



Playing with the Enemy: A Baseball Prodigy, a World at War, and a Field of Broken Dreams

Gary W. Moore

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"Foreword by baseball legend Jim Morris, former Major League pitcher with the Tampa Bay Devil Rays.

It was true in the 1940s, and it is still true today: if you have talent, someone will notice. In Gene Moore's case, that someone was the Brooklyn Dodgers.

Gene Moore was a farm boy living with his family in Sesser, Illinois, a town so small even map makers ignored it. As a teenager, when he wasn't in school or helping his Pop on the farm, slopping the hogs and doing other chores with his older brother Ward and five sisters, Gene was playing baseball with the guys on the town team. Some were twice his age. The older fellows didn't mind having the Moore kid on their team because he could hit the ball farther than anyone else, he was the best catcher anyone had ever seen, he could throw men out from his knees, and not a ball ever got past him. Gene was 15 years old.

Word quickly spread across the United States about the country boy who could hit the ball a country mile. The Dodgers wanted to take a look at this farm kid, barely old enough to shave and still awaiting his first kiss, but brash enough to call the pitches from behind the plate and motion to the infielders and outfielders as to how they should position themselves for certain hitters.

Headed for baseball stardom with the Brooklyn Dodgers, Gene's destiny was interrupted by Pearl Harbor. After playing ball for the Navy in the Azores and North Africa, Gene and his team were sent to the States for a special-and top secret-mission: guarding German sailors captured from U-505. Unable to field a team, Gene convinced his commander to allow him to teach the enemy how to play baseball while he and his teammates waited for the war to end so they could be called up into the Major Leagues. But Gene's future changed irrevocably in Louisiana. His life . . . and maybe our national pastime . . . was forever altered.

Inspired by true events, *Playing with the Enemy* is the riveting story of a depression-era youth and his brush with destiny. Author Gary Moore, Gene's son, did not learn of his father's remarkable odyssey through World War II and the hardships of minor league baseball until the day before Gene's death. Confronted with evidence of a possible career in baseball, Gene finally broke his decades of silence and spent the next several hours relieving himself of the heavy burden he had been carrying. The stunning news sent the author on his own odyssey as he researched his father's life and interviewed dozens of people.

The astonishing story of Gene Moore's life in and out of baseball is an exciting and often heart-wrenching saga that will capture the heart of every red-blooded American who can still smell the fresh-cut summer grass or remember how it felt to tie on the cleats while dreaming of making it to the big leagues. Jammed with memorable characters from an extraordinary time in our country's history, *Playing with the Enemy* is a story that will be read and reread for generations to come. And it is one you will never forget.

About the Author: Gary W. Moore is the president and managing partner of Covenant Air and Water, LLC, a motivational speaker, and an accomplished musician. Gene Moore was his father. Gary lives in Bourbonnais, Illinois. "

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