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Former Philadelphia Stars Negro League player Mahlon Duckett dies at 92

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Mahlon Duckett, who played for the Philadelphia Stars Negro League team, was at the June 4 opening of the Phillies Urban Youth Academy baseball field. (DAVID MAIALETTI / Staff)



GALLERY: Former Philadelphia Stars' player Mahlon Duckett... (Steven M. Falk)

By [Jesse Dougherty, Inquirer Staff Writer](#)

POSTED: July 15, 2015

Mahlon Duckett frequently told his daughter, Mahlene Duckett Lee, that he wanted to see more kids playing baseball.

Mr. Duckett, who died at age 92 on Sunday night and was the last surviving member of the Philadelphia Stars Negro League baseball team, was glued to the Taney Dragons' Little League World Series run last summer. He regularly spoke about his Negro League experience and its place in American history to students at his alma mater, Overbrook High School.

The West Philadelphia native was excited about the renovations to the Marian Anderson Recreation Center, which is where his love for baseball blossomed. The modernized space and the children playing inside will carry his legacy.

After baseball, he worked for the City of Philadelphia and as a mail carrier for the U.S. Postal Service until he retired in 1988.

Mr. Duckett, who played for the Stars from 1940-49, died of heart failure at Temple University Hospital with his family at his bedside.

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"Despite the challenges of the time, he was able to play the game he loved," Duckett Lee said. "He was definitely a role model. He was a man who never had an ill word to say about anyone, and I think that his personality was definitely an asset to him, his family, and the community as he moved forward."

Mr. Duckett was the Negro National League Rookie of the Year in 1940. After Jackie Robinson integrated baseball in 1947, the Negro Leagues faded over the next decade. Mr. Duckett finished his career with the Homestead Grays in 1949-50.

Mr. Duckett, who was born Dec. 20, 1922, continued to share his Negro Leagues story to relay the cultural significance of his experience. His influence started in Philadelphia and eventually spread to schools and events around the country, and he always made appearances free of charge.

"He shared his experience of the Negro Leagues not just as a ballplayer," Duckett Lee said, "but also on its impact on our community and country as a whole. His legacy will live on with our family, in Philadelphia and beyond."

In addition to Mahlene Duckett Lee, he is survived by four other daughters, Janice Council, Shirley Duckett, Beverly Marshall, and Crystal Duckett; and a son, Ronald Duckett.

Information on funeral services was pending.

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My condolences to Mr. Duckett's family and friends.

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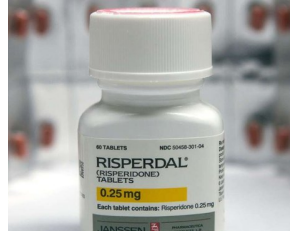
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