



Black Stars Who Made Baseball Whole: The Jackie Robinson Generation in the Major Leagues

Rick Swaine

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For major league baseball, the decade following Jackie Robinson's 1947 debut was one of slow yet persistent change. Four other black players made their first, brief big-league appearances that year, followed by only two in 1948 and four in 1949. But by the end of 1959, 122 black ballplayers had made it to the big leagues. Like Robinson, their lives were made difficult off the field, and on it they dodged beanballs and spikes. This book brings attention to the accomplishments of this transitional generation of African American players--made up of men like Luscious Luke Easter, Sam "The Jet" Jethroe, and Sad Sam Jones--many of whom spent years in the minors, the Negro leagues, or both before getting their shot. Chapters on each season from 1947 to 1959 incorporate biographical and career profiles for 25 players who stood out during baseball's integration. A final chapter covers the outstanding minor league players who for various reasons never got a real chance to play major league ball. Appendices include a roster of black major leaguers from 1947 through 1959, a list of black-player firsts and statistics on the year-by-year population of black players in the majors.

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