

BOOK REVIEWS

**OUT OF THE SHADOWS:
African American Baseball
from the Cuban Giants to Jackie Robinson
by
Bill Kirwin, Editor**

Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005
xii + 226 pp. Bibliography
\$17.95 (paper), ISBN 0-8032-7825-X

Reviewed for PAS by Thomas Aiello

Out of the Shadows: African American Baseball from the Cuban Giants to Jackie Robinson is an interdisciplinary compilation of articles from the venerable *NINE: A Journal of Baseball History and Culture*. It argues that black baseball was principally defined by its unique version of the game, and by its struggle through the shadow of white leagues and white prejudice, into the full light of integration. In so doing, it offers a telling evaluation of “a sense of community and power” (xi), but also seems to veer toward false goals. The integration of baseball incalculably influenced the Civil Rights movement and the eventual death of Jim Crow, but it also functionally ended the Negro Leagues. Making the death of an entity its greatest achievement seems to devalue the original importance of that entity. The introduction, written by editor Bill Kirwin, seems to celebrate this trajectory toward death-as-victory, but Kirwin’s brilliant selection of articles argues a different point: Black baseball had significant social value before Jackie Robinson ever arrived in Brooklyn, and baseball’s race problems were not completely solved when he did.

Kirwin’s selections, in large part, evaluate this “sense of community and power,” a sense of community best presented by Rob Ruck in his essay, “Baseball and Community: From Pittsburgh’s Hill to San Pedro’s Canefields.” Ruck describes the reciprocal relationship of baseball and social pride in the poverty-stricken regions of early twentieth century Pittsburgh and San Pedro. The relationship also affected population. In 1920s and 1930s Pittsburgh, for example, the black community (already separated from its white counterpart) divided into Old Pittsburgh and New after the great migration of impoverished blacks from the South. Those groups further divided into neighborhoods based on skilled or unskilled labor, income, and tenure in the city. The divisions magnified community loyalties to the two hometown teams, either the Pittsburgh Crawfords or Homestead Grays. But the black population in its entirety, more than 50,000 in

the 1930s, held the black game sacrosanct.

Scott Roper demonstrates that the growth of baseball and community, however, was not always linear. In “‘Another Chink in Jim Crow?’ Race and Baseball on the Northern Plains, 1900-1935,” Roper describes a sporting fraternity willing to include the native population, but still reticent to grant similar concessions to African Americans. The northern plains never had the population influx that industrial cities received, but racial tensions within sport did not require a manufacturing base for their existence. Jean Hastings Ardell produces yet another fork in the winding road of black baseball’s community development, describing the careers of three women who played in the Negro Leagues, principal among them Mamie “Peanut” Johnson. Sex divisions only piled further upon ethnic divisions, racial divisions, class divisions, and neighborhood divisions, making baseball all the more important as a unifying force.

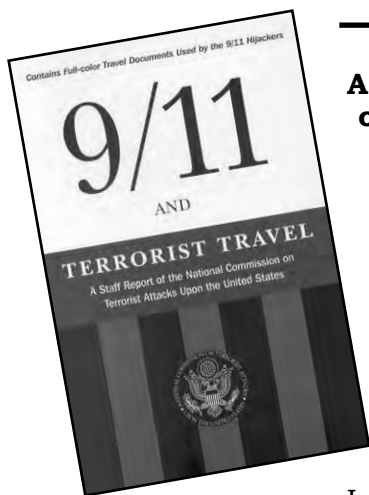
So the inclusiveness of “community” varied by region, gender, and skin color. But William C. Kashatus demonstrates that baseball’s integration would have to develop along similar curved lines before finding similar results in the major leagues. “Dick Allen, the Phillies, and Racism” describes a different reciprocal relationship--a stereotyped man and the dictates of his stereotype. The Philadelphia Phillies were the last National League team to integrate, and the town that supported them demonstrated an aversion to black players. Dick Allen joined the team under the general public assumption that he was a no-good drunken troublemaker--a no-good drunken *black* troublemaker--and he soon began to see himself as such. His disruptive behavior, alcohol abuse, and blatant narcissism sullied an otherwise productive baseball career and have continued to keep him from election to the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Long before Dick Allen’s struggles with himself and his integrated team, organized African-American baseball began with the formation of the Cuban Giants. The team barnstormed in Florida, then up the eastern seaboard, entertaining a largely white audience. They were, notes Jerry Malloy, neither Cuban nor giants (the team called themselves Cubans because the Latino label carried less stigma than did the African American label). Their story — and the story of their opponents and antecedents — comes to the historical community by way of Solomon (Sol.) White. He was a former player who devoted his post-athletic years to chronicling the stories and history of the black game he cherished. Jerry Malloy’s second contribution to the volume argues successfully that White’s recollections, opinions, and observations form the basis for all early Negro Leagues scholarship in an age before their efforts merited much coverage in the press.

Gai Ingham Berlage follows with a well-researched and informative essay on Effa Manley, arguing for the league-wide (and, in fact, baseball-wide) influence of the co-owner of the Newark Eagles. Manly exerted her power in the late 1940s to try to keep the Negro Leagues together following Major League Baseball’s integration. She argued that black baseball had a cultural and athletic value divorced from

any potential inclusion with white players. Manley lost her argument, and though she sold Larry Doby to the Cleveland Indians and took the lead in ensuring black owners' compensation for ballplayers crossing the color line, the Negro Leagues folded under the weight of integration. Though Manley's critique would prove invalid — as baseball's integration has undoubtedly enriched the game for all — her reminder that integration sapped the Negro Leagues of talent and ultimately caused its death remains instructive.

Not only did Manley lose to the larger Major Leagues, she also lost to Sol. White. In this account, as in others, White's *Official Base Ball Guide* plays a far larger role than Manley's *Negro Baseball...Before Integration*. So does White's optimism. In choosing the work of authors from a variety of different disciplines, however (sociology, history, psychology, geography, and management, among others, are represented), Kirwin is able to marshal that optimism in the service of critical evaluation. That evaluation, presented in one collected volume, presents a strong representation of *NINE*'s scholarship and a valuable contribution to black baseball's historiography.



**9/11 AND TERRORIST TRAVEL:
A Staff Report of the National Commission
on Terrorist Acts Upon the United States.
by
The National Commission on Terrorism**

Franklin, TN: Hillsboro Press, 2004
xi + 288 pp. Preface, Photographs, Appendices
\$10.00 (paper), ISBN: 1-57736-341-8

**Reviewed for PAS
by David Timothy Duval**

In the wake of the London Underground bombings of July 7, 2005, including a second round invoked shortly after, a report such as the National Commission on Terrorism's *9/11 and Terrorist Travel* becomes significant once again. Published nearly three years after the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon (as well as upon United Airlines Flight 93 in Pennsylvania), the report itself is rife with incredible details on the "operation" by over two dozen individuals who made the world sit up and take notice of the potential for terrorist activities. Rather than outline, in detail, the contents of the book itself, in this brief review I outline several key issues and policy directives that this report has spurred, and even regale a personal anecdote.

First, the issue of cross-border travel (obviously Canada and