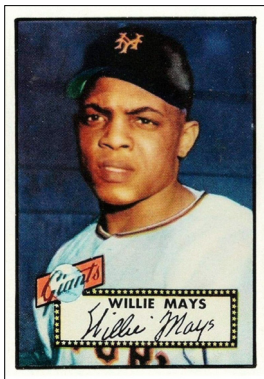


How times have changed.

Willie Mays, "The Say Hey Kid," and one of the greatest players in the history of baseball is banned from game because he accepted a multimillion-dollar position with an Atlantic City hotel and gambling casino.

Mays says that he is more bewildered than embittered by Baseball Commissioner Bowie Kuhn's decision, "Baseball has been my life I worship the game," the 48-year-old Hall of Fame star said. "But it's very important that I take care of my family."



Mays signs a contract with Bally Manufacturing Corporation, parent of the Park Place Hotel, to participate in community affairs and special events. The contract calls for \$100,000 a year for three years with a provision for an additional seven years at an escalating salary that would peak at \$150,000 in 1989.

In an hour-long meeting with Kuhn, the Commissioner tells Mays that if he accepted the Atlantic City position, he must disassociate himself from an existing contract with the New York Mets.

Asked if he planned to contest the decision in the courts, Mays takes the high road when he replies. "You know me, I am not going to fight baseball. If I challenge the Commissioner, I challenge baseball. I am not going to say baseball is wrong."

Saying "the world changes." a new commissioner, Peter Ueberroth, reinstates Mays on March 18, 1985.

Now major league baseball has not only ruined the best all-star game in sports, but sadly embraces sports betting to the extreme.