

2023 Black History Month – Minor League Club Activities

❖ Akron RubberDucks (Guardians Double-A affiliate)

- The RubberDucks will switch their social media profile pictures to the logo inspired by the Akron Black Tyrites for all of February. The RubberDucks will reshare the story of the Akron Black Tyrites and the plans to honor the team once again during the 2023 season.
- The RubberDucks will publish on the team's website and social media accounts a content series of Nine Questions with former RubberDucks pitcher and current Guardians starter Triston McKenzie. The series will feature a video and web story of nine questions with McKenzie about his career and inspiration.

❖ Asheville Tourists (Astros High-A affiliate)

- The Asheville Tourists will spotlight the Negro Southern League team, the Asheville Blues, and highlight the Blues' 1946 & 1947 Negro Southern League Championship teams on social media.
- The Tourists will unveil a new Asheville Blues logo, designed by a local artist in Asheville, and will then sell commemorative Asheville Blues t-shirts with 100% of the proceeds going toward the organization "My Daddy Taught Me That". MDTMT is a youth development program designed to support young men through advocacy, education, and mentoring.

❖ Birmingham Barons (White Sox Double-A affiliate)

- The Barons are partnering with the Negro Southern League Baseball Museum in Birmingham for a virtual tour video feature that will include articles and videos on Barons and Black Barons legends.

❖ Bradenton Marauders (Pirates Single-A affiliate)

- The Marauders will feature weekly social media posts highlighting the history of the Bradenton Nine Devils, a Negro Leagues team that played at Bradenton's LECOM Park.

❖ Charleston RiverDogs (Rays Single-A affiliate)

- The RiverDogs will host 50 boys and girls ranging from 8 to 13 years old, and their families, at Joseph P. Riley Stadium for The Citadel baseball game on Feb. 26, with food, drinks and tickets provided. Kids will run the bases after the game, receive a tour of the ballpark, take batting practice in the batting cages and take turns on the speed pitch game.
- The team will recognize and celebrate the careers of former Black RiverDogs players on social media throughout the month, with the final post honoring Larry Doby.

❖ Columbia Fireflies (Royals Single-A affiliate)

- The Columbia Fireflies will post interviews with some Black franchise record holders and share an article highlighting some of the best Black players in franchise history.
- The Fireflies will also create videos highlighting some Black front office staff members and releasing them throughout the month.

- ❖ **Fayetteville Woodpeckers (Astros Single-A affiliate)**
 - Throughout the month of February, the Woodpeckers will highlight notable Black baseball players on social media, including:
 - Feb. 3: Jackie Robinson (broke color barrier in MLB)
 - Feb. 10: Dusty Baker (Astros manager, recently became oldest manager ever to win a World Series)
 - Feb. 17: Buck Leonard (only Black baseball HOF member from North Carolina)
 - Feb. 24: Alex Cole (MLB vet who played ball in the 90s, from Fayetteville)

- ❖ **Fresno Grizzlies (Rockies Single-A affiliate)**
 - The Grizzlies will post the article to the top of our website about the [Top 5 Black Players in Fresno Grizzlies History](#), and social media posts throughout the month celebrating influential Black community members from the Central Valley and spotlighting Black-owned businesses.
 - The club will take a look back at their game from last season as the Fresno Tigers and tell how the Tigers came to be.

- ❖ **Harrisburg Senators (Nationals Double-A affiliate)**
 - With the help of a local Negro League historian, the Senators will post weekly social media features highlighting the rich Negro Leagues history in the Harrisburg area.

- ❖ **Hillsboro Hops (Diamondbacks High-A affiliate)**
 - The Hops will highlight their franchise roster's rich history of Black players and coaches weekly throughout February, highlighting their key stats, where they're from and special stories.

- ❖ **Hudson Valley Renegades (Yankees High-A affiliate)**
 - The Renegades will post a series of articles on their website pertaining to black baseball pioneers with ties to either New York baseball or specifically the Hudson Valley, including features on Frank Grant, Bill Holland, Elston Howard, and Bud Fowler.
 - The team will highlight local black-owned businesses throughout the Hudson Valley, filming videos for social media at their place of business for social media and providing them with tickets to use in the 2023 season.

- ❖ **Iowa Cubs (Cubs Triple-A affiliate)**
 - The I-Cubs will highlight and celebrate Black players and coaches from their history with feature articles and social media posts throughout February.

- ❖ **Indianapolis Indians (Pirates Triple-A affiliate)**
 - The Club will change its social media profile photos to MiLB's "The Nine" logo that is specific to the Indians.
 - Throughout the month of February, the Indians will recognize Black ballplayers on social media who have been honored as Team MVP in addition to single-season and all-time career recordholders.
 - The team will share player soundbites on social media from three Black ballplayers (Canaan Smith-Njibga, Cal Mitchell and Aaron Fletcher) who learned about the significance of the Indianapolis Clowns and Indianapolis ABCs during a visit to the Indianapolis Historical Society in 2022.

- On Monday, Feb. 20, the Indians will announce plans in collaboration with the Columbus Clippers to host a Negro Leagues home-and-home series.
- ❖ **Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp (Marlins Triple-A affiliate)**
 - On Feb. 10, Jumbo Shrimp executive vice president/general manager Harold Crow will be honored during the Melanin Market Heritage Awards. The ceremony will be held at WJCT Public Media (100 Festival Park Avenue Jacksonville, FL 32202).
 - On Feb. 11, the Jumbo Shrimp will host their first Family Movie Night of the 2023 calendar year. In conjunction with the Jax Melanin Market and as part of the club's Black History Month programming, the club will show a screening of "Soul" at 6 p.m. on the high-definition video board, with admission costing just \$1 per person at the gate.
 - On Feb. 15, the Jumbo Shrimp will host historic Duval County Public Schools rivals William M. Raines High School and Jean Ribault High School to play in the fourth annual High School Heritage Classic exhibition game at 121 Financial Ballpark. Raines and Ribault student-athletes will wear customized Jacksonville Red Caps uniforms in a tribute to the Negro Leagues team that resided in Jacksonville from 1938-42. The exhibition contest will feature historical references to Negro Leagues players and teams throughout the game. The winning team will earn the A. Philip Randolph Cup, commemorating the civil rights activist who moved to Jacksonville in 1891.
 - On Feb. 18, the Jumbo Shrimp are bringing the Jax Melanin Market to 121 Financial Ballpark in advance of the HBCU Heritage Classic. The 2 p.m. first pitch between HBCU institutions Edward Waters University and LeMoyne-Owen College will be preceded by a Black History Month parade and the Jax Melanin Market beyond the left field wall.
 - ❖ **Kannapolis Cannon Ballers (White Sox Single-A affiliate)**
 - The Cannon Ballers played host to MLK Dream Day on January 14. The free community-wide event was held at Atrium Health Ballpark for the second straight year through a partnership between the team and local community leaders. The event celebrates the Kannapolis community working towards the common goal of advancing an emerging diverse population. MLK Dream Day 2023 consisted of an on-field program and ceremony, a meet and greet with local officials, a Minority Business Fair, Community Organizational Fair, Health & Wellness Corridor, Interactive Kids Activities, Collaborative Art Display, Complimentary Food, Fun & Entertainment.
 - ❖ **Las Vegas Aviators (Athletics Triple-A affiliate)**
 - The Aviators will recognize star Black players from their years as the Aviators, 51s and Stars throughout the month through social media posts. The team will also recognize Black staff members and throughout February.
 - ❖ **Nashville Sounds (Brewers Triple-A affiliate)**
 - The Sounds will be running a series of Black History Month features across the club's social platforms throughout the month of February, highlighting the contributions of Black baseball players, business owners, athletes and artists and their impact on history in Nashville.

- ❖ **New Hampshire Fisher Cats (Blue Jays Double-A affiliate)**
 - The Fisher Cats will highlight the significance of the Nashua Dodgers, the first integrated affiliated baseball team in the United States, with a series of social media posts and articles.

- ❖ **Norfolk Tides (Orioles Triple-A affiliate)**
 - Each Thursday, the Tides will feature a former player and one current Tides employee on their social media accounts. The player stories will tell of the player's upbringing, their path to the Majors, notable moments of their career and highlight the player's charitable and community involvement. The employee features will tell a quick story of who they are, what they do and why they like working for the Tides.
 - The final player profile will be released on Feb. 28, and will feature Dwight "Doc" Gooden.
 - The Tides have a special announcement planned for the third week of February regarding baseball history in Norfolk.

- ❖ **Oklahoma City Dodgers (Dodgers Triple-A affiliate)**
 - The OKC Dodgers Foundation has partnered with Millwood Public Schools in Oklahoma City to provide nine OKC Dodgers Rookie League players with \$100 shopping sprees at Academy Sports + Outdoors to purchase baseball or softball equipment for their upcoming seasons.

- ❖ **Omaha Storm Chasers (Royals Triple-A affiliate)**
 - The Storm Chasers front office staff will watch the documentary "Out of Omaha" as a learning opportunity on Feb. 16.
 - The club will share the highlights of the Omaha Black Stars and Omaha Rockets Negro Leagues teams on social media throughout February.
 - The club website will feature an article on local Black-owned businesses with a call to action for fans to support those businesses.

- ❖ **Pensacola Blue Wahoos (Marlins Double-A affiliate)**
 - The Blue Wahoos will post weekly social media features with players, uniform personnel, alumni and local community members to highlight Black experiences and accomplishments.
 - The Blue Wahoos will pay tribute to Pensacola's Negro League history with announcement of themed promotional night during the 2023 season.

- ❖ **Portland Sea Dogs (Red Sox Double-A affiliate)**
 - The Sea Dogs will profile several of the Sea Dogs' top Black players in franchise history on their social media platforms.

- ❖ **Round Rock Express (Rangers Triple-A affiliate)**
 - For the third consecutive season, the Round Rock Express will pay homage to the Austin Black Senators. The Texas Negro League baseball team based in Austin, from the 1920s through the 1940s, was one of the earliest professional sports teams in Central Texas.
 - On Saturday, April 15 against the Tacoma Rainiers, the Express will don their specialty Austin Black Senators pinstripe jerseys and caps. The first 1,500 fans through the gates will receive a replica Austin Black Senators jersey.

- Before the game, the E-Train will pay tribute to former Austin Black Senators star and member of the National Baseball Hall of Fame, Willie Wells, by honoring his family with a ceremonial first pitch. The first 1,000 fans will also receive a postcard of Wells' Hall of Fame plaque.
 - President of the National Baseball Hall of Fame, Josh Rawitch, will deliver a prerecorded message in front of Wells' plaque in Cooperstown.
 - During the game, the Nolan Ryan Foundation Scholarship in Memory of Willie Wells will announce their 2023 recipient. The scholarship is awarded each year to a student at Huston-Tillotson University.
- ❖ **San Antonio Missions (Padres Double-A affiliate)**
- The Missions will be posting a series of social media clips of some of the on-field accomplishments of Black Missions players along with an article on their website recognizing significant moments and players in Missions history.
- ❖ **St. Paul Saints (Twins Triple-A affiliate)**
- The Saints will participate in Supporting Black Entrepreneurs Day at The Minnesota State Capitol Friday Feb. 3 in partnership with Sheletta Brundidge, Emmy award-winning media personality and autism advocate. The Saints will be on-site at the Capitol to support the 200 Black business owners expected for a day of strategizing to make changes in policies to help Black companies. The Saints are one of three local businesses providing a \$1,000 grant distributed via raffle. Event attendees include MN Gov. Tim Walz, LT. Gov. Peggy Flanagan and MN state legislators from both sides of the aisle.
- ❖ **Tulsa Drillers (Dodgers Double-A affiliate)**
- The Drillers will be promoting the large Jackie Robinson mural that is located just outside ONEOK Field in the Historic Greenwood District of Tulsa
 - New Drillers front office staff members will visit the Greenwood Rising museum to educate them on the history of Tulsa's Historic Greenwood District where ONEOK Field is located.
 - The Drillers will highlight and recognize some of the great Black players in Tulsa baseball history on social media.