

On This Date

March 19, 1952

Second baseman **Ray Neil**, the first African-American player signed by a Texas League team, is released.

Signed to a conditional contract by the Dallas Eagles, team owner Dick Burnett says that manager Dutch Meyer does not feel that Neil can play Class AA baseball. With a week still left to run in the team's training camp, Burnett feels that releasing Neil immediately would allow him to sign with another club if possible and it serves no "useful purpose" keeping him on the roster.

In two intrasquad games, Neil is hitless in four at bats, drawing two walks and committing an error in the field. The 31-year-old infielder had played several seasons with the Indianapolis Clowns of the Negro American League. Neil will return to the Clowns for the 1952 season.

Besides Neil, the Eagles also sign a second African-American, Othel Renfro, a shortstop from Atlanta. Like Neil, Renfro fails to make the Eagles' opening day roster and will play in 1952 with the Mexican League's Torreon Algodoneros.



RAY NEIL