

Roberto clemente essay



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A dazing baseball ace of exceling accomplishments. Roberto Clemente (1934-1972) was the first great Latin American participant to capture the major conferences. His life was cut short when his plane, presenting alleviation supplies to earthquake-devastated Nicaragua, crashed on the last twenty-four hours of 1972.

A Puerto Rican national hero. Hall of Fame outfielder Roberto Clemente spent his scintillating 18-year baseball calling with the Pittsburgh Pirates. He enchanted fans with his powerful throwing arm, graceful outfield defence, and brilliant striking. Clemente won Gold Glove Awards, typifying defensive domination, every twelvemonth from their origin in 1961, until his decease in 1972. He besides was elected to the National League All-Star squad 12 times. Clemente was an vocal advocator for Hispanic rights and a human-centered. His ill-timed decease came while he was taking a mission of clemency.

Clemente's ascendants were Puerto Rican labourers who worked on the island's java and sugar plantations. His male parent, Melchor Clemente, was in his mid-50s when Roberto was born in the Puerto Rican town of Carolina on August 18, 1934. Roberto was the last of six kids for him and his married woman, Dona Luisa. Melchor Clemente was a chief at a sugar cane factory and ran a little food market. His married woman rose early to make the household wash for the proprietor of the factory. She was really spiritual, and frequently fed hapless kids who came to her house. Clemente's parents instilled in him the values of difficult work, regard, self-respect, and generousness. " I ne'er heard any hatred in my house. " Clemente said. " Not for anybody. I ne'er heard my female parents say a bad word to my male

parent. or my male parent to my female parent. ” He revered his parents throughout his life.

Even in his childhood. Roberto was an organiser. He one time led a group of male childs in raising money to construct a fencing to protect his school. and another clip rescued a driver from a combustion auto. Get downing at the age of nine. he got up daily at six o'clock to present milk for a penny a twenty-four hours. salvaging his net incomes for three old ages in order to purchase a bike. From an early age. Clemente developed a passion for baseball. “ I wanted to be a baseball player. ” he said. “ I became positive God wanted me to. ” He would hit bottle caps with a broom handle. throw tennis balls against walls. and pattern his accomplishments infinitely.

At the age of 18. Clemente attended a trial cantonment conducted by Brooklyn Dodgers lookout and future general director Al Campanis. Among 70 participants. Clemente stood out. “ He was the best free-agent jock I have of all time seen. ” Campanis recalled. After playing with Santurce in the Puerto Rican winter conference. Clemente signed with the Dodgers for a \$ 10. 000 fillip and a \$ 5. 000 salary. He played in 1954 with the Dodgers' Montreal farm nine. But when Brooklyn didn't protect him on its roll. he wasdrafted by Pittsburgh. “ I didn't even know where Pittsburgh was. ” Clemente subsequently confessed. The Pirates installed him as their right fielder

Pride of Puerto Rico

“ Clemente was our Jackie Robinson. ” said Puerto Rican journalist Luis Mayoral. “ He was on a campaign to demo the American populace what a

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Latino adult male. a black Hispanic adult male. was capable of. " Robinson had broken baseball's colour saloon in 1947 with the Dodgers. Clemente was non baseball's first Hispanic participant - others such as Minnie Minoso preceded him-but he was the first to do a major impact on the game.

When Clemente made his major conference introduction on April 17. 1955. he was listed as " Bob" on the Plagiarists roster because Roberto sounded excessively foreign. He made an immediate feeling with his accomplishments. his manner. and his bearing. Though less than six pess tall and weighing merely 175 lbs. Clemente swung an enforcing 36-ounce chiropteran. He stood far off the home base. legs spread broad. keeping his chiropteran high and tilting his powerful upper organic structure over the home base. Using his speedy custodies and strong weaponries. he could manage pitches thrown in any location. frequently driving them to the opposite field.

Asked how to flip to Clemente. Dodgers Hall of Famer Sandy Koufax replied jestingly: " Roll the ball. " Clemente himself. non known for modestness. said: " Pitch me outside. I will hit. 400. Flip me inside. and you will non happen the ball. " Power was the lone property dividing Clemente from Willie Mays. to whom he was often compared as an all-round participant. Clemente was a line-drive batter who cleared the fencings at the rate of about 15 place runs a season.

Whether in the field or on the basepaths. Clemente ever hustled. frequently running out from under his helmet or hat " He played merely about every game like his life depended on it. " said his Plagiarists teammate. Willie

Stargell. His athletic fielding delighted fans. He covered an tremendous sum of land. caught fly balls no 1 else could make. and made enormous throws. Many experts considered his outfield arm the best of all time seen in baseball. Few smugglers would seek to take excess bases against him. yet he still led the National League in outfield aids in five seasons. One clip. he threw out Lee May of Cincinnati seeking to hit from 3rd base on a individual.

Despite his accomplishments. Clemente had a hard passage to major conference baseball. Sports writers frequently misunderstood his broken English and misquoted him. Sometimes they even made his English expression worse than it was. He besides had frequent quarrels with choleric Pirates director. Danny Murtaugh. In his first five seasons. Clemente hit over. 300 merely one time and ne'er had more than seven place tallies.

In 1960. he had a discovery season. taking Pittsburgh to the World Series. Against the vaunted New York Yankees. he had nine hits. After the Pirates won the Series on Bill Mazeroski's dramatic place tally. Clemente skipped the squad party and walked the streets of Pittsburgh to personally thank the fans. Yet the baseball authors elected Pirates shortstop Dick Groat. who had a. 325 batting mean with two home runs and 50 tallies batted in. as the league's Most Valuable Player in 1960. Clemente finished eighth in the vote with a. 314 norm. 16 place tallies. and 94 tallies batted in. Clemente publically expressed his choler at the vote. stating it showed prejudice against Latin participants.

In 1961. Clemente won the National League batting title with a. 351 mean and hit 23 place tallies. He hit supra. 300 in 12 of his concluding 13 seasons

and led the conference in batting three more times. in 1964. 1965 and 1967. In his fatherland. he was a bona fide hero. Clemente became known as “ the Pride of Puerto Rico. ”

Talking Out

Clemente was outspoken about his perceptual experiences of bias toward Latino participants. “ Latin American Negro baseball players are treated today much like all Negroes were treated in baseball in the early years of the broken colour barrier. ” he told Sport magazine. “ They are subjected to bias and stamped with generalisations. ” One illustration of such bias. Clemente thought. was writers’ frequent portraiture of him as a hypochondriac. Clemente frequently complained of wellness jobs. including backaches. concerns. stomach aches. insomnia. tonsillitis. malaria. sore shoulders. and pulled musculuss. Often before stepping into the batter’s box. he would turn over his shoulders and cervix. seeking to aline his spinal column. He insisted that his hurts were every bit existent as the strivings suffered by Mickey Mantle. a modern-day white ace. He pointed out that cipher accused the great Mantle of being a skulker.

Clemente grew progressively irritated that. unlike modern-day white stars. he ne’er was asked to make commercial indorsements. “ I would do a batch more money in baseball if I were a white American. ” he said in typically blunt manner.

Intense and outspoken. Clemente frequently aroused contention with his political positions. He was a steadfast advocator of Hispanic civil rights and a close associate of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Clemente was a frequent

participant in the societal issues and runs of the sixties. " I am from the hapless people ; I represent the hapless people. " Clemente one time said. " I like workers. I like people that suffer because these people have a different attack to life from the people that have everything and don't know what agony is. "

Clemente frequently took younger Latin participants under his wing. In 1966. his immature teammate. Matty Alou. wrested the batting title from him. This was accomplished mostly by following Clemente's changeless warnings to hit outside pitches to the opposite field.

A Legacy of Hope

Clemente was more than a baseball player. He was a unusually sensitive and intelligent adult male. He wrote poesy and played the organ. worked in ceramic art. and studied chiropractic medical specialty. His strongest committedness was to the immature people of Puerto Rico. During the off-season. he conducted baseball clinics all over the island. speaking to kids about the virtuousnesss of difficult work. citizenship. and regard for their seniors.

Clemente once more led the Pirates to the World Series in 1971. With a show-stopping public presentation on national telecasting. he eventually achieved the acknowledgment he had long deserved. Clemente hit a place tally in the concluding game to assist the Pirates win and was named Most Valuable Player of the Series. Asked by sports announcers how he felt. his first statement was to his parents. in Spanish. Translated. it was: " On the greatest twenty-four hours of my life. I ask for your approval. "

Toward the terminal of his calling. Clemente felt he had made some headroom against bias. " My greatest satisfaction comes from assisting to wipe out the old sentiment about Latin Americans and inkiness. " he said.

A Fatal Plane Crash

In 1972. at the age of 37. he was still traveling strong. He played in merely 102 games due to assorted hurts but still batted. 312. On September 30. the last twenty-four hours of the season. Clemente got his 3. 000th calling hit. going the 11th adult male to make that celebrated grade. The hit. a peeling two-base hit. turned out to be his last. Moved by the predicament of Nicaraguans devastated by a major temblor. Clemente feared that the Puerto Rican armed forces was stoping alleviation cargos. He insisted on personally presenting supplies collected by the people of Puerto Rico.

The prop-driven DC-7 that was transporting Clemente and the assistance packages on December 31. 1972 crashed into the ocean shortly after taking off from San Juan. The cause of the clang was ne'er determined ; a lading overload may hold been a factor. The island of Puerto Rico and the metropolis of Pittsburgh were both overwhelmed by heartache. A Catholic nun in Pittsburgh wrote a missive to Clemente's widow. Vera. stating: " He fell into the H2O so that his spirit could be carried by the ocean to more topographic points. " Three months after his decease. the Baseball Writers Association voted Clemente into the Hall of Fame. the first Latin American participant to be enshrined in Cooperstown.

Clemente long had dreamed about developing a young person cantonment in his native Puerto Rico. After his decease. Vera Clemente took the lead in

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developing the cantonment. Ciudad Deportiva Roberto Clemente was built on 304 estates of fen donated by the Puerto Rican authorities. Over the old ages. its Raiders baseball academy developed a figure of major conference stars. including Juan Gonzalez. Roberto Alomar. Ivan Rodriguez. Sandy Alomar Jr. . Benito Santiago. Carlos Baerga. Ruben Sierra. and Jose Guzman. Besides athletic installations. it besides has plans in play. dance. music. folklore. and trades. This cantonment is in maintaining with Clemente's vision of a topographic point where immature people can follow their dreams.

Clemente's bequest of brilliant strenuosity and an enduring belief in human potency proved a enduring one. At the 1994 All-Star Game in Pittsburgh. a bronze statue honouring Clemente was unveiled at Three Rivers Stadium. At a address in Houston. a twelvemonth before his decease. Clemente had said: " If you have an chance to do things better. and you don't make that. you are blowing your clip on this Earth. "

Honored After Death

Clemente was honored in assorted ways for his accomplishments after his decease. Schools in Chicago. Illinois ; Allentown. Pennsylvania ; and Detroit. Michigan. have been named in his award. In 1984 the U. S. Postal Service issued a 20-cent cast in Clemente's award and in 2000. it issued a 33-cent cast in his award. In April of 1999 Allegheny County. Pittsburgh. renamed the Sixth Street Bridge as the Roberto Clemente Bridge to honour the baseball fable. In 2002. Allan H. (Bud) Selig. Major League Baseball's Commissioner announced that September 18 will be known as Roberto Clemente Day. In

2006 David Maraniss wrote a book about Clemente's life. Clemente: The Passion and Grace of Baseball's Last Hero. In April of 2008. PBS featured a life on Clemente as portion of their American Experience history series.