

# "SWEETNESS" AND "MR. OCTOBER"

## ALL-TIME NFL RUSHER, WALTER PAYTON, HEADS CLASS OF '93 INDUCTEES

By W.G. Ramirez

Following the legacy of Cleveland Browns running back Jim Brown, whom after his rookie season had been called the greatest running back in the history of the NFL, it seemed impossible that there would ever be another back like him, or even close to being that good.

Then a young man by the name of O.J. "Juice" Simpson came into the league out of the University of Southern California and proceeded to set a single-season rushing record of 2,003 in 1973. He then then set a single-game rushing record, trampling 273 yards. The rushing records of both Brown and Simpson looked like they'd last forever. Then he came...

"The Little Engine That Could," a durable little scamper out of Jackson State University in 1975, made his way on to the scene with the Chicago Bears.

In 1977 he broke Simpson's single-game record by rushing for 275 yards against Minnesota, and seven years later, in

1984, he broke Brown's record of 12,312 total yards. Walter Payton was now immortal.

His slick ways and all-out style of play earned him the name *Sweetness*. It was Payton that enjoyed the same time period as America's Team Dallas boasted Tony Dorsett. Dallas, being every housewife's favorite team, got a bit more recognition than the Bears; but Payton? Nope, there was always something special about Walter.

Not just a pure runner for the Bears, "Sweetness" also managed to snag 492 receptions for 4,538 yards and 15 touchdowns.

Payton ended his career as the all-time leading rusher with 16,726 yards and 110 rushing touchdowns. In 10 of his 13 seasons with Chicago, he compiled more than 1,000 season-rushing yards.

Many experts believe Payton's career rushing record is safe with the presence of the passing age. With re-written rules now giving passers and offensive specialists more ad-

vantages, the league is flooded with firearm quarterbacks and quick receivers.

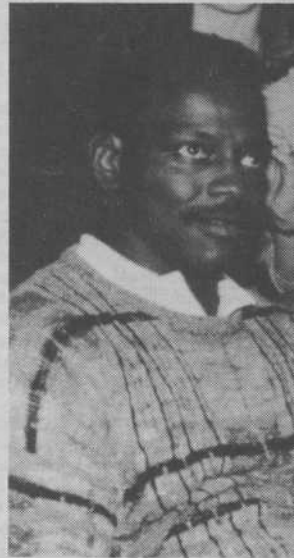
Payton was named the league's Most Valuable Player twice, in 1977 and '85 and also has played nine Pro Bowls.

Payton's career wouldn't have been complete without the season in 1985-86, when he and the Bears ran roughshod over the New England Patriots 46-10 in Super Bowl XX.

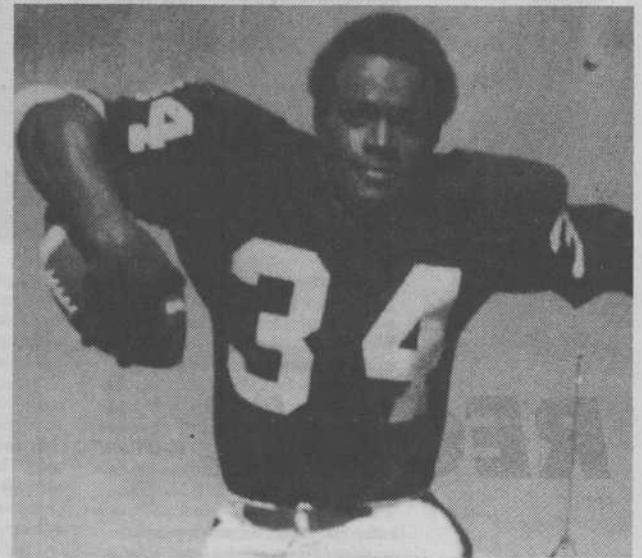
Payton was chosen Black College Player of the Century by Sports View magazine in 1992, the year that Black Colleges celebrated their 100th anniversary. Payton amassed 3,563 yards and scored 65 touchdowns. In 1974 he led the nation with 160 points.

Now at 39, Payton says he doesn't actually miss the game, is in the planning stages of obtaining an NFL franchise, and doesn't even comment on who he thinks could possibly break his record.

# SPORTS



"Sweetness" was enshrined into the Hall of Fame last Saturday in Canton, Ohio. Photo: Savoy/LVS-Voice



Walter Payton, seen here at Jackson State was chosen Black College Player of the Century by Sports View magazine in 1992.

Photo: Sports View Magazine

"When I left I was ready," says Payton. "I haven't had the time to miss it."

Payton is involved with a group that is vying for an expansion team in St. Louis, who lost their Cardinals to Phoenix.

"I think we have a good chance. We are working as hard

as we can. At this point, we're in a very good position."

If Payton could pinpoint someone to break his NFL record, he doesn't particularly want to put a finger on it. Payton thinks that someone, someday, will assuredly break the record, but can't exactly say who.

While many will remember the rough and tumble Brown or the powerful graceness of "The Juice," there will always be one player that stands tall, above all the rest; the quickness, the smoothness, the smarts, and most of all - the records -

*Sweetness.*

## REGGIE JACKSON RECEIVES HALL OF FAME STATUS SOLO

By W.G. Ramirez

October 18, 1977. That was the day that many kids, maybe nine and ten years-old, whom are now 24 or 25, many beloved Yankee fans, even George Steinbrenner, may remember best about Mr. October.

It began with Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Burt Hooten in Game 6 of the World Series, with New York up 3-games-to-2. It was the fourth inning and the score was deadlocked 2-2 when he stepped to the plate with a man aboard...

Crack! Hooten's low-and-away fastball had just turned into some fan's newest souvenir.

He returned to the plate in the fifth, only this time to face reliever Elias Sosa. Like the first time, there was a man on base and then...

Crack!

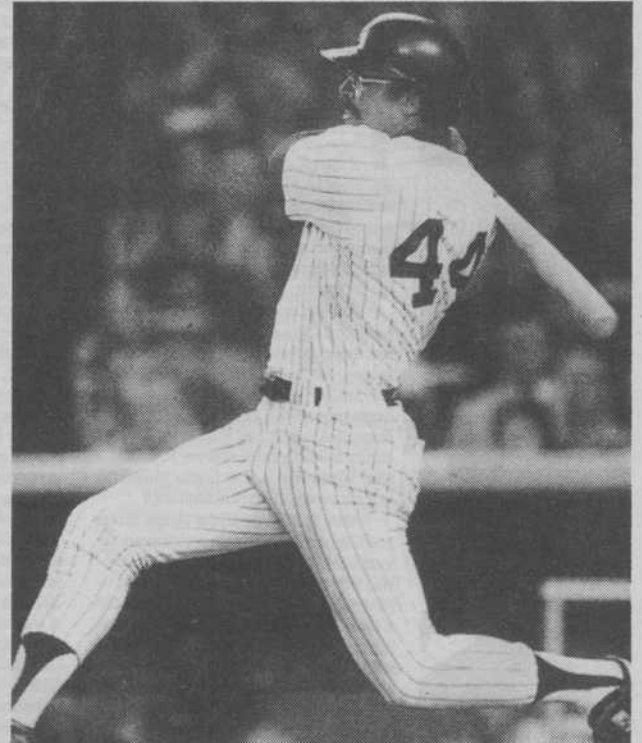
Wait a minute, not done yet.

Back to the plate in the eighth, it would now be Charlie Hough's turn, who is currently with the Florida Marlins, and this one was the sweetest - the third...

Crack! Reggie Jackson personally delivered all three pitchers' first-hurl into the bleachers; three pitchers - three dingers.

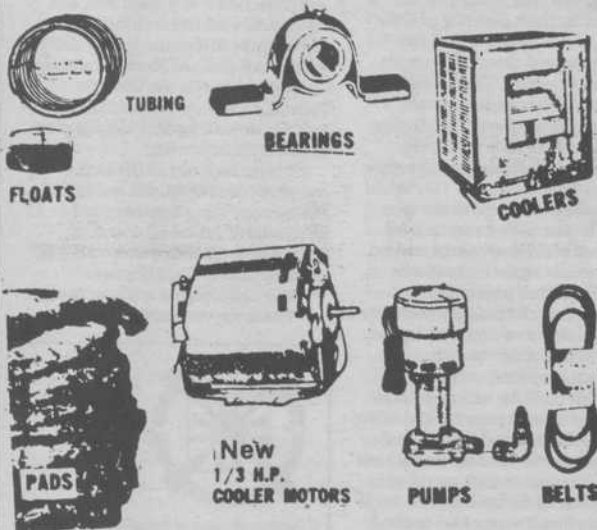
Last Sunday afternoon Jackson was inducted into Baseball's Hall of Fame. On a day that is usually enjoyed by three or four all-time greats, this day belonged only to Reggie. He would be the only one honored in Cooperstown.

Reggie's father Martinez Jackson was a second baseman in the old Negro Leagues for the Newark (N.J.) Eagles and admits that his Hall of Fame son was always dedicated to the (See Reggie, Page 23)



Reggie's infamous corkscrewed body, in pinstripes, following his vicious swing, will always be remembered. Photo: SI

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