



Hollywood's Team: Grit, Glamour, and the 1950s Los Angeles Rams

Jim Hock, Michael Downs

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In 2016, after twenty years in St. Louis, the Rams are back in their longtime home. Some call their return to Los Angeles a relocation, but it's more the restoration of a city landmark.

Hollywood's Team follows the Rams of the 1950s. They were glamorous, glitzy, and most of all, they were exciting. Like the city itself, the Rams were comprised of both big stars and everyday workhorses like John Hock, father of the author? a quiet, humble, and stout offensive guard.

They were the first major professional sports team west of the Mississippi River, the first to integrate, even before Jackie Robinson, the first team to reach a million fans, and the first team with a TV contract. The Rams of the 1950s were, in so many ways, the first modern sports franchise.

Their roster is a who's who of the NFL Hall Fame. Names such as quarterback Norm "The Dutchman" Van Brocklin, wide receiver Elroy "Crazy Legs" Hirsch, Bob Waterfield, Tom Fears, defensive back Dick "Night Train" Lane, and linebacker Les Richter. Other notables from the era include a wunderkind public relations man named Pete Rozelle who would go on to become the boy commissioner of the NFL at age thirty-three. Head coach Sid Gillman was an architect of the modern passing game. Owner Dan Reeves was a genius in business, but troubled by alcohol. Heck, even the iconic comedian Bob Hope was a partial owner of the Rams at the time.

The Rams were Hollywood's team. This is their story.

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