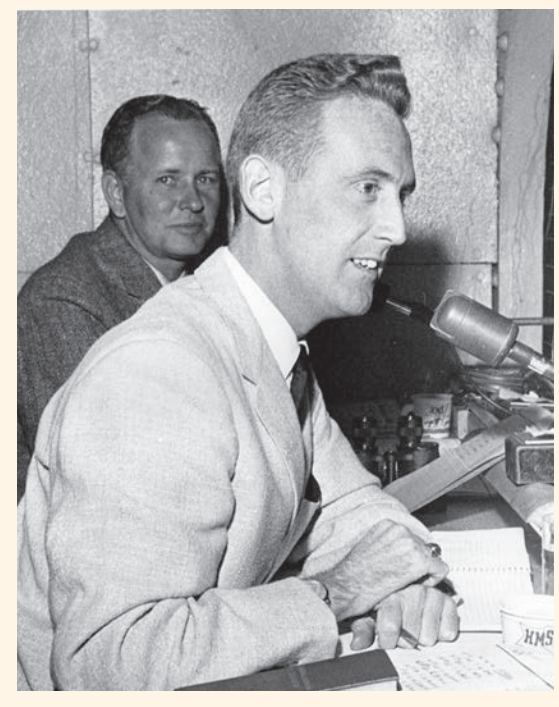
With Walter O'Malley while broadcasting for WOR-TV in New York

### COMING INTO ONE'S OWN

**I**'ve often told young broadcasters-to-be, 'The hardest thing is to be yourself. You go on the air, you're tentative, you've been listening to other great broadcasters. Red cautioned me, 'Don't listen to anybody else - you'll water your own wine. We want you to be you.' (But) it takes a few years to be confident enough to be you, to be yourself. ... Red left in '53, I did the World Series in '53 (and) '55, and by that time then, I think I started to come out of my shell and be a little bit more about what I am.



## Vin His Own Words



With Jerry Doggett (above), 1951 Dodgers Yearbook (below)

### FROM VINCE TO VIN

**W**ell, one of the things I tried to do was correct people only because if you try to say 'Vince Scully,' it's very sibilant. And I said, 'It's far more easy to just drop that "ce" and make it Vin Scully.' That was all. What's the old story? 'Call me anything, but don't call me late for dinner.'



### WELCOME TO CALIFORNIA

**W**e settled in the west side of town, only because when I was in the Navy, a buddy of mine was in the Marine Corps, and I used to come down from San Francisco and he'd come up from Pendleton. Two kids, sailor and marine. And a lovely young girl on a Sunday – we were walking the streets in Hollywood, looking for movie stars I think – we were so naïve – and the girl stopped. She was driving a convertible, and she said, 'Do you fellas have plans for Sunday dinner?' And we said, 'No.' 'Well, would you like to come home and have dinner with my family?' They did that in those days. So we went, we had a lovely dinner in a lovely home, and everything was beautiful. And then, she took us back, and dropped us off, and I said to her before we left, 'Could you tell me where we were?' And she said, 'You're in the section called Brentwood on the west side of Los Angeles.' 'Oh.'

So then years go by, and I wind up coming out with the Dodgers, and they ask me, 'Do you have any preference where you'd like to live?' and I had no idea. And I said, 'Well, where's Brentwood?' And they said, 'Well that's not bad, that's close to the Coliseum.' So we moved into Brentwood. And I was very happy, and deeply into the team, the Coliseum, all of the events that were going on. ... I'd go all the way down to Exposition and make a left on Exposition and drive all of the way to the ballpark.



At the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum (above), receiving a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame (below)

Soft-spoken, Southern-style Red Barber and staccato-syllabled Connie Desmond have been the two-toned "Voice of the Dodgers" almost since the crystal set became extinct.

Add now to this top pair—and where can they be matched in the baseball end of radio or TV?—the mellifluous tones of Vincent (Little Red) Scully, No. 3 hitter behind Barber and Desmond, and Francis Felton, the "Happy" of Knothole Gang fame on Ebbets Field television.

Barber, whose Brooklyn broadcasts have made him a national figure and zoomed him into the post as CBS sports director, has an interesting story. The self-styled "Ol' Redhead"—although his thatch is more blond than red—started dishing out his homespun philosophy and accurate reporting on the airwaves because of a free meal!

**No. 2 TORCH-TOP**—Vincent (Little Red) Scully, who will be a sensation with that flame thatch when color television gets here.

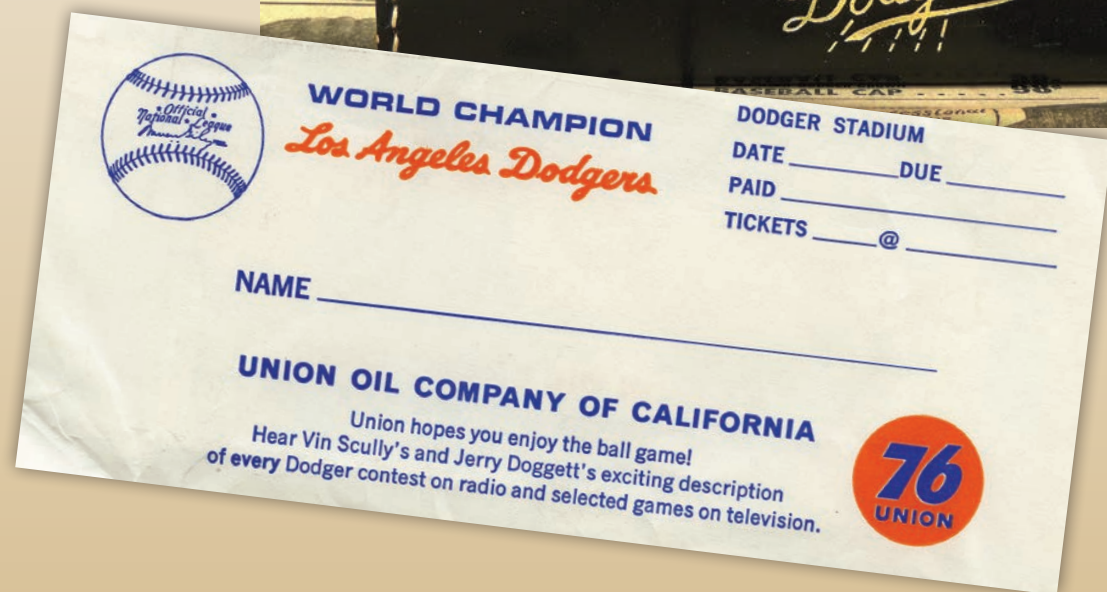
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## Vin His Own Words

### RADIO DAYS

**T**he real funny time was in the early days of the transistors, when the crowd would react. They would laugh at some pun that I made – or groan. I had a lot of fun one night. The balk rule said you had to come set for one complete second. And there was a big rhubarb over Maury Wills and pitchers balking, and so one night before a big crowd, I asked them, ‘How long do you think a second is? I’ll have some fun. I’ll say “A,” and when you think a second has gone by, you say “B.”’ And so I said ‘A,’ and the crowd let out this roar: ‘B!’ And then now that I know I have them, I’m not going to let them get away. So I said ‘Oh, that’s not even close. C’mon, try it again.’ Well now, I’ve got the crowd up hollering ‘B.’ I got a phone call in the booth from the dugout: The players are saying, ‘What’s going on. Why are they hollering “B?”’ So those were fun days. We had the crowd sing ‘Happy Birthday’ to an umpire. We don’t have that kind of thing anymore. But it was wonderful back in those days.



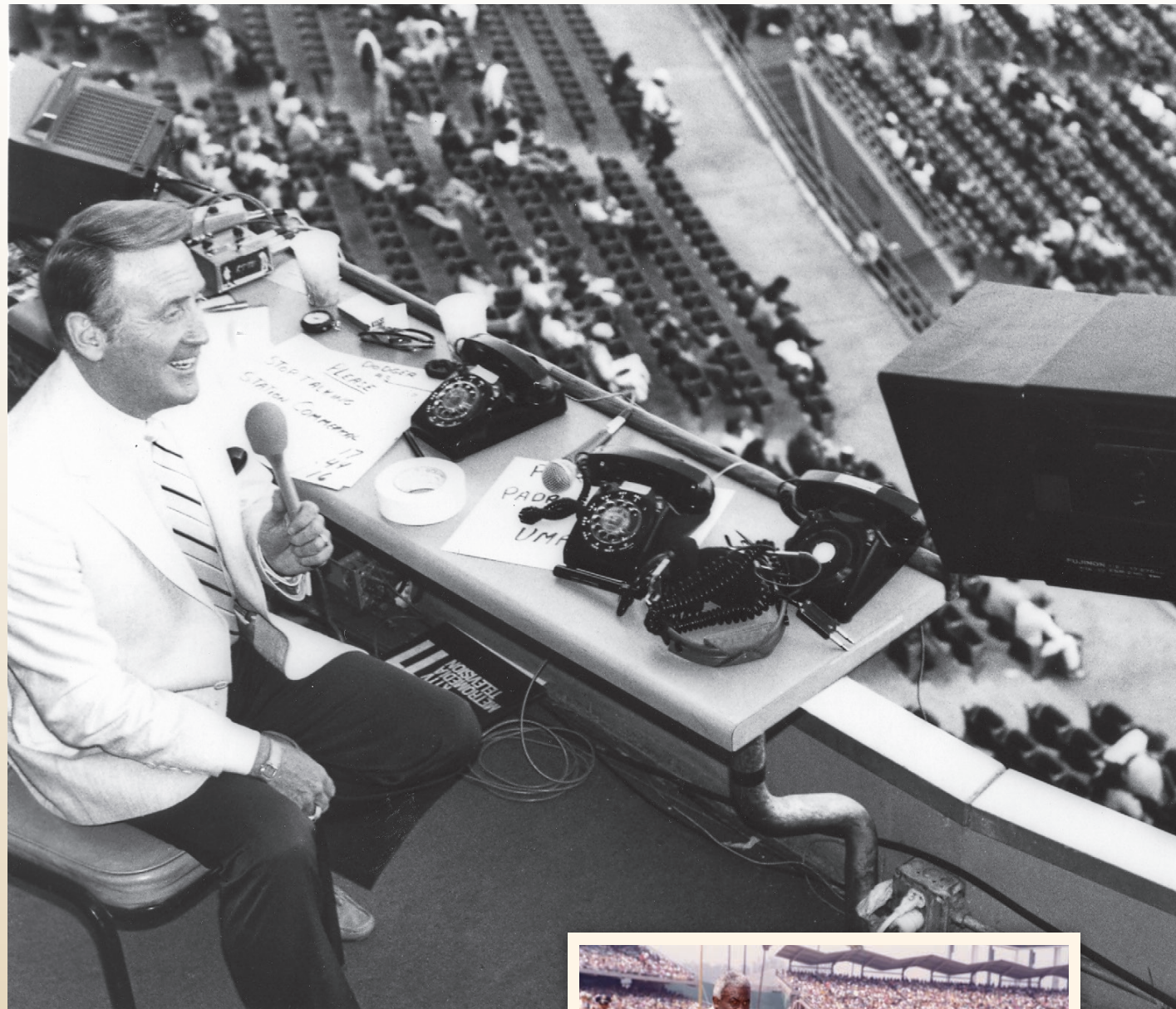
### WINNING FOR LOSING

**W**hen you are having a really bad year with your ballclub, what I’ve found – it helped me anyway – I would come into the ballpark, and I would forget that they had lost. I would forget where they were in the standings. I would just concentrate on that game – nothing else. And that helped a great deal. Because if you walk in and say, ‘Oh my gosh, they’ve lost seven straight, they’re in last place,’ it would affect your broadcast. So I really found that by isolating the game, not placing it in the schedule, just isolating it, I enjoyed it immensely, and that was a big lesson to learn.



With Don Drysdale and Ross Porter (top), at ceremonies honoring the 60th anniversary of Jackie Robinson’s debut, April 15, 2007 (above)

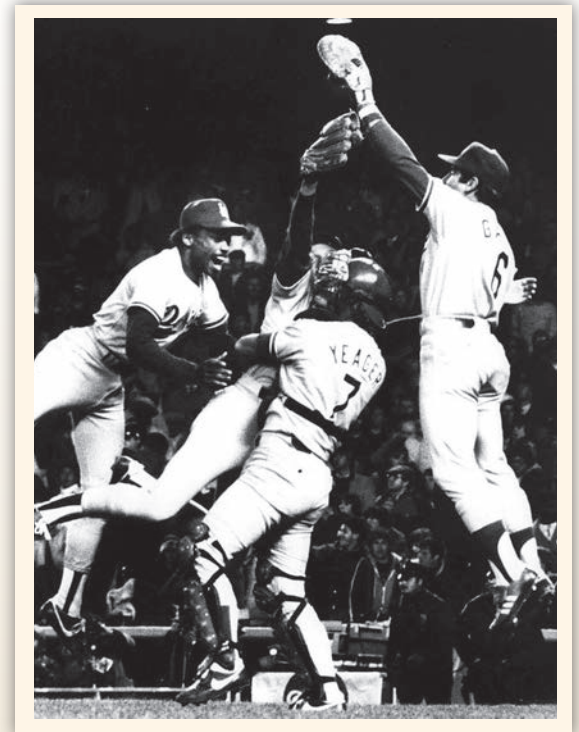
## Vin His Own Words



## GOOSEBUMPS

I still am surprised. Even individual efforts will surprise me. Even minor parts of a long game might surprise me. I still get goosebumps, and the goosebumps tell me that I'm still capable of being surprised. It's that remarkable a game, no matter having seen (how) many games. Something always comes along.

And of course last year, it was the emotional ride. In Spring Training, everyone said the Dodgers were going to win the Western Division. And instead they were in last place, 9½ games back, and just absolutely on a treadmill to oblivion. And then ... they were all healthy at the same time, (and) they took off on that exhilarating rise. And as I told people all winter, they were within one pitch, one fractured rib, and two games of getting into the World Series. So that's cutting it pretty close – and it's surprising.



## CHARACTERS IN THE STORY

I've always tried to make the players human beings – individuals – rather than wind-up dolls down on the field running around. So I've always searched for the human side of the game, if I can possibly find it. That's the character that I try to paint, the character that the man represents himself. I think that helps, especially when a team is struggling and you have something interesting to say about someone. I think on the other end, a listener might enjoy it.



Retired number ceremony for Jackie Robinson, Roy Campanella and Sandy Koufax, June 4, 1972 (above)



JON SOOHOO

The Dodgers celebrate winning the 1981 World Series (above right), Opening Day at Dodger Stadium, 1989 (below)



## Vin His Own Words



## FERNANDOMANIA VS. PUIGMANIA

**O**h, totally different. Fernandomania was almost spiritual. I had the feeling many times: I would see an apparently lower-income Hispanic family coming to the ballpark, with toddlers or little children, and I knew that they were coming not just to watch a game, and not even just to watch Fernando. I know they were saying to their children, 'See that man out there? He comes from abject poverty, from the back of beyond. And see what hard work and everything else will do.' I knew that was what was going on.

With Puig, it's like watching an electrical storm. It's totally different.

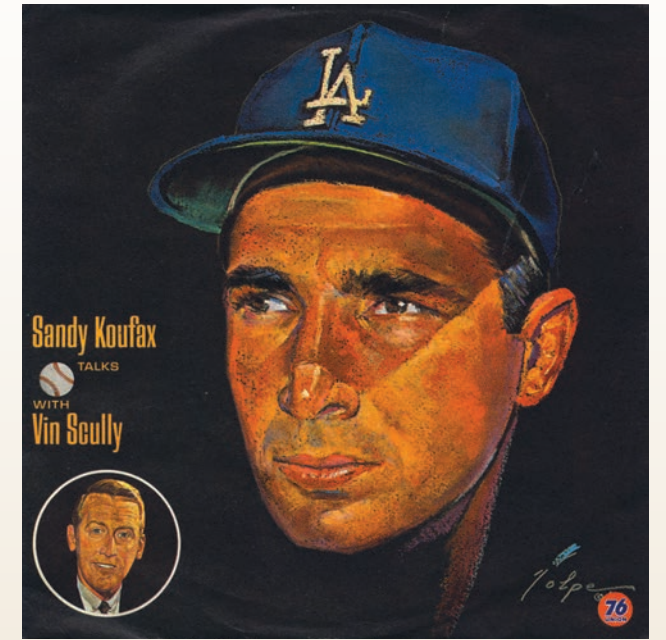


RICHARD KEE

## KOUFAX AND KERSHAW

**I**'ve never seen a pitcher get the reaction that Sandy Koufax received. The best way I could put it, it reminded me of the maestro ascending the podium to conduct a symphony orchestra. There would be around of applause before he did anything. Sandy would walk down toward the bullpen to warm up and get standing ovations. Players would stop doing what they were doing to just look at him. Clayton is a marvelously talented young player, but for whatever reason, he doesn't really have the electricity that involved Koufax. It's really hard to explain, but maybe it was part of Sandy's nature. His nature was to recede back into his shell – the more applause, the more acceptance, the quieter he became. I think Clayton revels in the applause and in the attention. And good for him – he should. But they are totally different people.

You have to remember, Clayton pitches every fifth day. Sandy pitched every fourth day. It's a big difference, physically. Sandy was unusually strong. One reason is to look at the way he was built. He had an unusually broad back and extremely long fingers. I'd almost wreck my wrist swinging Sandy's golf clubs, because the handles of the club were like barrels on a bat to accommodate his fingers. So he was unusually strong. ... Clayton is just not built quite that way, but as a modern-day, every-fifth-day pitcher, Clayton is what he is – twice a Cy Young Award winner, and the sky's the limit.



## Vin His Own Words



RICHARD KEE

### VIN SCULLY WAY

I'd be highly honored (if they named a street after me). I just felt (when it was suggested), maybe someday it'd be nice, but we had a new mayor. He had just taken over really. And so my reaction was (that) he's got so many more things to worry about than naming a street after me. I mean someday, it'd be nice I guess for my children, grandchildren and down through the years. But you know, when you're not here, it's not going to make you feel any better anyway. So whatever they decide is fine with me. There's no need – there's no hunger. It's not like I really want to have a street. No. And I was truly (speaking) from the heart when I said, 'If they're naming streets around here, the first one should be Walter O'Malley.' I mean, he brought the team here. He built the stadium. What more do you need to have a street named after you? Not the fella sitting up-stairs, jabbering away all the time."

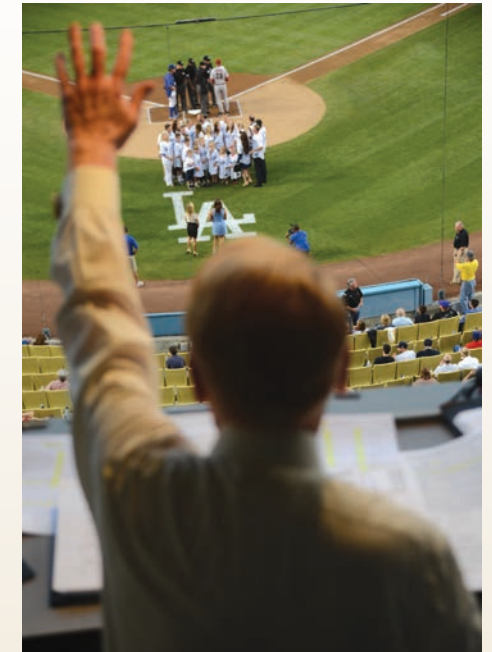


Signs from Dodgertown in Vero Beach, Florida

## THE PASSING OF THE DECADES

I've been very fortunate; I've enjoyed them all. They're all somewhat different as life progresses – your life changes constantly. So no, I don't have a specific (favorite). Maybe, of course, when you first start this job, this major job, you're very much younger and more impressionable and emotional, so maybe the '50s, which was a real growing-up period both in my life and my broadcasting career, that was probably the biggest change. And then you kind of settle in.

"You don't dread (the years passing). You're grateful you've gotten that far. I'm at that age right now that I'm just happy to be where I am for as long as I've been allowed to live.



JON SOOHOO

The Scully family gathers on August 30, 2012 for a first-pitch ceremony.

## Vin His Own Words



JON SOOHOO



JON SOOHOO

## REFLECTION

Usually push forward, it's rare for me to go backwards, very rare. One time I did go backward was last year, when they clinched in Arizona and they went into the swimming pool and all that stuff. I had left the booth, and I wasn't going to go near the clubhouse because I know they were pouring champagne and all that stuff. So I went to the bus in the tunnel at the ballpark, and I was totally alone, and I sat there quietly, and I became a reflective person.

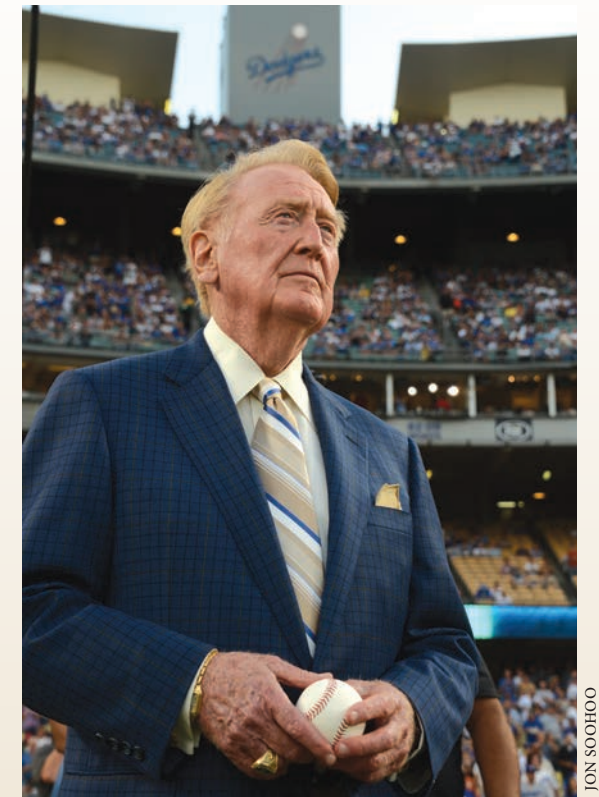
I started thinking back over the pennants that the team had won and the various players who had contributed heavily to them. I thought of the frustrating days and seasons. So yes, that was one special time, and it was probably 45 minutes when I sat quietly in that bus and enjoyed every minute of it, going back through the years.

I can't say it all stays fresh. It was more like faces. It was more like sitting on a little grassy knoll, and let's say it's a golf tournament and the players are walking by. In my mind, players were walking by, running by, pitching and hitting or crying ... not specific games, but players, people, men that I knew well.

## THE PROFESSIONAL

Going all the way back, if I went all the way back, I would think of Carl Furillo, for instance. The Dodgers were playing the Phillies, the final game of the year, winner goes on to the World Series. And it was a great match-up, Don Newcombe and Robin Roberts, two great pitchers of that era. And to make a long story short, the Dodgers lost that game – 10th-inning home run by Dick Sisler – and I went down to the clubhouse to kind of commiserate. It was my first year. I walked by, and there was a door open and I saw a station wagon piled with stuff on top of it, and I thought, 'Well, only a player can park there.' And I thought, 'Why would a player be all ready to go home – don't you think he'd be thinking of winning and staying?' And I said 'Whose wagon is that?' And they said, 'Oh, that's Carl Furillo.' Well, Carl Furillo was blue-collar, worked hard day after day after day, and I said, 'I saw you're packed out there.' And he said, 'Yeah, you either do or you don't.' And that really struck me as the complete professional. 'You either do or you don't.'

*Interview with Vin Scully conducted January 7, 2014.*



JON SOOHOO



JON SOOHOO