

LET'S TAKE IT IN STRIDE: Courier Managing Editor Urges Negro Fans to Sponsor Good Conduct Days

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The Pittsburgh Courier (1911-1950); Apr 19, 1947; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Pittsburgh Courier

pg. 18

LET'S TAKE IT IN STRIDE-- Courier Managing Editor Urges Negro Fans to Sponsor 'Good Conduct' Days

By WILLIAM G. NUNN,
Managing Editor.

The "Iron Curtain" which has prevented Negroes from participation in major league baseball has finally been lifted!

Jackie Robinson, 27-year-old athlete . . . with the mental and physical equipment necessary to make the grade . . . has been accepted as a member of the Brooklyn Dodgers baseball club.

The events which have transpired since *The Courier's* Wendell Smith launched his first blast at an un-American practice back in 1939 have been epochal. This newspaper takes pardonable pride in the role it played in "lifting the curtain" . . . in banishing for all time the invisible, "color-line" which made a monopoly of one of the major business enterprises in the United States.

Organized baseball is BIG BUSINESS . . . make no mistake about it. And one of the reasons Negroes couldn't make the grade, despite their ability, has been the money angle.

Branch Rickey, God-fearing, courageous, powerful, influential head of the far-flung Brooklyn baseball empire, has done his part

. . . like a real American. What he did, under terrific pressure and strain, merits the prayerful thanks of millions of Americans, white as well as black.

Jackie Robinson, UCLA graduate and former Army lieutenant, has done his part . . . thus far. He measured up to all that was asked of him . . . he proved on the ball field that he had the ability, the resourcefulness, the personality, the courage, to "come through" when the chips were down. Jackie's conduct . . . on and off the field . . . gave Mr. Rickey the axe he needed to batter down the "iron curtain."

The *Pittsburgh Courier*, who first mentioned Jackie as a major league prospect and who followed his every move from the moment he first entered the ranks of organized baseball . . . has done its part, thus far.

The *Courier* interviewed ball players and managers to try and convince ONE owner that the spirit of Democracy in Sports would be questioned until Negroes were given the OPPORTUNITY to make the grade. The *Courier* fought its battle along the lines of

decency and fair play, two inherent American characteristics.

AND NOW . . . the real challenge faces Negro America!

The challenge of taking this tremendous victory in stride!

The challenge to keep our big mouths closed and give Jackie the chance to PROVE he's major league calibre!

The challenge to conduct ourselves at these ball games in the recognized American way!

The challenge to NOT recognize the appearance of Jackie Robinson as the signal for a Roman holiday, with the Bacchanalian orgy complex!

The challenge to leave whiskey bottles at home or on the shelves of the liquor stores . . . and to leave our loud talking, obscene language and indecent dress on the outside of the ball parks.

The challenge to learn something about the game . . . in order that we will know what's going on out on the ball field, and won't humiliate Jackie by our lack of knowledge!

The challenge to stop our booing over some untoward incident which might happen on the ball field. Remember that Jackie

might be "roughed up" some, because that's the way they play in the majors . . . for keeps!

The challenge to refrain from holding "Jackie Robinson Days" until he's made the grade!

All of these things might distract his attention from the job he has ahead of him . . . and it's a full-time job, too!

Rather than "Jackie Robinson Days" . . . we believe it would be appropriate for civic groups, leaders, Negro newspapers and individuals to conduct "Good Conduct" days wherever the famous "Bums" appear.

Remember . . . today Negro America, whose symbol is Jackie Robinson . . . is on trial! Mr. Rickey opened the door, and Jackie's foot is in!

Whether he meets this latest challenge will depend largely on how you act . . . whether you take it "in stride" . . . or whether you make fools of yourselves.

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