

BEHIND THE PLAY

By DON DELEIGHBUR

BELIEVES GUS GREENLEE SET UP BASEBALL PLAY FOR RICKEY TO MOVE IN AND SIGN ROBINSON; MIKE JACOBS EXPLAINS LOUIS CONTRACT

NEW YORK—The role played by Gus Greenlee of Pittsburgh in calling Rickey president of the Brooklyn Dodgers, to Negro Baseball, will probably be one of those stories, details of which may never be told. However, it is a fact that had not Greenlee come up with his ill-fated United States Baseball League with a franchise club playing out of Ebbets Field in Brooklyn, Rickey might have foregone the signing of Jackie Robinson as the first colored player to crash the lilywhite portals of organized baseball, until others indicated they were ready for the precedent-shattering step.

Greenlee, it will be recalled, announced his re-entry into baseball in 1944. In characteristic Greenlee fashion he declared war on all the operators in Negro Baseball who opposed his comeback in the game he did so much to re-establish after its fall from high places following the death of Andrew (Rube) Foster. Greenlee, along with Abe Saperstein of Chicago, Shackleford of Cleveland and several others, set up the framework of the new U. X. League and selected Brooklyn, Chicago's Wrigley Field, Cleveland, Detroit, Pittsburgh, and Boston as cities in which the leagues would have franchises. Greenlee's dealings brought about the situation in which was created the Brooklyn Brown Dodgers club. The setup had advanced so far that there was talk of putting Satchel Paige in Ebbets Field along with the Brown Dodgers.

Greenlee got out his checkbook and started signing up players in both the Negro National and American Leagues when members of the two organizations decided they wanted no part of him and set up machinery to combat him. In retaliation, Greenlee spread the "word around the lobby of Chicago's Grand Hotel that launched the "player strike" before the East-West Classic in 1944. The NNL and ANL magnates had to cough up with around \$200 a man for the players as a price of their participation in the game.

From then on, the "heat" was on Greenlee. One thing after another went wrong and some of his original schemers, including Saperstein, pulled out, deciding to stay with the NNL and ANL rather than take a chance on a brand new venture which would be stymied from the start because the war had created a player shortage.

Nevertheless, Greenlee tried to carry on and had his Crawfords of Pittsburgh and the Brooklyn Brown Dodgers playing a makeshift schedule of games. Somewhere along the line, Greenlee, it was understood, got a chance to get the ear of Branch Rickey. What he told Rickey may never be known, but it is known that Rickey liked the idea of another Negro baseball league built on a foundation we could accept and respect.

That is why Rickey came out with that statement about the games and got more interested in the possibilities of Negro baseball players being good material for minor or major league use. Today Gus Greenlee may be rejoicing in the satisfaction that partly due to himself, a Negro has a last crashed the baseball color line.

Leaving baseball, we'll take a look at the garbled heavyweight boxing situation as well as the lowdown on what is going on along Jacob's Beach. First of all, Mike "scare head" story printed in a Jacobs is sore as all get up at a national weekly accusing in a

thinly veiled manner the veteran promoter of guiding Joe Louis along a path in which he would be "tricked" out of his heavyweight title because Louis had no manager of record when he signed to meet Billy Conn in a return championship match next June.

The story made great bones about the "unprotected" champion being manager—less and the consequences that would come to him unless somebody stepped up and took over. In fact, the prominent manner in which it was handled conveyed the impression that a plot was underway to "steal" the title from Louis.

"You can rest assured nothing will happen to Joe Louis," Mike told me the other day. "In fact, no white man will ever get a chance to 'move in' on Joe so long as I have anything to do with it. It's common sense, isn't it, for me to keep Louis where he is. He's the biggest moneymaker in the history of boxing and he'll make more. Would you give up your meal ticket or allow somebody to steal it?"

No, Louis and Conn signed identical contracts. Neither will be allowed to participate in 'tune-up' matches. I don't want either of 'em hurt and you can be assured that when they climb through the ropes for their June championship fight, both will be in as good condition for the match as they could ever be. They can both fight exhibitions with regulation gloves for such matches, but exhibitions are with sparring partners and usually go but three-two-minute rounds.

In a 'tuneup' the other guy is trying to knock you out and I'd or Conn to take such a chance be a fool to allow either Louis with some unknown trying to make a name for himself."

Although he wouldn't commit himself for publication, Jacobs admitted that Johnny Roxborough is still Joe Louis' manager of record. Because Roxborough couldn't be present for the contract signing was no indication that the famous Detroit sportsman still doesn't hold the guiding reins over the destiny of his own discovery—the Brown Bomber.

A copy of the contract was sent to the Michigan State Penitentiary where Roxborough is finishing a sentence that came from the big gambling cleanup in Detroit a couple of years ago. He knows everything that is going on pertaining to Louis. It was also found that Roxborough and Louis by common consent gave Jacobs the power to act on behalf of the champ until Roxy is on the sidewalks once more.

Jacobs, however, being a white man, wouldn't come out and say Roxborough is in jail. He preferred to keep that side of it quiet, although everyone knows that Roxborough is in trouble. Julian Black is believed to be out of the picture altogether, otherwise he would have been on hand to take care of things in place of Roxborough.

EX-SERVICEMEN RETURN TO ALABAMA STATE FACULTY

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — Alabama State Teachers College welcomed the resumption of service this week of four faculty members who have been on military leave of absence. They are Nelson S. H. Archer, assistant professor of Education; David D. Stott, instructor in foreign language, Alfonso Campbell, supervisor of transportation; and Benjamin F. Ward, who resumes his services in the area of Campus Operations and Maintenance.

BEE SPORTS



PROMISING LIGHTWEIGHT. Crack lightweight Gene Burton who is fast going to the top of New York's fistic ladder, recently won a decision over Doll Rafferty at the Gardens in Pittsburgh; boxed a draw with Sammy Angott, former NBA champ and is, his manager declares "ready to compete with crack lightweight in Madison Square Gardens."

1945 Grand Season for Negro American League

Name Youthful Member of Park Eleven

After six weeks of teaching football fundamentals to over 200 boys attending the Washington Park coaching school sponsored by the Chicago Sports Association and the Chicago Park District, Directors Sol Butler and Duke Slater selected the 15 boys, 12 to 15 years of age, to represent the school in city-wide competition.

The boys selected are Robert West, 15, 471 E. 41st street; Calvin Foster, 14, 449 E. 41st street; Clarence Gilmore, 14, 3817 Vincennes; Mathew Wilburn, 15, 567 E. 39th street; Emmett Brooks, 13, 3917 Calumet avenue; and Fasco Marshall, 9129 Urban Drive, all of Wendell Phillips high school; Bernard Hartsfield, 15, 451 E. 45th street. DuSable high school; Prince Greenwood, 15, 6728 Langley, Englewood high school; Nelson Bonds, 14, 6209 Vernon, and Calvin Dungee, 13, 6207 Vernon, of Sexton grade school;

Allen McDaniels, 13, 4831 Dearborn, Coleman grade school; Frank Hurtz, 14, 5602 Calumet avenue, Carter grade school; John Hendricks Jr., 13, 539 E. 38th street, Oakland grade school; Agis Bray, 13, 9362 Stewart avenue, Doolittle grade school, and Roy Johnson, 14, 9525 Perry avenue, Burnside grade school.

Stage All Set

Sandy happened upon a fellow Scot lying in the road after a motor crash. "Did nae one see ye?" he asked. "No." "Well, I'm insured, too. Wu'd ye mind if I la'doon beside ye?"

The Negro American League enjoyed a grand season. All teams gave baseball fans a fine brand of war time baseball and the attendance reached another high mark.

The Kansas City Monarchs are looking forward to several of their players returning from the army and joining the team next season. Monarch men expected to return are Willard Brown, centerfielder and home-run king; Rightfielder Thompson, one of the hardest little men to get out in the league, John O'Neil, first baseman and perhaps catchers Greene and Barney Correll.

The Birmingham Black Barons are expecting the return of a few players including Catcher Paul Hardy. The Memphis Red Sox will be a much stronger team next season with the return of first baseman Jelly Taylor, T. J. Brown; shortstop, and M. Carter, third baseman. On the other hand, the Cincinnati Indianapolis Clowns have their eyes on several players which will make the league race tough in 1946.

Lincoln Tigers

Clash With Fort Wood

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — Lincoln University Tigers will clash with the Fort Leonard Wood aggregation on November 10. In addition to what promises to be a thriller as a game spectators will see and hear the 28-piece 351st A.S.F. Band.

The guest organization, along with Lincoln's 40-piece student band will parade and alternately furnish inspirational "fight" music for their respective teams. Fort Wood officials advise that at least 300 men will be conveyed to Jefferson City for the day.

Giants Make Plans for '46 Ball Team

The Chicago American Giants have already begun making plans for a greater ball team in 1946 and like other teams, will be strengthened by players returning from the army. Two ex-servicemen, Edward "Pep" Young and William Charter, two of the Giant's former hitting aces, are expected to join the fold.

The team, one of the best drawing cards in the league, was runner up in the second half of a split Negro American League season this year. "Candy" Jim Taylor, veteran baseball manager, was the Giant's pilot and will gain head the team in 1946.

One of the Giant's attractive games was at the Yankee Stadium last August when they defeated the New York Black Yankees 1 to 0 behind the excellent pitching of Gentry Jessup. On the same eastern trip, the "Windy City Nine" broke even with the Homestead Grays at Washington and defeated the Baltimore Elite Giants at Baltimore.

Four of the toughest games were with the champions, the Cleveland Buckeyes, at the close of the season. When the Buckeyes took a doubleheader from the Chicagoans on their home grounds at Cleveland the Sunday before Labor Day, came to Chicago for Labor Day and the Chicago nine gave them the same spanking by taking both ends of a twin-bill.

Manager Taylor is having a little rest cure and spending some time with his brother and former team mate, John "Steel Arm Taylor in Peoria, Ill., while two of his ace pitchers, Gentry Jessup and "Lefty" Gread McKinnis and third baseman, Clyde Nelson, and right fielder, John Smith, are playing in California.

Ala. State A. M. Gridsters Clash Nov. 15

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama, Nov. 3—The Alabama A. & M. Institute Bulldogs resume their role as the opponent of The Alabama State Teachers College Hornets here at Legion Field for a twilight football game beginning at 5:00 o'clock on Thursday afternoon, Nov. 15.

This game will be the 17th annual Alabama football appearance at Legion Field and the fourth "Magic City Alabama Classic" between those two state institutions of Alabama. It is rapidly developing as Alabama's junior gridiron classic which precedes by one week the now-established senior "Dixie Classic" between Alabama State Teachers College and Tuskegee Institute at Cramton Bowl in Montgomery, Thursday afternoon, November 22nd.

This Alabama State-Alabama A. & M. football game will also pit Coach George H. Hobson, head monitor at Alabama A. & M. and a former grid luminary and Hornot captain against his Alma Mater. Coach John H. Brown is at the helm of Alabama State's eleven and has the assistance of G. H. Lockhart, E. B. Campbell and Edward K. Weaver under the administrative guidance of Athletic Director C. Johnson Dunn.

A featured attraction of this game is the massed participation of the several high school bands of Birmingham, Bossomer, Fairfield and Jefferson County under the leadership of Music Director Frederick D. Hall of Alabama State Teachers College.

SCOUT EXECUTIVES VISIT CHICAGO

Andrew R. Johnson and William Colwell of Baltimore are visiting Chicago as the guests of Emerson D. James, district executive, and Wendell Henry, assistant district executive of the Douglas district. Johnson and Colwell are in Chicago to study techniques and procedures of the Douglas district.