TIGERS PREPARING FOR SEASON OPENER

Beating The Gun

BY AL MOSES

NEW YORK (ANP) — BURT SHOTTON, the "gray eagle" of major baseball often referred to as its most understanding pilot, came up the other day with a yarn that got me to wondering greatly. It was wrapped up by a reporter something like this:

"It's amazing how really little Jackie Robinson knowns about the finer points of base stealing."

REMEMBER "SHOELESS" JACKSON (?)

Now, dont get me wrong baseball fans. I think Burt Shotton knows precisely what he's talking about and knowing Jackie Robinson as I think I do the brownskinned infielder would be first in supporting the Dodger manager's claim. But often we sacrifice a "natural genius" by trying (at the age of nearly 30) to teach "an old dog brand-new-tricks. Back in my high school days (1917-19) the Chicago White (Black Sox) Sox had and outfielder known as "Shoeless" Joe Jackson. In all the one hundred odd years baseball has been in existence I cannot think of a greater natural performer. Robinson, in the matter of natures gift that he himself handsomely developed, compares favorably in a discussion based on great base-stealing ability. So maybe as yet Robinson is not a Bob Bescher, Ty Cobb, Hans Wagner or Max Carey (and others of recent date) on the path. Do we know of another modern player who pack-rabbits like Robby does, worrying the pitchers almost to utter distraction? These dubious experiments might well be in good taste but I would say to Burt Shotten and Rickey, Sr. and Jr., let Robinson stay-on-his-own in the matter of sliding and [illegible] any other disturbing [illegible] perfected.

FAIR OF TEMPERS

CHRIS VAN CUYK, doubtless of Dutch or Germanic extraction, shared the baseball training camp headlines the other day with our subject, Jackie Robinson.

Happily the innocent sailed out into calm waters leaving the sort of ending real-Americans and fair-minded people the world over delight in. Van Cuyk, attached to Ft. Worth, got into a noisy debate with Robinson that was further intensified when the infielder alleged the pitcher tried to "dust him off" at the plate on two occasions during the afternoon workout. The night following the explosions Robinson called on Van Cuyk and mutual regrets were voiced. The players shook hands decided the rhubarb or rumble was just so much nonsense. The twirler is a giant of a youth standing 6 feet 5 inches and weighing 220 pounds.

ONE-POCKET SPECIALIST

It all depends upon which city or village you read this article in as to whether you've heard of Paul "Detroit Slim" Graham, for years a bonafide "one-pocket" pool player.

Hailing originally out of Winston-Salem, N. C., Graham is best known to New Yorkers who just now are loudly calling for a national straight pool championship tourney from which a colored player would emerge to enter the [illegible] world's pocket billiard round robin.

PRETTY DISGRACEFUL

Along with bowling and the select golf tournaments, pool sponsors have religiously barred the Negro aspirant since the days of James Evans, the master of the spacious 5 x 10 table. You and I know this is pretty senseless and rotten business for sports, a field that steadily boasts how democratic and open it is to people of all beliefs and colors. It may open to all but those of African descent and that won't even change unless we "keep punching" at it like yours truly is attempting to do here.

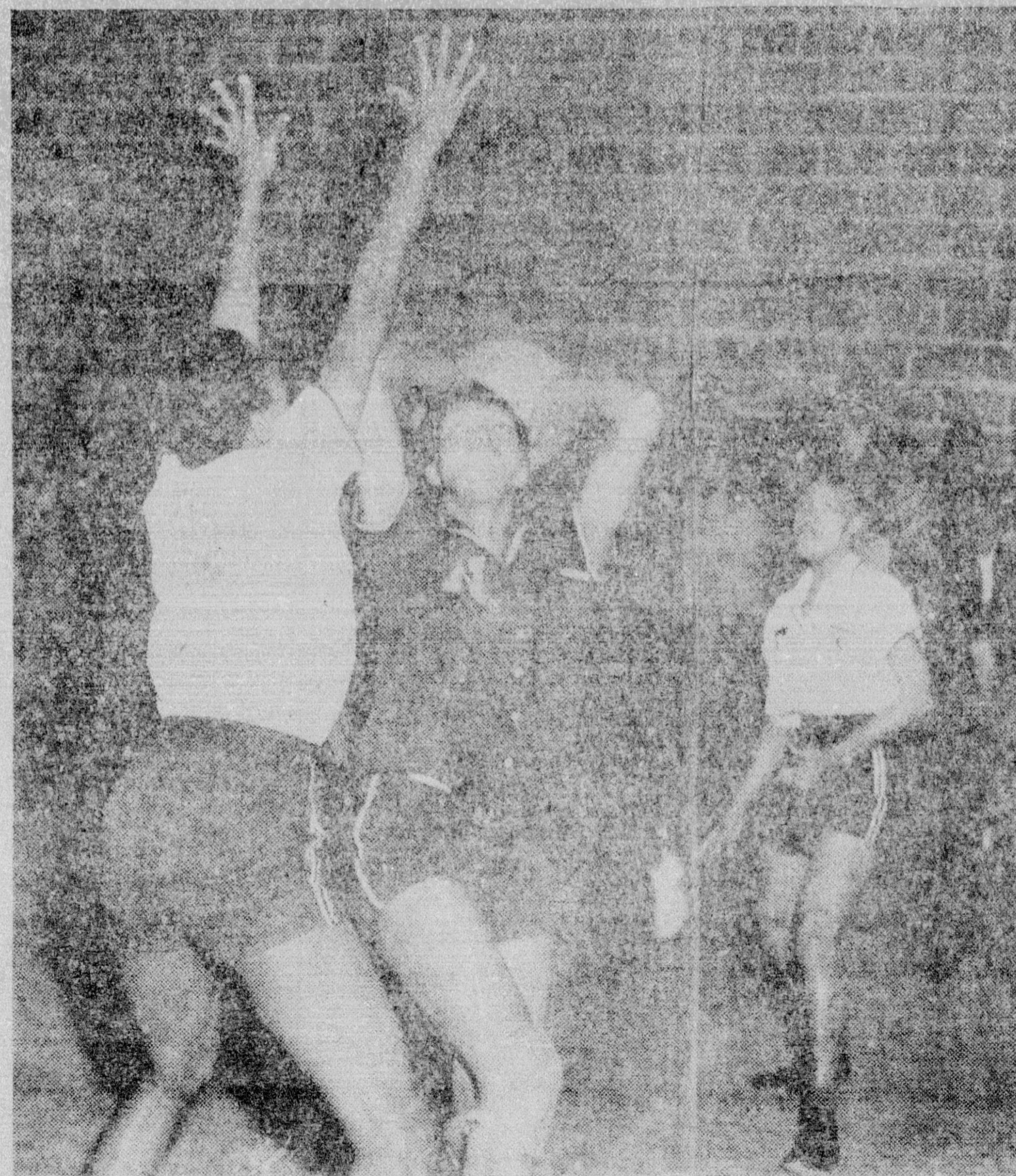
SPECTACULAR EXHIBITIONIST

Tonight we are sending reminders to sport editors in most of the principal cities to clamor loudly and persistently for Paul Graham [illegible] colored pool players [illegible] that promises [illegible] champion winner in the finals, the [illegible] chance Jackie Robinson received in baseball.

This should lead to greater interest in the game that has been missing since 1925 or thereabouts. Graham would naturally enter such a tournament since I account him the [illegible] best player (colored) in the land. As a "one pocket" player however, Graham rates with most of the best white players I've seen since 1927 right down to the present time, on an even-up basis.

COATES AND WASHINGTON FATS DEFEATED

The other night sitting in Harlem's popular Art and Musical club on West 132nd Street, we interviewed Mr. Graham with special emphasis being stressed on leading white one-pocket players he has faced in 30 years of playing. We found out that he has played and defeated "Washington Fats" a terror at one-pocket playing for [illegible] Lots of $100 a game and more. The same thing goes for Marcel Camp, a Detroit player and virtually popularized one-pocket; and the great Coates himself. White stars of years back and today still speak of these mentioned players as leaders in this particular branch of pool. Graham also has faced men like Arthur Woods, George Kelly, Joe Procita, Johnny Irish, James Evans, etc.



ACTION AT FALL LINE TOURNEY — A lot of spirited action during the girls finals of the annual Fall Line scholastic basketball tournament is shown as members of the Franklin County Training School team try vainly to halt a hot for the basket by Essie Mae Battle, Nash County Captain and forward. The Nash County lassies won the tournament title by defeating the Franklin team 17-13.

TENNIS MEET TO BE HELD AT A.-M.

Florida A. and M. Invitational Tennis Tournament will be staged March 25-26 on the college tennis court according to an announcement by Walter M. Austin, Coach of the Florida A. and M. College tennis team. Forty-five college tennis teams have been invited to participate.

The entry blank has already been received from the national champion, George Stewart.

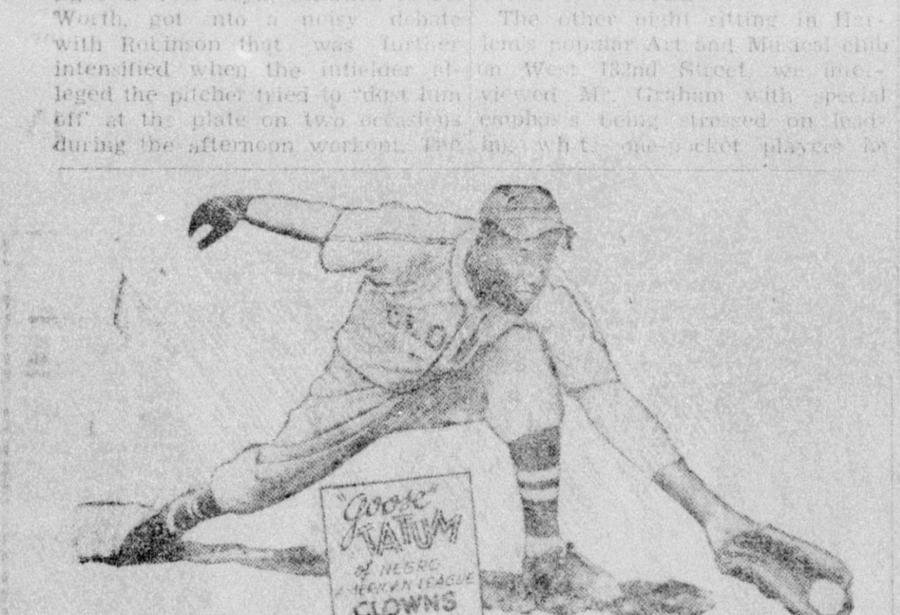
Negro Major League Cooperation Is Urged

BY ALVIN E. WHITE

NEW YORK (ANP) — [illegible] Dr. B. B. Jackson of Nashville [illegible] Negro baseball league and has just come up with an idea [illegible] Negro baseball to adopt the best practices of organized baseball. This, he wrote in a [illegible]

Continued on page seven

CONFUSIN' AND AMUSIN' — That's the status of the nationally famed Negro American League Indianapolis Clowns, shown above who make their initial appearance of the 1949 season at Chavis Park in a Raleigh, N. C. game on Saturday night, April 9, when the cross bats with the popular Raleigh Tigers at 8 P. M. The original Clown diamondeers and zanies of the baseball world have displayed exhibitions of both comedy and major league calibre baseball that has endeared them to the hearts of fans throughout the nation. Their natural diamond ability and yet they convulse their audience with roars of laughter and amusement, has paid off in big dividends, and fans locally are going to witness many amazement performances when they see the Clowns in action at Raleigh, N. C.



GOLDEN GOOSE — Reece "Goose" Tatum, highest salaried and topranking first-sacker in the Negro American League, with an 84-inch arm spread, longest of any athlete in the world, is starting on what he hopes will be his most sensational season with the famed Indianapolis Clowns of the Negro American League. "Goose" and the Clowns appear against the Raleigh Tigers in an 8 P. M. game at Chavis Park April 9th. Aware that the eyes of baseball scouts from the Majors will be on him this season, Tatum is out to show them that he deserves and has the ability to star in organized "big-time" ranks. The popular first baseman is one of the topflight athletes in the world, featured with the invincible Harlem Globetrotters in basketball, and in baseball with the Clowns, where he ranks second only to the fabulous Satchel Paige of the Cleveland Indians as a baseball attraction in Colored ranks.

RALEIGH TIGERS BEGIN TRAINING

The Raleigh Tigers, 1948 Negro American Association Champions, with a new pilot and two dozen candidates, will begin spring training here at Chavis Park Tuesday morning.

"Big Train" Cozart who moved up from a 1948 role of pinch-hitter and coach will seek to build the Tigers from a collection of veterans and recruits. Only James "Lefty" Jones, out fielder and John "Rock" Faison, southpaw pitcher, can be classed as hold outs.

The management of the Tigers is known to be seeking a trade for Faison. During the winter months they secured three other southpaws: Amos English of Mobile, Ala.; Roy Gasden, former Baltimore Panthers hurler and "Big Boy" Strong, highly regarded southpaw whom the Tigers signed from Cheraw, S. C. after beating a host of other clubs to his services.

Facing "Big Train" and the Tigers is one of the most ambitious spring exhibition slates ever lined up by a North Carolina team.

The spring exhibition schedule which will be completed this week already lists dates with Stannen A. C. in an interracial tilt to open the slate.

Others carded are: Indianapolis Clowns on April 9; Asheville-Charlotte Blues on April 7, Birmingham Black Barons on April 11th; New Orleans Creoles on April 16th and 17, Baltimore Elite Giants on April 27, 28 and 29, Philadelphia Stars, New York Cubans and Cleveland Buckeyes dates will be decided soon.

SIAC CAGE TITLE WON BY FLA. A-M

Tallahassee, Fla. — The Florida A. and M. College Rattlers, coached by Ulysses Jones, won the SIAC Conference championship with a record of 17 wins and 2 losses. Morris Brown was 2nd with 14 wins and 2 losses. Tuskegee was third with 14 wins and 5 losses.

At the Annual SIAC Tournament last weekend, the favorite Rattlers were upset by Tuskegee Tigers 63-54. Morris Brown copped the tournament honors by defeating Morehouse College 62-60 after overcoming a 22 point lead with 17 minutes to play.

The Rattlers held two close wins over Tuskegee during the regular season and a 10 point victory in their only game in Atlanta against Morris Brown.

Charles (Juke) Bostic, sensational one hand push shot artist of Tampa, and Herman Pittman of Tampa made the all tournament team. Bostic also set a new Famee's record by scoring 423 points during the season and copped first place scoring honors at the tournament with 53 points.

Captain James (Big Jim) Williams of Tampa closed out his brilliant athletic college career by standing second with 216 points for the season. Followed by Robert (Wheel) Jefferson of Dunbelon with 212 points and Earnest Fears, lanky rebound specialist of Tallahassee with 209 points, and Earl (Bubble) Robinson, freshman sensation of Tampa, with 193. The Rattlers closed the season with 24 wins and 5 losses.

The Rattlers are expected to play an exhibition game against some outstanding college team during the Florida High School Tournament this weekend according to a statement by Coach Jones.

PREDICT WAY OF THE DIAMONDS — What will soon be happening on the major league diamonds was discussed by baseball's best liked second baseman, Jackie Robinson of the Brooklyn Dodgers, and CBS Sports director, Red Barber, on "Red Barber's Club House" program before Jackie left for the Dodgers training camp at Vero Beach, Fla. Jackie predicted big diamond doings — naturally for the Dodgers. (ANP)

At The Ringside

WILLIAMS-GAVILAN FIGHT CALLED OFF

The anticipated rubber match between lightweight champion Ike Williams and Kid Gavilan, Cuban welterweight challenger, scheduled for March [illegible] was cancelled two days before ring time last week when Williams suffered a pulled shoulder muscle in training.

Williams' doctor advised him not to go through with the bout. In two previous bouts Williams and Gavilan have one split decision each. In April Williams is signed to defend his title against Enrique Bolanos in Los Angeles.

Down in Houston, Tex., retired heavyweight king Joe Louis booked out a TKO over Elmer (Violent) Ray in an exhibition bout. Only a couple of years ago Ray was listed as one of Louis' leading challengers.

The largest crowd, 7,050, ever to see a fight in Texas paid $21,000 to see Louis flog his opponent at will with 14 ounce gloves. Louis as a promoter was lauded last week by ex-heavy king Jack Dempsey.

Dempsey told sports writers in Chicago:

"Louis' decision to renounce his heavyweight title is a good thing for the game. His decision to become a promoter is an excellent idea. He and his associates (Art Wirtz and James Norris, Jr.) will do all right, I'm sure.

"However, Joe's in a tough business now. If he knew what he's going into he might have hesitated. But I don't want to discourage him. He might be the shot in the arm the game needs. At least I hope so."

ROBINSON TO DEFEND TITLE

Unless something happens Ray (Sugar) Robinson will defend his welterweight title for the first time in almost a year Friday night, March 25, against Bobby Lee at the Chicago Stadium. Lee recently almost upset Freddie Dawson in a 10-round bout at the Stadium.

Abe J. Greene, NBA commissioner, has warned Robinson to fight or vacate his title. Recently Ray has been taking on middleweights or not fighting at all.

In Louisville two savage lightweight challengers fought to a bruising 10-round draw. Jimmy Robinson matched Johnny (Honey-boy) Williams, sixth ranking 135 pounder, blow for blow, and battled him to a draw.

They fought at the city's Police Fund Benefit show before Louisville's largest fight crowd since 1940.

Rufus [illegible], newly appointed member of the Illinois Athletic Commission, resigned his post as director of the department of civil rights of the Mayor's commission on Human Relations in Chicago. He said his new duties with the boxing body would take all his time.

SPEED MERCHANT — Henry "Speed" Merchant is all that the name implies, and more, to the Negro American League Indianapolis Clowns baseball club, who oppose the Raleigh Tigers, NAA Champs, at Chavis Park on Saturday night, April 9th at 8:00. Merchant is the fastest man in the League, can run 100 yards in 9.7, and has several times run against and defeated Jesse Owens, crack Olympic champ sprinter and track star. An outfielder, doubling at first base, "Speed" Merchant can also take on the mound and does.

NAMED TOP FALL LINE CAGERS — Shown above are players who were selected as All Tournament team members following the annual Fall Line Conference Tournament which was held at the Louisburg Armory Friday and Saturday of last week.

Included in the group are left to right, front row, Jean McLendon, Mary Potter, guard; Ernestine Coppage, Nash County Training School, guard; Essie Mae Battle, NCTS, forward; Joseph Dempsey, NCTS, forward; Jeannette Williams, Perry, forward; Ruth Williamson, Franklin County Training School, forward; back row: James Mann, NCTS, center; Rudolph Williams, NCTS, guard; Donald Millard, Mary Potter, forward; James Plummer, Hawkins, forward, and James Williams, Hawkins, center.

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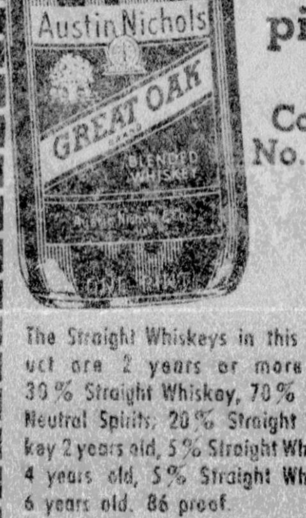

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