

Missouri Road Trip



Every Hero Has A Story: Buck O'Neil

Some baseball players are remembered for what they did on the field, others for what they did off it. Buck O'Neil deserves to be remembered for both.

Born John Jordan O'Neil, the man known to most as "Buck" was a first baseman in the Negro Leagues. Before Jackie Robinson broke baseball's color barrier, the Negro Leagues offered an opportunity for talented African-American ballplayers to showcase their skills.

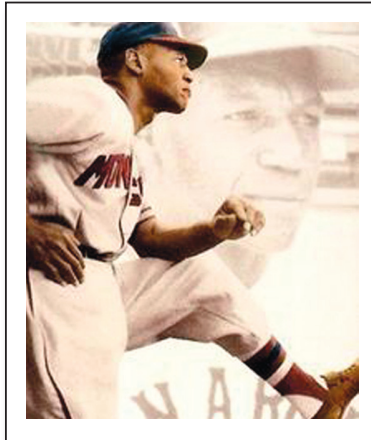
Buck is most often associated with the Kansas City Monarchs franchise, for which he played from 1938-43 and again from 1946-55 (his baseball career was put on hold while he served in the U.S. Navy during World War II). Toward the end of his career, he served the dual role as player/manager.

From 1939 to 1942, the Monarchs won four straight Negro American League pennants. In 1942, in the first World Series played between the Negro American League and the Negro National

League, Buck hit .353 as the Monarchs swept the Homestead Grays.

After the war, Buck returned to Kansas City and his hot-hitting ways, batting .353 for the entire season and winning the Negro American League's batting title in 1946. As manager, Buck guided the Monarchs to five pennants and managed in four consecutive all-star games from 1951-54.

Although he never made it to the big leagues as a player, Buck became the first African-American coach in major league history when he joined the Chicago Cubs in 1962. A man with an eye for talent, Buck's scouting skills helped him – and the Cubs – land the likes of



Ernie Banks and Lou Brock, two players who ultimately made it to the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y.

Later in his career, Buck served as a special scout for his hometown team, the Kansas City Royals. It was in Kansas City where Buck sought to preserve the stories and history of the Negro Leagues, serving as the chairman of the board – and a leading

spokesman for – the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum.

Buck O'Neil was born Nov. 3, 1911, in Carrabelle, Fla. By the age of 12, he was playing semipro baseball. When he was barred from playing

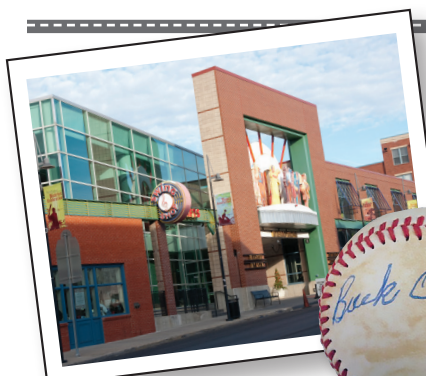
Points of Interest

- ★ Buck O'Neil was inducted into the Hall of Famous Missourians in the Missouri State Capitol at Jefferson City in 2012.
- ★ The Negro Leagues Baseball Museum celebrates its 25th anniversary in 2015.
- ★ Learn more about the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum at nlbm.com.
- ★ Read about Buck's experiences firsthand in an interview at pbs.org/KenBurns/Baseball/Shadowball/Oneil.html.
- ★ At every home game, the Kansas City Royals honor Buck by filling the "Buck O'Neil Legacy Seat" behind home plate with a member of the community who embodies an aspect of Buck's spirit. Learn about the Buck O'Neil Legacy Seat program at Royals.com.
- ★ Learn more about things to do and see in the Kansas City metropolitan area on the Kansas City Star website, KansasCity.com.

Sources:
Negro Leagues Baseball Museum,
Hall of Famous Missourians



baseball at his high school in Sarasota, Fla., because of his race, he enrolled in a nearby college and earned his high school diploma and two years of college. Buck O'Neil died at the age of 94 on Oct. 6, 2006, in Kansas City.

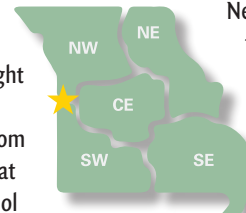


Negro Leagues Baseball Museum
1616 E. 18th St., Kansas City
816-221-1920
The museum has limited days of operation, so check before you go.



Take A Road Trip to Kansas City!

Today, thanks to Buck's dedication and perseverance, the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City honors the legacy of the men and women who were denied the right to play baseball – or be involved with the game in other ways – on the basis of race. Exhibits include everything from autographed baseballs and memorabilia to stories on great players such as Robinson, Satchel Paige, Josh Gibson, "Cool Papa" Bell and others. One of the most popular exhibits at the



Negro Leagues Baseball Museum is a replica playing field with statues of talented players assigned to their respective positions. In fitting tribute, Buck O'Neil oversees action on that field from the manager's post.



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