

Frank Robinson Is First Black Manager

By DAVE ANDERSON

Special to The New York Times

CLEVELAND, Oct. 3—With the poise that has characterized his career as a slugger of 574 home runs and as a clubhouse leader, Frank Robinson was named today by the Cleveland Indians as major league baseball's first black manager. He received a one-year contract.

At a crowded news conference in Cleveland Stadium, a congratulatory telegram from President Ford was read by Phil Seghi, the Indians' general manager, who chose the 39-year-old Robinson to succeed Ken Aspromonte as the American League team's 28th manager and ninth player-manager, the most of any major league team.

President Ford described Robinson's selection as "welcome news for baseball fans across the nation" and a "tribute to you personally, to your athletic skills and to your unsurpassed leadership." Attending the news conference were Bowie Kuhn, the Commissioner of Baseball, and Lee MacPhail, the president of the American League.

"We got something done," Kuhn commented, "that we should have done before."

Wearing a black and white plaid suit with a vest, Robinson attempted to reduce his sociological burden.

"The only reason I'm the

Continued on Page 45, Column 1

Indians Name Robinson First Black Manager

Continued From Page 1, Col. 6

first black manager is that I was born black," he said calmly. "That's the color I am. I'm not a superman, I'm not a miracle worker. Your ballplayers determine how good a team you have. I might influence the ballplayers to some extent, but if we have a good team, they deserve the credit. If a ball club fails, I think the manager should be held responsible. I want to be judged by the play on the field."

Asked if he foresaw any additional pressure on him to succeed as a black manager, he replied:

"I don't see any pressure. I don't see any goals I have to achieve as the first black manager. The pressure from within is not there."

He was hired nearly three decades after the late Jackie Robinson was the major league's first black player in 1947.

"I thank the Lord that Jackie Robinson was the man he was in that position," the Indians' new manager said. "If he wasn't it would have set back the whole idea of signing more black players. The one wish I could have is that Jackie Robinson could be here today to see this happen."

Asked if he believed a similar responsibility to succeed

as a manager now was on him, Robinson replied:

"No, this is a different ball game altogether. Different society. I just hope baseball people don't say, 'All right, Frank Robinson is the first black manager, we have one, that's it.' In my heart, I don't think I was hired because I was black. I hope not. I think I've been hired because of my ability."

"Frank Robinson sits before you," Seghi said, "because I think he has the qualities that I was searching for in a manager, not because he was black or white. He has all the leadership qualities necessary to lead a major league ball club. You know what he did at Cincinnati, you know what he did in Baltimore; he's a true leader."

Robinson helped the Baltimore Orioles represent the American League in four World Series in his six seasons there. He had led the Reds to one National League pennant. He is the only major leaguer selected the most valuable player in both leagues. Through 19 seasons he has a career .295 average with 2,900 hits and 1,778 runs batted in.

Now a designated hitter, Robinson will be the major league's first playing manager since Solly Hemus of the St. Louis Cardinals in

1959. Eddie Joost, with the Philadelphia Athletics in 1954, was the American League's last playing manager.

His salary of \$175,000 next season was agreed upon shortly after the Indians acquired him on Sept. 12 from the California Angels for the \$20,000 waiver price. When the managerial position later developed, he sought a two-year contract through 1976, but accepted the one-year offer in return for the opportunity to fulfill his ambition to be a manager.

As a playing manager, Robinson will receive the same \$175,000 plus the fringe benefits accorded managers such as a hotel suite on road trips and an expense account. Unlike other managers, he also will receive living expenses in Cleveland next year and the use of an automobile here. His contract was negotiated by Ed Keating of International Management, Inc.

In listing Robinson's credentials, Seghi also mentioned his five seasons managing Santurce in the Puerto Rican winter league.

In five seasons there, Robinson's teams finished first twice, third twice and fourth once. When he joined Santurce for the 1968-69 season, he was the first American black to manage an integrat-

ed team of white, black and Latin players.

During nearly two hours of questions and answers, Robinson spoke easily and articulately, more so than many major league managers. At the formal news conference in the stadium club, he was flanked by Seghi; Nick Mileti, the Indians' president, and Ted Bonda, the Indians' executive vice president. Later, in the press room, he sat with his wife, Barbara Ann, and Seghi while continuing to discuss his managerial philosophies:

¶On discipline: "I can't say I've never missed a curfew, but I've never been caught. I

believe men are men. I'm not going to set a time limit on when they have to be in the hotel. I'm not going to be a baby-sitter. I'm not going to sit in the lobby to see who's late. I'll need my sleep because I'll be playing myself. But if I walk into a cocktail lounge and see a couple of players, I won't expect them to run out. I might even buy them a drink now that I've got an expense account."

¶On arguing with umpires: "I don't think I've had trouble with umpires. I've been thrown out of about 15 games in Puerto Rico in five seasons. But only twice last year. I select my words better now. Any manager that goes through a season without being thrown out isn't doing his job. You've got to show your players you're backing them up. And you've got to show the umpires that you're not going to let them run over you."

¶On his coaches: "I haven't had time to sit down and select my staff. I have a few people in mind, but I haven't talked to them yet. I'll say this, if I select two black coaches and one white coach, I don't want people reading anything into that. And if I select two white coaches and one black coach, I don't want people reading anything into that either. I'll pick my coaches on ability, people I think can do the job."

¶On himself as a player: "I'm counting on Frank Robinson the manager to talk to Frank Robinson the player. I'll be the first one not to write Frank Robinson's name in the line-up."

¶On the Indians, who finished fourth in the American League East with a 77-85 won-lost record: "In the years I was in Baltimore, we always figured we could win three out of four with the Indians and maybe all four. But this year the Indians became a team to be reckoned with. I think the strong part of the ball club is offense. Every team needs more pitching. But in my heart, I don't think there's a team in the American League with the youth and experience we have."

¶On the demand of Gaylord Perry, the Indians' ace pitcher, for \$1 more in salary than Robinson's \$175,000 contract: "I don't negotiate salaries. Mr. Seghi handles that. I don't think Gaylord and I are incompatible. Gaylord's a real competitor and a real professional. So am I, and if he's satisfied, I'm sure we'll get along."

With a one-year contract, the Indians' new manager obviously is on trial, but he commented:

"I hope that in September next year I will have justified the Indians' confidence in me and that I'll be rehired. If not, I don't foresee any problem in firing me or any black manager if he's not doing the job. If the Indians aren't satisfied with the job I'm doing, fire me. There won't be any repercussions."

"The public is pretty smart. That guy up in the stands knows if you're doing a good job or not."

LINEUPS

INDIANS

1. McGraw	7
2. KUDER	4
3. CAMPBELL	01
4. SPILLER	9
5. McCann	3
6. HAMMICK	8
7. HELL	5
8. DUNCAN	2
9. NUNOZADO	6
10. J. VERRA	1

UMPIRES

HP	2. Miller
ID	3. Miller
2B	4. Miller
3B	5. Miller



Associated Press

Frank Robinson talking to reporters in Cleveland yesterday. On the wall is a line-up of team's final home game.

The New York Times

Published: October 4, 1974

Copyright © The New York Times



United Press International

**Barbara Ann Robinson,
wife of Cleveland man-
ager, as a message from
President Ford was read.**

The New York Times

Published: October 4, 1974

Copyright © The New York Times