

= James Dudley =

James Dudley (May 12 , 1910 ? June 1 , 2004) was an American baseball player , professional wrestling manager , and professional wrestling executive . He played Negro league baseball for nine years but is best known for his time with the World Wide Wrestling Federation . Dudley was the first African @-@ American to run a major United States arena (Turner 's Arena in Washington , D.C.) . He worked with four generations of wrestling 's McMahon family and was particularly close with Vincent J. McMahon . At age 74 , he was put back on the company 's payroll to show appreciation for his work for the McMahons . He also managed several wrestlers in the WWWF and was inducted into the WWF Hall of Fame in 1994 .

= = Career = =

= = = Baseball = = =

Dudley was considered an " excellent athlete " and ran the 100 yard dash in under ten seconds on multiple occasions . Although he showed up for the trials for the 1924 United States Olympic team , he was not allowed to participate because African Americans were not permitted on the team . After playing semi @-@ professional baseball in Baltimore , Maryland , Dudley signed with the Baltimore Elite Giants at age 27 . Nicknamed " Big Train " , he played catcher but started out helping pitchers warm up in the bullpen . Playing alongside two other talented catchers , Roy Campanella and Eggie Clarke , Dudley 's playing time was limited . He remained with the Elite Giants until leaving professional baseball in 1945 . In total , he played about 60 games in the Negro leagues .

= = = Professional wrestling = = =

James Dudley began working for Jess McMahon in the 1950s , when McMahon was a co @-@ owner of the Capitol Wrestling Corporation . When McMahon and his partners broke away from the National Wrestling Alliance to form the World Wide Wrestling Federation (WWWF) in 1963 , Dudley continued to work for McMahon . Dudley performed many different jobs , from carrying buckets of waters to counting ticket sales . Dudley was a close friend of Vincent J. McMahon and continued working for the family when the younger McMahon took over the business from his father ; in particular , he drove McMahon 's limousine and served as his bodyguard . He has said that he thought of McMahon as a father figure . McMahon later increased Dudley 's responsibilities with the company several times , and eventually assigned him to manage Turner 's Arena in Washington , D.C. , which made Dudley the first African @-@ American to hold such a position in the United States . His role required him to oversee several other events , including the Town and Country Jamboree television show .

Dudley also managed several wrestlers , including Bobo Brazil . Prior to Brazil 's matches , Dudley excited the crowds by waving a towel while running to the ring . Over time , Dudley 's role with the company diminished and he ceased working for them ; the company 's operations were moved to Connecticut , and Turner 's Arena was demolished . Shortly before McMahon 's death in 1984 , he told his son , Vincent K. McMahon , who had taken over control of the promotion (then known as the WWF) , " Whatever else you do , you take care of James Dudley . " After Vincent J. McMahon 's death , Dudley was put back on the company payroll at age 74 and subsequently received several gifts from Vincent K. McMahon to show appreciation for Dudley 's contributions to the company . Dudley has been described as an " important cog " in the company , and McMahon once stated that " had there been no James Dudley , the WWF possibly wouldn 't exist as it does today " . Dudley continued to feel a sense of loyalty to the McMahons and their promotion . Dudley was inducted into the WWF Hall of Fame in 1994 by Vincent K. McMahon .

Dudley 's final appearance with the company came during the January 4 , 2002 episode of SmackDown ! . According to the storyline , Stephanie McMahon was banned from the MCI Center .

In an attempt to get past security , she pushed Dudley in a wheelchair but was still refused entrance . Following the scene , Dudley left the wheelchair , walked to his seat , and watched the show .

= = Personal life = =

Dudley continued to live in the District of Columbia after retiring from professional wrestling . He had 37 grandchildren , 34 great @-@ grandchildren , and 16 great @-@ great @-@ grandchildren . Dudley died of natural causes on June 1 , 2004 at the age of 94 .

= = In wrestling = =

Wrestlers managed

Bobo Brazil

Sweet Daddy Siki

Sailor Art Thomas

Bearcat Wright

= = Championships and accomplishments = =

World Wrestling Federation

WWF Hall of Fame (Class of 1994)