

Feinstein's book is a clear window on the 'window' both at Annapolis and West Point. What makes more sense as a philosophy of competition for the academies, judging from the realities that Feinstein shows so well through his book, would be something like this; 'In sports winning is important but not as important as what Grantland Rice called "the Uphill Heart"'.

It is not an easy task for any school to compete in Division I athletics but doubly hard for the military academies, which are the same as other schools but very different in mission and in several other aspects. For Army and Navy, one cannot keep from wondering how gratuitous the difficulties might be and what saner, yet still heroic paths, might be open to them, or for that matter their civilian competitors as well. Feinstein does not speculate on what changes might be desirable. As good reporters should, he narrates what he sees and most of all he makes us genuinely care for those he writes about, all 'winners', as Feinstein says, regardless of the score in the final game.

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Charles K. Ross, *Outside The Lines: African Americans and the integration of the National Football League*. New York and London: New York University Press, 1999. ix + 201pp. Index. US\$35.00 hb.

Jackie Robinson and the integration of organised baseball is undoubtedly one of the most thoroughly discussed and popular subjects in American sports history. The Robinson saga is a story of courage and heroics, both on his part and Brooklyn Dodgers co-owner Branch Rickey. Even individuals with limited knowledge of baseball history can vividly recreate details of Robinson's signing with the Dodgers.

While there have been several books written about the Robinson legend, the integration of professional football after World War II has been virtually ignored. Charles Ross attempts to fill this void. Ross, a professor of Afro-American studies and history, traces the plight of black professional football players from 1904 to 1962. Within this context of the black experience in professional football several themes emerged that included how and why blacks participated in small numbers until 1933, the drawing of the color line, the impact of rival leagues upon integration, and the economic incentives that occurred as a result of signing black players. Further, Ross argues that since the playing fields of America were integrated years before the Supreme Court reversed itself in 1954, sports, in many ways, set the tone for the nation to begin integration off the field.

The black experience in professional football began with the exploits of Charles W. Follis and Charles 'Doc' Baker. Follis played right-halfback for the Shelby Athletic Club, possessed exceptional athletic skills, and was a frequent target of verbal and physical abuse from opponents and fans. Despite these verbal and physical taunts, Follis never resorted to any belligerent behavior, and his demeanor under fire left a lasting impression on Shelby teammate Branch Rickey. Doc Baker played halfback for the Akron Indians and, like Follis was also a target of opponents trying to injure him. Although Baker was never implicated, his football experience was marred by several gambling scandals. Chronicling the plights of Follis and Baker illustrated that racial prejudice on and off the field was simply the American way of life. The opportunity to play football against whites was an accomplishment in itself and physical and verbal abuse were consequences that came with territory.

From 1919 to 1933, thirteen black players played on several professional teams. The following year, blacks disappeared from team rosters only to reappear in 1946 with the rise of the All-America Football Conference. Ross points out that black players, like Fritz Pollard and Paul Robeson, were essentially drawing cards during the National Football League's fledgling days. While there was never a formal policy excluding African Americans, blacks brief hiatus from the game coincided with the NFL's reorganization efforts following the 1933 season. Ross cites several reasons why blacks were temporarily barred from the NFL. League reorganization was under the direction of George Preston Marshall and the Redskins owner probably initiated the ban. The Great Depression adversely impacted upon the NFL at a time when the league sought to achieve some sense of stability. Moreover, compensating black players in the midst of a dismal economic environment did not make good business sense to white team owners.

One of Ross's most original contributions was his discussion of Sam Lacy's one-man crusade against Marshall's refusal to sign black players. Lacy, an African American sportswriter, whose column was syndicated in several black newspapers, had written articles over several years criticizing Marshall's discriminatory ways. Throughout the 1950s and early 1960s Marshall refused to draft exceptional black athletes like Jim Brown, Lenny Moore, Jim Parker, and Roosevelt Grier. Lacy blasted Marshall for his 'lily-white stubbornness' and urged black fans to boycott Redskins home games. Although Marshall did not relent, the external pressure brought on by Lacy, civil rights groups like the NAACP and Core, and low-level officials in the Kennedy Administration, resulted in the Redskins owner conceding.

But Ross's assertion that integrating the playing fields set the tone for integration off it is somewhat problematic. Ross did not adequately contextualise the black experience in professional football within the broader forces that shaped African American history specifically and American history in general. Blacks benefited from the post-World War II economic boom, more

than doubling their median income from 1940 to 1960. The northward migration of nearly three million African Americans brought gains in professional, white-collar, skilled and semiskilled occupations. Where whites competed with blacks for even the lowest-paid jobs during the Depression, in the postwar years employment and salaries spiraled upward through the late 1940s and 1950s easing fears that black gains would threaten white affluence and security. Moreover, historically blacks' economic well being had traditionally improved during periods of labor scarcity: World War I, the 1920s, World War II, and the Vietnam War. In essence, the integration of professional football occurred at a time when blacks had more opportunities open to them.

Despite this drawback, Ross makes a significant contribution to the history of professional football, a topic in dire need of scholarly attention. I am certain his ideas will stimulate further research analysis in the integration of professional football. Scholars investigating professional football have an intellectual debt to him for his pioneering work.

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