

A Case of Cultural Forgetting

Black Newspapers' Presentation of Black Baseball in 1932

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When Negro National League officials agreed to close operations for 1932 due to the hard realities of the Great Depression, the usually minor Negro Southern League and the newly-created East-West Colored League became black baseball's "major leagues."¹ Disillusionment with the Negro National League collapse, apprehension about the ability of the leagues to complete a season, complications of player trade disputes, and low attendance figures led to a muddled portrait of black baseball in 1932. The black press only fed the disillusionment and apprehension of its readers, aiding what would become a historiographical lapse in coverage of the season. Their initial bias and eventual apathy only added further confusion as they attempted to clarify the championships, legitimacy, and politics of the foundering Negro Leagues.

The topography of baseball newspaper reporting in 1932 is herein defined through the analysis and statistical sampling of a set of nineteen black newspapers. Those newspapers are then divided into various regional locations in some instances and circulation coverage areas in others (see table 1). The sample is largely the result of availability. Each of the newspapers listed in table 1 provides either complete or near-complete surviving coverage for the 1932 calendar year. Availability, of course, necessarily omits some publications that would immensely benefit such a study. Nashville, Tennessee, and Monroe, Louisiana, for example, play significant roles in the 1932 season, yet the black newspapers for those cities (the *Nashville Globe and Independent* and the *Southern Broadcast*, respectively) no longer survive.² Only the Negro Southern League (NSL) completed league play for a full season. The East-West folded before the close of the season's first half. As a consequence, the statistical analysis only treats coverage of the NSL. The categorizations and calculations that follow all stem from the original core list of nineteen newspapers.³

That core list greeted the 1932 season—particularly the formation of the

TABLE 1. 1932 Black press sample set, divided by region and circulation

SOUTH	NORTH	BORDER	WEST
<i>Memphis World</i>	<i>Indianapolis Recorder</i>	<i>Louisville Leader</i>	<i>California Eagle</i>
<i>Shreveport Sun</i>	<i>Chicago Defender</i>	<i>Kansas City Call</i>	<i>Houston Informer</i>
<i>Louisiana Weekly</i>	<i>Pittsburgh Courier</i>	<i>Baltimore</i>	
<i>Atlanta Daily World</i>	<i>New York</i> <i>Amsterdam News</i>	<i>Afro-American</i>	
<i>Birmingham Reporter</i>	<i>New York Age</i> <i>Negro World</i> <i>Philadelphia Tribune</i> <i>Boston Chronicle</i> <i>Cleveland Gazette</i>		
NATIONAL EDITIONS		REGIONAL EDITIONS	
<i>Atlanta Daily World</i>	<i>Memphis World</i>	<i>Philadelphia Tribune</i>	
<i>Chicago Defender</i>	<i>Shreveport Sun</i>	<i>Boston Chronicle</i>	
<i>Pittsburgh Courier</i>	<i>Louisiana Weekly</i>	<i>Cleveland Gazette</i>	
<i>New York Amsterdam News</i>	<i>Birmingham Reporter</i>	<i>Louisville Leader</i>	
<i>Baltimore Afro-American</i>	<i>Indianapolis Recorder</i>	<i>Houston Informer</i>	
<i>California Eagle</i>	<i>New York Age</i> <i>Negro World</i>	<i>Kansas City Call</i>	

assumed major league concentrated in the northeast, the East-West Colored Baseball League—with skepticism. As early as July 9, the *Baltimore Afro-American* reprinted a John L. Clark article originally written for the West Penn Service that insinuated that the league's organizer, Cumberland Posey, was forming the league as a countermeasure to the success of the Pittsburgh Crawfords.⁴ Posey's Homestead Grays (a Pittsburgh team) competed for dollars and notoriety with their crosstown rival, and the mogul's attempt to form the league was, for Clark, a direct attempt to omit the competition from league play. His critique went further. Clark charged that "Washington, Newark, New York, Norfolk, and Kansas City are likely to be excluded. In spite of the fact that Cleveland and Detroit [included teams] had poor gate attractions last year, they will get preference over the five teams just mentioned. They will be preferred because Cum can dictate to them, which fact dovetails with the prime objective." W. A. Greenlee, owner of the Crawfords, echoed Clark's sentiments in late February. "You probably know," wrote Greenlee in a widely published letter to the press, "that Posey's interest in a league came after the Crawfords had their first successful playing season."

The criticism seemed valid, as Posey purchased a controlling interest in the East-West Detroit entry and stocked the team with Homestead players.⁵

The league began with weekday games and Sunday doubleheaders, with a planned split schedule. In his zeal to exclude the Crawfords (as well as other dominant teams in the region, such as the newly reformed New York Black Yankees), Posey even invited the barnstorming Cuban House of David club to participate. The league had so much trouble without a core of the best available teams that its demise appeared inevitable to most as of late June. *New York Age* columnist Lewis E. Dial decried the league's omission of a New York team, as well as its indifference toward the press. Bill Gibson, columnist for the *Baltimore Afro-American*, assumed the league was finished, but lamented, "What are the fans and the press to do when nothing official comes from those who are supposed to know what it is all about?" He printed an interview with Bert Gholston, an umpire fired weeks prior because of the league's inability to pay. "The future of a league," said Gholston, "is very, very dark." He was right. The early July editions of many papers printed a wire story that pronounced the proverbial nail in the league's coffin: "Due to the present conditions that have caused the receipts from operations to shrivel to the point where they are insufficient to meet the carrying charges to operate baseball clubs on a salaried basis, club owners of the East-West League have abandoned the first-half schedule [and] discontinued payment of monthly salaries." Just to the right of the article in the *Kansas City Call's* coverage, however, an article titled "Monroe Rides Nearer Flag With Triple Win Over Sox" signaled that events in the NSL were far from settled.⁶

The NSL was typically a minor league, but in 1932, it took on larger market (and non-Southern) teams such as the Indianapolis ABCs and the Cleveland Cubs, each looking for a home following the collapse of the Negro National League the previous year. The newly "major" NSL also lured the Chicago American Giants, under the new ownership of funeral home owner Robert A. Cole. The team was formerly owned by Rube Foster, father of the now-defunct Negro National League, giving the Southern immediate currency with baseball writers. Additionally, the civil war among Pittsburgh's black baseball community led the Crawfords to associate with (though not formally join) the new league.⁷ The NSL seemed to be on solid footing, and, unlike the East-West, was greeted with relative optimism by the black press. "The Southern League clash promises to be better in the section this summer," wrote "Melancholy" Jones in his "Sportopics" column in the *Atlanta Daily World*. But he, like others, voiced his apprehension about the possibility of a complete season in *any* league. Rollo Wilson, writing for the *Pittsburgh Courier*, was more specific in his concerns: "In addition to Chicago

and Pittsburgh, there is a Cleveland team in the Southern league, which will also be a thorn in the side of the Ewee [East-West] folks, no doubt. The war cloud now grows to more ominous proportions.”⁸

War descended on the leagues in late April. Reuben B. Jackson, president of the Southern League, accused the East-West’s Posey of refusing to return a pitcher whose rights were held by the Indianapolis ABCs. “Rumors are flying thick and fast concerning the newly-formed East-West baseball league and its stability,” wrote Leon Hardwick in his *Kansas City Call* column. The *Chicago Defender* led the coverage of the telephone conferences between the two leagues to arrange a truce. Cole, Jackson, and Posey used the press to attack the viability and character of the other’s league. “Posey,” declared Cole, “should be a man of his word and not show signs of getting there at any cost.” The *Defender*’s Al Monroe supported the NSL position, as did the rest of his sports page. “Posey pulled a fast one,” the paper reported. Its May 14 edition announced that Jackson and the Southern had cancelled all games its teams played with the East-West. The league placed Greenlee, Crawfords owner and Posey rival, in charge of booking Southern League games with eastern teams—refusing, in effect, to recognize the existence of Posey’s authority.⁹

The editorial criticism from the black press, however, did not need specific scandal as a prompt for its published concerns. “The day of rowdyism in baseball is but a faded memory!” lamented the *Pittsburgh Courier*’s William G. Nunn in his “Sport Talks” column.¹⁰ The Depression was eroding the urban economies that surrounded the newspapers and ball teams. It laid waste to the National League the previous year, leaving sportswriters jaded and ready to warn their readers not to get their hopes up. Of the nineteen newspapers sampled, only the *Memphis World*, the *Houston Informer*, the *Negro World*, the *Cleveland Gazette*, and the *Louisville Leader* did not include editorials lamenting the uncertain state of professional black baseball. The *Memphis World* was the only of the five to report on a hometown team of any significance to the 1932 season, and the late June and July newspapers (the precise time when Memphis had ample reason to complain) have not survived. All of the papers with broader national circulations included such criticism.

Criticism and doubt, however, gave way to confusion as the first half of the NSL season came to a close without a definitive winner. The league worked, as did many leagues of the era, on a split schedule. The first half of the season continued until the beginning of July, at which time the league declared a winner of the first-half pennant. Then the teams began a second half with a clean slate, playing until a second-half winner emerged. The two pennant holders would then play each other for the league championship. When the Southern’s first half ended, the Monroe, Louisiana, Monarchs led Cole’s American Giants by a slim margin.

TABLE 2. Newspapers' choice for winner of first-half pennant, 1932

CHICAGO AMERICAN GIANTS	MONROE MONARCHS	NONE
<i>Houston Informer</i> (W, R)	<i>Memphis World</i> (S, R)	<i>Indianapolis Recorder</i> (N, R)
<i>Chicago Defender</i> (N, N)	<i>Shreveport Sun</i> (S, R)	<i>New York Age</i> (N, R)
<i>Pittsburgh Courier</i> (N, N)	<i>Louisiana Weekly</i> (S, R)	<i>Negro World</i> (N, R)
<i>California Eagle</i> (W, N)	<i>Atlanta Daily World</i> (S, N)	<i>Boston Chronicle</i> (N, R)
<i>Kansas City Call</i> (B, R)	<i>New York Amsterdam</i>	<i>Cleveland Gazette</i> (N, R)
<i>Baltimore Afro-</i>	<i>News</i> (N, N)	<i>Birmingham Reporter</i> (S, R)
<i>American</i> (B, N)	<i>Philadelphia Tribune</i> (N, R)	<i>Louisville Leader</i> (B, R)

Note: Abbreviations following each paper designate region and circulation respectively.

Region key: North (N), South (S), West (W), Border (B)

Circulation key: National (N), Regional (R)

"All is not well in the Southern League," the *Defender* reported. League President Jackson ruled that, due to its use of players claimed by other teams, some Memphis Red Sox games would be forfeited. Two, in fact—two victories against Cole's American Giants, which Jackson ruled to be Chicago wins. The decision gave Chicago the first-half pennant in a move some papers chose to ignore, and some chose to openly question. The *Defender*, however, offered its approval. "The decision worked wonders with Cole's American Giants of Chicago," it announced, "who now move back into first place as a result."¹¹ Other papers found the decision less wondrous.

When the paper's first-half choices appear within their location and coverage areas, a distinct regional pattern emerges. (see table 2) With the exception of the *Birmingham Reporter*, whose hometown team had already abandoned league play, all of the Southern papers declared Monroe the first-half champion. Significantly, however, the bulk of coverage from papers with national circulations centered on the American Giants. The *New York Amsterdam News* mentioned Monroe as the first-half winner, but never adamantly argued the team's case.¹² As a consequence, every subsequent mention of the 1932 NSL first half has deemed Chicago the winner.¹³ The majority of Southern coverage, however, disagreed.

The *Louisiana Weekly* acknowledged Jackson's ruling on the forfeited games, but declared Monroe the victor anyway. It noted protests mailed to the league office by Monroe fans, arguing that the NSL attempted "to give the Chicago nine something they have not rightfully won. All the southern papers as well as some of the northern and eastern papers carry the standing just as it is with Monroe leading and naturally, the fans are not fooled." The *Atlanta Daily World* listed Monroe's 31-7 record and Chicago's 31-8 as the

“official standing” of the League in its 8 July edition. It described the NSL’s final administrative meeting in depth, including attendance prizes, umpire status, franchise transfers, and player acquisitions. Monroe, it reported, won the first-half pennant.¹⁴

Monroe, Louisiana, had a black newspaper in 1932, but its pages have not survived. Interestingly for a Deep South cotton-farming region in the Mississippi Delta, however, Monroe’s white press took an active interest in its local black team.¹⁵ The *Monroe Morning World* described the Memphis situation as the result of the president’s dubious motives. “Monroe has won more games and lost less than Chicago but in order to give the Chicago team the break it was ruled to throw out some of the games Chicago lost.” After an early July Monroe-Memphis series, the *Monroe Morning World* announced, “The victories gave the Monarchs undisputed possession of the first half of the Negro Southern League.” A just forfeit for Monroe fans would have given “neither team credit for them. Even though the games were thrown out Chicago would have won 26 and lost seven with a percentage of .787, 38 points behind the Monarchs.” For the remainder of 1932, both the *Monroe Morning World* and *Monroe News Star* would refer to the Monarchs as champions of the Southern League.¹⁶

The uncertainty engendered by the first-half champions debacle bred confusion throughout the rest of the season. Its remainder seemed in doubt, as only the *Chicago Defender*, the *Pittsburgh Courier*, the *Kansas City Call*, and the *Atlanta Daily World* published a second-half schedule for the league. Only five papers maintained consistent coverage through the second half. The same Southern papers that argued for Monroe’s pennant stopped substantial coverage by August, as the turmoil of July caused them to focus on other events. (see table 3) The summer of 1932 was an Olympic summer, and two black sprinters, Eddie Tolan and Ralph Metcalfe, sprinted to gold and silver medals, with Tolan winning both the 100- and 200-meter events. The victories dominated the headlines of every paper in the sample group, but only some chose to use the remaining column inches for baseball coverage.¹⁷

As August progressed, however, the dilemma of hashing out a champion for the muddled season coming to a close proved easier said than done. Nashville won the second half of the NSL season, and Reuben B. Jackson and Southern League officials pronounced the series between Chicago and Nashville to be the only legitimate championship for the year. The Pittsburgh Crawfords, however, recognized Monroe as the NSL champion and scheduled a series with the Monarchs billed in most newspapers as the World Series. The *New York Amsterdam News* and *California Eagle*, for example, reprinted wire service reports declaring the Monroe-Pittsburgh series the only legitimate championship. Even those who covered both series referred to the Pittsburgh

TABLE 3. Newspaper coverage patterns by region and circulation, with the availability of a second-half schedule

RELATIVELY CONSISTENT COVERAGE	SUBSTANTIAL COVERAGE STOPPED BY AUG.	SPARSE COVERAGE THROUGHOUT
<i>Louisiana Weekly</i> (S, R)		
<i>Chicago Defender</i> (N, N)		
<i>Pittsburgh Courier</i> (N, N)		
<i>Kansas City Call</i> (B, R)		
<i>Baltimore Afro-American</i> (B, N)		
	<i>Memphis World</i> (S, R)	
	<i>Shreveport Sun</i> ^a (S, R)	
	<i>Atlanta Daily World</i> ^a (S, N)	
	<i>Philadelphia Tribune</i> (N, R)	
	<i>Birmingham Reporter</i> (S, R)	
	<i>Indianapolis Recorder</i> (N, R)	
		<i>Houston Informer</i> (W, R)
		<i>Louisville Leader</i> (B, R)
		<i>New York Amsterdam News</i> (N, N)
		<i>New York Age</i> (N, R)
		<i>Negro World</i> (N, R)
		<i>California Eagle</i> (W, N)
		<i>Boston Chronicle</i> (N, R)
		<i>Cleveland Gazette</i> (N, R)

Note: Abbreviations following each paper designate region and circulation respectively.

Region key: North (N), South (S), West (W), Border (B)

Circulation key: National (N), Regional (R)

^aResumed for World Series

contest as the "World" series and the Chicago contest as the "Dixie" series. But some, like the *Louisville Leader*, remained jaded by the awkward development of the season. "Winning this title will not settle the question of the championship team," it reported. "The disorganized state of affairs among Negro baseball clubs prevent[s] such a settlement with only one series." The majority of the sample papers, however, described the two series by advocating one or the other. When Pittsburgh defeated Monroe in the final game of their "World Series," the *Memphis World* argued that the final game "closed the series in which the Crawfords and Monarchs battled for the Negro World Championship."¹⁸

The statistical sample demonstrates that, in the case of NSL coverage, the initial hope for a successful season ended with the first-half pennant controversy. In their attempt to clarify the league machinations and true league champion, sportswriters for the black weeklies only confused the season in the popular mind, leading to a corresponding confusion in the historical mind. As in the case of the East-West League, the skepticism of the press led to the skepticism of the public. The East-West collapsed as a result. The Southern held a championship series that not all saw as a championship (and one that consequently disappeared from the historical record).

The monthly article fluctuation for the sample set demonstrates clearly the effect of the first-half criticism in the press. The bulk of NSL coverage was in April, May, June, and July, showing a palpable interest in the season and its progress. July coverage was devoted almost categorically to league pennant meetings and the choosing of a champion. In August, the total drops. The dual championship series between Monroe and Pittsburgh, Nashville and Chicago, generated a series of September articles in various sample papers—some reporting on the games, others arguing for the validity of one or the other. After September, only twenty-one more articles exist for the rest of the calendar year, as assorted reports on the possibility of a season in 1933 offered editorialists a final soapbox to fret over the state of baseball.

When broken down by region, the numbers become more telling. The August coverage drops significantly in the South, particularly in the South's largest black newspaper (and only daily paper in the sample), the *Atlanta Daily World*. Also, the coverage decline begins much earlier. New Orleans, home of the *Louisiana Weekly*, and Shreveport did not have teams in the NSL. Memphis's June and July tallies have not survived. Atlanta and Birmingham's teams stopped league play prior to the Monroe-Chicago controversy of early July. The Northern papers with a surviving stake in the outcome of the Southern—the *Indianapolis Recorder*, *Chicago Defender*, and *Pittsburgh Courier*—remain truest to the pattern set by the sample in its entirety. Notably, the three publications carry the most Southern League coverage in a regional category without many concerned newspapers. In the border region, the *Kansas City Call* and *Baltimore Afro-American*, playing to a large circulation but without a direct hometown interest in the outcome, kept a generally consistent coverage pattern throughout. The West's coverage existed almost entirely in the form of wire service reprints.

When broken down into national and regional circulations, the pattern remains constant. Notably, only the *Kansas City Call* had a higher number of August articles than it did July articles. The paper's hometown team, the Kansas City Monarchs, took the opposite route of the other teams in Negro

League baseball for 1932. The Monarchs did not field a team for the first half of the season, and when they did begin play, they barnstormed independently. In August, their opening games against the Chicago American Giants counted toward the Giants' second-half total, and so these are included in the sample's August total. When those contests are eliminated, the August total becomes markedly lower.¹⁹ (The same cannot be said for the national total when Chicago's Kansas City coverage is eliminated. The American Giants lost the series, and the *Defender's* only article on the games announced that they would take place—no reports of the outcomes were printed. This only reemphasizes the growth in journalistic apathy.)²⁰

And so the fluctuations in newspaper coverage both fed and responded to the turmoil of Negro League baseball. The absence of historical scrutiny stands as a testament to the legacy of this confusion, but there were contemporary consequences, as well. Jules Tygiel notes the reciprocal relationship of black baseball and newspapers, each helping create the success of the other. Baseball provided fodder for the sports pages of the weeklies, which in turn provided the publicity that teams needed to remain relevant in the community.²¹ Though Monroe's African American newspaper did not survive, its white newspaper can offer an interesting case study of the relationship of black baseball to a community.

The *Monroe Morning World's* coverage of the black community, the Monarchs excepted, was generally negative, consisting primarily of arrest reports, prohibition violations, and patronizing caricatures of the Southern black dialect. Positive portrayals of black life revolved around religious and civic meetings. Negative coverage of the black community grew steadily in the *Monroe Morning World* from January to April, finally peaking in May. When murder, robbery, and other crime statistics are added to reports of drunkenness, bootlegging, and general condescension, the total of monthly negative stories for the first five months of 1932 runs from 3, 17, 17, 38, to a high of 56. Positive portrayals of the black community's church and civic meetings remained infrequent, running from 3, 3, 3, 15, to 25 in the corresponding months.²²

Some of the murder stories did not occur in Monroe. The portrayal of the criminality of the black populace, however, did not rest on regional variation. Negative depictions of what it meant to be black contributed to the white image of African American inferiority and the need for continued segregation. But as the Monarchs' season progressed, the frequency of those negative depictions markedly decreased. From June through August, the negative coverage numbers ran from 50 to 32 to 16. The Monarchs' series with the Crawfords ended on September 12, and the negative portrayals decreased

to eleven in the first half of that month. Additionally, the reports of prohibition violations for this time span numbered twenty-three, as the violent crimes of murder and robbery decreased to yearly lows. The *Monroe Morning World* reported only thirteen other African American prohibition violations for the eight-and-a-half other months of the year. The negative coverage numbers again increased after the season's conclusion, from the second half of September to the New Year, moving from 22, 35, 39, to, finally, 36 in December. The slightly lower number in December was accompanied by *no* positive coverage in the month.²³

The black community of Monroe responded to its team's success with a dramatic decrease in violent crime. The white newspaper decreased its negative representations of the black community as the Monarchs continued to win. There is, of course, no direct quantifiable connection between newspaper representation of the black community and the success of the town's black baseball team. But the *Monroe Morning World's* numbers demonstrate a negative correlation of black crime with team performance.

It is the only such sample available. The *Monroe Morning World* and *Monroe News Star* covered the majority of Monarch games, particularly those played at home. They also commented on the state of the NSL standings. In comparison, the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, *Arkansas Gazette*, *Arkansas Democrat*, and *New Orleans Times-Picayune* carried two black baseball articles through the entire year. The *Chicago Tribune* carried three articles about the local team. The *Austin Statesman* carried four, the *Austin American* carried five. The *Nashville Banner* and *Birmingham Age-Herald* held no coverage of their respective local teams. The *New York Times* and *New York Herald Tribune* carried no news of black baseball, either, though articles appeared on their sports pages reporting on the results of fishing, rugby, lacrosse, cricket, outboard motorboating, clay target shooting, Gaelic football, airplane racing, fencing, archery, snooker, and ping pong, among others. Even the *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, which included a far broader scope of coverage for black baseball, did not come close to reaching the reporting level for the Monroe dailies.²⁴

The racial divide, however, seems just as prominent when viewed from the other side of the prism. Eight of the sample papers—the *Houston Informer*, *Atlanta Daily World*, *New York Age*, *California Eagle*, *Philadelphia Tribune*, *Boston Chronicle*, *Cleveland Gazette*, and *Birmingham Reporter*—gave page space to white baseball. The *Atlanta Daily World*, mentioned the town's white team sporadically, and only in passing. Most of the eight simply made mention of the New York Yankees' victory over the Chicago Cubs in the World Series. Those that did cover local white teams were large-market papers with-

out a viable black baseball team, like the sample weeklies from Philadelphia, Boston, and Cleveland. The *Houston Informer* was the only sampled weekly that gave any concentrated page space to its white hometown team, the Houston Buffaloes. It was also the only paper to include photos of the hometown squad.²⁵ But the principal emphasis of all the black weeklies that covered baseball was *black* baseball, and the image they attempted to focus remained frustratingly blurred throughout.

For the whole of the 1932 season, different black audiences received different messages about the state of their baseball, leaving both contemporary and historical observers with different perceptions of what really occurred. The confusion led, as it often does, to a sort of cultural forgetting. The following year, the Negro National League returned. Robert Cole, owner of the Chicago American Giants, and Thomas T. Wilson, owner of the Nashville Elite Giants, joined with Crawfords owner W. A. Greenlee to create the East-West All Star game, which would become the anchor of the new league.²⁶ Years later, a historiographical crevasse would grow between the black baseball shores of 1931 and 1933, mirroring the gap in the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum's "Golden Years" timeline. But black baseball happened in 1932, and many (if not most) lived it through the media. The black press in 1932 began the baseball season with cautious optimism and ended with disillusioned apathy. Its collective attempt to write the season into some semblance of order only demonstrated regional division and the actual confused state of Negro League baseball. It created a desire for something better—whether called a "golden year" or simply "order"—the following season.

NOTES

Unless otherwise specified all newspaper citations are references from 1932.

1. The Negro Leagues Baseball Museum describes 1933 as the beginning of the "Golden Years" of Negro League Baseball. The previous period on its timeline ends in 1931.

2. There are four surviving issues of the 1932 *Nashville Globe and Independent* available for viewing in the Tennessee State Library and Archives. The scarcity of the sample, however, omitted the paper from consideration here. The *Southern Broadcast* is available for the years 1936 and 1937 at the Shomberg Center at the New York Public Library. As 1936 was Monroe's last year to field a team, however, even the later year does not give an accurate representation of the paper's coverage in 1932. Arkansas and Mississippi also had black weeklies in 1932, but none survive. See Julius Eric Thompson, *The Black Press in Mississippi, 1865–1985* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993), 16–17.

3. While the distinction in table 1 (and later tables) of "National" and "Regional" is relatively easy to determine based on circulation figures and the presence of a national edition, the breakdown of the newspapers into "South," "North," "Border," and "West" is entirely the responsibility of the author—an attempt to quantify regional and cultural value placed on the fluctuations of the season.

4. West Penn Service was a news-gathering and wire service headquartered in Pennsylvania. The most prominent and successful such service was the Associated Negro Press (ANP). John L. Clark's special interest coverage of the Pittsburgh Crawfords was the perhaps the most common West Penn Service purchase by the sample set of papers. A study of the role and scope of West Penn Service, however, has yet to be written, while ANP, founded in 1919 by Claude A. Barnett, has justly received substantial coverage. Seminal texts on the black press such as Roland Wolseley's *The Black Press, USA*, and Maxwell Brooks's *The Negro Press Re-Examined* discuss the role of the ANP. Lawrence D. Hogan's *A Black National News Service* chronicles the significance of the ANP in an exhaustively researched book-length treatment. None, however, mention the West Penn Service. See Roland E. Wolseley, *The Black Press, USA*, 2nd ed. (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1990), 350–52; Maxwell R. Brooks, *The Negro Press Re-Examined: Political Content of Leading Negro Newspapers* (Boston: Christopher Publishing, 1959), 82–84; and Lawrence D. Hogan, *A Black National News Service: The Associated Negro Press and Claude Barnett, 1919–1945* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1984).

5. *Baltimore Afro-American*, January 9, p. 15; *Baltimore Afro-American*, February 13, p. 14; *Philadelphia Tribune*, February 25, p. 11; *New York Age*, February 27, p. 6; *Atlanta Daily World*, February 28, p. 5; *New York Amsterdam News*, March 2, p. 12.

6. *Pittsburgh Courier*, January 16, pp. 2–5; *Pittsburgh Courier*, July 16, pp. 2–5; *Baltimore Afro-American*, February 6, p. 15; *Baltimore Afro-American*, June 25, p. 14; *Baltimore Afro-American*, July 2, p. 15; *New York Age*, June 18, p. 6; *New York Amsterdam News*, July 6, p. 9; *Philadelphia Tribune*, January 28, p. 10; *Philadelphia Tribune*, February 4, p. 11; *Philadelphia Tribune*, June 16, p. 11; *Kansas City Call*, July 8, p. 1B.

7. The Atlanta Black Crackers, Birmingham Black Barons, Chicago American Giants, Indianapolis ABCs, Little Rock Greys, Louisville Black Caps, Memphis Red Sox, Montgomery Black Sox, Monroe (Louisiana) Monarchs, and Nashville Elite Giants were voted franchises in the NSL. *Atlanta Daily World*, March 20, p. 5; *Pittsburgh Courier*, March 19, p. 5; *Birmingham Reporter*, March 12, p. 3.

8. *Baltimore Afro-American*, February 27, p. 15; *Pittsburgh Courier*, March 26, pp. 2–4; *Atlanta Daily World*, March 30, p. 5; Phil Dixon and Patrick J. Hannigan, *The Negro Baseball Leagues: A Photographic History* (Mattituck, NY: Amereon, 1992), 151–52.

9. *Chicago Defender*, April 30, p. 8; *Chicago Defender*, May 7, p. 8; *Chicago Defender*, May 14, p. 9; *Kansas City Call*, May 13, p. 5B; *Pittsburgh Courier*, May 14, pp. 2–5.

10. *Pittsburgh Courier*, May 21, pp. 2–4.

11. *Chicago Defender*, June 4, p. 9; *Chicago Defender*, June 11, p. 9; *Chicago Defender*, June 25, p. 8.

12. The *Amsterdam News*'s endorsement, in fact, was a reprint of a West Penn Service wire story. *New York Amsterdam News*, September 14, p. 9.

13. A few representative examples follow: Robert Peterson's *Only the Ball Was White* sets the standings as Cole's American Giants 34 wins, 7 losses; Monroe Monarchs 33 wins, 7 losses. Dick Clark and Larry Lester also place the total as Chicago 34-7, Monroe 33-7, as does the *2005 ESPN Baseball Encyclopedia*. John Holway's *The Complete Book of Baseball's Negro Leagues* offered only a season total for the Southern League teams, citing the American Giants as 52-31, the Monarchs as 26-22. See Robert Peterson, *Only the Ball Was White: A History of Legendary Black Players and All-Black Professional Teams* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 269; Dick Clark and Larry Lester, eds., *The Negro Leagues Book* (Cleveland: Society for American Baseball Research, 1994), 164; *The 2005 ESPN Baseball Encyclopedia* (New York: Sterling, 2005), 1624; and John Holway, *The Complete Book of Baseball's Negro Leagues: The Other Half of Baseball History* (Fern Park, FL: Hastings, 2001), 288, 292–93.

14. *Louisiana Weekly* (New Orleans), July 9, p. 8; *Atlanta Daily World*, July 8, p. 5.

15. See *Louisville Courier-Journal*, July 24–25; *Arkansas Gazette*, April 23–24; *Arkansas Democrat*, April 22–23; *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, August 13–14; *Chicago Tribune*, July 18–20; *Austin Statesman*, August 18, 20–22; and *Austin American*, 18, 20, 21, 22 August 1932. Coverage of non-mainstream sporting events in the *New York Times* and *New York Herald Tribune* can be found throughout the year's sports coverage.

16. *Monroe (LA) Morning World*, May 4, p. 6; *Monroe (LA) Morning World*, July 2, p. 9; *Monroe (LA) Morning World*, July 3, p. 8; *Monroe (LA) Morning World*, July 6, p. 7.

17. *Baltimore Afro-American*, August 13, pp. 1, 2, 14, 15. While the *Afro-American*'s coverage was particularly informative, the Tolan/Metcalf success at the Olympics (the paper called the 100-meter race "The Greatest Race Ever Run") was reported on the front news page of all of the black weeklies, and is subsequently recounted in various works on the history of the Olympics. The early August equivalent of the *Afro-American*'s coverage could be (but, for the sake of space, will not be) cited here.

18. The *Houston Informer* and *Chicago Defender* reported only on the Nashville-Chicago "Dixie" Series. The *Memphis World*, *Shreveport Sun*, *Louisiana Weekly*, *New York Amsterdam News*, *California Eagle*, and *Baltimore Afro-American* reported only on the Pittsburgh-Monroe World Series. The *New York Age*, *Negro World*, *Boston Chronicle*, and *Cleveland Gazette* reported on neither game, while the *Indianapolis Recorder*, *Louisville Leader*, *Atlanta Daily World*, *Pittsburgh Courier*, *Philadelphia Tribune*, *Kansas City Call*, and *Birmingham Reporter* reported the results of both contests. *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 20, p. 4; *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 27, pp. 4, 5; *Monroe (LA) Morning World*, September 13, p. 6; *New York Amsterdam News*, August

24, p. 9; *New York Amsterdam News*, September 14, p. 9; *California Eagle* (Los Angeles), September 16, p. 11; *Louisville Leader*, September 17, p. 8; *Memphis World*, September 16, p. 5.

19. Three of the *Kansas City Call*'s six August articles describe the American Giants-Monarchs series. *Kansas City Call*, August 5, p. 2B; *Kansas City Call*, August 12, p. 1B.

20. *Chicago Defender*, August 13, p. 8.

21. Jules Tygiel, *Past Time: Baseball as History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 119.

22. Naturally, some stories dragged on for days. Each day, each mention was logged, even if repetitive. Civic and church meetings often had newspaper notices days prior to the events, and each of those mentions were also logged. This data is based on the author's examination of each issue of the 1932 *Monroe (LA) Morning World*. The author has presented the figures for the relationship between Monroe's black baseball success and its black crime rate previously, in an entirely unrelated context, at the 2005 Black Belt Symposium at the University of West Alabama and in *North Louisiana History* 37 (Winter 2006).

23. See note 22.

24. See note 15.

25. Many newspapers carried a wire story describing the experience of Alvin E. White, correspondent for the ANP, the first African American reporter included in the World Series press corps. He was "given a working table at the stadium and invited to join with the other writers in covering the series." Since the focus of the story was on the black presence in the larger white world, however, the publication of that item did not change the paper's place in the table. *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 8, p. 17; *Atlanta Daily World*, April 15, p. 6; *Atlanta Daily World*, April 20, p. 5; *Houston Informer*, March 12, p. 8; *Houston Informer*, April 9, p. 8.

26. Neil Lanctot, *Negro League Baseball: The Rise and Ruin of a Black Institution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 14, 22–23; Larry Lester, *Black Baseball's National Showcase: The East-West All-Star Game, 1933–1953* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 21–22, 24.

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