Top echelon remains white, ex-great Mitchell reminds

(Final of 2 installments)

A critical look at the scarcity of black leaders in pro sports and a warning to prepare for post-career years highlight Bobby Mitchell's Manpower Magazine Interview.

Here is the AFRO reproduction of the former NFL star's talk with Manpower:

Q. Mr. Mitchell, you were a star on the playing field and now you're in management. How are pro football and baseball about bringing mediocre black players into management?

A. Just look around. In football, baseball, and basketball, the top positions are held by whites who were mediocre players. Of course you have Ted Williams and Otto Graham, but they're exceptions.

I've known a lot of smart young blacks who didn't have a lot of football ability but they would have been balls of fire in the front office.

They're eliminated and we never see them again. But look, I don't want you to sit here and say black stars like Bobby Mitchell are getting the jobs. Because that's not happening very often either.

Q. In both professional football and baseball, there are no black managers or head coaches. What about future prospects?

A. I would imagine in a very short time there is going to be a black manager in baseball. In the National Football League there are no head coaches but we do have some assistant coaches.

In terms of total integration in the coaching ranks, both baseball and football, progress is being made. I think the one thing that has kept the black guy out of the top spot has been this old stigma of "difference in brains."

Q. From what you've said, black players have very good opportunities in pro football and baseball. How about the other sports, like tennis and golf?

A. Golf has been tough because black people just never had golf courses or what was available was too crowded. So we never got very interested.

Right now you can only name a handful good enough for the top circuit.

We've been so far behind it will be quite some time before we have many stars in golf. I'm not worried about golf in terms of blacks getting in. It's going to happen.

Tennis, I sort of equate with golf. We just never went to the tennis court. I think that any black kid now that wants to can go as high as he wants in tennis.

The problem in tennis and golf is money. We don't have the money to go on the tours.

Actually, I guess I'm not concerned about sports where so much depends on the individual performer.

What I'm concerned about is the team sports, such as baseball, football, and basketball, where one person controls dozens, even hundreds of people.

Q. You majored in marketing in college. What courses do you think would be most helpful to blacks on athletic scholarships for building future careers?

A. Years ago you would tell a young black to study to be a school teacher or perhaps to be a black doctor.

But that isn't true anymore. I know black doctors who probably have as many white patients as black. I can't think of any area now where a black doesn't stand a good chance.

I'll tell you my own situation. When I went to Illinois in 1954, I wanted to be a dentist.

But when I tried to enroll in dental school, the Athletic Department called me aside and told me, "You can't go in there. We can't control what will happen to you and we don't know if you can make it."

I've always been upset about that because I might have been a heck of a dentist. It should have been my decision.

Q. They thought dentistry would take up too much of your time?

A. Yes, and they were worried about the brains, too. But being black wasn't the whole thing.

They did it to white athletes, too. They didn't want us in areas like engineering, medicine, and dentistry that would keep us away from the practice field too much.

Kids don't have to worry so much about that now. Schools are set up, on the quarter system so you can arrange your schedule to do what you want.

Q. Johnny Unitas played for the University of Louisville, which is not big time in terms of football. When he graduated he played the sandlots for a year or two before he was discovered and brought to the Colts. Would it be possible for a black player to do what Unitas did?

A. Possibly. Big Daddy Lipscomb didn't play any college football. He played in the service. But he did have speed and size.

A smaller man with less strength wouldn't have been noticed. You can always cite several black guys who managed to do it, but normally it just doesn't seem to happen.

He has to make it with a college team and be drafted.

Q. Has the name you made for yourself in football helped you in the business world?

A. Having a name never hurts, but it doesn't help as much as people think. There are many hours of hard work.

When I went through training with Pepsi-Cola, I didn't get my briefcase the first day. It took years. But when I talk to these kids, white or black, they don't want to hear about all the hard work.

They see me with a desk and a briefcase and that's what they want. They don't want any talk about starting down and working up.

Q. With an insurance business and a position with Pepsi-Cola, why are you still in pro ball?

A. I'm in professional football for one reason and one reason only. I would like to run a football team, one day.

This is my third year in management in professional sports and I'm in no hurry. Management has to learn that I'm capable, and that I can help them, and they have to make up their minds whether they want a black man as head coach, which of course is the seat of the problem.

I've got to overcome all these things and it takes time. But I feel I have made tremendous progress toward that goal.

Q. White stars seem to make a lot of extra money doing TV commercials. Is that true for black players?

A. No. Take Jim Brown, for instance, the greatest runner of all time in the National Football League.

He never made the money that the white stars made. In fact, several times Jim Brown and I flew to New York and did commercials and they never showed them.

Q. Were you paid?

A. Yes, but they never used them. So you don't get residuals, and there's no repeat business.

If they don't use your first one, they don't call you back for subsequent ones. I just don't think black guys will ever get our share of the advertising market.

We get small-scale work certainly but I think the average businessman feels that he can market the white guy much better.

Q. A new magazine recently noted that black movies are among the most successful ones nowadays because downtown movie audiences are composed largely of affluent blacks. Does that give you hope that blacks will become an influential enough market to persuade sponsors to use black athletes to move their products?

A. It depends. I have a feeling the advertisers are still aiming mainly at the suburbs, not at the center city, with their advertising.

Being an athlete, I wish black athletes got more commercials. What really makes me feel good is to watch TV and just see black people, period, doing all these commercials, and they are doing a heck of a lot of them now. That's a real joy.

Q. What advice would you give a black youngster who appears to have a high-paying 10 or 12-year athletic career ahead of him?

A. If he's fortunate enough to play that long and make good money, one thing he's got to do is to live way, way below his means.

During my 11 years in pro football, I lived half as good as I could afford to live, so that once I quit football I could live as well as I wanted to live.

I guess that's the best way to say it. He's got to live way below his means.

Q. And invest the rest?

A. Invest the rest. Set it aside. That's the key.

Q. If I'm not mistaken, you used to do a lot of free television and radio commercials for various government agencies, including the Labor Department, as a public service. Was this a way of training yourself?

A. I spoke to thousands—millions if you count broadcasting—without accepting a fee. That was my training. I was getting something from it. Kids are amazed when they hear me speak 45 minutes without notes, but I've done it so often I can speak 50 times and give 50 different speeches. So I got something from all those free speeches and broadcasts. You can't learn to be a speaker unless you go out and speak.

Q. Is there money in speaking engagements?

A. Oh, gee, yes.

Q. The speaking abilities that you developed while you were a playing star—did this help lead you to a job with Pepsi?

A. Everything I'm doing now has come from that training I forced myself to take.

You know how college is. It teaches you all the major things—the big picture—and not the practical things. College enables you to grasp things faster and understand quicker but you still have to be trained. It enabled me to learn faster.

That was important because I have always worked two or three jobs all my life, and this too is a part of my training.

Everything I've learned helps me in football, because if one of our players comes in here with a problem, I've got a larger store of experience to draw on to help him. That's got to be beneficial to the Washington Redskins.

Q. And now your big ambition is to be a trailblazer for black coaches and managers?

A. That's right. I've made some financial sacrifices but that's all right.

I made good money in football and invested it in such a way that I could afford to do it. I've got a good boss here at the Redskins, Tim Temerario, our personnel director, and I've learned from him. I consider him the most knowledgeable man in pro football in the front office.

So I learned football from 11 years on the field, and now I'm learning personnel and my training with Pepsi and my own business has taught me to handle the paper work. So I'm ready.

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Hampton grad wins dental scholarship

ADRIAN L. PATTERSON JR.

Adrian L. Patterson Jr., 4400 block Havelock Rd., Lanham has been awarded a dental scholarship from the American Fund for Dental Education.

Mr. Patterson is now a freshman dental student at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry, where he is studying under a scholarship sponsored by the McCormick Trust of Chicago. This past year he was awarded a B.A. degree from Hampton Institute, Hampton, Va.

Mr. Patterson's scholarship was one of 63 awarded this year under AFDE's Dental Scholarship Program for Disadvantaged Minority Students.

"Each scholarship provides for an annual stipend of $2,500, depending on need, and covers a five-year period: the final year of pre-dental study and the four years of dental school.

The five-year scholarship may total up to $12,500.

Students must complete the requirements for admission to dental school during the first year of scholarship.

They must maintain satisfactory progress and may apply each year for the scholarship grant.

McDonogh scholarship tests given Feb. 12

McDonogh School will dent scholarships on Feb. 12.

John C. Bentz Director of Admissions for McDonogh, said that the individual scholarships vary in length from four to six years and average $2,700.

Applications to take the examination must be completed by February 4 and are available from the school. To be eligible for McDonogh scholarships, candidates must demonstrate financial need... be residents of Maryland, and be in the sixth, seventh or eighth grade.

In 1971-72 80 McDonogh students in grades seven through 12 received more than $225,000 in scholarships.

The scholarship program at McDonogh is deep-rooted, Mr. Bentz said. When the school was conceived as a farm school for underprivileged boys, the scholarship program included every student. Today about 20 per cent of the students receive financial aid.

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at Ritchie Hwy., Pasadena

FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS—Sara Ponemone is celebrating the Jewish holiday of Chanukah by lighting candles set in a modern menorah. The holiday lasts until Monday and honors the recovery of the holy temple from the pagan masters of Israel over 2100 years ago.

Health neglect worse than lynching: Metcalfe

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UPI) — Rep. Ralph H. Metcalfe, D-Ill., Friday said inadequate health care for black communities creates "misery and death far worse than even the lynchings of the past."

Metcalfe, opened a two-day national conference on the status of health in the black community attended by some 350 physicians, students and legislators.

Metcalfe, in his keynote speech, compared lynchings of the past with the "genocide of black people through neglect" of adequate health care.

The conference, held at Meharry Medical College, was sponsored as well by the Congressional Black Caucus, Howard University, the National Black Association and the National Dental Association.

* * *

Metcalfe, chairman of the Black Caucus subcommittee on health, said infant deaths are one measure of the difference between health care for whites and blacks. The rate is 80 per cent higher for blacks, he said.

"It becomes clear, therefore, that racism is more than a matter of civil rights," he said.

Metcalfe called on the conference to analyze the nation's health care needs and make concrete recommendations for change.

"We must initiate those changes by making others in and out of government aware that health care for our people is inadequate . . . and that no longer will delay be tolerated," Metcalfe said.

Money sought for Hawkins' election bid

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Reginald Hawkins' campaign treasurer has issued an appeal for funds to support the black dentists' bid for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination.

Ezra J. Moore, in a letter addressed "Dear Pellowcitizen" received by the news media, also asked for volunteer workers and campaign suggestions.

Divorces filed

Nazzareno F. Velleggia vs. Helen E. Velleggia; Elsie Evely Croto vs. Walter Croto; Juanita Beatrice Anderson vs. Wilbert Anderson; Amelia Gordon Ward vs. George B. P. Ward, Jr; Betty Jean Johns vs. Berand Avon Johns; Marion Barnes vs. Arthur Barnes; Alexander Sokal vs. Barbara Sokal; Mabel Jarvis vs. Roy Arthur Jarvis; Janet Louise Reagan vs. Jimmy Ray Regan;

Frances T. Chiapparelli vs. Louis Joseph Chiapparelli; Leona Richardson vs. Willie D. Richardson; Annie Laurie Waters vs. Edward John Waters; Diane Holmes vs. Rufis D. Holmes; John Thomas Horecni vs. Margaret Ann Horecni; Edward Leroy Gutridge vs. Diane Lee Gutridge;

Divorces granted

Lawrence Edward Stoots vs. Ida May Stoots; Richard G. Medicus from Kathleen J. Medicus; Dorothy J. Medicus; Dorothy R. Moore from Benjamin Moore; Dotson James Coleman, Jr from Edna Mae Coleman; Elsie M. Sharp from Ted W. Sharp; Enate Berta Davis from E. James Willis Davis; Shirley Hazel Hammond from Arnie Bradley Hammond; Pamela Frances Merryman from Jack Kenneth Merryman; Lillian May Marks from Donald Leroy Mark, Sr., Conrad Poniatowski from Susan A. Poniatowski;

Doris Dorsey from Edward Dorsey; Beatrice Langford from Timmy Langford, Sr.; Frances W. Peck from Eric J. Peck; Betty Louise Lasbes from William John Lasbes; Phillip Andy Couslin from Henrietta Harrison Couslin; Patricia A. Epps from Linwood Epps; Anna M. Miller from Leslie J. Miller; Armie J. Peebles from Johnnie E. Peebles; Mary Jackson from Stuary JACKSON: Ella M. Webb from David R. Webb; Margie A. Canupp from Raymond F. Canupp; Barbara D. Buettner from Robert K. Buettner; Ernest S. McNew from Frances M. McNew; Vernon P. Washington from Catherine Washington; Carolyn Terry from James D. Terry; Bertha M. Jefferson from William R. Jefferson; Dolores Morot from Donald Moroz;

Liberian officers visit

Two officers of the Liberian National Guard have visited Aberdeen Proving Ground and toured a local farm.

Brigadier General Binyah W. Kesselly, commanding general, Liberia National Guard Brigade, Republic of Liberia, and Major Moses G. Kpardeh, commanding officer, 2nd Recruit Battalion, Liberia National Guard, first visited the US Army Ordnance CNENTER and School (USAOC and S).

While at USAOC and S they were briefed in the organization and mission of the School and observed Classes and instruction in progress in the Metal working Services Department, Weapons Training Department, and the Mobility Training Department.

Rat control comic book available

The Baltimore City Health Department has produced a new comic-style rodent control booklet entitled "Zap the Rat "for use by school children.

Written and illustrated by John LaTorre, health educator aide in the Rat Eradication Program of the Bureau of Rodent and Insect Control, the 12-page booklet is a lively, graphic, and entertaining description of the rat, its history and habits.

Besides offering practical methods of control the book let also suggests various activities as school projects.

The booklet will also be useful in sanitation workshops now being planned for inner city schools and neighborhood groups.

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