

Moore, Joseph Thomas, *Pride Against Prejudice-The Biography of Larry Doby*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1988. Pp. 208. Bibliography, photographs, index. \$35.00.

Larry Doby played in the major leagues from 1947 to 1959, performed in two World Series and six all-star games, and achieved a lifetime batting average of .283; hit 253 home runs, and was an excellent centerfielder. Doby, who was born in 1923 in South Carolina, scarcely knew his father, who abandoned his mother and died in 1934. His mother took him to Paterson, New Jersey, where friends and relatives helped rear him. As a result of his upbringing he became withdrawn and reserved. Some of his major league teammates saw him as a loner. While in high school Doby displayed great skill in several sports, but did not think about being a professional athlete, but rather a teacher and coach.

After a stint in the Navy, Doby decided not to go to college but rather to

follow the path opened by Jackie Robinson. In 1946 he joined the Negro National League and by 1947 was playing with the Cleveland Indians. Doby felt that he faced bigotry, slurs and slights throughout his major league career. Al Lopez, who was then a catcher for the Indians and would become his manager, made racial comments when Doby arrived. Another teammate refused to lend him his glove. He resented living in segregated quarters, the interest his teammates had in the TV series "Amos and Andy," and the supposed obsequious behavior of black teammates Satchel Paige and Luke Easter. Doby was hurt by the racial insults from Detroit fans, prejudice from certain umpires, and the difficulties in finding a house in Paterson. He felt that Cleveland sports writers, particularly Whitey Lewis and Gordon Cobbledick, were unfairly critical. On the other hand, Bill Veeck was a friend and a father figure who always stood behind him, and Tris Speaker, who incidentally was reputedly a KKK member, took great effort and pride in teaching Doby to play center field.

After his playing career he became an excellent hitting coach for Montreal and Cleveland, where he expected to become manager but lost the job to Frank Robinson because management in his view saw that he was not a puppet. It seems that Doby, who confronted so much prejudice, may not always have been capable of making an objective evaluation of his situation. In 1978 Bill Veeck hired him in midseason to manage the Chicago White Sox. Under Doby the mediocre team played worse than it had for Bob Lemon, his predecessor. Veeck apologized for giving Doby such a bad team, but fired him nonetheless. At one point Veeck explained that Doby was a good batting instructor rather than manager. Doby felt that he was never given the opportunity to develop as a manager because baseball executives held to the racial stereotypes noted by Al Campanis in his notorious "Nightline" interview of 1987.

Doby was in his own words a "good not great player." He did break the color barrier in the American League, but does Doby deserve a full-length biography? Moore tries hard to puff up his subject. "For more than 40 years, longer than any other famous American athlete save the late Jesse Owens, Doby has lived the life of a proud black man-not simply a man-in American national sport." One wonders why Moore arbitrarily excludes Jackie Robinson, Joe Louis, Sugar Ray Robinson, so many of the great players from the old Negro league and the pioneers of professional basketball. Moore's comparison of Doby with Ted Williams is unconvincing. "Williams for all his gifts as a batsman never was regarded as a player who produced when his team most needed him and openly feuded with newspaper reporters, yet never suffered so vicious an attack as Lewis's attack on Doby." The Boston press vilified Williams as did sports writers in other cities. Williams played injured in his only World Series, 1946, and did not do well, but to suggest that he was not a clutch player is unfair. Moore thinks Doby was an unusual power hitter in that he struck out a great deal but managed to accumulate many walks. This in fact is rather common among home run hitters.

Moore is an excellent historian. While the first and third chapters, "The Photograph of 1948" and the "Pioneer," go over ground covered by Jules Tygiel

in *Baseball's Great Experiment* (New York 1983), Moore provides many astute observations about racial conditions in midcentury America. Unlike most baseball biographies, which are based chiefly on sport pages, Moore has tirelessly interviewed scores of people, even eliciting a sentence out of the laconic George Hendrick. While Moore has not established that Doby was a great player or a significant figure in the civil rights movement who deserves as much acclaim as Jackie Robinson, he does depict a decent, intelligent, dignified man who suffered the slings and arrows of outrageous bigotry.

East Carolina University

A. J. Papalas