

1962 WORLD SERIES

his Army service beginning in October, the pitcher wouldn't have been available for the World Series, regardless. Asked if he followed along as his teammates faced the Giants in the Fall Classic, Downing laughs.

"Son, you've never been in the Army, have you?" he says. "There were no TVs in the barracks. The only TV was in the PX (Post Exchange), but those were day games in the World Series back then, and in the Army your days are kind of busy."

But Downing pauses and adds: "We sure did find out about it, though. Especially the way it ended."

The 1962 World Series brought about a return of an old New York rivalry. The

Giants had left the Polo Grounds in Manhattan for San Francisco just five years earlier. Much has been made of the Yankees' October battles with the Dodgers, but the Yankees and Giants met six times in the World Series between 1921 and 1951. The rivalry was bitter — after all, the two franchises shared the Polo Grounds until the Yankees purchased Babe Ruth and started becoming more popular, causing the Giants to, at one point, give the Yankees an eviction notice that was later rescinded. The enmity, of course, led to the construction of Yankee Stadium just across the river in the Bronx.

So, after the Giants won a dramatic three-game playoff against the Dodgers for

the National League pennant, the '62 Series was the first time in 11 years the former co-tenants would meet.

"A great team. A fearsome team," Kubek says of the '62 Giants. "I think about that roster today, and I'm still like, 'Wow.' Mays, McCovey, the Alou brothers, Marichal, Cepeda ... Harvey Kuenn was on that team too, and if I remember right he hit over .300 that year."

It was .304, to be exact.

The Giants were a veritable All-Star team, and the World Series was just as competitive as many had expected. After the teams split the first two games at Candlestick, the Yankees came home and won two of three at the Stadium to take a 3-games-to-2 Series lead back to San Francisco.

Because of the cross-country travel — the first World Series in history pitting together teams on opposite coasts — and two games postponed by rain, the drama was extended. After Game 5 was postponed for a day in New York by rain, Game 6 in San Francisco was actually postponed three days because of torrential downpours in Northern California. That allowed Yankees manager Ralph Houk to tab Terry — who had won Game 5 — for his third start of the World Series instead of Jim Bouton. San Francisco manager Alvin Dark tabbed Jack Sanford to oppose Terry in Game 7.

It was a classic pitcher's duel, the only run coming in the top of the fifth inning. Skowron and Clete Boyer opened with singles, and Sanford inexplicably walked Terry to load the bases with nobody out.

"I actually wasn't a bad hitter. I had a pretty good eye at the plate," Terry said. "I even tried switch-hitting once, but they didn't let me do it after that. They said, 'You know what? Just take care of the score on the mound.'"

Kubek was up next. The beloved Yankee, who had missed much of the 1962 season because of military service and played just 45 games during the regular season, drew the Game 7 start at shortstop and batted leadoff, with eventual Rookie of Year Tresh moving to left field.



The Yankees took a 3-games-to-2 lead in the Series after a 5-3 win in Game 5. Tresh [R] delivered the big blow, a three-run homer in the eighth off Jack Sanford, while Terry went the distance, striking out seven and walking one. Terry, the 26-year-old All-Star right-hander, was a workhorse in '62, making 39 starts and pitching nearly 300 innings during the regular season.