

SPORTS BOARD

SPORTS, GAMING, HORSERACING

June 4, 1981



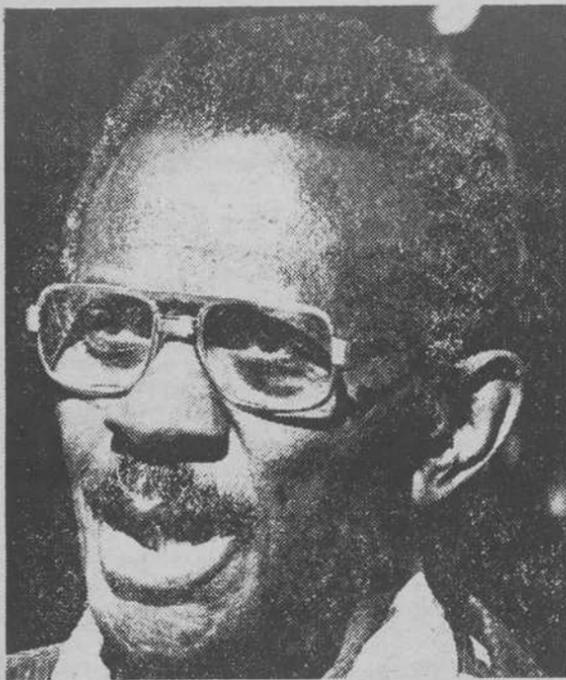
A PAIGE OUT OF HISTORY

Legend Will Live Longer Than Man, Who Is 75

SPRINGFIELD, ILL. — His tall, thin body still looks like it's in great shape. There are only dashes of gray in his black hair. His eyes still dance like a rookie's when he talks baseball.

But the legendary Leroy (Satchel) Paige is about 75 years now. Although he vows his fabled right arm still is ready for pitching, he admits he's slowed down lately due to a troublesome lung condition.

"I was pitchin' good five years ago in batting practice," said the ageless Paige, who'll admit only to being "over 60." No one knows exactly how old he is, although it's been pinned down to about 75.



"This age thing ... it's been a long time. I've been called many different (ages). It don't make no difference," said the Hall of Fame star of the old Negro leagues and the majors.

Paige still is involved in baseball. For 12 years, he's worked for the Triple-A-Springfield Redbirds, the last minor league stop for budding St. Louis Cardinals.

He's identified as a vice president. He does public relations work and advises young pitchers on the fundamentals of pitching — a subject he knows as well as anyone around.

Paige is dissatisfied with modern-day pitchers. "Pitchers throw the ball; they don't try to find a hitter's weakness. Now they just throw the

It is not hard to define exactly when "my day" was. An ace pitcher for years in the Negro leagues, Paige was 42 years old when Bill Veeck of the American League Cleveland Indians called him in 1948.

He said he had not started a game in 15 years, but went 6-1 at the end of the season for the world champion Indians that year.

"I still say I'm the luckiest man on earth to have pitched for 50 years."

See MAN, page 8

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