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## Nike Partners With Negro League Baseball Museum to Launch "Untold Truth" Collection

*Collection Will Offer Apparel and Footwear Inspired by the Legendary Athletes and Teams of the Negro Baseball Leagues*



*This Kansas City Monarchs replica jersey is part of Nike's Untold Truth collection, a new apparel and footwear line that pays homage to the teams of the Negro Baseball Leagues. The apparel is available online at [nikeuntoldtruth.com](http://nikeuntoldtruth.com) and at Niketown, as well as select stores.*

Beaverton, OR (BlackNews.com) - This February, as part of Black History Month, Nike celebrates the accomplishments, heritage and history of Negro Leagues Baseball when it unveils the Untold Truth Collection. The new line of urban sportswear showcases six legendary teams of the Negro Baseball Leagues: Chicago American Giants, Kansas City Monarchs, New York Cubans, Homestead Grays, Memphis Red Sox and Philadelphia Stars. The apparel was created in conjunction with the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum (NLBM) to pay homage to the extraordinary athletic ability and indomitable spirit of these players. Part of the proceeds from the sale of the apparel will go to the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum.

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Apparel evoking the spirit of Chicago American Giants, Kansas City Monarchs, and New York Cubans will be available beginning February 8 online at [nikeuntoldtruth.com](http://nikeuntoldtruth.com) and at Niketown, as well as select stores throughout the country. On April 1, apparel celebrating the Homestead Grays, the Memphis Red Sox and the Philadelphia Stars will be in stores.

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Nike previewed select items from the Untold Truth Collection at the **Helen Mills Theater** in New York last month. Among the guests were 94 -year-old John Jordan "Buck" O'Neil, a former Negro League player who became the first African American coach in the Major Leagues, and Florida Marlins pitcher Dontrelle Willis, a National League All Star. The two shared the league's rich history, enduring legacy and impact still felt by today's players and today's game.

"I know personally how important these players were," enthused Dontrelle Willis. "Men like Buck O'Neil, Jackie Robinson, and Satchel Paige paved the way for me and many others to succeed in baseball on our merits and not our color. We owe them a lot."

"The year 2006 marks the 60th anniversary of Jackie Robinson's playing in the Major Leagues. We felt it was a timely opportunity to not only pay homage to his accomplishments, but those of the entire Negro Leagues," said Rodney Knox, Nike US communications director. "We are extremely proud of the partnership we've established with the Museum and look forward to introducing the line this month."

Nike began discussions with the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum to research and develop the collection more than a year ago. Using original team logos and colors, the collection aims to capture the essence of what the teams presented while bringing the little known facts of the league's story to life. The high batting averages and pitching stats that the players continually achieved is a testament to their physical and emotional strength and endurance. Innovations created by the league, like mobile lighting systems, shin guards and batting helmets, continue to be a necessary part of today's game. The Untold Truth Collection is Nike's way of ensuring the public knows their stories and of supporting the NLBM's operation.

"To try to capture the look of the Negro Leagues' clothing and translate it into a modern day style, we had to study history," said Sheldon Donnell, Nike product line manager - Untold Truth, in explaining how the line was created. "We looked at hundreds of photos and films. For example, Nike matched the color of the Kansas City Monarchs' footwear to the color of the team's road uniform. In the end, we hope anyone who wears this apparel will appreciate the attention to detail while honoring and savoring the history."

"A lot about the game has changed, and thankfully, much of it is for the better," stated an emotional Buck O'Neil. "There is still work to do, but today we have a Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, we have Black owners, managers and executives of teams...and look what Nike has done! The Untold Truth Collection represents more than a jersey or a pair of sneakers. It represents our lives, our story, our legacy."

For photographs and more details about the collection and the history of the Negro Leagues, please visit <http://www.nikeuntoldtruth.com/>

About NIKE, Inc.

NIKE, Inc. based in Beaverton, Oregon is the world's leading designer, marketer and distributor of authentic athletic footwear, apparel, equipment and accessories for a wide variety of sports and fitness activities. Wholly-owned Nike subsidiaries include Converse Inc., which designs, markets and distributes athletic footwear, apparel and accessories; Bauer NIKE Hockey Inc., a leading designer and distributor of hockey equipment; Cole Haan, a leading designer and marketer of luxury shoes, handbags, accessories and coats; Hurley International LLC, which designs, markets and distributes action sports and youth lifestyle footwear, apparel and accessories and Exeter Brands Group LLC, which designs and markets athletic footwear and apparel for the value retail channel. Please go to <http://www.nike.com/> for more information.

*Florida Marlins pitcher Dontrelle Willis listens as former baseball player Buck O'Neil recounts his experiences in the Negro Leagues. Willis and O'Neil helped unveil Nike's Untold Truth collection, a new apparel and footwear line that pays homage to the teams of the Negro Leagues.*



### **About the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum**

Founded in 1990, the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum (NLBM) is a privately funded, non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the rich history of African-American Baseball. Experience a tour of multi-media displays, museum store, hundreds of photographs, & artifacts dating from the late 1800s through the 1960s. The NLBM opened its permanent 10,000 square foot facility in 1997 sharing the new 18th & Vine museum complex with the American Jazz Museum. Please go to <http://www.nlbm.com/> for more information.

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