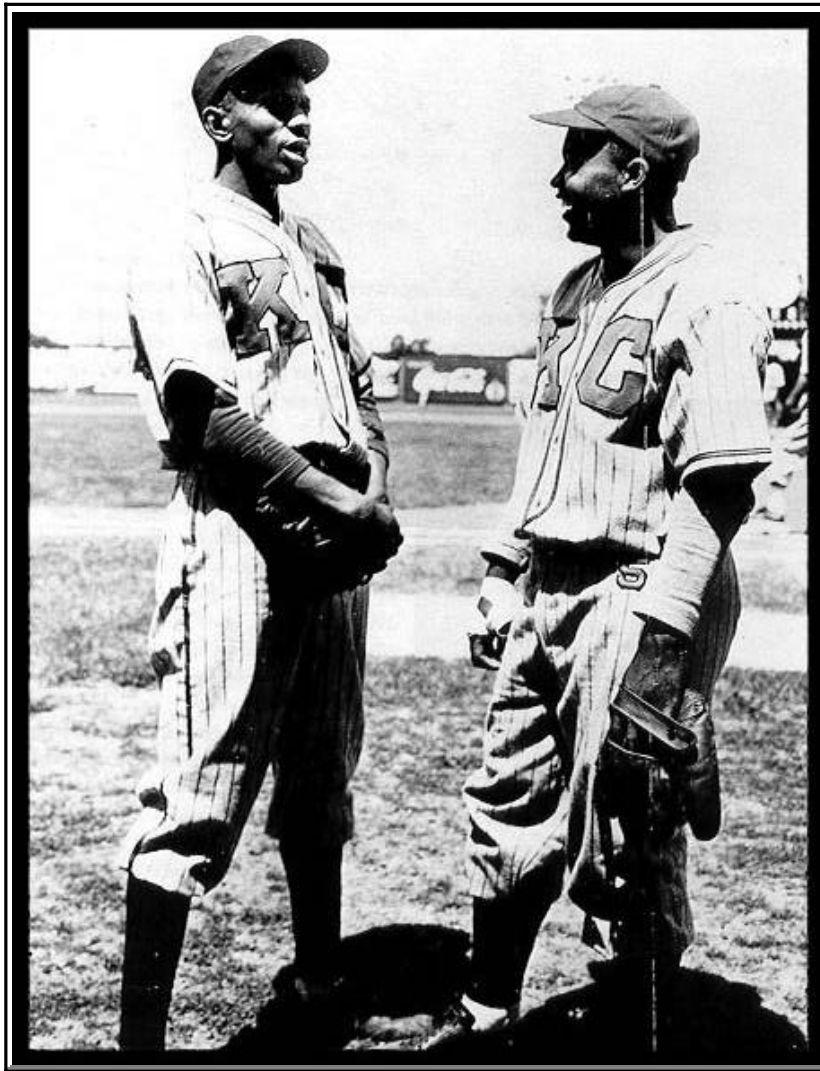


**The Library of Congress & The Smithsonian Associates Discovery Theater present:**



Satchel Paige and Jackie Robinson, Kansas City Monarchs teammates.

# Black Diamond!

## Satchel Paige and the Negro Baseball Leagues

***June 5, 2003***

### **Learning Guide:**

This handout is designed to help you and your students enjoy, prepare for, and discuss *Black Diamond! Satchel Paige & the Negro Baseball Leagues*. Inside you will find background information, an introduction to our co-sponsors, *The Library of Congress* and *The Smithsonian Associates Discovery Theater*, and activities for students.

### **Contents:**

- ★  About our Co-sponsors
- ★  Raquis Da'Juan Petree
- ★  Biographies of the Players
- ★  Student Activities
- ★  Vocabulary of keywords in this guide
- ★  Additional resources

## About Our Co-Sponsors:

**The Library of Congress** is the largest library in the world, with more than 120 million items on approximately 530 miles of bookshelves. The collections include more than 18 million books, 2.5 million recordings, 12 million photographs, 4.5 million maps, and 54 million manuscripts. Founded in 1800, and the oldest federal cultural institution in the nation, it is the research arm of the United States Congress and is recognized as the national library of the United States.

When you visit the Library of Congress you can expect to find comic books, baseball cards, some of your favorite television programs, motion pictures, the latest music recordings, newspapers from all over the world, street maps, even the contents of Abraham Lincoln's pockets the night he was assassinated.

### *Online Exhibit at LC*

#### **Baseball, the Color Line, and Jackie Robinson**

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/jrhtml/jrabout.html>

This Web site reference aid was created to commemorate Jackie Robinson's achievements and describe some aspects of the color line's development and the Negro Leagues. Robinson became the first African American in the twentieth century to play baseball in the major leagues when he stepped onto Ebbets field on April 15th, 1947 -- breaking the "color line," a segregation practice dating to the nineteenth century. Robinson was an extremely talented, multi-sport athlete and a courageous man who played an active role in civil rights. This aid also illustrates how historical collection materials located throughout the Library of Congress can be drawn together to tell a story.



**The Smithsonian Associate's Discovery Theater**, located in the Arts and Industries Building on the National Mall, is dedicated to offering the best in live performing arts for young people. Each season more than a dozen productions feature puppets, storytellers, dancers, actors, musicians, and mimes in performances that present classic stories for children, folk tales from all over the world, American history and cultures, and innovative theater techniques. Some productions, such as **Black Diamond!** are written specially for Discovery Theater. Often interactive, Discovery Theater performances unite ideologies, enact themes that reflect the diversity of its audiences, open avenues of self-reflection, and are enjoyable means for parents and teachers to demonstrate life's lessons.

#### **Discovery Theater**

#### **Smithsonian Institution**

#### **Arts & Industries Building**

**900 Jefferson Drive, S.W.**

**Phone (202) 357-1500 , Fax (202) 357-2588**

**Email: [disc-th@tsa.si.edu](mailto:disc-th@tsa.si.edu)**

#### **Meet Raquis Da'Juan Petree**

Raquis Da'Juan Petree is an actor, dancer, choreographer, writer, and director of theater and musical performances. He graduated from the Duke Ellington School for the Arts where he focused on Performing Arts and Producing; and studied Musical Theater and Theater Dance at the American Musical and Dramatic Academy in New York City.

**Black Diamond** is part of a series of musical, theatrical performances Raquis is working on called "The

Greatest Stories Never Told."

Upcoming in the series is "Children of Struggle," which tells the story of Ruby Bridges and other courageous children who played important

roles in the Civil Rights Movement.



## Meet Satchel Paige

**Leroy Robert Paige** was born in Mobile, Alabama on July 7, 1906, the sixth of twelve children. His father was a gardener and his mother was a domestic worker. Some say Leroy "Satchel" Paige got his nickname while



working in Mobile, Alabama as a **baggage porter**. He could carry so many bags or **satchels**, *all at one time*, that he looked like a "satchel tree."

At the age of 12 a **truant officer** caught him skipping school and stealing. As punishment, Paige was sent to

**industrial school**. Paige said, "It got me away from the bums. It gave me a chance to polish up my baseball game. It gave me some schooling I'd of never taken if I wasn't made to go to class."

He was a superb athlete throughout his career in the Negro Leagues, from his debut in 1924 with the semi-pro Mobile Tigers Ball Club, to a stretch with the Pittsburgh Crawfords, and to the Kansas City Monarchs, where he helped them win half a dozen **pennants** from 1939-48. In 1934, Paige won 104 of 105 games.

In the off-season, Paige would **barnstorm** as a solo player (appearing independently as a kind of sports personality) sitting in with other teams. For a fee of \$500-\$2000, his appearance would guarantee a full house for small town teams. He was a sensation in his time – the most popular and celebrated player of the Negro Leagues.

Everyone was amazed at his wide variety of pitches. He told Baltimore *Afro-American* sportswriter Sam Lacy he had pitches, "I ain't even showed yet." He called them "bloopers, loopers, and droopers . . . I got a jump ball, a screw ball, a be ball, a wobbly ball, a whipsy-dipsy, a nothin' ball, and a bat dodger." But the most famous of all his pitches was the "hesitation pitch," where he would touch his foot on the **mound** before the pitch. Satchel told Lacy, "Some of the umpires have been saying they're going to call a balk on me if I throw my 'hesitation' with a man on third. I guess if they do, that'll just have to be all right. But it won't be no balk.

The rules say a balk is a pitch that fools the base runner. If I wind up, the base runner knows I can't throw to catch him so I got to throw home. So when I wind up with my 'hesitation,' I ain't fooling the runner, I'm fooling the batter. Ain't that what a pitcher's supposed to do?"

After playing spectacularly for years in the Negro Leagues, he was finally signed to play in the Major Leagues in 1948. At age 42, Paige was the oldest "rookie" to enter the Major Leagues, playing for the Cleveland Indians. Paige was also the first African American pitcher to win a game in the Major Leagues. In September 1965, at the age of 59, he became the oldest baseball player ever to pitch in the professional sport.

In 1971, Satchel Paige was the very first Negro Leagues player to be elected into the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

**Position:** Pitcher, Coach  
**League:** Negro Leagues, Major Leagues  
**Teams:** Pittsburgh Crawfords, Kansas City Monarchs, St. Louis Browns, Cleveland Indians

**Career Dates:** 1930 - 1965

**Batting Avg.:** not given

**Honors:** First Negro Leagues baseball player inducted into Baseball Hall of Fame, 1971.

### What's Your Average?

It is difficult to compare the ability of Negro Baseball Leagues (NBL) players with Major League players because the two leagues played their seasons separately and only met at barnstorming or exhibition games. In addition, statistics for NBL players are incomplete.

One important way to measure a baseball player's ability is figuring out his batting average. You can find out your favorite player's average, or figure out your own, by using division. Just divide the player's number of hits by the number of times at bat.

Say your favorite player got a hit three times in his last ten times at bat. Divide three by ten, which can also be written as 3/10, or .300.

You can look up the batting averages of NBL players in books like, "The Biographical Encyclopedia of the Negro Baseball League," by James A. Riley, New York: Carroll & Graf, 1994.

## Negro Leagues Baseball I

The Negro Leagues refers to African American baseball teams that competed between 1880 and 1955. During the era of segregation based upon skin color, also called the Jim Crow era, African Americans were barred from playing on white teams, so they created their own teams and leagues. African Americans took great pride in the players' skills and looked forward to exhibition games between Negro Leagues and Major League players.

During **Black Diamond**, you will meet:

### Moses "Fleet" Walker

The first African American player in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Major Leagues, Walker played for the Toledo Blue Stockings in 1884 before the creation of the Negro Leagues. He and several other African American players, including his brother Weldy, were gradually forced off teams as players and owners restricted and then eliminated African American involvement in the sport. Fleet was the last African American playing in the Major Leagues when he retired from baseball in 1889.

**Position:** Catcher, Outfield, 1<sup>st</sup> Base

**League:** Major Leagues

**Teams:** Toledo Blue Stockings

**Career Dates:** 1883-1889

**Batting Avg.:** not given

### Andrew "Rube" Foster

Foster was a pitcher, team manager and founder of the Negro National League, which began in 1920. His screwball pitch was said to be very powerful and accurate. Foster's ability as a manager was equally impressive. He signed pitcher "Smokey" Joe Williams, later with the Grays, to his Leland Giants in 1910.

**Position:** Pitcher

**League:** Negro Leagues

**Teams:** Chicago American Giants, Leland Giants

**Career Dates:** 1902-1930

**Batting Avg.:** not given

**Honors:** Baseball Hall of Fame, 1981

### Josh Gibson

Gibson was called the "Black Babe Ruth," and was one of the Negro Leagues' most prominent power hitters. He was known as a courageous hitter, never flinching when a pitch came too close. His numerous home runs were hit with incredible strength and control. He died soon after his 35<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Position:** Catcher, Outfield, 3<sup>rd</sup> Base, 1<sup>st</sup> Base

**League:** Negro Leagues

**Teams:** Homestead Grays, Pittsburgh Crawfords

**Career Dates:** 1929-1946

**Batting Avg.:** not given

**Honors:** Baseball Hall of Fame, 1972

### Jackie Robinson

The first African American to be recruited by, and play for a modern Major League team. Brooklyn Dodgers president Branch Rickey signed Robinson to a minor league contract in 1945; Robinson's first season with the Dodgers was 1947. An excellent all-round athlete, Robinson's experience in college at UCLA and serving in the military set him apart from most other Negro Leaguers of the time, who had little or no experience outside of segregated society. Robinson played an important role in the Civil Rights Movement. He stated: "The right of every American to first-class citizenship is the most important issue of our time."

**Position:** 1<sup>st</sup> Base, 2<sup>nd</sup> Base, Shortstop, 3<sup>rd</sup> Base

**League:** Negro Leagues, Major Leagues

**Teams:** Kansas City Monarchs, Dodger's Montreal Farm Team and Brooklyn Dodgers

**Career Dates:** 1944-1956

**Batting Avg.:** .311, 137 home runs, 197 stolen bases

**Honors:** First African American inducted into Baseball Hall of Fame, 1962.

"42" retired from MLB in 1988.

## Be a Sports Reporter

The reports that newspapermen Sam Lacy, of the Baltimore *Afro-American*, and Wendell Smith, of the Pittsburgh *Courier*, wrote about the Negro Leagues played a crucial role in desegregating Major League Baseball. Long before any Major League owner seriously considered recruiting an African American player, Lacy and Smith let their readers know that the stars of the Negro Leagues – Satchel Paige, Josh Gibson, Monte Irvin, Buck Leonard, and many others – matched the ability of any player from the Major Leagues.

The next time you watch a game, write down what you think are the highlights, record the final score, and pick the outstanding players from each team. Then read the next day's newspaper to see how the game was described. Finally, write your own story to share with your class or

# Resources for Teachers:

## Books:

- William Brashler, **Josh Gibson: A Life in the Negro Leagues**. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, Pub., 2000.
- Robert Charles Cottrell, **The Best Pitcher in Baseball**. New York: NYU Press, 2001.
- Phil Dixon, **The Negro Baseball Leagues, 1867-1955: A Photographic History**. Mattituck, N.Y.: Amereon House, 1992.
- Wilmer Fields, **My Life in the Negro Leagues: An Autobiography**. Westport, Ct.: Meckler Books, 1992.
- Leslie Heaphy, **The Negro Leagues, 1869-1960**. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., 2003.
- John B. Holway, **The Complete Book of Baseball's Negro Leagues**. Westport, Conn.: Meckler Books, 2000.
- Brent Kelley, **Voices from the Negro Leagues: Conversations with 52 Baseball Standouts of the Period**. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., 1998.
- Sam Lacy with Moses J. Newson, **Fighting for Fairness: The Life Story of Hall of Fame Sportswriter Sam Lacy**. Centreville, Md.: Tidewater Publishing, 1999.
- William F. McNeil, **Cool Papas and Double Duties: The All-Time Greats of the Negro Leagues**. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., 2001.
- Buck O'Neil, **I was Right on Time**. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.
- Satchel Paige (as told to David Lipman), **Maybe I'll Pitch Forever**. Lincoln, Ne.: University of Nebraska Press, 1993.
- Robert Peterson, **Only the Ball was White**. New York: Gramercy Books, 1999.
- Mark Ribowsky, **A Complete History of the Negro Leagues: 1884 to 1955**. New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1995.
- \_\_\_\_\_, **The Power and the Darkness: The Life of Josh Gibson in the Shadows of the Game**. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999.
- James A. Riley, **The Biographical Encyclopedia of the Negro Baseball Leagues**. New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, Inc.: 1994.
- Jackie Robinson as told to Alfred Duckett, **I Never Had it Made: An Autobiography**. Hopewell, N.J.: Ecco Press, 1995.

## On Line:

**Baseball, the Color Line, and Jackie Robinson**. On line exhibit at American Memory created in honor of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Jackie Robinson's rookie season for the Brooklyn Dodgers. [memory.loc.gov/ammem/jrhtml/jrabout.html](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/jrhtml/jrabout.html)

**Negro Leagues Baseball Museum** - Lesson plans [www.usd230.k12.ks.us/NLBM/lessonplans/lessonplans.htm](http://www.usd230.k12.ks.us/NLBM/lessonplans/lessonplans.htm)

**National Baseball Hall of Fame** [www.projectview.org/bbhoflessons.htm](http://www.projectview.org/bbhoflessons.htm)

**Negro Leagues Baseball** [www.negroleaguebaseball.com](http://www.negroleaguebaseball.com)

## Vocabulary of Key Words

**Barnstorming** – traveling across the country to showcase ones talents.

**Baggage Porter** - person who carries baggage for tips.

**Industrial School** – a school specializing in the teaching of industrial arts (or a public institution of this kind for juvenile delinquents).

**Inning** – one of nine divisions or periods of a regulation game, in which each team has a turn at bat that is limited by three outs.

**Migration** – the movement of people from one country, place, or locality to another.

**Mound** - the hill, or circle of dirt on the baseball field from where the pitcher throws the ball.

**Pennant** - the annual championship in a baseball league; also the flag that is awarded to the winner of such a championship.

**Satchel** – a bag for carrying books or clothing, often having a shoulder strap.

**Truant Officer** – a school attendance officer.

# Reading List for Students:

- David Adler, **Mama Played Baseball**. San Diego: Gulliver Books, 2003.
- Kathleen Billus, **Judy Johnson**. New York: Rosen Central, 2002.
- Marcos Breton, **Home is Everything: The Latino Baseball Story: From the Barrio to the Major Leagues**. El Paso, Tex.: Cinco Puntos Press, 2003.
- Ace Collins, **Blackball Superstars: Legendary Players of the Negro Baseball Leagues**. Greensboro, N.C.: Avisson Press, 1999.
- Karen Mueller Cooms, **Jackie Robinson: Baseball's Civil Rights Legend**. Springfield, N.J.: Enslow Publishers, 1992.
- David K. Fremon, **The Negro Baseball Leagues**. New York: New Discovery Books, 1994.
- Rebecca Gomez, **Jackie Robinson**. Edina, Minn.: Abdo Publishing, 2003.
- Michelle Y. Green, **A Strong Right Arm: The Story of Mamie "Peanut" Johnson**. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 2002.
- Katie Haegele, **Monte Irvin**. New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, 2002.
- John B. Holway, **Josh Gibson**. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1995.
- Angela Johnson, **Just Like Josh Gibson**. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2003.
- Marybeth Lorbiecki, **Jackie's Bat**. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2003.
- Wil Mara, **Jackie Robinson**. New York: Children's Press, 2002.
- Jacob Margolies, **The Negro Leagues: The Story of Black Baseball**. NY: Franklin Watts, 1993.
- Pat McKissack, **Satchel Paige: The Best Arm in Baseball**. Berkeley Heights, N.J.: Enslow, 2002.
- Don McLeese, **Jackie Robinson**. Vero Beach, Fla.: Rourke Publishing, 2003.
- Marissa Moss, **Mighty Jackie: The Strike Out Queen**. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2004.
- Jim O'Connor, **Jackie Robinson and the Story of All-Black Baseball**. New York: Random House Children's Books, 2003.
- James Overmyer, **Queen of the Negro Leagues: Effa Manley and the Newark Eagles**. Lanham, Md.: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1998.
- Lucia Raatma, **Jackie Robinson**. Milwaukee, Wisc.: World Almanac Library, 2002.
- Howard Reiser, **Jackie Robinson: Baseball Pioneer**. New York: Franklin Watts, 1992.
- James A. Riley, **The Negro Leagues**. Philadelphia, Pa.: Chelsea House Publishers, 1997.
- Lawrence S. Ritter, **Leagues Apart: The Men and Times of the Negro Baseball Leagues**. New York: Morrow Junior Books, 1995.
- Sharon Robinson, **Promises to Keep: Jackie Robinson's Commitment to America**. New York: Scholastic, 2004.
- Julie Schmidt, **Satchel Paige**. New York: Rosen Central, 2002.
- Michael Silverstone, **Latino Legends: Hispanics in Major League Baseball**. Bloomington, Minn.: Red Brick Learning, 2003.
- Lauren Spencer, **Hank Aaron**. New York: Rosen Publishing Group, 2003.
- Mark Stewart, **Latino Baseball's Hottest Hitters = Los Mejores Bateadores del Béisbol Latino**. Brookfield, Conn.: 21st Century Books, 2002.
- Mark Stewart, **Latino Baseball's Finest Fielders = Los Mas Destacados Guantes del Béisbol Latino**. Brookfield, Conn.: Twenty-first Century Books, 2002.
- Kimberly Noel Sweet, **Hank Aaron: The Life of the Homerun King**. Montgomery, Ala.: Junebug Books, 2001.
- Nick Twemlow, **Josh Gibson**. New York: Rosen Central, 2002.
- Sally M. Walker, **Jackie Robinson**. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, 2002.
- Geoffrey C. Ward and Ken Burns with S.A. Kramer, **Shadow Ball: The History of the Negro Leagues**. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994.
- Jonah Winter, **Fair Ball!: 14 Great Stars from Baseball's Negro Leagues**. New York: Scholastic Press, 1999.
- Deborah Woodworth, **Determination: The Story of Jackie Robinson**. Plymouth, Minn.: Child's World, 1999.

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