



1957 Little Rock Nine

Federal and National Guard troops intervene on behalf of nine black students blocked from entering all-white Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas.

1960 Greensboro

Four black college students stage a sit-in at a segregated Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina. Six months later, the store begins serving blacks.

1963 'I Have a Dream'

More than 200,000 people participate in the March on Washington, where Martin Luther King Jr. gives his most famous speech.

1964-65 Civil Rights Laws

President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1964, outlawing segregation in public places and employment. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 bans literacy tests, poll taxes, and other obstacles to black voter registration.

team or eating in the same restaurants. He roomed with a black sportswriter who traveled with the team. Pitchers threw at his head, and runners hit him with spikes. He received hate mail, even death threats.

Some of these problems subsided as Robinson gained acceptance and other black players joined the majors. Eleven weeks after Robinson became a Dodger, the Cleveland Indians signed Larry Doby, who became the second black Major Leaguer. By 1951, there were 14 black players, and the color barrier was falling in other sports as well. (See chart, right.)

Civil Rights Hero

Robinson went on to win the Rookie of the Year award in 1947. In 1949, as the Dodgers' second baseman, he led the National League in batting (with a .342 average) and stolen bases and was voted the league's MVP.

He would lead the Dodgers to six pennants and a World Series title before retiring from baseball in 1957. In 1962, he was elected to the Hall of Fame in his first year of eligibility.

Robinson became a business executive and continued to support civil rights, participating in voter-registration drives in the South and working with Martin Luther King Jr. to raise money for rebuilding black churches that had been burned in Georgia.

Like King, Robinson dreamed of a race-blind society. In his 1972 autobiography, he wrote that "a life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives," and that he couldn't consider his work complete "until hatred is recognized as a disease" and "every man can vote and any man can be elected if he qualifies."

The day a black man would hold the highest office in the U.S. would come 36 years after Robinson wrote his book, when Barack Obama was elected president in 2008. But Robinson didn't live to see that day. His last public appearance was at the 1972 World Series in Cincinnati. Diabetes

had taken a toll on his health; he walked with a cane and was nearly blind. He died that October of a heart attack. He was 53.

Integration of Major Sports in the U.S.

SPORT	YEAR INTEGRATED
Football	1946
Baseball	1947
Basketball	1950
Tennis	1950
Hockey	1958
Golf	1961

SOURCES: NFL, MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL, NBA, UNITED STATES TENNIS ASSOCIATION, NHL, PGA

Robinson would also miss out on another baseball milestone involving his old team, the Dodgers. This past March, nearly 65 years to the month since Jackie Robinson desegregated baseball, former L.A. Lakers basketball star Magic Johnson bought the Dodgers (who moved to L.A.

in 1958), becoming the first African-American to own a Major League Baseball franchise.

Robinson was certainly on Magic Johnson's mind when he closed the deal.

"I take very seriously," Johnson told the *Los Angeles Times*, "the honor of being a minority owner in an organization where Jackie Robinson played." ●

Additional reporting by Veronica Majorol.