

Re: This Week In Baseball

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TWB Show #803

This week TWIB focused on the front-running Los Angeles Dodgers and continued their tribute to Jackie Robinson by reporting firsthand from Los Angeles, home base for MLB's "Jackie Robinson Day."

It has been almost 20 years since the Dodgers won the World Series Championship. Manager Grady Little expressed the hope that this year's Dodger team will play for another championship this season. Building on a solid core of players already in place, the Dodgers added pitcher Jason Schmidt, veteran Luis Gonzalez and center fielder Juan Pierre to create what they hope will be a great mix of talent.

Educational theme: Attitude is one of the little things that make a difference. Attitude is contagious and worth catching. The idea is to have a common vision and to direct everyone to accomplish the objective.

"Act Two": The legacy of Jackie Robinson was honored by MLB in a very special way. On this day more than 200 players and managers wore number 42. Jackie's number 42 was retired a decade ago becoming the only number in the history of baseball to be retired in perpetuity.

TWIB cited the "Top Five Players to Wear #42" other than Robinson. They were pitcher Jose Lima, pitcher Jason Schmidt, outfielder Dave Henderson, slugger Mo Vaughn, and closing pitching superstar Mariano Rivera.

Dodgers outfielder Marlon Anderson gave the viewers an all access view of the celebration of "Jackie Robinson Day" at Dodgers Stadium. This historic event included many celebrities such as Hall of Fame member Joe Morgan and Jackie's family.

A noteworthy quote by Robinson was read to indicate the character of the man. Jackie once said: "A life is not important except for the impact it has had on other lives."

The day was a tribute to Jackie Robinson, but his incredible wife Rachel was honored as well, primarily for the formation of the "Jackie Robinson Foundation" and her contributions to MLB. Commissioner Allan "Bud" Selig presented her with the "Commissioner's Historic Achievement Award."

TWIB recalled the past by re-showing a clip from 1997, when TWIB's Ozzie Smith reported on the retirement of Robinson's number 42. President Bill Clinton may have said it best, "Jackie proved that America is a better, stronger, richer country, when we all work together and give everyone a chance."

This week's TWIBIA question asked about the only other Dodger than Robinson to win both the Rookie of the Year Award and the MVP. It was pitcher Don Newcombe.

Educational theme: Honoring a leader by paying tribute to his life is an important method to teach children to emulate and live with character.

Educational theme: Baseball is a game that defines the American spirit. If a child wants to emulate and understand America, he must learn baseball.

Educational theme: Baseball has played a significant role in the civil rights movement in American history. The importance of integration must not be forgotten.

"Clutch": This segment features the most spectacular performances in MLB. TWIB looked back at the 2006 Los Angeles Dodgers clutch performance in last season's pennant race. Trailing by four runs in the bottom of the ninth inning versus the San Diego Padres, the Dodgers became only the fourth MLB team to hit four consecutive home runs. Those home runs tied the game. Then trailing again in the tenth inning Nomar Garciaparra hit a two-run walk-off home run to win the game.

"The Call of the Week" featured Chicago White Sox pitcher Mark Buehrle's no-run, no-hit game.

Educational theme: Pressure is an opportunity to prove oneself. Winners never quit, especially under pressure.

Educational theme: A critical component of sports psychology is mental toughness. That is being able to perform under the stress of competition.

Educational theme: Documentation of the achievements of a great performance is part of sports history. Many baseball traditions are based upon historic performances that are the measure of accomplishment.

“Front Row Fans”: In the film “Pride,” actor Terrence Howard plays a man who inspires inner-city youth to realize their potential. Howard delivered a verbal tribute to Jackie Robinson stating, “... Jackie welcomed change, knew the transition would be difficult, but maintained his integrity ...” Jackie was the ultimate sportsman.

Educational theme: Children must not be seduced by the lure of mediocrity. Any conscious choice to avoid learning, growing, or developing, results in failure.

Educational theme: It is a wise choice for one to choose integrity. Integrity equals a wholeness, honesty, and uprightness of character. Winning is a result of character.

Educational theme: Children’s desire to show good sportsmanship should be equal to the desire to win. There is no dishonor in civility.

“How ‘bout that!”: This traditional segment of TWIB featured a look at the best baseball plays and misplays of the week. There were numerous diving and sliding catches, creative double plays, an exciting inside the park home run, and game winning “walk-off” home runs.

Educational theme: Children can carefully observe the rhythmical patterns of premiere athletic movement, and then it can be better comprehended, imitated and learned. Children then have an opportunity to become physically educated by watching and then emulating those athletic movements.

Educational theme: The appreciation of sport can be found in the art and beauty of human movement.