

Sports for african americans history essay



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Firstly, Negro Leagues were one of the most dominated African American sports during the 1800's and 1900's. Negro Leagues was where blacks could come and play professional organized baseball. For example in 1883 Moses Fleetwood "Fleet" Walker became the first Negro major leaguer catcher for the minor league (associated with Negro League) Toledo Blue Stockings. Moses made a major impact on baseball, his impact organized the first Negro League in 1887. It didn't go so well because it only lasted a week. In 1885 around the time of the first Negro League the very first all black pro team was the NY Cuban Giants. They also became the first all black team to receive a salary. Some African Americans tried to play baseball for international league teams but in July (of 1887) the league banned future contracts with black players.

The first successful organized Negro League was established on February 13, 1920 at a YMCA in Kansas City, Missouri. Edward H. Bolden who was chairman of the Negro Leagues at the time wanted to expand baseball games to the east. So three years after the founding of the National Negro Leagues, the Eastern Colored League was formed on December 16, 1923. By then the next year (1924) the first Negro World Series was between the Kansas City Monarchs and the Hillside Club.

National Negro League had member teams in the South and Midwest that were successful until 1931. Since racial discrimination was heavy white players didn't like the success of the Negro Leagues, so when the East West Negro League was formed it ended before the season ended. The Negro Southern League was the only black pro league to survive the 1932 season. After that downfall a second National Negro League (1933) was formed and

was the only black operating team until 1937. Also in 1937 the South and Midwest formed the Negro American League. The best Negro Team was considered to be the Pittsburgh Crawfords.

The Negro Leagues came to an end in 1952, so then the MLB (Major League Baseball) came around and then history was once again made. An African American named Jackie Robinson was the first African American to be inducted into Major League Baseball in 1947. Robinson was the first black to participate in the major leagues for the Brooklyn Dodgers. Robinson was hand selected by President Branch Rickey and the Dodger Organization. During the 1950's once again racial discrimination was mega heavy, but Robinson promised Rickey he wouldn't let it get to him. Robinson had an outstanding season, shocking baseball athletes white and black. Robinson dominated baseball from the time he got into the MLB until the time he retired. Even when Robinson retired he still to this day has a major impact on baseball. Know his life impacted others Robinson made a comment stating "A life is not important, except in the impact it has on other lives." Jackie Robinson retired from baseball on January 5, 1957, Robinson made history by becoming the first African American to ever be inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1962.

Negro League baseball and Major League Baseball had history made during its era and had some pretty shocking moments. For example in 1948 Satchel Paige became the first black player all-time oldest "rookie" at the age of 42. During an interview Paige made a comment to other about his age..."Age is a case of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it don't matter." Also the Cleveland Buckeyes signed the first white player Edde Klepp to play in the

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Negro Leagues. Over the years of the Negro Leagues eleven inter-league black World Series were held. Currently there are eighteen Negro League players in the Hall of Fame. Furthermore in 1997 all of MLB saluted Jackie Robinson (on the 50th Anniversary of his breaking the color barrier) and permanently retired his number 42 from the game of baseball.

Football was also a very difficult sport for African Americans to try and play in. Around the 1800's American Football League (AFL) was where African Americans could come and play football. The AFL recruited black players who were ignored by the NFL. The NFL was predominately white players who didn't like the fact that African Americans had their own league. AFL and the NFL quickly became rivals and often played each other. College football (where a lot of African Americans played football) was a lot more popular than the NFL during the 1800's.

Eventually in the 1900's black were being drafted into the NFL. The first African Americans to become inducted into the NFL were Fritz Pollard and Bobby Marshall in 1920. Around the 1920's football started gaining a lot of popularity because of blacks being drafted. Not only was Fritz Pollard one of the first African Americans to play in the NFL he was the first black coach (NFL) in 1921.

Even when blacks were drafted into the NFL, they received poor equipment and low salary caps. Along with poor treatment black athletes weren't allowed to play intelligent positions like quarterback, center, or not ever tight end. The NFL team Redskins didn't even sign any black athletes until the threat of the Civil Rights movement. Furthermore black football players were

benched even when drafted onto an NFL team. The NFL during the 1920's only started letting black football players play the speed positions, like running back and or defensive tackle.

After 1926 all African American football players started disappearing (basically had their contract suspended) from the NFL. Another black football player wasn't drafted into the NFL until 1952. There was still one problem at hand, in 1960 through 1962 the AFL averaged 17% more African American football players than the NFL. Eventually the NFL merged with AFL in 1970, making the NFL average more than 30% black athletes. In the near 2000's up until now more and more African American athletes are being drafted into the NFL.

Then came the National Basketball League (NBL) which started in 1937 and (along with pro football) was at the time dominated by white players. Also the NBL only started out with only thirteen teams. NBL at the time didn't really receive much attention by audiences around the U. S. So in 1942 the NBL integrated, and started offering opportunities for African Americans to start playing basketball. Up to ten black players were signed to two NBL teams to start their careers.

During the 1942-1943 season the two NBL teams that signed African Americans were the Toledo Jim White Chevrolets and Chicago Studebakers. Those two teams immediately started filling the rosters with African Americans athletes. Of course a lot of white players didn't like the fact that black players were being signed into the league, but they had to deal with it. The signing of African Americans brought a little more attention to the NBL.

To bring even more attention to the NBL they merged with the NBA in 1949. Right before NBL merged with NBA some teams started changing their names entering into this new league. The Minneapolis Lakers changed their names to the Los Angeles Lakers, the Rochester Royals changed their names to the Sacramento Kings, and Fort Wayne Zollner Pistons changed their names to the Detroit Pistons. The NBL came to an end in 1949 the league had a total of 38 teams, the last championship team of the NBL was the Anderson Packers (1948-49 season).

In the end sports for African Americans were still difficult to compete in, sports in general had its bad times and hall of fame times. After years went by more and more African Americans are able to compete in professional sports. Sports in the 1800s and 1900s where dramatic and intense for all athletes alike. From having poor equipment to merging with other franchises, and allowing other races to compete in professional sports. A dynamite of history was made during those time periods (1800s and 1900s) and the legend within sports still lives on even till this day.