

@ SABR - NEGRO LEAGUES COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

June 1995

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CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Another long-time friend has left us to join his maker. Normal "Tweed" Webb passed on April 27th in St. Louis. Tweed was a long-time SABR member and a valued NLC contributor. He was a Negro Leagues historian long before others. We're most thankful for his many contributions.

This newsletter reflects the worthy contributions of the following: Luis Alvelo, Davis Barker, Todd Bolton, Frederick Ivor-Campbell, Ed Cesarone, Laura Cortner, Paul DeBono, Robert Eisen, Tom Garrett, Daryl Grigsby, Leslie Heaphy, Bob Hieronimus, Bob Hoie, Larry Hogan, John Holway, Merl Kleinknecht, Dirk Knemeyer, Neil Lanctot, Joe Lee, Larry Lester, Jerry Malloy, Gary Maurer, Ralph Maya, John McCormack, Andy McCue, Joe Mitchell, Jim Overmyer, Bill Plott, Brad Sullivan, Greg Truitt, Eduardo Valero, Lyle Wilson, Ralph Winnie, and Tweed Webb.

NEGRO LEAGUERS AND THE HALL OF FAME

SMOKEY JOE WILLIAMS IS THE NLC'S CHOICE FOR COOPERSTOWN

Joe Williams is the candidate the NLC will promote in the 1996 Veterans Committee vote. We may conduct another vote after his selection.

Williams received 23 first place votes out of 37 with Bullet Joe Rogan getting 7 first place votes. 13 points were awarded for first place down to 1 point for thirteenth place in the voting. A **1pg list of the folks who voted (but not how they voted) is available. The NLC's order of choice is: Williams, Rogan, Willie Wells, Turkey Stearnes, Biz Mackey, Mule Suttles, Willie Foster, Dick Redding, Dick Lundy, Louis Santop, Chet Brewer, Ray Brown, and Sammy T. Hughes. A majority of voters expressed bewilderment at why the following deserving people were not on the list. John Beckwith, Willard Brown, Bill Byrd, Andy Cooper, Pete Hill, Jose Mendez, Cum Posey, Ted Radcliffe, Hilton Smith, Ben Taylor, Cristobel Torriente, J.L. Wilkinson, and Nip Winters. The most support for an individual in the missing group went to Jud Wilson. To our way of thinking past Hall of Fame selections have been inadequate. It seems likely that the Hall of Fame will never give the Negro leaguers their due.

I'm pleased with the responses I received from folks for the Hall of Fame voting, although, I'm rather surprised that more votes weren't sent in. It occurs to me we may be able to reduce newsletter postage costs on nonparticipating members and readers.

We sincerely appreciate Dr Bob and Zeb Hieronimus sending us the video which includes over 40 news stories of Leon Day's election to the Hall of Fame. The video also covers the funeral and the news stories of his death. Write to Bob at PO Box 648 Owings Mills, MD 21117 (410) 356-6216 about how to purchase Negro League items which benefit the players and also the Leon Day Estate. He has many autographed Day items.

Louis Fields is lining up a bus trip to Cooperstown for Leon's induction on July 30th. Contact him at TSF Tours 10 E. Lee St. Baltimore, MD 21202, (410) 783-5469.

A few more articles on Leon. RAGTYME SPORTS, May, 1995 "Leon Day Dies Just Days After HOF Election." **2pp. SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER, "Hall of Fame wait continues to be too long for Negro League Stars," **1pg.

NEGRO LEAGUES COMMITTEE PUBLICATION

Mike Bergantino has finished researching Portland, San Diego, and Seattle papers for the West Coast Baseball Association. Lyle Wilson researched other Seattle papers and as a result, the Seattle Mariners have significant information, on the Steelheads, for their tribute to the Negro Leagues. Mike will have this all done soon. We hope a future article or paper will follow.

Gary Maurer passed along material from the ST. PAUL RECORDER.

Brad Sullivan sent more coverage of Cleveland and Paul DeBono of Indianapolis.

Joe Mitchell and Gregg Truitt sent some copies of clippings on Judy Johnson.

Quincy Barbee, Alfonso Gerard, Hubert Simmons are among new players that have been found.

We finally got some local Michigan publicity. ANN ARBOR NEWS 5-14-95. "Book gives box score on Negro Leagues lore," **1pg. Also "Long Gone" **1pg on THE NEGRO LEAGUES BOOK, and "Surviving players reveal tales of discrimination," (Mel Duncan & Larry Williams) **1pg

Larry has made up a price list for the available pictures from the book. Send for the **1 page list.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Judy Johnson Statue Dedication Ceremony took place on April 14, 1995. Todd Bolton, Joe Mitchell, and Gregg Truitt were among the many in attendance with Buck O'Neil speaking. It was a first class event with many friends and family of Judy and 10 Negro Leaguers on hand: Russell Awkard, Gene Benson, Bill Cash, Jimmy Dean, Mahlon Duckett, Toots Ferrell, Stan Glenn, Larry Kimbrough, Buck O'Neil, and Al Wilmore.

We have the following articles available: ABOUT...TIME April, 1995 "The stuff of legends, Judy Johnson is immortalized in Bronze," **1pg.

THE NEWS JOURNAL, 4-15-95, "Sun shines on Johnson Statue," **1pg

THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER, 4-15-95, "Honoring a baseball great, Judy Johnson," **2pp

Photo copy of poster **1pg. Dedication Ceremony Program, **2pp & Luncheon program, **1pg

The NLBPA Autograph Show was a great time for all. Monte Irvin and Buck Leonard couldn't make it due to illness but most all of the Eastern fellows were there. Todd Bolton was instrumental in getting Puerto Rican Hall of Famer, Jose Antonio Figueroa, to return to the US for the first time in 54 years. Jose had a great long weekend meeting with many old friends and former roommate Russell Awkard. We thank Todd and Tom Garrett for passing along information. We have 3 items: **1pg News Release, **1pg Career Highlights, and **1pg Overview of career of Jose Antonio Figueroa. There is also a limited supply of the pamphlet BEISBOL BEHIND THE VEIL.

Unfortunately, the next event will have occurred by the time this newsletter reaches you. June 4th the 23rd Annual Luncheon Inducting the honorees into The Bob Douglas Hall of Fame was held in New York City. Larry Doby was the baseball honoree. Monte Irvin and Gene Benson have been past honorees.

Upcoming Major League events are: The Detroit Tigers will pay tribute to the Negro Leagues on July 8th. July 30th, will be Kansas City Monarchs Cap Day. June 16th in Oakland, a Negro Leagues 75th Anniversary Celebration will be held. August 6th A Tribute to The Negro Leagues, in San Francisco is planned.

In Seattle on September 9th, there will be a Microsoft Salute to The Negro Leagues, Turn Back The Clock Night. The visiting Royals will wear Monarchs uniforms and Seattle will have Seattle Steelheads uniforms. Jerry Cohen of Ebbet's Field Flannels is providing the replicas. Mike Bergantino, Ed Cesarone, Lyle Wilson, and Ralph Winnie are providing valuable information to the Mariners.

COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Several other men passed recently. Fuzzy Walton died May 1st. Andrew Hudson passed on April 5th in Kansas City **1pg obit from KANSAS CITY STAR 4-8-95. Simon Banks SR **1pg obit from THE CALL AND POST of 5-4-95. Leroy Harris died on March 21st **1pg obit from THE BUFFALO NEWS. Sylvester Snead has also died. We have a **1pg obit from SCD 6-9-95 on Woody Smallwood. Finally, a **1pg obit on Tweed Webb and **2pp copy of the funeral program. Larry Lester attended. We know little of some of the above people; please pass along any data you may have on them.

Gary Maurer reports that the St. Paul Saints (Northern League) will have three separate "Tributes to the Negro Leagues" this summer on 6/19, 7/14, and 8/22.

"Salute to The Buckeyes" will be held in Cleveland on June 16th, unfortunately during the SABR Convention.

Renee Bolden, Sgt 1st Class, 40 years old, died in the Oklahoma City bombing. She is the daughter of Jim "Fireball" Bolden.

The annual Negro Leagues Committee Report is available **1pg.

The recent NATIONAL PASTIME was another excellent SABR publication. Hats off to Mark Alvarez: Five articles had some ties to the Negro Leagues. Be sure to check them out: The 25th Infantry Regiment Takes The Field by Jerry Malloy; Jackie Robinson and the 1941 Honolulu Bears; More Negro Leaguers for the Hall of Fame by John Holway; Philadelphia's Pythians; and Building a Champion by Merl Kleinknecht.

Congratulations to Larry Doby upon being named Special Assistant to American League President, Gene Budig.

The Discover Greatness Exhibit of the NLBM is currently in Mt. Vernon IL, at the Mitchell Museum, until July 23rd. It will go to the St. Louis Historical Society from August 13th through November 26, 1995.

The New Haven (CT) Ravens are planning to honor Negro Leaguers later this year.

Many Negro League items will be available in Leland's Hobby Auction XVI, Friday June 16, 1995, **1pg list.

Many Negro Leaguers autographed items in St. Louis, June 3rd & 4th. Chicagoland's Summer Sports Collectors Convention will have Sam Jethroe, Bobby Robinson, Double Duty Radcliffe, Lester Lockett, and Clint Jones to sign June 9-11, 1995. Buck O'Neil will be signing in Kansas City on July 16th at the KC Sports Collectors Convention.

In Eduardo Valero's latest Latin American Committee Newsletter he has a terrific **2pp listing of all American Players That Participated in The Winter Leagues in Cuba, 1878-1933. Thanks Eduardo!

NEGRO LEAGUES RELATED ARTICLES

From the KANSAS CITY STAR Special Section "Soul Survivors: The Negro Leagues Celebrate 75 Years," 4-29-95 **13pp for all. Articles include: Larry Lester's Five Greatest Teams in Negro League History **2pp; Soul Survivors. **1pg; The Kansas City Monarchs, **4pp; Hall of Famers, **2pp; Discover Greatness, **1pg.

CLEVELAND FREE TIMES, 3-22-95 "Some Negro League Guy" (Day Election) **1pg

THE BALTIMORE SUN 4-22-95, "Jethroe seeks legal victory in bid for baseball pension," **1pg

ORLANDO SENTINAL, April, 1995, "Henry Flager helped popularize Baseball in Florida." **1pg

SCD, 6-2-95, Baseball Autograph Price Guide. **3pp & "Ebbe Ruth's studied at Hofstra University." **2pp.

SCD, 11-20-92, "An interview with Al "Apples" Wilmore." **1pg.

THE PROVIDENCE SUNDAY JOURNAL, 4-16-95, "50 years ago, Sox had 1st crack at the future....and missed." (Robinson-Jethroe trade) **2pp. & "Johnson's fans recall 'you've never seen anything like Judy.'" **1pg.

Bill Plott's latest Where Are They Now feature from THE BIRMINGHAM NEWS 5-7-95 is "Wiley Griggs was a rookie on one of the Negro League's best teams." **2pp

LIFE TIMES (Published by Blue Cross) April, 1995, "They played for the love of the game," **2pp.

SCD, 5-5-95, "Willie Pope was the Dr. K of the Negro Leagues." **3pp

"Robinson's birthplace just a fading memory," **1pg from THE MACON TELEGRAPH.

QUANTUM, April, 1995, **1pg, "Tribute to Leon Day"

Volume 2 Number 5, April/May 1995 SWEET SPOT, "Cooperstown finally sees the light of Leon Day," **2pp

**1pg from SCD, "Spotlight on Black Baseball" (Trenton NJ exhibit)

THE SPORTING NEWS, 2-8-56, "Negro League era fading with breakup of Monarchs," **1pg

SCD, 6-9-95, "Children come first for Negro Leaguer Stanley Glenn." **2pp

SCD 6-16-95, "Former Negro Leaguer 'Big Train' Dudley subbed for Campy and managed Bobo Brazil," **2pp.

CURRENT AND FUTURE INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS

Jim Overmyer will be giving a paper at the Cooperstown symposium on June 7th. "The Meaning of the Negro Leagues". You can get a copy from Jim for \$2 (to cover copying and mailing). Jim also has available copies of his terrific book EFFA MANLEY AND THE NEWARK EAGLES for \$26 postpaid. His address is 7 Fairview Ave. Lenox, MA 01240.

Ralph Maya is spearheading the drive to establish a permanent museum in Miami for Cuban Baseball.

Dirk Knemeyer, PO Box 351571 Toledo, OH 43635-1571 is compiling info for a Oscar Charleston biography and seeks any interesting tidbits on Charleston. Please see if you can assist him.

Daryl Grigsby is working on a book on the greatest teams in Negro Baseball League History.

John McCormack seeks documentation on the games between White Major Leaguers and Negro Leaguers. Contact me if you have game dates and scores and I'll pass them along.

Gary Maurer is seeking information on the companies that made the buses used by Negro League teams and any possible existence of same.

Linda Hamblin Denton, an anchor at KSHB-TV in Kansas City is working on African-American Women who played in the Negro Leagues.

THE MARKETPLACE

Everyone should get SOL WHITE'S HISTORY OF COLORED BASE BALL: WITH OTHER DOCUMENTS ON THE EARLY BLACK GAME, 1886-1936. Jerry Malloy's 40 page introduction is worth the "price of admission". The pictures and text are clear and very readable. It has 16 additional appendices. Excellently done, a must for all libraries, highly recommended.

I have not had a chance to read David Zang's FLEET WALKER'S DIVIDED HEART, nor another new entry PRIDE: THE CHARLEY PRIDE STORY, an autobiography in which his Negro League career is covered. The Charley Pride book sells for \$20. EARLY INNINGS: A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF

BASEBALL, 1825-1908 by Dean Sullivan, and from University of Nebraska Press, has 10 references to Black Baseball of this period covering 20 pages. You should check this out. INVISIBLE MEN: LIFE IN BASEBALL'S NEGRO LEAGUES, by Donn Rogosin has been reissued by Kodansha Globe and is available in stores.

The new McFarland Baseball Catalog is out. **3pp of books of interest to Negro League enthusiasts. (if you didn't get yours).

Book review on David Zang's FLEET WALKER... **1pg from 4-22-95. BALTIMORE SUN. BOOK WORLD 4-30-95 reviews of four books: BUCK LEONARD, FLEET WALKER, I NEVER HAD IT MADE (reprint) and Ribowsky book. **1pg INDIANAPOLIS STAR 4-9-95 review of Jim Riley's BUCK LEONARD: THE BLACK LOU GEHRIG, **1pg. From SCD 5-26-95, Richard Miller's reviews of Sol White and Fleet Walker tomes. **1pg OLDTYME BASEBALL NEWS Volume 6 Issue 6 has a book review of LEAGUES APART: THE MEN AND TIMES OF THE NEGRO LEAGUE, (geared to young readers), also, BOOK WORLD 4-2-95, **1pg. The March, 1995 THE DIAMOND ANGLE has reviews of THE NEGRO LEAGUES BOOK **1pg & AD **1pg. In the issue is a review of John Holway's BLACK BALL STARS. **1pg and also "Above The White Foul Lines," by Larry Lester **1pg.

Quality Autographs, **1pg AD

"Cuban Baseball Cards Produced by Canadian," SCD 5-5-95, **1pg

Match 1/New World Creation is a new maker of wearable Negro League merchandise.

"Ted Williams Card Co. out of business," SCD 5-5-95 **1pg

"Ted Williams Card Co. goes down swinging," SCD 5-12-95 **1pg

**1pg AD for Negro League Lithograph & **1pg AD for Hall of Fame Autographs.

SCD 5-12-95, "Participating McDonalds' offering Negro League Caps."

Finally, let's discuss the (gulp!) A COMPLETE HISTORY OF THE NEGRO LEAGUES 1884-1955 by Mark ~~████████████████████~~ Ribowsky. Neil Landrot reports our worst fears, a hatchet job mass marketed. Ribowsky freely uses everyone else's work and puts his own touch to it with flagrant misuse of meanings and quotes. I have asked Neil to write a review for Philadelphia papers. The NLC should do everything possible to see that THIS version doesn't become the accepted version. This is arrogance to the Nth degree by the publisher and "writer". I will not spend a nickel to get this book but if sent a copy will certainly review it. WHAT A JOKE!

FINAL REMARKS

The next newsletter will be August's. Please get all items to me before the last week of July. See you in Pittsburgh!

The updated NLC address list is enclosed for members. Let me know of any changes. I did it and made copies prior to Tweed's passing.

Dick Clark & Larry Lester

Dick & Larry