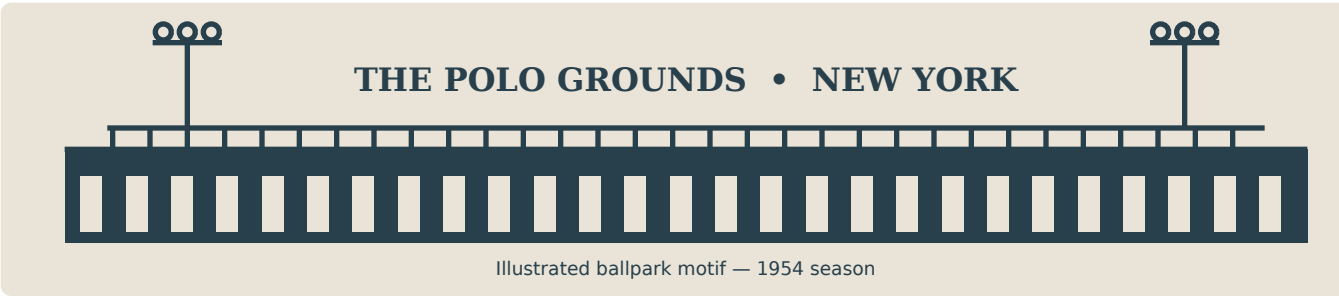
THE POLO GROUNDS CHRONICLE

JULY 1954 EDITION • VOLUME IV • NEW YORK GIANTS REPLAY

GIANTS STORM TOWARD THE PENNANT!

Antonelli reaches 22-0 • Mays bats .417 • New York leads by 15½ games



Illustrated ballpark motif — 1954 season

SEASON RECORD	JULY RECORD	NL LEAD
77-25 (.755)	23-9 (.719)	15½ games

NEW YORK, JULY 31, 1954. The Giants have completed another remarkable month of baseball, and with August approaching, the National League pennant appears increasingly destined for the Polo Grounds. But July was no ordinary triumphal procession.

New York was no-hit, its seemingly invincible pitching ace came perilously close to defeat, and the club endured a bizarre succession of fielding errors. Yet Leo Durocher’s men won 23 of 32 games and finished the month with four consecutive victories. The Giants can be beaten on a given afternoon. Beating them often enough to win the pennant is another matter.

THE SAY HEY KID IS IN A LEAGUE OF HIS OWN

Willie Mays enters August batting .417, with 33 home runs, 96 RBI and 103 runs scored. His 161 hits include 29 doubles and 10 triples; his .801 slugging percentage and 1.274 OPS are extraordinary. In July alone he hit .400 with nine homers and 25 RBI.

AVG	HOME RUNS	RBI	SLG	OPS
.417	33	96	.801	1.274

Season batting figures are cumulative through July 31; monthly figures are from the corrected July report.

ANTONELLI: TWENTY-TWO WINS, NOT A SINGLE DEFEAT

No National League pitcher has commanded more attention than Johnny Antonelli. On July 17, he shut out St. Louis 5-0 to reach 20-0, surpassing Rube Marquard’s famous 19-0 start for the 1912 Giants.

By July 31, Antonelli stood at 22-0 with a 0.96 ERA over 197⅔ innings. He had surrendered only 99 hits and recorded five shutouts. During July he went 5-0 with a 1.77 ERA.

W-L	ERA	INNINGS	WHIP	STRIKEOUTS
22-0	0.96	197⅔	0.72	121

The afternoon the streak nearly died

Against Cincinnati, Antonelli took a 5-3 lead into the eighth inning. The Reds erupted for four runs and led 7-5. Alvin Dark homered in the ninth and Willie Mays delivered a two-out RBI double to tie the game, sparing Antonelli his first defeat. Cincinnati ultimately won 8-7 in ten innings.

Antonelli responded with eight innings of one-hit, shutout baseball in a 4-0 victory over Milwaukee, then held St. Louis to four hits over seven innings in a 7-2 win on July 28. His 22 victories already exceed his actual 1954 total of 21.

THE DAY CINCINNATI SILENCED THE GIANTS

JULY 18 — HOWIE JUDSON NO-HITS NEW YORK, 1-0! On a Sunday afternoon in Cincinnati, Judson held the Giants without a hit, walking four and striking out two. The Reds needed only one run.

Remarkably, New York answered by winning the next two games of the series by shutout, 5-0 and 3-0, before losing the fourth contest in the ten-inning Antonelli thriller. Four games, three shutouts, and a 2-2 split: the most unpredictable series of the Giants’ season.

DON LIDDLE: THE FORGOTTEN ACE

While Antonelli dominates the headlines, another Giants lefthander has quietly built a remarkable unbeaten campaign. Don Liddle finished July 8-0 with a 1.81 ERA over 84 innings. He won five games during July alone, with a 1.42 monthly ERA.

Together, Antonelli and Liddle have amassed 30 victories without a loss. Ruben Gomez earned his twelfth win on July 30. In the bullpen, Marv Grissom leads the National League with 14 saves, followed by Hoyt Wilhelm with 11.

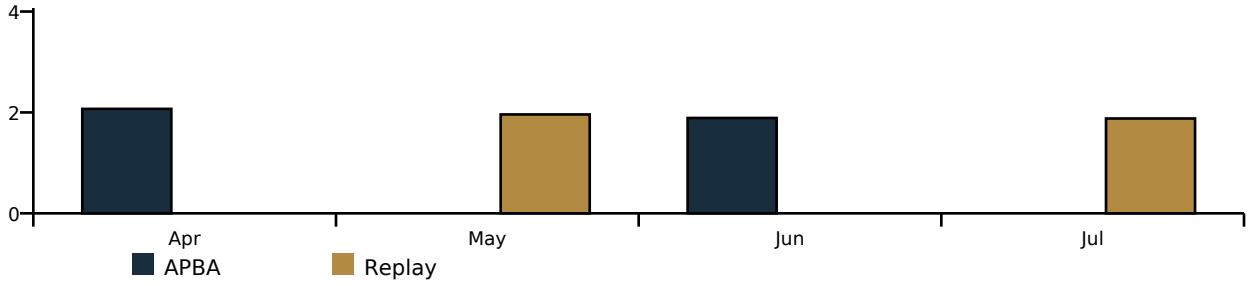
THE FIELDING FOLLIES: 23 STRAIGHT GAMES WITH AN ERROR!

From Game 78 on July 6 through Game 100 on July 29, every Giants game featured at least one error by either club. The streak ended July 30, when New York beat Cincinnati 6-1 and both teams played error-free baseball.

The surprise: July actually had the lowest combined error rate of the four months. Its 60 errors across 32 games amounted to 1.88 per game. Only two games were errorless, so the mistakes were distributed across nearly every contest.

MONTH / ENGINE	GAMES	COMBINED ERRORS	ERRORS / GAME
April / APBA	14	29	2.07
May / Replay	28	55	1.96
June / APBA	28	53	1.89
July / Replay	32	60	1.88

Combined fielding errors per game by month



JULY BY THE NUMBERS

STATISTIC	JULY TOTAL	STATISTIC	JULY TOTAL
Wins / losses	23-9	Runs scored	180
Runs allowed	100	Run differential	+80
Giants hits	314	Opponent hits	243
Combined hits/game	17.41	Combined errors	60
Errorless games	2	Giants team ERA	2.79

Game-level totals are calculated from the July 31 game log; team ERA is from the corrected monthly pitching report.

APBA VERSUS REPLAY: THE SEASON-LONG EXPERIMENT

Four months into this unique project, the comparison between tabletop engines is taking shape. Replay continues to produce somewhat more hits per game, while the fielding error rates are nearly identical.

STATISTIC	APBA (42 G)	REPLAY (60 G)
Giants record	34-8	43-17

STATISTIC	APBA (42 G)	REPLAY (60 G)
Combined hits per game	16.17	17.17
Combined errors per game	1.95	1.92
Errorless games	7	7
Games with 20+ combined hits	9	15

Different opponent mixes, rotations, and months could explain some of the differences. The final season comparison will account for those factors.

PITCHER RUN SUPPORT: WHO GETS THE OFFENSE?

How many runs do the Giants score when each pitcher starts? This measures total New York runs in games started by that pitcher, including runs scored after he leaves. It is not the same as runs scored while the starter is on the mound.

STARTER	STARTS	GIANTS RUNS	RUNS / START
Larry Jansen	7	61	8.71
Ramon Monzant	1	7	7.00
Johnny Antonelli	24	143	5.96
Jim Hearn	14	81	5.79
Ruben Gomez	21	121	5.76
Don Liddle	11	56	5.09
Sal Maglie	21	89	4.24
Marv Grissom	2	6	3.00
Windy McCall	1	1	1.00
GIANTS TOTAL	**102**	**565**	**5.54**

Jansen received enormous support: 61 runs in seven starts, or 8.71 per game. Antonelli received 5.96, above the club average of 5.54. Liddle received 5.09, and Sal Maglie only 4.24. The difference in run support helps explain why a pitcher’s won-lost record never tells the entire story.

AROUND THE MAJOR LEAGUES

Cleveland continues its American League dominance

The Indians finish July at 74-25, ahead of the Chicago White Sox at 66-37. Early Wynn leads the American League with 18 victories and a 1.82 ERA. Cleveland’s .747 winning percentage is nearly identical to New York’s .755.

Miñoso’s monster afternoon

On April 19, Minnie Miñoso went 6-for-7 with two home runs and eight RBI in Chicago’s 20-2 rout of Detroit, still one of the year’s finest individual offensive displays.

Milwaukee erupts for 26 runs

On July 5, the Braves battered St. Louis 26-7 with 27 hits, one of the replay's most astonishing offensive performances.

A MIDSUMMER CLASSIC TO REMEMBER

At Cleveland Stadium on July 13, the National League defeated the American League 13-5 in the replay's All-Star Game. Willie Mays earned MVP honors with an unforgettable performance: 4-for-4, two home runs, five RBI and four runs scored. Ted Kluszewski added two home runs, including a grand slam, and five RBI.

The All-Star Game is a separate exhibition and is excluded from regular-season player and team totals.

THE NATIONAL LEAGUE PENNANT RACE

CLUB	W-L	PCT.	GB
NEW YORK	77-25	.755	—
Philadelphia	60-39	.606	15½
Milwaukee	60-40	.600	16
Brooklyn	53-49	.520	24
Chicago	49-51	.490	27
St. Louis	41-59	.410	35
Cincinnati	42-61	.408	35½
Pittsburgh	22-80	.216	55

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

The Giants have played 102 games. They have won 77. Willie Mays is batting .417. Johnny Antonelli has not lost a game. Don Liddle has not lost a game. The bullpen boasts the league's two leading relief specialists in saves.

And yet July demonstrated that this team is not invulnerable. Cincinnati no-hit the Giants. Antonelli nearly saw his perfect record disappear. Perhaps that is what makes this season so compelling.

The real 1954 Giants won 97 games. These Giants need only 20 more victories to match that total, with 52 games still to play.

LOOKING AHEAD: AUGUST 1954

August brings a return to APBA Baseball, another chapter in Antonelli's unbeaten pursuit, Mays's chase for batting immortality, and the Giants' march toward a National League championship.

Next edition: The Polo Grounds Chronicle — August 1954.

Source note: This is an alternate-history 1954 Giants replay. Statistical reporting uses the game log through July 31 and the supplied corrected monthly reports and cumulative leader reports. Illustrative stadium graphic is original artwork, not an archival photograph.