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RICHARD WESLEY BURNETT AND THE DALLAS EAGLES, 1948-55

by Larry G. Bowman

In 1948, Richard Wesley Burnett attracted national attention when he purchased the Dallas Rebels of the AA Texas League for the hefty sum of \$550,000.¹ Although he was something of a newcomer on the national baseball scene in 1948, "Dick" Burnett was well-known in Southern minor league circles. Since 1935, Burnett had owned several different teams in Gladewater, Gainesville, and Texarkana, and in Monroe, Louisiana. He was recognized as an aggressive and innovative baseball zealot, and as a wealthy Texas oilman who possessed nearly unlimited baseball ambitions.² Burnett further amazed baseball observers when he purchased the Rebels' home ballpark in Oak Cliff for an additional \$265,000.³ Burnett promptly renamed the Rebels the "Eagles" and the ballpark "Burnett Field." In a few weeks Burnett spent nearly a million dollars to gain control of the Dallas franchise, and clearly indicated he had great ambitions for his newly-acquired minor league team.⁴

Dick Burnett was born in McLennan County, Texas, in 1898, but was reared in Gladewater, Texas, where his parents relocated when he was two years old. Although his activities took him far afield from Gladewater, the small East Texas town remained his lifelong home. After he served in World War I, Burnett returned to Gladewater and pursued a series of jobs and business ventures with varying success. Then, in 1932, his career as a businessman took shape. He became involved in the East Texas oil boom, struck oil, and became moderately wealthy.⁵ His wealth did not last long, however. He plunged into a risky oil exploration program in Illinois and suffered heavy losses. In 1944, he recouped his fortune when he discovered the Wesson Field in Ouichita County, Arkansas, once again became wealthy, and remained so the balance of his life.⁶ Throughout his early days as an oilman, Burnett earned the reputation of a hard-driving, honest, and intelligent businessman. He was impulsive, decisive, farsighted, and single-minded. He had to succeed.

While Burnett made and lost his first fortune in Texas and Illinois, he set out to follow one of his great passions in life. As a young man Burnett had played baseball enthusiastically and while he was not particularly talented as a player, he loved the game. So, when he became financially affluent in his first oilfield success, he bought the Shreveport, Louisiana, franchise in the Class C East Texas League in 1935 and moved it to his home town.⁷ His Gladewater Bears did well in 1936, winning the East Texas League pennant, and this whetted Burnett's appetite for further baseball adventures. In spite of his financial reverses late in the 1930s, Burnett never ceased his activity in minor league baseball; and when he

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became a multimillionaire in the 1940s, he fulfilled a long-cherished ambition to own a franchise in the nationally-respected Texas League.⁸

Burnett had two goals when he bought the Dallas team in 1948. First, he pledged to spare no expense to improve the Eagles and to win the Texas League pennant—something Dallas had not accomplished since 1936. Burnett's other objective, and clearly the more visionary of the two goals, was to upgrade the Eagles' playing facilities, to secure a major league franchise, and to locate it in Dallas. Although expansion franchises were still years away and the relocation of existing major league teams was just entering speculative discussions about the future of baseball, Burnett sensed that significant changes in the geographical distribution of the major league teams was imminent. During his first two years as owner of the Eagles, Burnett spent \$200,000 improving Burnett Field, the adjacent parking lot, and buying surrounding vacant lots.⁹ He planned to have his ballpark in excellent condition and ready to serve as the home of a major league team when the opportunity arose. He also understood how the proliferation of the automobile and the decline of public transit were affecting post-war America, and he planned to have plenty of parking spaces for automobiles. Burnett also was aware that fans enjoyed comfortable ballparks, and he labored to make his park one that was pleasant, well-lighted, and safe to visit. As he adapted to the harshly competitive world of big-time baseball, Burnett regularly proved he was an alert and innovative operator.

Burnett assumed management of the lackluster Dallas Eagles on the eve of the Texas League season in 1948, and devoted himself to improving his team. His first three seasons as owner of the Eagles were mixed successes. Burnett spent freely to locate talent for his team, and by the end of 1949 he had assembled a roster of hard-hitting young players. In the 1950 season, the Eagles featured some powerful hitters who attracted 404,851 fans to Burnett Field. Eagle first baseman Jerry Witte hit fifty home runs, and his teammates, Ben Guintini, Bill Serna, and Buck Frierson, hit thirty-two, twenty-eight, and nineteen respectively.¹⁰ The Eagles showed flashes of promise, but their record often left Burnett in despair. His team finished next to last in 1948, and fifth in 1949 and in 1950.¹¹

Burnett did not lose quietly or gracefully. Once, while he was upset with the play on the field, he ripped a telephone from the wall in the pressbox. Another time he threw a typewriter out of the pressbox, and he often called the dugout to offer advice or criticism to his managers. Because of his sometimes impulsive behavior in the early years of his ownership of the Eagles, Bill Rives, a Dallas sportswriter, referred to Burnett as "Rampant Richard."¹² By 1952, as his Eagles came of age, Burnett learned to check public displays of his emotions, so much so that Rives eventually declared that Burnett had forfeited the title of "Rampant Richard."¹³

In addition to his talent for assembling a team, Burnett also

demonstrated that he was an excellent promoter. For example, he knew that the Fort Worth Cats held the record for an opening-day crowd in the Texas League at slightly over 16,000 spectators. To create interest in his team and to satisfy his competitive drive, Burnett decided to use opening day of the 1950 Texas League season to establish a new attendance record. Even though he encountered many obstacles and some criticism while pursuing his goal, Burnett rented the Cotton Bowl, cramped a playing field on its turf, and began the season amidst a whirlwind of promotion and hyperbole. The opening game of the season was preceded by an old timers' workout in which such immortals as Frank "Homerun" Baker, Ty Cobb, This Speaker, Dizzy Dean, and others took batting practice and performed the usual pre-game, warm-up rituals before an awed and appreciative audience of 53,578.¹⁴ Texas Governor Allan Shivers threw out the first ball when the old timers took the field against the Tulsa Oilers, and Dizzy Dean, who good-humoredly went along with the charade, promptly walked the first Tulsa hitter. The Eagles' regulars then assumed their positions on the diamond, the Tulsa leadoff batted again and singled, and the season got underway. The opening day crowd was an all-time record for attendance at any kind of Texas League game.¹⁵ The whole evening was a success. Burnett engineered the attendance record he coveted and earned much good will for the Eagles.

Burnett was a showman. He fully understood that he competed for the fans' entertainment dollars, and he was convinced that an evening at Burnett Field should be a full-entertainment experience. Taking an example from some of the major league teams, he installed an organ at the park and hired Inez Teddlie to play it during lulls in the game and between innings. Teddlie and the music became standard features at all home games.¹⁶ He regularly engaged in promotions to draw fans to the ballpark, and, while these were the years in which minor league attendance declined, the Eagles regularly set attendance records while Burnett was the club's owner.¹⁷

Burnett was not a dilettante. He took minor league baseball seriously. He constantly improved his team, upgraded the facilities at Burnett Field, and carefully lobbied the owners of major league teams with an eye to the future when he hoped he might obtain a major league team for Dallas. Burnett was colorful; he enjoyed the notoriety he earned as the owner of a minor league team in a prime baseball market. He also understood that he had to avoid becoming too controversial. The men who controlled the major leagues often were amused by Burnett's resourcefulness. But he also understood they could thwart him, if they decided he was too "colorful."

In January 1952, Burnett took a step that was potentially dangerous. He decided to end segregation in the Texas League. Burnett announced the Eagles would have at least one black on the roster for the upcoming season—if a qualified, competent player could be located and signed to a contract.¹⁸ Even though Burnett edged into controversial territory in his determination to integrate the Texas League, he unflinchingly pursued the

matter. His determination to integrate the league was apparent; his desire to avoid undue controversy was equally apparent. Few faulted his decision to banish Jim Crow from the Texas League, but Burnett knew that many would criticize him if he handled the integration of the league poorly.

The Dallas Express, the leading black newspaper in Dallas in the 1950s, took note of Burnett's activities and urged him to follow through on his plan to integrate the league.¹⁹ Burnett's motives for ending segregation in the Texas League were at once altruistic and self-serving. Although he was a product of East Texas where racial discrimination was a commonly accepted practice, Burnett had a healthy attitude regarding civil rights. He also was well aware that major league baseball was slowly making headway with its policy of voluntary integration, and, while many minor leagues had not ended discriminatory practices, Burnett believed the moment had arrived for the Texas League to end its practice of barring black players. Moreover, and not unimportantly, he also realized that the introduction of black players to the league would permit him to tap a new pool of talent. And, of course, he suspected that Dallas' black population would support his effort and would bolster attendance at Burnett Field.²⁰ Burnett was not a liberal; but he did have a sense of what was just and what was not, and, besides, integrating the Texas League made good business sense.²¹

Burnett sought the black player he wanted with his customary vigor. First, he held two tryouts in Dallas. The first attracted black players from Texas and surrounding states, and several who showed some promise were invited to a second, more intensive tryout. Unfortunately, the tryouts failed to produce a player Burnett believed ready to compete in the tough Texas League. His next step was to seek players in the Negro American League. Ray Neil and Othello Renfro, veterans in the Negro American League, were invited to spring training with the Eagles. Neil signed a short-term contract, worked out with the Eagles in Florida, and was cut from the roster before spring training ended; Renfro accepted travel money but failed to appear in camp.²²

Burnett's attempt to locate the black player he wanted seemed stymied. At that point Cleveland Indians' General Manager Hank Greenberg offered to loan David Hoskins to the Eagles. Hoskins, who had played in the Negro American League and had toured with Satchel Paige, was a right-handed pitcher who began his professional career as an outfielder.²³ Burnett preferred to own the contracts of the players on his team's roster, but, in this situation, he had little choice. As events were to prove, Burnett made a wise decision when he added Hoskins to the Eagles' roster.

Hoskins did well with the Dallas Eagles. He debuted on April 13, 1952, and pitched the Eagles to a 4-2 win over the Tulsa Oilers.²⁴ About 4,000 fans attended the game, and Hoskins was accepted well by the spectators who witnessed a history-making event. Hoskins presence with

the Eagles had a positive influence on the Eagles' attendance in 1952. In 1951, the Eagles had drawn a paid attendance of 228,286; in 1952, when the Texas League experienced declining attendance, the Eagles home turnout rose to 266,532, a seventeen percent increase.²⁵ Burnett was further gratified by the fact that Hoskins' presence did not provoke racial incidents at Burnett Field, and the integration of the Eagles proved to be a relatively simple task.

Hoskins performed wonderfully and improved the Eagles as a contender for the pennant. When the season ended in September, he had recorded twenty-two wins against ten losses, and ranked among the top ten hitters in the league with a .318 average.²⁶ In fact, Hoskins did everything that could have been expected of him: he served as a pinch-hitter, a pinch-runner, and did some relief pitching on a couple of occasions. Hoskins was a major contributor to the Eagles' championship season in 1952. Then, in the playoffs for the right to represent the Texas League in the Dixie Series, the Eagles were eliminated by the Tulsa Oilers. The Eagles lost four games to two, with Hoskins the winning pitcher in both Dallas victories.²⁷ It was an outstanding year for the Dallas franchise even though Burnett was bitterly disappointed by the failure of the Eagles to represent the league in the Dixie Series. In 1953, the Eagles (minus Hoskins, who had moved to the major leagues) won the pennant again and defeated Nashville in the Dixie Series.²⁸

By 1952-1953, Burnett achieved one of the two goals he had set for himself when he purchased the Eagles. A combination of real baseball savvy, money, and hard work paved the road to championship years for the Eagles. As Burnett enjoyed the successes of his Eagles in the early 1950s, another of his ambitions appeared to have a increasing chance for realization.

Since early in the 1900s, the map of the major leagues had remained fixed. The sixteen teams in the American and National Leagues had resided in their sites since the National Agreement of 1903 between the then rival leagues. The warring American and National Leagues made peace in 1903, and agreed upon the means through which they controlled the map of baseball for the next half century. By 1950, however, American demographics had changed dramatically and some of the weaker franchises (i.e. Boston in the National League and St. Louis in the American League) sought to relocate in better baseball markets (the Boston Braves moved to Milwaukee in 1953, and the St. Louis Browns settled in Baltimore in 1954). Other financially troubled franchises were rumored ready for relocation or seeking new ownership. Burnett realized that an unprecedented era of change approached major league baseball, and he understood that all the debate about the expansion of American and National leagues appeared promising. Burnett believed that his work improving Burnett Field, strengthening the Eagles, and proving Dallas to be a viable baseball market was simply a prelude to realizing his ambition of acquiring a major league

team.

At this point, Burnett found himself in a dilemma. On the one hand, he wanted a major league franchise and he was well aware of the need to avoid alienating the major league owners who were the lords of baseball. On the other hand, he was concerned about the condition of minor league baseball, and he increasingly became annoyed by the treatment it received at the hands of the closed corporation of major league baseball. Burnett was especially concerned over the decline minor league baseball experienced early in the 1950s, and he believed that a significant part of the minor leaguer's problems arose from the standard business practices in baseball that clearly favored the interests of the major leagues.

Since 1949, when the minor leagues had boasted fifty-nine leagues with an attendance of 41,872,762 spectators, the number of leagues had declined and fan support steadily dwindled; during the 1953 season, for example, the minors attracted 22,183,821 in paid attendance.²⁹ The decline of nearly 20,000,000 paying patrons accompanied by the demise of nineteen leagues between 1949 and 1953 alarmed minor league owners such as Burnett. He often referred to himself as a "real minor-leaguer," meaning that he remained independent of "working agreements" with major league teams and retained control of his club and its destiny rather than subordinate it to the interests of major league executives who viewed the minors only as a farm system for the development of players. Burnett was contemptuous of what he called "chain store" baseball. He often used that term to express his profound dislike of the minor league farm systems many of the major league teams established to develop players. The increasingly common practices of "working agreements" and "chain stores," Burnett believed, would eventually drive the "real minor-leaguers" out of business.³⁰

As the business conditions for minor league baseball steadily worsened in the 1950s and the major leagues did nothing to aid the faltering minor league establishment, Burnett decided to act. Even though he realized he would not endear himself to the all-powerful major league owners and possibly threaten his chances to join their ranks, he decided to call an ad hoc meeting of all minor league owners and executives in Dallas, Texas, to discuss the current problems of minor league baseball and to seek remedies to the plight it faced.

Burnett decided to pay the conference's expenses, an estimated \$8,000, out of his pocket in the hope that his gesture would encourage attendance. He was not disappointed. On Saturday, October 17, 1953, representatives of twenty-three minor leagues plus several major league executives assembled in the Adolphus Hotel in Dallas for a two-day conference.³¹ Burnett intended for the delegates to discuss problems common to minor league baseball. Then, if an agreement for action emerged from their conversations, they could carry that consensus forward

at the annual meeting of the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues (NAPBL) scheduled for November 1953. The NAPBL was the agency which regulated minor league baseball, and Burnett believed any protest from the minor leagues to the major leagues ought to be delivered through the NAPBL.

The keynote speaker at the Dallas meeting was United States Senator Edwin C. Johnson of Colorado, who also was the president of the Western League.³² Johnson, who had long sympathized with the dilemma of the minors, delivered a stinging indictment of the business practices of the major leagues, and the conference got off to a rousing start. For two days, the delegates aired a host of issues. When the delegates ended their deliberations, they decided to present the NAPBL with a report calling for action on several issues.

To combat the emerging invasion of minor league territory by radio and television broadcasts of major league games, the Dallas group called for the restoration of the newly-discarded Rule 1 (D) of the National Agreement.³³ The National Agreement was the document which governed the relationships among the major league teams and between the major and minor leagues, and Rule 1 (D), simply stated, banned broadcasts of baseball games beyond a fifty-mile radius of a team's home ballpark. Broadcasting major league games was a fairly recent innovation, and, so long as the major leagues had confined their broadcasts to their immediate 12 metropolitan areas, the minor leagues had been unconcerned with their policies. Early in the 1950s, some teams, such as the St. Louis Cardinals, aggressively formed radio networks and extended their influence into areas the minor leagues thought to be unacceptable. The major leagues abandoned Rule 1 (D) when the United States Department of Justice suggested that the rule worked an undue hardship on radio stations wishing to fill the yawning gaps in afternoon programming with baseball broadcasts. Many minor league executives believed that the major-league owners had too quickly acquiesced to the pressure brought upon them by the Department of Justice. After all, baseball was exempt from the anti-trust laws, and the minor leaguers felt the owners simply used the pressure as an excuse to earn additional revenue at the expense of the ailing minor-league establishment.

The delegates also urged an increase in the monetary compensation a minor-league team received when one of its players was drafted by a higher minor-league team or by a major-league franchise. The Dallas group called for better representation for the minors when the National Agreement was amended, and, in addition, the delegates called for a reform in the way the NAPBL changed its bylaws.³⁴ In 1953, the NAPBL required a two-thirds majority for any alteration of its rules. The major league teams could forestall changes in the NAPBL's by-laws since nearly seventy per cent of the minor league teams were either owned by the majors or had "working agreements" with major-league teams. Burnett's group suggested that the

rule be changed to a simple majority vote.³⁵

The purpose of the references to the National Agreement and the bylaws of the NAPBL was to foster an attempt to alter the means through which Burnett and his allies felt the major leagues exploited minor-league baseball. The proposals may, at first glance, appear innocuous, but in fact, they challenged the one-sided advantage the majors enjoyed in their relationship with the embattled minor leaguers.

Armed with the results of the Dallas meeting, Burnett carried its proposals to the NAPBL's annual meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, where he reported the outcome of the Dallas conference to a caucus of the Texas League, and presented the recommendations to the NAPBL's general assembly.³⁶ Burnett was pleased by the general assembly's reaction. No one condemned his Dallas conference. Nearly everyone who spoke condemned the major-league owners for the ongoing plight of minor-league baseball. After a series of speeches and debates, the NAPBL created a special committee to study all the issues at stake and to report to the general assembly in 1954 at its next annual meeting in Houston, Texas.³⁷

Although Burnett was not appointed to the special committee, he agreed to serve as its temporary chairman. The committee, which was never given an official name, met under his direction in Dallas early in 1954, elected Leslie O'Connor, the general counsel to the Pacific Coast League, as its permanent chairman, and proceeded to work on the charge given it by the NAPBL. Burnett ended his formal association with the committee but watched its progress with keen interest. He also shared its disappointment when the major leagues rejected all of the committee's proposals in December 1954.³⁸

Burnett's modest efforts to reform baseball failed. All through 1953 and 1954, he urged change, but, at the same time, he exercised caution. After all, one of his over-riding ambitions was to establish major-league baseball in Dallas, and he could not afford to alienate the major-league owners who, he hoped, would someday permit him to purchase a franchise.

On June 1, 1955, fifty-seven year old Dick Burnett died of a heart attack while he was in Texarkana, Texas, to see his Eagles play a weekend series against the Texarkana Sports.³⁹ One can only guess what might have occurred had Burnett lived a few years longer. He had labored diligently and carefully to position himself to acquire a major-league team for Dallas, and he may well have taken advantage of either the franchise relocation or expansion programs the major leagues inaugurated in the 1950s and 1960s.

NOTES

¹*The Dallas Morning News*, April 14, 1948; Bill O'Neal, *The Texas League, 1888-1987: A Century of Baseball* (Austin, Texas, 1987), p. 234, hereinafter cited as O'Neal. *The Texas League; The Dallas Times Herald*, April 14, 1948; *Fort Worth Star Telegram*, April 15, 1948.

²Interview, Mrs. Richard W. Burnett, Gladewater, Texas, March 19, 1991.

³Blackie Sherrod, "The Pickers Up Nawth", *The Dallas Times Herald*, October 16, 1975;

Interview, Mrs. Hughes Brown, Gladewater, Texas, March 19, 1991. Mrs. Brown is the younger of Mr. and Mrs. Burnett's two daughters, and she participated in the management of her father's baseball interests.

²At the time he purchased the Dallas Rebels, Burnett was quoted in the *Dallas Morning News* as stating, "I may not live to see it [the arrival of major league baseball in Dallas], but my children will," *Dallas Morning News*, April 11, 1948.

³Interview, Mrs. Richard Wesley Burnett, Gladewater, Texas, March 19, 1991; William B. Ruggles, *The History of the Texas League of Professional Baseball Clubs* (N.P., 1951), pp. 10-11.

⁴*The Gladewater* (Texas) *Mirror*, April 17, 1991.

⁵Interview, Mrs. Richard Wesley Burnett, Gladewater Texas, March 19, 1991; *The Dallas Eagles News*, II, June 1956, p. 3.

⁶Interview, Mrs. Richard Wesley Burnett, Gladewater, Texas, March 19, 1991.

⁷*The Sporting News*, June 8, 1955; Bill Rives, "The Sports Scene," *The Dallas Morning News*, April 26, 1952. Burnett's renovations were in addition to \$60,000 of improvements his predecessors had done to the restrooms, ticket windows, food facilities, and turnstiles during the winter prior to the change in ownership. *Dallas Morning News*, January 11, 1948.

⁸Bill Rives, "The Sport Scene," *Dallas Morning News*, April, 27, 1952; O'Neal, *The Texas League*, pp. 102-03.

⁹O'Neal, *The Texas League*, p. 341; J.P. Friendly, ed., *The Texas League Record Book, 1888-1972* (Blytheville, Arkansas, 1972), p. 5, hereinafter cited as, Friendly, *Texas League Record Book*.

¹⁰*The Dallas Morning News*, April 4, 1952.

¹¹O'Neal, *The Texas League*, pp. 341-45.

¹²*Dallas Morning News*, April 11, 1950, and April 12, 1950. Prior to this promotion, the record attendance at a Texas League game had been set in 1930 in Fort Worth when 16,018 had crowded into the home ballpark of the Fort Worth Cats. The largest crowd ever to attend a minor league game in the United States occurred in Jersey City, New Jersey, in 1941 when 56,391 fans witnessed one of Jersey City's home games. Also see, O'Neal, *The Texas League*, p. 234.

¹³*The Dallas Times Herald*, April 12, 1950.

¹⁴Interview, Mrs. Hughes Brown, Gladewater, Texas, March 16, 1991; Dan Baldwin, "Play Ball! The National Pastime-Dallas Style," *Legacies: A History Journal for Dallas and North Central Texas*, III (Spring, 1991), pp. 24-25. The Philadelphia Athletics were a team unrenowned for adapting to changing times, and in the late 1940s even the A's had gone to organ music to entertain the fans, see Bruce Kuklich, *To Every Thing A Season: Shibe Park And Urban Philadelphia, 1909-1976* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1991), p. 100.

¹⁵Friendly, *Texas League Record Book*, p. 16.

¹⁶Larry G. Bowman, "Breaking Barriers: David Hoskins and the Integration of the Texas League," *Legacies: A Journal of History for Dallas and North Central Texas*, III (Spring, 1991), p. 15, hereinafter cited as, Bowman, "Breaking Barriers".

¹⁷*The Dallas Express*, March 29, 1952; Robert Peterson, *Only The Ball Was White* (New York, 1984), pp. 349-54, hereinafter cited as Peterson, *Only The Ball Was White*; *The Dallas Morning News*, March 20, 1952.

¹⁸C.H. Gentry, the sportswriter for *The Dallas Express*, wrote a lengthy story for the weekly paper circulated among Dallas black citizens which was captioned: "I am indebted to the Colored Race." It was an account of Burnett's assessment of his relationships to black Americans and how several had worked with him in the difficult days of getting rich, and how they were still valued employees. While the statements and the manner of writing featured in Gentry's article would shock and outrage modern, politically-correct readers, it was, for its time, an unusual and courageous statement. *The Dallas Express*, June 28, 1952.

¹⁹Interview, Mrs. Hughes Brown, Gladewater, Texas, March 19, 1991.

²⁰*The Dallas Express*, March 29, 1952; *The Dallas Morning News*, March 20, 1952.

²¹Robert Peterson, *Only the Ball Was White*, p. 349; *The Dallas Express*, May 5, 1952;

Bowman. "Breaking Barriers," pp. 15-16.

²⁴*The Dallas Morning News*, April, 14, 1952; *The Dallas Times Herald*, April 14, 1952.

²⁵*The Dallas Morning News*, September 6, 1952.

²⁶*The Dallas Times Herald*, September 14, 1952.

²⁷O'Neal, *The Texas League*, pp. 346, 348. The Dixie Series was an annual event in which the Texas League pitted its champion against the winner of the Southern League. Dixie Series was a well-played and well-attended imitation of the World Series.

²⁸*The Sporting News* declared Burnett the winner of the Minor League Executive of the Year for 1953, *The Sporting News*, January 20, 1954.

²⁹Neil J. Sullivan, *The Minors: The Struggle and the Triumph of Baseball's Poor Relations From 1876 to the Present* (New York, 1990), p. 235. hereinafter cited as Sullivan, *The Minors*; Robert Obojski, *Bush League*, (New York, 1975), p. 27, hereinafter cited as Obojski, *Bush League*; Benjamin G. Rader, *Baseball: A History of America's Game* (Urbana, 1992), pp. 214-15. For information concerning the rising numbers of minor league teams owned by or affiliated with major league teams in the 1950s, see John Thorn and Peter Palmer, eds., *Total Baseball: The Ultimate Encyclopedia of Baseball* (New York, 1992), p. 514, cited hereinafter as Thorn and Palmer, *Total Baseball*.

³⁰*The Dallas Morning News*, October 18, 1953; *The Dallas Times Herald*, December 2, 1953; Interview, Mrs. Hughes Brown, Gladewater, Texas, March 19, 1991.

³¹*The Dallas Morning News*, October 17, 1953.

³²*The Dallas Morning News*, October 18, 1953; *The Dallas Times Herald*, October 18, 1953.

³³*Fort Worth Star Telegram*, October 18, 1953.

³⁴*The Dallas Morning News*, October 19, 1953. For handy discussions of the evolution of the National Agreement through which baseball was governed in 1953, see, Charles Alexander, *Our Game: An American Baseball History* (New York, 1991), pp. 37-38, 45, 50, 55, 60, 86, 102, and 104; also see, Sullivan, *The Minors*, pp. 44, 58, 64, 91, 97, and 110.

³⁵Thorn and Palmer, *Total Baseball*, p. 514.

³⁶*The Atlanta Constitution*, December 4, 1953.

³⁷*The Dallas Morning News*, December 4, 1953; *The Dallas Times Herald*, December 4, 1953.

³⁸*The Dallas Morning News*, December 12, 1954; *The Dallas Times Herald*, December 12, 1954.

³⁹*The Dallas Morning News*, June 2, 1955; *The Dallas Times Herald*, June 2, 1955; *The Sporting News*, June 8, 1955.