

COLOR LINE LOSES 3 GREAT PITCHERS TO MAJOR LEAGUES

Donaldson, Wickware and Cuban Negro Wonders on the Twirlers' Mound

By FRANK G. MENKE

NEW YORK, June 8.—The color line drawn so tightly around major league baseball has barred from major league fields three of the greatest pitchers the game ever has produced.

One of the trio, John Donaldson, pitching semipro ball in Kansas City, recently pitched 30 innings without allowing a hit or run—a record without parallel.

"If Donaldson were a white man, or if the unwritten law of baseball didn't bar negroes from the major leagues, I would give \$50,000 for him—and think I was getting a bargain," said John McGraw of the Giants, after seeing Donaldson pitch several games in Cuba.

Donaldson, just before establishing his record of pitching 30 innings without being hit, struck out 25 men in a 12-inning game—an average of better than two strike-outs per innning.

Donaldson just now is twirling for the All-Nationals, a Kansas City team composed of players of all nations and an outfit that baseball sharps claim is strong enough to give any major league club a nip-and-tuck battle.

Frank Wickware is another negro pitcher who would rank with the Walter Johnsons, Joe Woods and Grover Alexanders if he were a white man. Wickware performed some marvelous pitching feats in and around Schenectady, N. Y., and has since moved on to Chicago where he has become a sensation among the semipro.

Has Marvelous Speed and Curve.

Wickware has marvelous speed, a weird set of curves and wonderful control. And he has a trick that has made him feared among batters. He throws what seems to be a "bean-ball," but his control is so perfect that he never yet has hit a batter in the head. But when the batters see the ball, propelled with mighty force, come for their heads, they jump away—and the ball, taking its proper and well-timed curve, arches over the plate for a strike.

Wickware has compiled a wonderful strike-out average. He figured in about 30 games over a stretch of three years from 1912 and struck out something like 250 batsmen—an average of about 8 1-3 to a game. In one game he fanned 15 men. He has allowed on an average of only five hits to a game for the last 20 games pitched and over a stretch of 15 games he allowed only

26 runs, less than two runs to a game.

In Cuba there is a negro pitcher by the name of Mendez. He's known as "the Black Matty" and his work has been almost as brilliant as that of "the Big Six" of the Giants. Mendez is only of medium height but he has terrific power in his arm.

The Cuban negro has a canny brain and he always has used it. He has mixed his fast ball with his slow one, has an assortment of beautiful curves and perfect control.

Pitching for the speedy Almendares team he has established some amazing records. But he has done so without really trying. Like Mathewson he never pitches air-tight ball unless he has to. He conserves his strength. But when he needs to pitch hitless ball he does it. When he needs to strike out a man he usually succeeds. But he always works on the theory that he has eight men to aid him in his defensive work.

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June 9, 1915, Page 7