

Pinch Hits, "Texas League Revision"

©DiamondsintheDusk.com

31st Texas League Season Closed With Comedy and Drama

On September 11, 1932, the final day of the regular season, Texas League history is made in the second game of doubleheader between the Houston Buffaloes and the Galveston Buccaneers.

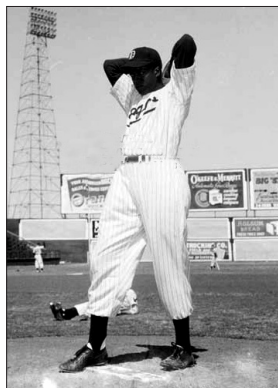
Galveston is leading 6-2 in the seventh, and final inning, when Houston manager Joe Schultz sends the team's African-American bat boy to pinch hit for light-hitting Stan Baker (.162) against Galveston's portly southpaw Hank Thormahlen.

In the league-wide summary composed following that day's games, the bat boy's appearance was important enough to warrant headline attention by the Associated Press' Bill Parker, who wrote in the game report:

"The dusky youth's Texas League career was short-lived. Three "snake-eye" curves by Hank Thormahlen sent him back to the bench."

In the season's statistical leader summary Parker again includes the Houston bat boy:

Dave Hoskins



It's been accepted that the first African-American to play in the Texas League was Dallas Eagles' pitcher Dave Hoskins, who debuted against the San Antonio Missions on April 13, 1952. The right-hander struck out four, walked seven and yielded eight hits in a complete-game win.

GALVESTON WINS A PAIR.

Galveston, Texas, Sept. 11 (AP)—The Galveston Buccaneers closed their Texas league season here this afternoon by taking a double-header from the Houston Buffs, 6 to 1 and 6 to 2. Lefty Darrow gave up but three hits in the winning opener.

The final game contained much comedy, with both teams burlesquing through the seven innings. Manager Schulz let half his players take a turn at pitching before he himself took the mound for the final frame.

The final touch of comedy came, however, in the seventh, when Schulz first let his son, Joe Schulz, Jr., bat for Beckman and then followed this by sending in "Snowball," negro bat boy, to hit for Baker. Young Schulz hit safely, but "Snowball" fell a victim to Thormahlen's curves and fanned after unsuccessfully trying to sacrifice.

'Snowball' Bats for Buffs

"Hank Thormahlen, chunky Galveston pitcher, paced the league in strikeouts with 186. His one hundred eighty-sixth strikeout was the sacred-stiff "Snowball."

So let's summarize: (1) Houston's African-American bat boy is allowed to officially enter the game by the home plate umpire, (2) his nickname is carried in the official box score as pinch-hitting for Stan Baker, and (3) both games counted in the final league standings, as did the individual statistics as best we can tell.

I understand the sensitivity of using derogatory racial nicknames, and if I offend anyone, I apologize. If I could have avoided using one in this story I would have. But, unfortunately that was not possible and the issue of who the first African American in the Texas league remains open for discussion.

SECOND GAME

HOUSTON					GALVESTON				
	AB	H	PO	A		AB	H	PO	A
Peel, 3b	4	1	1	0	Governr, cf	4	1	1	0
Stebbins, lb	3	0	6	0	Allday, 2b	2	0	0	1
Beckmn, rf	2	0	0	0	Bell, rf	3	0	4	0
Schlz, Jr., 1	1	1	0	0	Fausett, 3b	3	3	2	5
Baker, ss	2	0	2	0	Frey, lf	2	1	4	0
xxSnowbal	1	0	0	0	Zaepfel, lb	2	2	8	0
Jenkins, lf	2	1	3	1	Parma, ss	2	0	1	1
xxxPayne	1	0	0	0	Allen, c	3	1	1	1
Heusser, 2b	2	1	0	2	Thrmhln, p	2	1	0	2
Wysong, rf	2	1	4	1					
Ryba, c	2	0	2	0					
Narlsky, p	2	0	0	2					
Schulz, p	0	0	0	0					
Totals	24	5	18	6	Totals	24	9	21	10

xBatted for Beckman in seventh.

xxBatted for Baker in seventh.

xxxBatted for Jenkins in seventh.

Score by innings:

Houston 000 010 1—2
Galveston 000 420 x—6

Summary: Runs batted in—Zaepfel, Allen, Thormahlen, Parma. Two-base hits—Thormahlen, Peel. Three-base hit—Governor. Stolen bases—Frey, Zaepfel, Schulz, Jr.. 2. Sacrifices—Frey, Parma. Hits and runs—Off Narlesky 7 hits and 4 runs in 3 2-3 innings, Baker 2 hits and 1 run in 2-3, Stebbins no hits and no runs in 2-3. Struck out—By Thormahlen 1. Base on balls—Off Baker 1. Hit by pitcher—By Schulz (Thormahlen). Left on bases—Houston 1, Galveston 4. Double plays—Wysong to Baker, Allday to Parma to Zaepfel. Runs—Schulz, Jr., Jenkins, Bell, Fausett 2, Frey, Zaepfel, Allen. Error—Governor.

Hank Thormahlen

