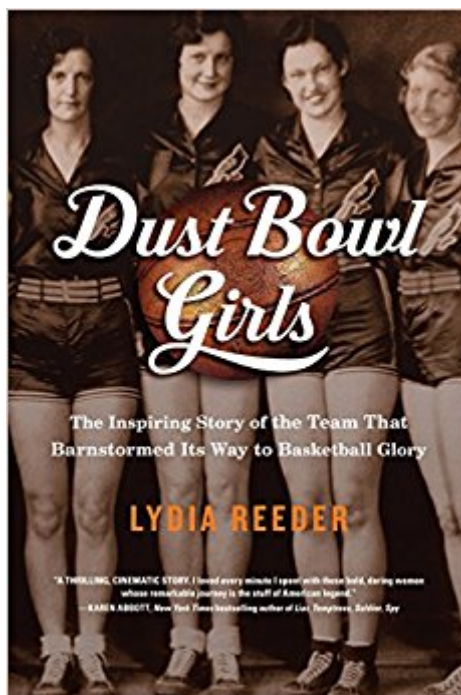




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# Dust Bowl Girls: A Team's Quest For Basketball Glory (Thorndike Press Large Print Popular And Narrative Nonfiction Series)



## Synopsis

At the height of the Great Depression, Sam Babb, the charismatic basketball coach of tiny Oklahoma Presbyterian College, began dreaming. Like so many others, he wanted a reason to have hope. Traveling from farm to farm, he recruited talented, hardworking young women and offered them a chance at a better life: a free college education if they would come play for his basketball team, the Cardinals. Despite their fears of leaving home and the sacrifices faced by their families, the women followed Babb and his dream. He shaped the Cardinals into a formidable team, and something extraordinary began to happen: with passion for the sport and heartfelt loyalty to one another and their coach, they won every game. For author Lydia Reeder, this is a family story: coach Sam Babb is her great-uncle. When her grandmother handed her a worn, yellowed folder that contained newspaper articles, letters, and photographs of Sam and the Cardinals, she said, You might want to tell their story someday. Now, with extensive research and the gathered memories of the surviving Cardinals, she has. Combining exhilarating sports writing and exceptional storytelling, *Dust Bowl Girls* conveys the intensity of an improbable journey to an epic showdown with the prevailing national champions, led by the legendary Babe Didrikson. It captures a moment in American sports history when a visionary coach helped his young athletes achieve more than a winning season. "

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Lydia Reeder has crafted a thrilling, cinematic story that seems destined for the big screen (please

cast Saoirse Ronan as Doll Harris!). I loved every minute I spent with the bold, daring women of the Cardinals basketball team, whose remarkable journey to victory is the stuff of American legend.

Karen Abbott, New York Times bestselling author of *Liar*, *Temptress*, *Soldier*, *Spy* Long before the influence of Title IX, a small college in Oklahoma, under the direction of a volunteer coach, was actively involved in recruiting women athletes. Based on extensive research and told with the talented storytelling ability of the author, *Dust Bowl Girls* is an important and enjoyable story."

Virginia Peters, Ph.D., Former Coach of Women's Basketball and Director of Women's Intercollegiate Athletics at the University of Central Oklahoma, Edmond, Oklahoma *Dust Bowl Girls* reads like something pulled from the imagination of a Hollywood dreamer. However, it is a true story of a group of Oklahoma Dust Bowl farm girls melded together by a one-legged coach into the finest basketball team of the Depression era. This epic sports story is the stuff of which legends are made.

W. Lynne Draper, Former President and CEO of the Jim Thorpe Association and the Oklahoma Sports Hall of Fame and recipient of the NFL Players Association National Award of Excellence Fun. Heartwarming. The story of a little-known but important moment in the history of basketball and women's sports in general. *Fastpitch: The Untold History of Softball and the Women Who Made the Game* For so long, women have been told they couldn't or shouldn't. In *Dust Bowl Girls*, Lydia Reeder tells the story of pioneers in women's sport who refused to listen. In a mix of history and sports thriller, Reeder unearths the story a rag tag group of women - some of them teenagers - who took the first steps to proving women could be athletes too. It's an inspiring story.

Jen A. Miller, author of *Running: A Love Story* As she tells the amazing story of Babb and his underdog women's basketball team, Reeder also reveals the challenges facing serious female athletes during the 1920s and '30s, including the perceived risk of destroying their feminine image by invading a man's world. Sports fans and general readers alike are sure to find the story both worthwhile and entertaining. A heartwarming inspirational tale. *Kirkus Reviews*"

As soon as I saw the cover and description for *Dust Bowl Girls*, I knew I had to read it. Both of my parents are from Oklahoma and still maintain close ties to the state. While my parents grew up in Ardmore, my grandfather lived for a while in Durant, and several of my relatives are buried there. *Dust Bowl Girls* details the extraordinary success of the women's basketball team from Oklahoma Presbyterian College in the midst of the Depression. With incredible dedication and commitment, Sam Babb, the school's basketball coach, traveled all over rural Oklahoma to recruit women to play on his basketball team. Babb offered them an education in exchange for playing basketball at a time when many families were barely scraping by. Lydia

Reeder, the great niece of Sam Babb, writes an exhaustive tale of not only the successful women's basketball team but also a history of Oklahoma Presbyterian College and the history of women's basketball. Having spent a lot of time in Oklahoma, the sections related to Oklahoma were very interesting to me. If not from Oklahoma, those sections may not appeal as much to others because it is very detailed. The portions related to the history of women's basketball did not appeal to me quite as much. However, overall Dust Bowl Girls is an interesting read. The photographs are a great addition to the book and help make the story come to life. Dust Bowl Girls is clearly a labor of love for the author. Thanks to Algonquin Books and NetGalley for the opportunity to read this ARC in exchange for an honest review.

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