



The Story of Negro League Baseball

By William Brashler

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From about 1890 to 1947, major-league baseball was closed to blacks. William Brasher traces the history of black baseball from prior to the ban on blacks, through the creation of the Negro Leagues, to Jackie Robinson's signing his major-league contract and the end of the Leagues. Illustrated with historical photos.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 6 Up-In this worthy entry in the recent and welcome array of books on the subject, Brashler takes a more personal look at Negro League baseball than previous titles published for young people. He states in the forward that much of the material was obtained from interviews with former players, their wives, and relatives, though documentation is not included. Written in a breezier style than the McKissacks' *Black Diamond* (Scholastic, 1994), this book intersperses chapters on such black stars as Satchel Paige, Josh Gibson, and Jackie Robinson among the accounts of the various Negro Leagues. Archival and scrapbook black-and-white photographs, similar to those found in other titles, appear throughout. A list of Negro League all-star teams chosen by a variety of groups and individuals is appended. Michael Cooper's *Playing America's Game* (Lodestar, 1993) features more photographs with less information, while Robert Gardner and Dennis Shortelle's *The Forgotten Players* (Walker, 1993) provides a coherent, fully documented account of the Negro Leagues. If possible, add all of these titles to your sports sections.

Tom S. Hurlburt, La Crosse Public Library, WI
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From Kirkus Reviews

The author of *The Bingo Long Traveling All-Stars and Motor Kings* (1973) and a biography of Josh Gibson chronicles not just the rise and demise of the Negro Leagues, but the history of African-Americans in baseball from the post-Civil War era to the 1950s. He picks a handful of stars to profile and paints an engaging picture of the wild and wonderful style and variety of black pro and semipro ball--played by barnstormers and clowns, as well as the all-star teams that regularly faced (and frequently beat) white major leaguers. After pointing an accusatory finger at Cap Anson, the player/owner who was most influential in creating the "Gentlemen's Agreement" that excluded blacks from the Major Leagues, and at Commissioner Landis, who perpetuated it, Brashler perceptively analyzes the interlocking web of factors and circumstances that finally dismantled that barrier and pays fine tribute to the talent and character of Jackie Robinson. On the other hand, though he bases some of his narrative on interviews with Cool Papa Bell and other Negro Leaguers, their insights are not much in evidence aside from scattered, colorful sound bites, and his coverage of baseball in Latin America is sketchy. Several recent books, most notably Gardner and Shortelle's *The Forgotten Players: The Story of Black Baseball in America* (1993) and the McKissacks' *Black Diamond: The Story of the Negro Baseball Leagues* (1994) cover the same territory in equivalent detail. Sturdy but supplementary. Index; bibliography; occasional small b&w photos. (Nonfiction. 11-15) -- Copyright ©1994, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

Review

"Illustrated with black-and-white photographs, an extended history of the Negro Leagues brings to life some of the finest players and most interesting men who ever chose a career in baseball -- such as Leroy Satchel Paige, Josh Gibson ... Brashler provides insight into the various baseball teams and also addresses social history in the United States. Bib., ind." -- Copyright © 1995 The Horn Book, Inc. All rights reserved. (*Horn Book*)

"The author . . . chronicles not just the rise and demise of the Negro Leagues, but the history of African-Americans in baseball from the post-Civil War era to the 1950s. . . . Brashler perceptively analyzes the interlocking web of factors and circumstances that finally dismantled that barrier and pays fine tribute to the talent and character of Jackie Robinson." (*Kirkus Reviews*)

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