



# Of Mikes and Men: A Lifetime of Braves Baseball

*Pete Van Wieren, Jack Wilkinson*

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As a boy growing up in upstate New York, Pete Van Wieren dreamed of becoming the play-by-play voice of his hometown heroes, the Triple A Rochester Red Wings. Instead, he found big-league broadcast heaven in Atlanta. In 1976, Van Wieren and another young broadcaster named Skip Caray, son of the legendary Harry Caray, were hired to call Atlanta Braves games. Over the next three decades, they were the voices of America's Team, as the Braves became known thanks to Ted Turner's *TBS* superstation. For 33 seasons, Van Wieren—nicknamed "The Professor" for his scholarly approach to baseball and resemblance to a college professor—saw it all and called it all, including mercurial owner Ted Turner's one-game stint as the Braves' manager in 1976. And then, in the midst of 15 seasons of mostly awful and often hilariously inept baseball, came the Miracle of 1991, when the Braves went from worst to first, captured Atlanta's heart, and nearly won one of the greatest World Series ever played.



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