

1941

# Kenyon Downs Oberlin, 9–5, in Lacrosse Debut, First Game Played in Ohio

April 15, 1941

Last Saturday Oberlin turned out to witness its first lacrosse game — and incidentally, the first lacrosse game ever played in Ohio. The fans were well pleased despite the fact that Oberlin wound up on the short end of a 9–5 score. It was a thrill-packed spectacle from the starting whistle to the closing gun. In the four hard-fought, gruelling periods, the Oberlin team matched the superior skill of the more experienced Kenyon club with hard, fast, gutty play. Nor was the Oberlin team entirely lacking in its own skill: Bliss Forbush's fast stick-handling,

Gabby Robertson's dodging from midfield to goal and Kirby West's heady defense play were all good lacrosse and there could be no finer on any seasoned collegiate squad.

### Yeomen Show Promise

Even the green Yeomen matched experienced lacrossers in many departments. Stan Burns, Bill Poteat, Gerry Wilson and Bob DeGroff, though new men to the game, settled down and did a heads-up job at defense. Bob Clapp and Bob Warren, both playing their first lacrosse game, showed remarkable promise, and provided adequate relief for

Thorne, Bennett and Gordon, continuing the good work of that attack trio. Particularly praiseworthy is the work of Paul Scanton, freshman goalie, who, though he had never seen a stick until last week, turned in a performance worthy of a veteran lacrosser.

### Coach is Optimistic

Our own stick swingers were weak in fundamentals and play was often sloppy. This is largely due to lack of practice and experience. Gabby Robertson is quite pleased with his team's showing and considers the defeat due to lack of experience and condition. He is confident that with a bit

more practice and heavy running, the Oberlin team should avenge this defeat when it meets Kenyon again later in the season.

It looks as though Gabby Robertson has really started something with his lacrosse business. It was amazing to see the number of students that witnessed Saturday's spectacle between Oberlin and Kenyon. We wonder if this game couldn't be developed into a major support here at Oberlin. Gabby says that he has scheduled a return match with Kenyon for this spring and is pulling wires for a tilt with the University of Michigan.

1972

# Ali Makes Open Plea

To the Editor:

I am writing to you in the hope that you will print my letter, thereby allowing the whole Oberlin community to hear my message.

When I recently learned of the magnificent reforms that Bob Fuller is working on for your College, and of the addition of new faculty members to your physical education department, I immediately decided that I want to become a professor at Oberlin. I have contacted President Fuller in this regard, but he seems to have no interest in my offer to become a member of the Religion Department, the English Department, and the Phys Ed Department (which many consider to be the best in the nation).

By taking my case directly to the whole community through the *Review*, I hope to stimulate the widespread enthusiasm that will force the administration to act favorably upon my application.

Remember — I float like a butterfly and sting like a bee,

And am just what you need on your faculty.

Sincerely,

Muhammad Ali

*The Review has contacted President Fuller, who feels that the place Ali could best fit into the faculty would be in the Inter-Arts program. — Ed.*

1963

# Rink Opens To Clamor Of Enthusiastic Skaters

Friday, December 6, 1963

There is a new musical sound on campus: the schmaltzy strains of the skater's waltz. After much discussion and almost a full year's delay in building, the College skating rink has attracted swarms of students and townspeople out of their winter doldrums.

Because the rink opened just before vacation, the skating classes and ice hockey teams did not get to start until this week. But at the present time the rink is operating on a full schedule of classes and hockey and open skating as late as 11 each night.

The plans for building the rink passed the Board of Trustees in June 1962. The entire cost of

building the rink is being covered by gifts, but, according to Lewis Tower, College Business Manager, the cost for maintaining the rink is quite high and it will be necessary for the attendance and enthusiasm to continue in order to break even.

The skating charge, 25 cents for College students and 50 cents for townspeople, plus the cost of skate rentals, is just being used for the upkeep of the rink. However, at the present time, Mr. Tower added, the entire cost of the building has not been completely covered.

A number of upperclassmen, however, are reminiscing about the days of rugged skating on the town rink by the Morgan Street reservoir. Changing skates in an

unheated shed and maneuvering around the cracks and holes, they complain, has been replaced by the plush convenience of a warm changing room and a snow roof.

Yet the consensus of opinion from the beginners in the skating classes to the seasoned hockey players is that the rink is a welcome addition to the campus.



Photo courtesy of the Oberlin College Archives

2017

# State Honors Famous Baseball Alum

Alex Davies  
Staff Writer

September 29, 2017

A bill honoring the late Moses Fleetwood Walker, the first African-American man to play under contract in the major leagues and a member of Oberlin's first baseball team, was signed by Governor John Kasich Tuesday after its first two failed passage attempts. Walker's birthday, Oct. 7, will be recognized annually as "Moses Fleetwood Walker Day" in Ohio beginning in 2018.

House Bill 59 was sponsored by Democratic Representatives David Leland and Thomas West and was approved unanimously by the Senate during its third

attempt at passing. The first time the bill was introduced, it failed to clear the House; on its second go, the bill passed the House but was rejected by the Senate.

Walker was born in Mount Pleasant, Ohio on Oct. 7, 1856. He enrolled at Oberlin College in 1878 at the age of 20. He studied philosophy and the arts, which would help him become a businessman, inventor, newspaper editor, and author later on in life. Walker joined Oberlin's first-ever varsity baseball team in 1881.

According to the GoYeo, Oberlin's official athletics website, in 1922 Walker was asked via a questionnaire about the influence of his time at Oberlin on his post-grad life; he merely wrote

the word "excellent" and underlined it.

Early in his baseball career, Walker was a leadoff hitter and barehanded catcher for the College's preparatory baseball team. In 1881, Oberlin lifted its ban on off-campus competition, giving rise to Oberlin's first varsity baseball club. Walker's younger brother Weldy, a first-year when Moses was a senior, played for the Yeomen as well. The pair were recruited to play at the University of Michigan after an exhibition game in which Oberlin beat Michigan 9–2.

Walker and his brother continued as the first and second people, respectively, to break the color barrier in the major leagues.

Walker caught for the Toledo Blue Stockings of the American Association in 1884, playing 42 games for the club before being cut due to injury.

Although baseball fans globally recognize Jackie Robinson as the one to have broken the color barrier in Major League Baseball, historians at the National Baseball Hall of Fame claim Walker was actually the pioneer. Robinson stepped onto the scene on April 15, 1947, six decades after Walker played. A picture of Walker and his Toledo teammates is on display in the Cooperstown museum.

"Though [Walker's] name is relatively unknown compared to Jackie Robinson's, he was the first to break the barrier which prevented Black men from playing organized baseball," Senator Edna Brown said at the hearing of the bill.

Rep. Leland said that Walker's baseball career is an important part of American history that needs to be recognized.

"The Moses Fleetwood Walker story is an American story about a constant need to fight for justice, equality and freedom," he told *The Undeclared*.

Although Walker's legacy extends to every level of baseball, the place that saw him grow into adulthood also feels his impact to this day. Fleetwood's experiences continue to inspire the College baseball team, among others, a century and a half later.

African American outfielder Lawrence Hamilton, a first-year on the team said that the College's commitment to diversity in sports stemmed from leaders like Walker.

"It's good to see that there's more diversity on the team and in sports [now]," Hamilton said. "It makes me feel comfortable when I'm playing. I have a group of friends. It's good to get that [inclusivity] back into baseball."

For Head Baseball Coach Adrian Abrahamowicz, it's important to keep Walker's legacy in mind while leading his team.

"Obviously your history is a big piece in what you are," Abrahamowicz said. "The school's reputation as the first school to admit African Americans and women kind of ties in perfectly with the athletics' reputation. Having somebody like Moses Fleetwood Walker as part of your history just kind of brings something special — things are inclusive, how they are supposed to be."

According to Hamilton, the Yeomen baseball team has a record number of African-American players this year.

"Since [Walker], there have been bits and pieces of African-American baseball players at Oberlin," he said. "But this year we have a total of six or seven, which is unheard of. For example, in the major leagues right now, there are only about 60 African-American players. Starting at the college level, getting more African Americans involved in baseball, recruiting them to come in plus the academics — it's good to be back on the right track."

Walker, who died in 1924, was inducted into the Oberlin Hall of Fame in 1990. 26 years after he passed, the Oberlin Heisman Club financed the erection of a headstone on his previously unmarked grave at the Steubenville's Union Cemetery.



Moses Fleetwood Walker, 6, was a member of Oberlin's first varsity baseball team in 1881. His brother Weldy, 10, was also on the team. They went on to become the first and second African Americans to play in the major leagues, respectively.

Photo courtesy of the Oberlin College Archives