



# Stealing Games: How John McGraw Transformed Baseball with the 1911 New York Giants

*Maury Klein*

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The 1911 New York Giants stole an astonishing 347 bases, a record that still stands more than a century later. That alone makes them special in baseball history, but as Maury Klein relates in *Stealing Games* they also embodied a rapidly changing America on the cusp of a faster, more frenetic pace of life dominated by machines, technology, and urban culture.

Baseball, too, was evolving from the dead-ball to the live-ball era--the cork-centered ball was introduced in 1910 and structurally changed not only the outcome of individual games but the way the game itself was played, requiring upgraded equipment, new rules, and new ways of adjudicating. Changing performance also changed the relationship between management and players. The Giants had two stars--the brilliant manager John McGraw and aging pitcher Christy Mathewson--and memorable characters such as Rube Marquard and Fred Snodgrass; yet their speed and tenacity led to three pennants in a row starting in 1911. *Stealing Games* gives a great team its due and underscores once more the rich connection between sports and culture.

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