

The Courier

A Publication of SABR's Negro Leagues Committee

"We are the Ship, All Else the Sea"

Editor, Larry Lester

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In the News

2009 Jerry Malloy Negro League Conference

The conference is named after one of the pre-eminent historians of early day baseball, the late Jerry Malloy. He edited a revised edition of "*Sol White's History of Colored Baseball*," written in 1903, which serves as the primary source for information on black sport teams and players in the late 19th century.

America's biggest and best black baseball conference made a whistle stop in Pittsburgh on July 16-18, at the Senator John Heinz History Center and the Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum. The sports museum features a stunning collection of one-of-a-kind sports artifacts and more than 70 interactive exhibits while celebrating the homeland victories of the Super Bowl and Stanley Cup champions.

With a proclamation from Mayor Luke Ravenstahl proclaiming the weekend as "**Jerry Malloy Negro League Conference Days**" we kicked off the conference with an educational session on Thursday. The all-day workshop for teachers was led by Dr. Leslie Heaphy and Ph. D. candidate Stephanie Liscio. Each participant received a notebook filled with bibliographies of Negro League adult and youth books, project ideas, games, and other recommended teaching aids for all grade levels. The materials can be used to enrich students understanding of black baseball and its fundamental role in the social and civil rights history of America.

Thursday's evening, Craig Britcher, a member of the SABR's Forbes Field chapter, provided a personal tour of the state-of-the-art **Western PA Sports Museum**, reliving the rich championship history of the Pittsburgh Crawfords and the Homestead Grays.

On the second day, before a record crowd, Bryan Steverson opened the conference with uplifting, contested debate presentation entitled "**The Champions: Baseball's Best Team.**" The momentum was continued with Geri Strecker's excellent presentation on **Greenlee**

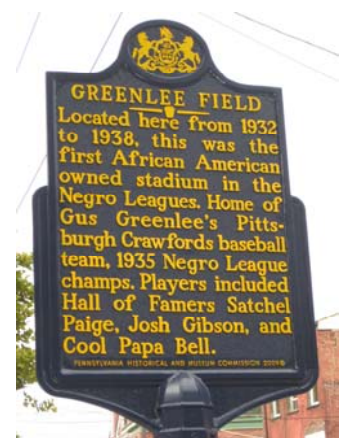
Field. This same presentation was a last minute substitution at the SABR national in Washington, DC, and won second place. Before lunch, we enjoyed a down home speech about **Satchel Paige** from Dr. Donald Spivey and an enlightening overview of the **Teenie "One Shot" Harris** photographic collection from Kerin Schellenbarger from the Carnegie Museum. So far, more than 66,000 negatives from Harris' collection have been catalogued.

Dr. Brian Carroll from Berry College talked about the shift of power in the Negro Leagues from Chicago to Pittsburgh; followed by one of the conference's most popular event, the Player Panel. This year's panel featured **Bill "Ready" Cash, James Cobbin, Pedro Sierra, Jim Robinson** and **Jumpin' Johnny Wilson.**

En route to PNC Park to see the Pirates play the San Francisco Giants, we took two tour buses to the **Hill District** to dedicate a Pennsylvania State Historical Marker for Greenlee Field at the intersection of Bedford Avenue and Junilla Street. The well attended event celebrated the legacy of **Gus Greenlee** and his Pittsburgh Crawfords.

Later leaving the Hill District and arriving at **PNC Park**, the Malloy attendees were treated with a fine performance from last year's strikeout king and Cy Young winner Tim Lincecum. He struck out 10 Pirates in seven innings, but gave up a solo home run to Garret Jones in the first inning.

The Giants tied the game in the 7th inning, 1-1 on an unearned run. The rain-delayed game carried onto the 14th inning, when Garret Jones muscled up for a walk off home run, this time off of Giants pitcher Bob Howry for a Pirate win.



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Saturday brought in award winning author Larry Tye with a poignant discussion about his new book on **Satchel Paige**. He was followed by Dr. Dawn Norwood with her perspective on women in black baseball.

Up to bat next was conference regular Todd Peterson talking about the “the best left handed pitcher in the world,” **George Wilson**. Later Dr. Rick Kenney from Florida presented on **Fleetwood Walker’s** seldom seen little brother **Welday**. He was followed by Dr. Richard Puerzer’s talk on a Pittsburgh star and an unsung hero in the integration of major league baseball, **Gene Baker**. Soon after, the author of “*The Early Image of Black Baseball*,” Dr. James Brunson III provided a reconstruction of images from 19th century baseball using a variety of mediums providing his audience with a feel and sense of the postbellum period.



After a short break, we hosted a second player panel with the return of the fabulous five: **Cash, Cobbin, Sierra, Robinson** and **Wilson**, along with an autograph session.

Next up was the quartet of, Dr. Laurence Glasco and his students from the University of Pittsburgh with excellent tag team presentation on **Greenlee Field**. We closed out conference presentations with Dr. Michael Haupert from the University of Wisconsin with an analytical view of the **East-West All Star Classic**, using various statistical models.

Some presentations are candidates for the Black Ball Journal published by McFarland & Company. Anyone can submit an abstract of their article to:

lheaphy@kent.edu. The deadline will be announcement in the next edition of *The Courier*.

Immediately following Haupert’s presentation was the always popular Trivia contest. After two rounds of intense battle of wit and wisdom, **Ted Knorr**, from Harrisburg, PA, emerged as winner of several prizes. While **Bob Bailey** and **Fred “Fredrico” Brillhart** took home the silver and bronze.

We closed out the conference, partnering with the Josh Gibson Foundation, to host a banquet with silent and live auctions. Hall of Fame outfielder, and now minister, **Rev. Lou Brock** was the key note speaker. Several awards are given out, including the **Robert Peterson Recognition** and the **Tweed Webb Lifetime Achievement Awards**.

Joseph Mitchell from Wilmington, Delaware, won the highly coveted **Fay Vincent Most Valuable Partner Award**. Previous Vincent MVP winners have been **Mike Garvey** from Chicago, Illinois, and **Michael Hartnagle** from Wilmington, DE.



All in all, it was another record breaking, successful conference for the Jerry Malloy Leadership Team.

Currently, we have various levels of interest from Baltimore, Birmingham, Memphis, Homestead, Indianapolis, Newark and the University of Wisconsin in La Crosse to host the conference. With interest of black baseball history at an all-time high, we hope to you can join us next year at our next whistle stop. Choo-choo!

