



## Here's to you, Mr. Robinson

By [Tyme](#)



**A**pril 15, 2007, marked the 60th anniversary of Jack "Jackie" Robinson's inaugural game in the Major Leagues. He broke the color barrier as the first African-American baseball player, devoting 10 seasons to the Brooklyn Dodgers. Robinson honed his baseball skills in the Minor Leagues with the Montreal Royals, the Dodger's Triple-A farm club. The team held spring training in Daytona Beach during March and April 1946.

"If Jackie Robinson didn't succeed during the spring training of 1946, he wouldn't have played for the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. He wouldn't have changed America," said Chris Lamb, author of "Blackout: The Untold Story of Jackie Robinson's First Spring Training".

Robinson upset the fundamental beliefs of white segregationists. He was refused by the town of Sanford, and even threatened. Other Southern cities chose to cancel baseball games rather than to let those games be played with a black team member. Only Daytona Beach allowed him to play.

To most Americans, Robinson was a great ballplayer. To others, he was hope: hope of a better future, with opportunity and promise. "Black kids



Learn more about the history of [Jackie Robinson Ballpark](#) in Daytona Beach.

would later talk of hanging over the outfield fence to get a glimpse of Robinson and praying, 'Please God, let Jackie be successful,'" said Lamb. "Blacks knew that if Jackie Robinson were successful, it would mean that they, too, might have equal opportunity in jobs and in housing and in education." Not only was he a great role model for blacks but so too an activist for change.



Throughout his career, Robinson played in six World Series and six consecutive All-Star Games. His awards were numerous and, in 1962, the Baseball Hall of Fame inducted him into membership. He was an athlete of great skill and a man of even greater character. The posthumous award to him of a Congressional Gold Medal and the Presidential Medal of Freedom are testament to the indelible mark that he has left on our nation's history.



My thanks to Chris Lamb for his participation herewith, and for his passion and dedication to the story of Jackie Robinson. Dr. Lamb is an associate professor of Communication at the College of Charleston, as well as an author. See also newspaper column article "[Jackie Robinson was more than a ballplayer](#)" from the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

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