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A black cat doomed the '69 Cubs

NKU prof's book details that season of
misery

BY HOWARD MCEWEN | ENQUIRER CONTRIBUTOR

HIGHLAND HEIGHTS - Doug Feldmann's fourth book, "Miracle Collapse: The 1969 Chicago Cubs," details the season that could have been for the club that hasn't won a National League championship since 1945.

"The talented 1969 team built a large lead over the rest of the National League (East) by August - over 10 games at one point - but went into a tailspin in the final month of the season," Feldmann said. "In September, the Cubs' slide began while playing the Mets in Shea Stadium in New York. Early in one of the games, a black cat ran onto the field ... and went right over in front of the Cubs dugout where he stared manager Leo Durocher right in the face.

"The Cubs lost that night, and the downfall had begun," said Feldmann, an assistant professor of education at Northern Kentucky University.

ADVERTISEMENT The team lost the division race to the New York Mets, who went on to win the World Series.

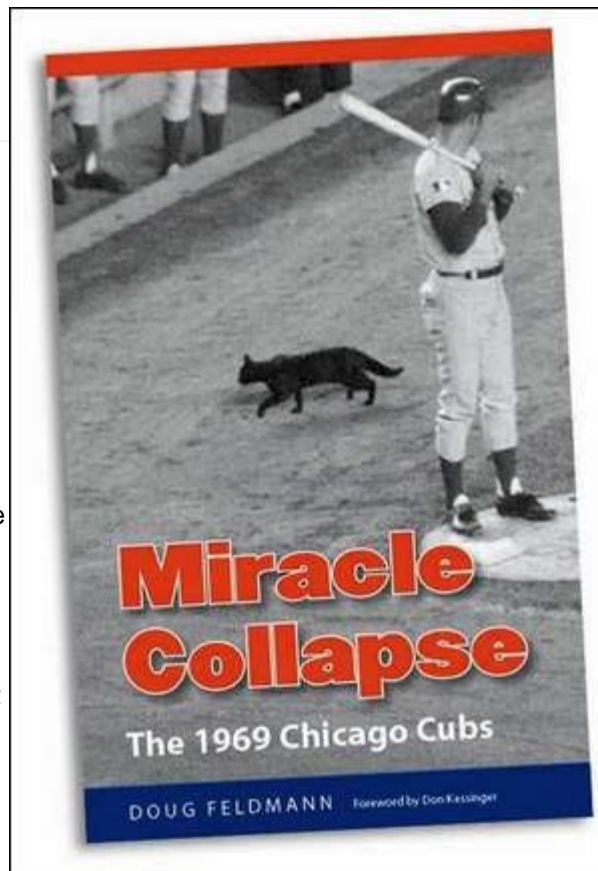
Feldmann has also written on the 1935 Cubs and two books about the Cardinals of 1934 and 1985.

"I grew up on the north side of Chicago - a Cubs fan, naturally. However, my father grew up a Cardinals fan in southern Illinois, and he went on to play professionally in the White Sox system," said Feldmann, explaining his interest in those two teams.

Feldmann's baseball interests are not all academic. He played as an undergraduate at Northern Illinois University and is now a scout for the Reds. Feldmann believes his scouting helps his writing.

"A scout tends to be able to appreciate the minute qualitative aspects of the game - such as particular attitudinal or hustle habits of a player, for example - and I think that knowledge adds to what I can share with a reader, a perspective that perhaps some other baseball writers do not possess," Feldmann said.

Feldmann is also a former Northern Illinois University football player, but his first love remains baseball.



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About the book

"Miracle Collapse," by NKU assistant professor Doug Feldmann, is due out in June. It can be preordered through University of Nebraska Press.



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"I fully believe that baseball has encapsulated the total American experience, over different epochs of history, like no other sport ever has or ever will," Feldmann said.

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