

Jackie Robinson

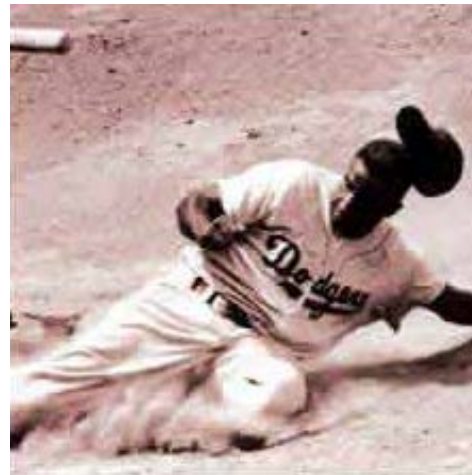
October 1991 Calendar

Jackie Robinson made history by breaking the color barrier in Major League Baseball. Signed as a Brooklyn Dodger in 1947, Robinson suffered constant abuse, racial slurs, even physical attack. But he persevered, earning Most Valuable Player honors in 1949 and leading the Dodgers to six pennants and a World Series.

Jack Roosevelt Robinson was born in Cairo, Georgia, on January 31, 1919, the youngest of five children. He grew up in Pasadena, California, first exhibiting his athletic and leadership skills as he lettered in football, baseball, basketball and track at UCLA. But his influence has gone far beyond the sports arena. Today, many credit Jackie Robinson as the man who made equal opportunity a reality.

After three years in the Army, Robinson played with the Kansas City Monarchs of the American Negro League in 1945. Later that year, in a historic move that ended decades of discrimination against blacks in baseball, he signed a contract with the Brooklyn Dodgers. After a successful 1946 season with its farm club, the Montreal Royals, he was moved up to the Dodgers.

Robinson was named 1947 Rookie of the Year, and in 1949 received the National League's Most Valuable Player Award. In



1957, he retired from baseball after helping the Dodgers win six pennants and one World Series. He was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1962.

Robinson made use of his fame to become an outspoken leader on civil and human rights, a role he undertook throughout his years as corporate executive, civil servant and political figure. In 1957 he became vice president of Chock Full O' Nuts, a coffee and restaurant chain. He co-founded Freedom National Bank of Harlem and served as chairman of the board from 1964 to 1972. In 1970, he organized the Jackie Robinson Construction Corporation. Through his ventures, Robinson sought to improve living conditions for black Americans.

After his retirement from baseball, Robinson

traveled extensively to raise funds for the NAACP and the Anti-Defamation League and to advocate for civil rights. He had close relationships with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other prominent leaders. In 1964 he worked on the presidential campaign for Gov. Nelson Rockefeller. In 1968 he campaigned on behalf of Vice President Hubert Humphrey.

Jackie Robinson worked tirelessly over the years with a variety of church groups and community organizations. He served on the board of managers of the Harlem YMCA, where a building now bears his name. A major supporter of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, he served as national chairman of its Brotherhood Week in 1968.

In 1973, the year after he died, his extraordinary commitment to youth was recognized when his widow, Rachel Robinson, founded the Jackie Robinson Foundation.

Angeles — a popular monthly public affairs forum that addresses critical issues impacting urban communities. He is currently president and chairman of the board of 100 Black Men of Los Angeles, Inc.