

Campanella Names Josh Gibson Greatest Catcher; Article In Sport Magazine Tells of Famous Player

Josh Gibson was the greatest catcher—and ballplayer—I ever saw. And if that old saying "it takes one to know one" holds any water, the above statement is fact. Because it's made by none other than one of the best catchers in the business today, Roy Campanella, in the current issue of Sport magazine.

Roy met Josh (who died in 1947) in 1937 when he broke in with the Baltimore Elite Giants. By that time Josh was already a legendary figure in the Negro leagues. Lots of stories have come down to us about Josh's amazing hitting prowess and some of them are a trifle Bunyanesque. But in there are any doubts that Josh was just about the greatest batter that ever ran the bases, Roy dispenses them in his article for Sport.

"Josh hit home runs in every major-league park he ever played in," says Roy, "and in almost all of them he hit balls up into places other hitters never even knew were there. He was the 'righthanded Babe Ruth' over a period of 15 years, without ever having a bad season. In 1931, when he was 19 years old, Josh hit 70 home runs. Ten years later, playing for the Homestead Grays, he hit more home runs in one season in huge Griffith Stadium in Washington than the whole American League put together. Walter Johnson said that Josh was worth \$200,000 to any big-league ball club. In today's market that would be more than tripled.

"That was no hopped-up ball Josh was hitting, either. We used a long-wearing baseball in the Negro leagues and, while I'm not saying it was a dead ball, it certainly didn't have anywhere near the life the ball has we're using in the majors today."

But despite Josh's uncanny ability with a bat, it is as a catcher that Roy admired him most. The six-foot-two, 230-pound Josh moved with "effortless grace."

"There never was a better receiver," says Roy. "His arm was strong and always accurate, something which is important for a catcher anywhere but even more important in the Negro leagues where we ran the bases much more freely.

Against Josh, though, hope-

ful base-healers stopped to think before taking off." In his Sport feature, Roy expresses his gratitude to Josh who took the time to improve Roy's speed and accuracy.

And it was Josh who probably saved Roy from many an injury when he advised, "Don't ever block that plate without the ball in your hand unless you're looking to get yourself killed. The rule book says the runner's got the right of way and I don't know anybody in this league who's going to let

you take it away from him. Besides, you'll be doing it for nothing. The umpire's going to call him safe even if you do block him off."

As far as Roy is concerned, Josh Gibson's ability can be summed up in one sentence—"Josh Gibson had it, that's all!" "He had more of it," says Roy, "than anyone I've seen before or since. I haven't done too badly up here myself, and I never heard anyone say that Campanella was the player Gibson was."

PRESENT FOOTBALL SEASON PRODUCING VERSATILE BACKS

The 1954 football season in the CIAA is producing an unusually versatile crew of sterling backfield performers.

Quarterbacks particularly are sparkling. A and T's great senior Lonnie Hall; Maryland State College's George Bell; Union's Leroy Vaughn, whose name doesn't appear on the Panthers' 1953 roster; North Carolina College's sophomore sensation Albert "Money" Montgomery, triple threat-ace who was ninth ranking punter among small colleges last season; Fayetteville's Jim Paige; St. Augustine College's Ron Washington and A. C. Elridge; and Bluefield's Tom Harris—these are some of the lads who have figured prominently in their teams' play thus far in the youthful season.

The halfbacks are showing promise of reaching dazzling heights. North Carolina College's fireballing little leftback, Amos Thornton, one of the Eagles' co-captains who was voted the CIAA's outstanding player in 1953, opened the new season with a sizzling 59 yard return of a kickoff in the first play of the NCC-St. Augustine's College game on Sept. 26. Afterwards, however, the fleet Thornton was used principally as a decoy as Herman Riddick unleashed a long array of backs including Ralph Curry, 160 lb. Hickory, (NC) frosh, under-study to Thornton; Jerome Evans, righthalfback and co-captain, Oscar Turner, and numerous others.

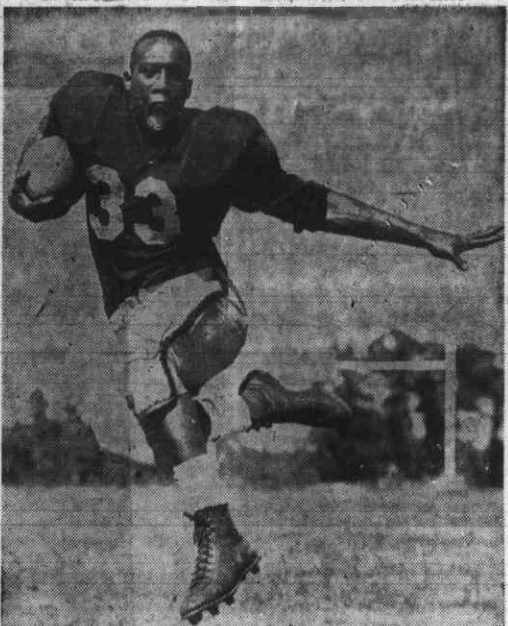
In addition to the galaxy of

backfield performers with 1953's defending championship Eagles, other CIAA backs are thrilling grid fans throughout the East. A and T's Bob Jones, Walt Parker, Eddie Favors, and Frank "Rabbit" Johnson are a dangerous quartet.

Maryland State College's backs, the fear of the league, includes Andy Dement, one of the smoothest performers seen on the gridiron this season.

Nat Smith of Virginia State, Dick Clary of Hampton, Fortune Spriggs of Union, and Freddie Parks of Bluefield are players whose chores in the backfield thus far singles them out for unusual recognition.

Several promising ends are making some of the passing backs like the Aggies' Lonnie Hall and Howard Battle, Hall's understudy, look especially good. A and T's John Cuthrell and Frank Johnson; Maryland's Vern Vaughn, Hampton's John Harris, Union's Spencer Bonds, Fayetteville's Crexton Williams, St. Augustine's Herbert Oldham, and Bluefield's Phil Horton all are flankmen who may carry their teams to unprecedented heights in the scoring columns in the weeks ahead.



Frank "Rabbit" Johnson, sophomore halfback with the A and T College Aggies, has shown near sensational form in early season games. Besides being one of the fastest men on the spud and effective with his "outside" runs for long yardage, "Rabbit" has demonstrated his ability as a pass receiver. Already he has gathered in two TD aerials and with his long runs, he has set up two others. Johnson was converted from a quarterback. He is from Greenville, S. C.

A&T Aggies To Meet Maryland In Shrine Bowl

NORFOLK, Va.

The annual Shrine Fish Bowl Classic, featuring the A and T College Aggies and the Maryland State College Hawks will be played here on Friday night, October 8, instead of Saturday, October 9.

The date was advanced as a result of conflicting commitments in the use of Foreman

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Shaw Bears And Trojans On Tap For Saturday

RALEIGH

Shaw University's Bears and Virginia State's Trojans clash here at Chavis Park Saturday in the CIAA game of the week. Both clubs are sporting new, untried mentors in the CIAA.

Two of the loop's leading contenders, the Morgan State College Eagles of Durham, will be idle while other CIAA clubs go into action on eight fronts.

The West Virginia State College Yellowjackets, losers in last week's tussle with Virginia Union by a 20-6 count, tangle with Central State College, winner of last week's bout with Morgan by a score of 25-0. The clubs play at Institute, W. Va.

Bluefield and Winston Salem tangle at Bluefield with the inspired Big Blues, still gloating over their 27-7 victory over Fayetteville Teachers, having the advantage of their home gridiron and an inspired student body.

The Howard-Union battle in Washington pits two of last week's winners in an important contest that rivals the Shaw-Va. State clash in interest and perhaps in importance. Howard's Bisons scored a 14-0 win over a Naval Station outfit last week, and Union's Panthers vanquished West Virginia's Yellowjackets, 20 to 6.

In the Trojans vs. Shaw Bears night game in Raleigh

Saturday, W. W. Lawson, successor to the Virginians' Sylvester Hall, will be trying to establish a consistent winning streak after his debut as a loser against Tennessee's Tigers in a inter-sectional, non-conference tilt on September 25. The Trojans were scheduled for an acid test on their home field last week against Bluefield. Shaw's new mentor, Robert "Duke" Brown, whose 70 man squad was slated for its first test against ancient rival, St. Augustine's, last week got a chance to see R. D. Moore's Falcons in some real sleight of hand aerial fireworks. Although Lawson and Brown are new in CIAA circles, they are both able coaches and their teams have given evidence of great promise.

Other CIAA games scheduled for Saturday are Elizabeth City vs. St. Paul's at Elizabeth City; J. C. Smith vs. St. Augustine's at Charlotte; Delaware vs. Hampton at Dover, Del.; and Fayetteville vs. Morris College at Fayetteville.

6,000 Students Expected At A&T Senior Day

GREENSBORO

Nearly 6,000 students are expected for the annual high school senior day celebration to be held here at A and T College on Saturday, October 16.

A full program of activities has been arranged for the young visitors who will be guests of the college for the full day. According to William H. Gamble, dean of men at the college and chairman on arrangements for the celebration, the youngsters will not only have the usual entertainment features, but emphasis will be placed on encouraging the scholastics to continue their training as some institution of higher learning.

The tentative program, designed to give many of the stu-

(Continued on Page Eight)

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