

In Tribute to Baseball's Greatest Legends



Native American Louis Sockalexis Penobscot was born October 24, 1871 on Indian Island Old Town, Maine. After being the most sought after college baseball player in the nation, in 1897 Sockalexis became the first American Indian to play professional baseball. Although Native Americans were permitted to play, during his 3 years at bat with the Cleveland Spiders, Sockalexis encountered hostile crowds and racial taunting on the field. He was also the subject of many offensive newspaper cartoons of the era.

Exactly fifty years later, Jackie Robinson faced derision and abuse as the first African American in Major League Baseball. Like his Native American predecessor, crowds jeered and showered him with abuse. But Mr. Robinson displayed personal dignity and restraint, and ultimately won the respect of many with his exciting plays on the field.



Major League Baseball salutes the heritage of the Native American Community and all those individuals, worldwide, who have enabled others to cross racial boundaries.