

# THE GASHOUSE GANG



**YESSIREE**, ball playing was where we Deans really excelled. But it wasn't all fun and games on the St. Louis Cardinals. Baseball's real serious business, don't you know. And no season more so than 1934.

By September of that year, the New York Giants was leading us Cardinals by seven whole games. But I told that Mr. Frisch, "We ain't givin' up, Frankie. I'm pitchin' and I'll show you we ain't beat." And what did I tell you, in the homestretch we Cards went and won 20 of our last 25 games!

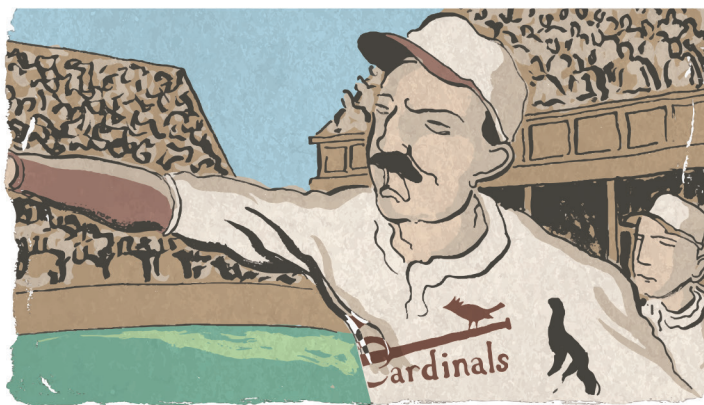
Those Giants were some tough opponents though, and I didn't want to leave our fate all up to my pitching skill. One day, before a weekend game against that particularly formidable team, I found myself a black cat and carried that thing right into the opposition's dugout. I put that cat's whiskered nose up into the face of Giant's second baseman, Hughie Critz, and I says, "Cat, get Critz! Critz, get jinxed. Zmmmm!" That got him, alright.

I believed in 1934 that Frankie Frisch had to have been the most wonderful manager in the whole wide world. Who else could keep a club in a pennant fight with only two pitchers? That's right, the Cardinals' playoff dreams were ridin' high on the slightly less than bright white shoulders of me 'n' Paul.

Frankie, though, sometimes crossed the chalk line when he'd try to tell Ol' Diz how to throw. I mean, how's a right infielder like Frisch gonna tell a star like me how to pitch, after all? One game, against the Dodgers, I told Mr. Frisch I was gonna pitch however I darn well pleased—and you know, I did just that! I threw **fastballs** to batters who liked fastballs. I threw **curves** where Frankie had explicitly said, "No curves." And, heck, it worked! I found myself in the eighth inning giving up the first hit of the game! We Cards shut out those Dodgers 1-0 and had a right

good time doing it, too. I had a picnic with Frisch. I always hoped he'd manage the Cardinals forever. I sure loved to drive that Dutchman nuts.

Next game, my kid brother Paul really did throw a **no-hitter** against those same Dodgers. Darnnit, I told them press people, if'n I'd knowed Paul was gonna throw a no-hitter, well, I'd a throwed one, too!



Those wins led us to a string of victories right alongside a good long chain of Giants' defeats! We was like two trains chugging full speed ahead in opposite directions. And whattya know, on the very last day of the season, I pitched my way to victory against them Cincinnati Reds and the Cards won the **pennant!** Was a pretty special day for Ol' Diz

here. That game was not only the Cardinals' fifth pennant win since 1926, but it also was my seventh **shutout** of the year and 30th win for the season. No team has ever given up a seven-game lead in the month of September, but that's what those Giants did in 1934, and the Cards sure came out on top!

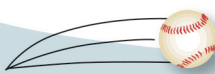
After the game, a young lad walked on out to the pitcher's mound, on my solid instructions. He carried with him a little block of ice, settin' it right there on the rubber. He then says to them press people, "Dizzy told me this morning to put it there after the game. Said it would be burning up if I didn't. Go ahead and feel it. Even the ice hasn't gotten it cooled down yet."

Read more about Dizzy Dean and his fellow players in author Carolyn Mueller's children's book "Dizzy and the Gashouse Gang." She lives in St. Louis, MO.

Visit [www.carolynelizabethmueller.com](http://www.carolynelizabethmueller.com).

Illustrator Nick Hayes draws political cartoons for the Guardian and New Statesman newspapers and writes graphic novels. He lives in East London.

## POP UPS



**FASTBALLS:** The fastball is the most common baseball pitch. Its purpose is to prevent the batter from hitting it based on its speed. Fastballs can be thrown up to 100 mph!

**CURVES:** The curveball is a pitch with forward spin on it, causing it to dive downward as it approaches the plate, making it difficult for the batter to hit.

**NO-HITTER:** A no-hitter is a baseball game in which a team is not able to record a single hit.

**PENNANT:** The term is for the American or National League championship. The winner of the American League or National League pennant goes on to play in the World Series.

**SHUTOUT:** A shutout in baseball means that a single pitcher pitches a complete game and does not allow the other team to score a run.

## EXTRA INNINGS!

Imagine you are writing about a baseball game in the 1934 World Series. Read coverage of a sports game in your newspaper and follow the format used to create your story.

Frankie Frisch tried to give advice to his players. Newspapers often have advice columns and how-to sections. Find an example of advice in your newspaper.

**Learning Standards:** I can write for a specific purpose and audience. I can use the newspaper to locate information.

