



5A

JACKIE ROBINSON

As World War II ended, many African Americans believed that "separate but equal" could no longer be tolerated because while much was separate, little was equal. Highly decorated black regiments helped foster the pride and impetus that demanded change in all parts of American life. Following the death of commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis, Brooklyn Dodgers president Branch Rickey and Jackie Robinson took the lead in testing America's tolerance for integrated baseball. Under pressure, the major and minor leagues began to desegregate, but slowly and on their own terms.



Jack the Soldier

Jackie Robinson served in the Army during World War II. Like many African Americans, he did not see a true road to equality as well as a war for democracy. Black soldiers were ill-respected and used after the war. They were highly decorated for their service, and their examples helped highlight their rights to full participation in civilian life after the war. In 1945, having been in the service since 1943, Robinson learned the color that the great baseball recruit had it was an important part of his past for Branch Rickey and himself.

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Branch Rickey

Branch Rickey, assigned Dodgers scout Clyde Sobotkin to find all African American players with high league talent and the courage to withstand harsh prejudicial treatment. Sobotkin found the man in Kansas City Missouri, christening Jackie Robinson. Despite opposition from major league owners, Rickey signed Robinson for the 1946 season with Brooklyn's first team in Montreal.



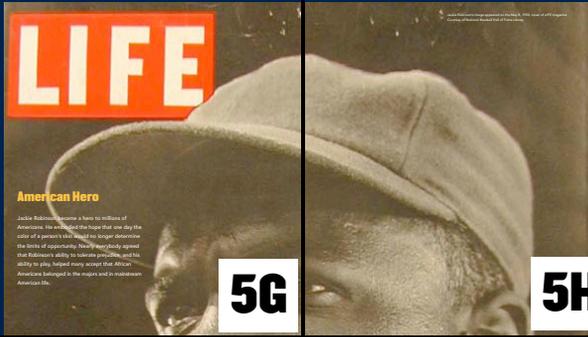
Jackie Robinson played the 1946 season with the Montreal Royals, Brooklyn's International League farm team. Rickey hoped that Canada, a country with less racial prejudice, would provide Robinson with a gentler introduction to the majors. Robinson, strong season with the Royals, led the groundscrew for his promotion to the Dodgers in 1947.

PRIDE &

The African-American Baseball Experience

5K

BREAKS THE BARRIER 1947



American Hero

Jackie Robinson's courage to break to millions of Americans, he inspired the hope that one day the color of a person's skin would no longer determine the limits of opportunity. His courage inspired that Robinson's ability to tolerate prejudice, and his ability to play, inspired every young Black American. Americans belonged in the major and to mainstream American life.

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1947

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"It is said on good authority that one of the leading players in the National League is advocating the entrance of colored players into the National League with a view of signing Matthews, the colored major league star. It is not expected that it will succeed in the ordinary of such a move, yet where such matters come to matter, there are grounds for hoping that some day the line will drop and some good man will be chosen from out of the colored profession that will be a credit to all, and pave the way for others to follow."

—"White, History of Colored Base Ball, 1907"
By Jack Rosenthal Robinson, Branch Rickey found
the "White" "good man" to "open the way."

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All items which Robinson owned during his career are now in the collection of the Baseball Hall of Fame.



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Many a Skill

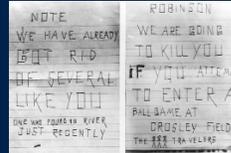
Jackie Robinson burst onto the scene in 1947, breaking baseball's color barrier and bringing the Negro League's best player to the majors. With Robinson as the catalyst, the Brooklyn Dodgers won the National League pennant and won World Series in his 1st season. On the field, Robinson recorded 100 hits in 147 games. He dominated the base paths, leading home 19 times while also opposing pitchers with his daring basestealing style. During his career, the six-time All-Star primarily played second base, but also served multiple seasons at third base and first base. Robinson was named National League Rookie of the Year in 1947 and captured the National League Most Valuable Player (MVP) award in 1949, leading the league in hitting (.342) and walk (171) while leading in (124 runs). His career batting average (.311) ranks him in the top ten of all time at second base.



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Encountering Hatred

Some Americans hated Robinson for crossing the color line and were violent to him. Branch Rickey asked Robinson to wear the other check during his early years with the Dodgers. Following his major league career, Robinson discussed how difficult it had been to see above the racial hatred he encountered.



Robinson's "hat" was made by Branch Rickey and was given to him by Branch Rickey. Robinson's "hat" was made by Branch Rickey and was given to him by Branch Rickey.

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African-American History Baseball History

- 1847** **First African American Baseball Player**
In 1847, John Jay was the first African American to play professional baseball in the United States. He played for the New York Knickerbocker Club.
- 1865** **First African American to Play in the Major Leagues**
In 1865, Moses Fleetwood Walker was the first African American to play in the major leagues. He played for the Toledo Blue Stockings.
- 1878** **First African American to Play in the National League**
In 1878, John Henry "Rube" Foster was the first African American to play in the National League. He played for the Chicago American Giants.
- 1880-1890** **Major League Baseball Excludes African Americans**
Major League Baseball excluded African Americans from playing in the major leagues from 1880 to 1947.
- 1943** **Branch Rickey Signs Jackie Robinson**
Branch Rickey signed Jackie Robinson for the 1946 season with Brooklyn's first team in Montreal.
- 1947** **Jackie Robinson Breaks the Color Barrier**
Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier by playing for the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947.
- 1949** **Jackie Robinson Wins MVP Award**
Jackie Robinson won the National League Most Valuable Player (MVP) award in 1949.
- 1950** **Jackie Robinson Wins Cy Young Award**
Jackie Robinson won the Cy Young Award in 1950.
- 1954** **Branch Rickey Signs Pumpsie Allard**
Branch Rickey signed Pumpsie Allard for the 1954 season with the Boston Red Sox.
- 1957** **Jackie Robinson Wins MVP Award**
Jackie Robinson won the National League Most Valuable Player (MVP) award in 1957.
- 1962** **Jackie Robinson Wins Cy Young Award**
Jackie Robinson won the Cy Young Award in 1962.
- 1963** **Jackie Robinson Wins MVP Award**
Jackie Robinson won the National League Most Valuable Player (MVP) award in 1963.
- 1969** **Jackie Robinson Wins Cy Young Award**
Jackie Robinson won the Cy Young Award in 1969.



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