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## Reviews

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**The American Indian Integration of Baseball.** By Jeffrey Powers-Beck. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004. 269 pages. \$34.95 cloth.

Usually, historians of American baseball point to Jackie Robinson as the beginning of the integration of America's game. However, Jeffrey Powers-Beck's new book documents the American Indians who played professional baseball and faced similar racism in the four decades before Robinson suited up for the Brooklyn Dodgers. *The American Indian Integration of Baseball* departs from previous works on American Indian sports. Most studies tend to address athletics at boarding schools and, specifically, football. Powers-Beck joins John Bloom (*To Show What an Indian Can Do: Sports at Native American Boarding Schools*) in exploring the athletic lives of American Indians who did not flourish in the famous football programs at Carlisle and Haskell. Throughout their sometimes spectacular, other times mundane, careers, American Indian baseball players broke down racial barriers in the United States but still faced virulent racism.

Powers-Beck argues that the first American Indian baseball player was James Toy (Sioux). Toy played for Cleveland and Brooklyn in 1887 and 1890, respectively, a full decade before Louis Sockalexis played for Cleveland. For most American Indians, their first introduction to baseball came at the federal boarding schools such as Carlisle. Since the majority of boarding schools contained American Indians from several nations, baseball fostered a pan-Indian unity among team members. Many saw sports as an avenue to defy racial prejudice against Indians by "beating them at their own game" (16). Some players too saw baseball as an opportunity for social mobility. For the best American Indian baseball players, a career in the major or minor leagues and a paycheck awaited them. The pan-Indian dimensions and famous American Indian ballplayers—such as Charles Bender (Chippewa) and John Meyers (Cahuilla)—allowed American Indians to make "America's pastime" their own. Indians, both players and spectators, invested their own meanings in the game. Nevertheless, American Indian ballplayers and umpires faced racial discrimination. Members of the American press and teammates commonly called American Indian baseball players "Chief." Powers-Beck argues persuasively, "Certainly, the 'Chief' epithet was not meant to honor

American Indian identity but to appropriate and cartoonize it as an ‘Other’ in the manner of the cigar-store Indian or the Wild West show Indian” (5). American Indian baseball players also faced accusations that they were lazy or inveterate alcoholics. Facing this discrimination, some Indians, such as Toy, chose to hide their American Indian heritage while others, such as Bender, internalized their mistreatment at the hands of American spectators.

Powers-Beck also provides insight into famous and well-known Indian baseball teams and professional ballplayers. Football has usually overshadowed baseball in the historical discussions of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School and American Indian sports in general. This, Powers-Beck argues, is no coincidence. Despite its popularity among male and female Indian students, baseball remained underdeveloped and underfunded at Carlisle. Football coach, track coach, and athletic director Glenn “Pop” Warner purposefully deemphasized baseball because he did not want that sport to compete with football and track. In January 1910, school officials abandoned the baseball team after fifteen unspectacular seasons. Carlisle’s baseball team won only 46 percent of its games, compared to the football team’s winning percentage of 70 percent. School officials cited the fear of professionalism creeping into “amateur” baseball (considering Jim Thorpe and his Olympic medal controversy, this may not have been far from the truth), but Powers-Beck strongly argues that baseball was sacrificed at the altar of big-time football.

Powers-Beck then turns to another team, one that is not as well known. Between 1897 and 1917, the Nebraska Indians baseball team played mid-western colleges and semi-pro teams. The barnstorming baseball team introduced Indians to an American public in a situation that was entirely different from the one many Americans expected to find them. The era of the Nebraska Indians coincided with the professional careers of Meyers, Bender, Thorpe, and many others. American Indians, thus, had a variety of experiences in American baseball. They played at different levels (boarding schools, independent barnstorming teams, the minor leagues, and in the major leagues) and found varying levels of success. Bender, for instance, won more than two hundred games and was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Despite the apparent differences that distinguished the experiences of American Indian baseball players, they also shared similar paths to professional baseball. Off-reservation boarding schools introduced most American Indians to baseball. Louis Leroy, for instance, played at Carlisle, as did Thorpe. Players also sustained vicious racist attacks. Fans across the country rained derisive remarks on American Indian baseball players, including war whoops and jeers of “blanket heads,” and some people even called Meyers a “nigger.” Finally, all ballplayers fought the stigma of alcoholism. The American press called many American Indian baseball players incurable drunks and usually attributed their professional decline to alcoholism. Moses Yellowhorse, for instance, faced these accusations, but his alcohol consumption (at least during his playing days) reflected the general athletic culture of the 1910s and 1920s; his teammates and other prominent baseball players (including Babe Ruth) were known for hard drinking and partying. Yet American Indians faced this lingering sentiment as proof of their racial inferiority.

Powers-Beck offers a readable and enjoyable examination of American Indian baseball. There are points where he lapses into antiquated terminology when discussing American Indian life. For instance, he writes that a Pawnee story “vividly represents the plight of the Pawnees throughout the nineteenth century” (145). In recent decades, scholars have attempted to eschew words such as “plight,” as it connotes hopelessness in American Indian lives. Powers-Beck also misses an opportunity to examine baseball in the reservation context. Certainly the ability of Meyers, Yellowhorse, and others to integrate baseball is significant. Nevertheless, many American Indian athletes brought the games back to the reservation. Future studies should examine baseball and other sports on the reservation and see how many American Indians integrated baseball into their twentieth-century lives.

*The American Indian Integration of Baseball* arrives at an important moment. Despite the successes of various American Indian athletes in football, baseball, and Olympic sports, many people wonder why so few American Indians are professional athletes today. Part of this, Powers-Beck argues, stems from the contemporary debate about professional teams, such as the Cleveland Indians and Atlanta Braves, using American Indian images as mascots: “While the racial slurs that fans once hurled at Jackie Robinson and Larry Doby in 1947 are now considered anathema in American public life, the racial mockery launched against Sockalexis in 1897 still lives and helps to sell caps, jerseys, souvenir towels, and plastic tomahawks in Cleveland and Atlanta” (169–70). Caricatures of American Indians in professional baseball have erased their historical contributions and rendered American Indians little more than sideshows in professional baseball. However, the success of Bobby Madritsch, who played for the Seattle Mariners in the 2004 season, gives hope to those who want to see American Indians playing baseball, not on baseball caps.

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**The Apache Indians: In Search of the Missing Tribe.** By Helge Ingstad. Translated by Jannine K. Stenehjem with a preface by Benedicte Ingstad and an introduction by Thomas J. Nevins. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004. 188 pages. \$24.95 cloth.

I remember the first time I heard about Apaches living in the Sierra Madre Occidental in Mexico. It was about 1966, when I was a graduate student in the anthropology department at the University of Arizona. Somewhere I came across a reference to a book by a Norwegian named Ingstad who had looked for these so-called “lost Apaches.” I also remember I was quite disappointed to learn that while Ingstad’s book was in the University of Arizona library it was in Norwegian, and although I am sure my Scandinavian grandmother could have read it, I of course couldn’t. The idea that there were still Apaches living traditional lives in the Sierra Madre of Mexico excited me as it did some