

Behind The Play In Sports

BY DON DE LEIGHUR

DEHART HUBBARD AS COMMISSIONER OF BASEBALL WOULD BE "NATURAL"

NEW YORK — Let us get back to the Commissioner idea in Negro Baseball. With the hubbub created by the starting of the new United States League, sponsored by Greenlee and company of Pittsburgh, and the new Southern Negro League established by Dr. R. B. Jackson and associates, down in Dixie, the program to choose a Commissioner for Negro Baseball has slumped a bit and the question has been put in the background by the operators who are or have been busy grinding themselves for what they expect to be a tumultuous summer, what with battle-forming with the Greenlee crowd and the annual fuss over players and bookings.

I still contend that DeHart Hubbard, the former broadjumping champion from the University of Michigan is the best man for the spot, notwithstanding the names of several of my close friends and others who have been suggested by various sources. Several important facts might make Hubbard's candidacy stand out more. Along with Dr. B. H. Martin of Memphis, DeHart Hubbard did most of the work of organizing the Negro American League and he wrote the excellent constitution for the Negro American League, which is being more or less adhered to by the western circuit today.

Hubbard thinks that the office of the Commissioner should take the lead in formulating a long range program for the progress of Negro Baseball. For instance, the former broadjumping champion believes a Commissioner should work for a favorable working agreement with organized baseball. Such agreements, he told me, might eventually result in Negro Baseball becoming an integral part of organized baseball. Such an agreement would also strengthen the control of players and teams.

Hubbard, who has studied the question for a number of years and in that study has gone far in advance of most of the candidates under consideration, thinks the Commissioner should formulate and execute a program designed to inspire the Negro to consider baseball as a profession. This would require the organization of minor leagues along the farm system set-up and would also involve a program, such as the National Leagues now operate in cooperation with the American Legion Negro Colleges, Hubbard says, should be inspired to again promote baseball as a major sport. Some financial assistance, he thinks, could be given by the League teams in order to back up this program.

The Commissioner of Negro Baseball, envisioned by DeHart Hubbard would work for the elimination of what he terms the booking agent evil by requiring that all contracts for parks and promotional connections in various cities should be formulated and operated in the name of the leagues, not of promoters. This should interest Fife Manley of Newark and Alex Pomoy of New York.

Above all, Hubbard says, "I believe that the position of Commissioner should be a full-time job. Successful performance of the job will require undivided attention. I hope that the leagues will take this factor into consideration. I hope they also realize that this job, if properly administered, can save in actual cash much more than it operates cost."

There is no doubt that Negro baseball will really need a Commissioner to handle the affairs of the club owners if only for the 1945 season. Every kind of problem in the books seems to be confronting the hurried magnates long before the season actually begins. Among such problems is "What are the Majors going to do because the Majors set the pattern for Negro

Baseball?" If they do not operate as in the past, Negro Baseball must follow suit. The major everything including dates, parks, equipment, transportation, etc.

The new Leagues that have been started this winter should be supervised by recognized authority without a lot of inter-league warfare, breaking out between club owners over players, parks, and bookings.

A clean-cut, honest, and capable young man who can think and take action is the type of man needed for Commissioner as I see it. To go out and bring in some person whom everybody likes because they know him for twenty-five or thirty years or because he used to do this or do that will not solve the problem and will not bring the amount of respect that Negro Baseball sorely needs. Neither will it suffice Negro Baseball to bring in some big prominent name person just because he has a name, to take over the affairs of what has advanced to be a million dollar a year enterprise. There must be some business judgment, administrative ability, as well as initiative present in the man chosen. He must be able to crack the whip and make the boys walk the line as did Judge Kennesaw Mountain Landis in the national league. Respect is the No. 1 consideration.

Hubbard, with his years of experience in physical education arouse Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati, plus his years on the playing field, should fill all these requirements.



HAMMERING HENRY TAKES ONE—Henry Armstrong (right), holder of three boxing titles in '38 and '39, is touring the China-Burma-India war theater with USO-Camp Shows, member agency of the National War Fund. This photo was made in Calcutta, where Henry appeared at the all-Allied open amateur tournament for American, British and Indian Army boxers. (Official U. S. Signal Corps Photo—courtesy P. M.)

WHY SWIM...

BY Carroll L. Bryant, Director Water Safety Service American Red Cross

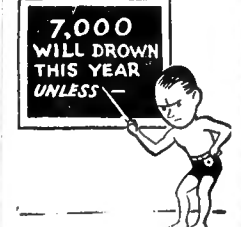
Only fifty per cent of the people in the United States can swim at all; yet this is the season when young and old flock to the beaches and pools regardless of their knowledge of water technique. Of the 50 per cent who swim, only 10 per cent swim well. The safety of these untrained bathers is left to the life-guard — if one is present. Is it any wonder that approximately 7,000 persons drown every year?

Most drownings occur May, June, July and August, for it is during these months that 80 million Americans go "swimming." Perhaps 7,000 drownings mean a small percentage of the 80 million who attempt to swim, but don't forget that a much greater number suffer near-drowning experiences, with shock and illness — not to mention the inhibition that such experiences play on future enjoyment of the water. The number of persons who will have near-drowning experiences this year can be estimated on the basis of approximately fifty for every one who drowns.

Like most accidents, those in the water are generally preventable. They are the result of ignorance of the ways of the water and how to handle one's self on it and in it. Fortunately, the knowledge and skills essential to water ability can be easily and pleasantly acquired.

The American Red Cross Life Saving Service was organized a little over a quarter of a century ago. In that period the drowning rate has been cut 90 per cent.

The Red Cross offers courses in swimming and life saving for all age groups. See your local chapter about enrolling.



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"Big Bill" Bell New Football Mentor At A. and T. College

GREENSBORO — Lt. William "Big Bill" Bell, former all-American tackle at Ohio State University and coach of the unbeaten Tuskegee, Ala., Army Air Field eleven last fall, has been named head coach and director of physical education at A. and T. College. It has been announced by President F. D. Bluford.

He will assume his new duties in July after discharge from the armed forces and he succeeds Brentan King as football coach of the zephyrs.

Bell was regular at Ohio State for three seasons, graduating after the 1931 football campaign and later getting his M. A. degree at Ohio State. He coached the strong Florida A. and M. College team before joining the army in 1933. At Tuskegee last fall he organized a football team and completed a perfect season, clinched by a victory over Morgan State College in the collegiate football classic at Washington, D. C. It was Morgan's only loss.

His Florida teams won unofficial national championships in three of his seven years there, at one time having a string of 20 victories in 21 games. Prior to that, Bell led Clinch College teams in South Carolina to two South Atlantic conference championships.



Lt. WM. "BIG BILL" BELL

Lt. Bell will coach all varsity sports at A. and T. in addition to his duties as head of physical education. At Tuskegee AAF he served as assistant physical training officer.

Commission Chairman Picks No Flaws In Fight

NEW YORK (CNS) — Despite Eagan said, while at the same time the fact that the Williams lost to denying the numerous rumors that Willie Joyce in a split decision, by the two might not have given their apparent quite good to Commission best efforts. "I agree with the decision Chairman Eddie Eagan. "Nobody in fact I scored 6 rounds to could find any fault with the fight," 3 for Joyce."

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