



# JONRON

## *SABR Latin America Newsletter – Winter 2001*

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### **Chairman's Note**

**Saludos.....**It is very sad we have to begin this newsletter announcing the sudden death of **Jose A. Crescioni**, one of our most distinguished and enthusiastic collaborators. Jose was a lawyer, also a sportswriter, sportscaster, statistician and a member of SABR. He published "Boricuas en Grandes Ligas" (Puerto Ricans in the Major Leagues), two volumes, 1995, 1996). A co-author of "Beisbol Profesional Boricua" (Puerto Rico Professional Baseball) in 1997, was posthumously inducted last October into the Puerto Rico Sports Hall of Fame.

I would like to ask the Latin America Committee members to send the E-mail address to maintain an electronic mailing list. The E-mails should be sent to [evaleropr@hotmail.com](mailto:evaleropr@hotmail.com).

Below, you will find the major highlights of the exciting last six (6) months in Latin America and the Caribbean Regions regarding Baseball:

- **Todd Bolton visits Puerto Rico**

Latin America and Negro Leagues Committee member Todd Bolton, whose exhibit "Baseball Behind a Veil", portrays the Latin America contribution to the Negro Leagues, recently spent a week in Puerto Rico. He was hosted by a long time friend, Emilio Navarro, the first Puerto Rican to ever play in the Negro Leagues (1928). His stay was covered by the local press, radio and TV, while attending several games of the Puerto Rico Professional Baseball League season. He also visited the Sixto Escobar, Charles H. Terry and Paris baseball stadiums where professional baseball was played during the 30's and 40's in San Juan, Ponce and Mayaguez respectively. In addition, he took the opportunity to visit the graves of Francisco Coimbre, Luis A. Marquez and Luis Villodas, key Puerto Ricans who participated in the Negro Leagues.

- **Tony Perez inducted to the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York**

Atanacio (Tony) Perez was inducted last July to the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown. Tany, as he is also known among latins, was the seventh Latin American and the second Cuban born to be elected to this exclusive hall. He joined Martin Dihigo, Rod Carew, Orlando Cepeda, Roberto Clemente, Juan Marichal and Luis Aparicio. We all feel very proud that a son of our latin countries has received such a unique distinction. Native from Ciego de Avila, Cuba, also played in the Puerto Rico Winter League with the Santurce Crabbers. The Puerto Rico Professional Baseball League dedicated the 2000-2001 season to Tany recognizing his contribution to baseball

- **Major Leagues inaugural season game in Puerto Rico**

There is great expectation and enthusiasm in Puerto Rico for the Toronto-Texas inaugural game to be played at the Hiram Bithorn Stadium in San Juan on April 1, 2001. It will be the first American League opening to be staged outside of North America. One day before, on March 31, the Blue Jays and the Rangers will also meet on what should be their last spring training game.

On January 18, MLB Officials and the Municipality of San Juan representatives held a meeting to review the organization and planning aspects of this major event.

- **Culiacan, Mexico, host of the 2001 Caribbean Series**

Culiacan, Mexico will host for the first time the Caribbean Series from February 2 to February 7, 2001. Only the cities of Hermosillo and Mazatlan of Mexico have staged, what is also known as the Caribbean Baseball World Series, with the participation of the Dominican Republic, Mexican Pacific Coast, Puerto Rican and Venezuelan Leagues champions. The activity culminates with the election of former players to the Caribbean Baseball Hall of Fame. Four (4) players are elected each year; two (2) from the existing country members, one from either former members, Cuba and Panama, and one imported (USA) player who have participated in any of the two stages of the series (1949-1960)-(1970 to the present). This year the candidates are pitchers, Luis Arroyo (Puerto Rico), Vicente Romo (Mexico), Humberto Robinson (Panama), Jose "Carrao" Bracho (Venezuela) and Wilmer Fields (USA).

- **Data gathering on African Americans**

Data is being collected by our Committee on the African Americans contribution to our National Pastime. It includes their relevant participation in the Latin America and Caribbean baseball as part of the joint proposal submitted by SABR and the Negro Leagues Committee's proposal to the Hall of Fame.

- **"JONRON", the Book**

JONRON, a book on all the Latin American and Caribbean baseball players participation in the Major Leagues should be available by the summer of 2001. It includes data on the arrival to the Majors as well as their achievements in the best-of-the-world baseball. From Estaban Bellan in 1887 with the Troy Haymakers in the National Association to the most recent entrance in the new 21<sup>st</sup>. Century.

In this publication, there is a chapter on the leading players of this area who had all the necessary tools to reach the Major Leagues, but due to the racial discrimination were not able to participate on it. The book is a result of an extensive research made by members of the Latin America Committee.

- **VI Baseball Report – Rory Costello**

Rory is the author and publisher of "Baseball in the Virgin Islands", "Our Eastern Outpost", an excellent 60 pages work on the "distinct contributions to baseball". Their players marked impact to the Puerto Rico Winter League. It was their showcase where they attracted the attention of major league scouts. The reader will find players and the historical relation between this Caribbean paradise and Negro baseball since the 1870's.

We acknowledge research contributions of Henry Martino, Edwin Fernandez, Carlos Valero, Tony Menendez, Tito Rondon, Juan Vene, Bruno Egloff, Elfren Bernier and Rory Costello.