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2023 Hall of Game will pay homage to the “Black Aces!”

Pitching greats Vida Blue, Al Downing, Dwight Gooden, Mike Norris and Dontrelle Willis to be inducted into the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum’s Hall of Game; ceremonies planned for September 9 in Kansas City, MO.

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (August 16, 2023) – In its seventh induction class, the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum (NLBM) has selected five pitchers from the iconic group known as the “Black Aces” to be inducted into its “Hall of Game.” The announcement was made during a press conference held at the NLBM today.

The Black Aces, a term coined by the late, great Jim “Mudcat” Grant, celebrates the 15 African American pitchers to win 20 games or more in a Major League Baseball season. Five members of the group headline the Hall of Game Class of 2023 which includes the late **Vida Blue** (posthumous), **Al Downing**, **Dwight Gooden**, **Mike Norris** and **Dontrelle Willis**. Dave Stewart, who will accept on behalf of Blue, his former Oakland A’s teammate, Ferguson Jenkins, J.R. Richard, and Mudcat Grant were inducted into the Hall of Game in previous years. **CC Sabathia** and **David Price** had schedule conflicts and will be inducted in a subsequent class.

The 2023 Hall of Game, presented by Hy-Vee, will be held at 8 pm, Saturday, September 9 at the Gem Theater. Tickets that include dinner and the ceremony are \$150; a ceremony only ticket costs \$75 and are available at NLBM.com. Proceeds benefit the NLBM.

Established by the NLBM in 2014, the Hall of Game annually honors former MLB greats who competed with the same passion, determination, skill and flair exhibited by the heroes of the Negro Leagues. The event returns after a three-year absence due to the Covid Pandemic and last year’s Buck O’Neil Hall of Fame Celebration.

The 2023 inductees will join baseball greats from the previous induction classes, which have included legends such as Roberto Clemente, Joe Morgan, Rickey Henderson, Ozzie Smith and more. In addition to the induction ceremony, Hall of Game honorees also will receive permanent recognition as part of the future Buck O’Neil Education and Research Center being developed by the NLBM at the site of the Paseo YMCA, the birthplace of the Negro Leagues.

“We’re thrilled to remember our dear friend, Mudcat Grant, by honoring members of the Black Aces as part of our celebration of the history of the African American pitcher,” said Bob Kendrick, NLBM President. “These great athletes were thrilling to watch and took the legacy of the Negro Leagues with them every time they took the mound.”

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THE NEGRO LEAGUES BASEBALL MUSEUM

The Negro Leagues Baseball Museum is the world's only museum dedicated to preserving and illuminating the rich history of black baseball. The museum, built in conjunction with the adjacent American Jazz Museum at the famous 18th & Vine Jazz District, has become an iconic piece of Kansas City's social and entertainment culture. The NLBM is a privately funded, 501c3 not-for-profit organization incorporated in 1990. The museum's inception brought together the vision of a group of Kansas City business leaders, historians and former baseball players, headed by the legendary John "Buck" O'Neil. For more information, visit www.nlbm.com, and follow the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum on Twitter [@nlbmprez](https://twitter.com/nlbmprez).

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Hall of Game, Class of 2019

Eric Davis

- 2-time All-Star (1987, 1989)
- World Series champion (1990)
- 3-time Gold Glove Award (1987–1989)
- 2-time Silver Slugger Award (1987, 1989)
- Roberto Clemente Award (1997)
- Cincinnati Reds Hall of Fame (2005)

Fred McGriff

- 5-time All-Star (1992, 1994-1996, 2000)
- World Series champion (1995)
- 3-time Silver Slugger Award (1989, 1992, 1993)
- AL home runs leader (1989)
- NL home runs leader (1992)
- Had seven consecutive seasons of at least 30 home runs (1988-94)

Dave Parker

- 7-time All-Star (1977, 1979–1981, 1985, 1986, 1990)
- 2-time World Series champion (1979, 1989)
- NL MVP (1978)
- 3-time Gold Glove Award (1977–1979)
- 3-time Silver Slugger Award (1985, 1986, 1990)
- 2-time NL batting champion (1977, 1978)
- NL RBI leader (1985)
- Cincinnati Reds Hall of Fame (2014)

Dave Stewart

- 3-time World Series champion (1981, 1989, 1993)
- World Series MVP (1989)
- 2-time ALCS MVP (1990, 1993)
- Roberto Clemente Award (1990)
- AL wins leader (1987)
- All-Star (1989)
- Oakland Athletics Hall of Fame (2018)