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The batboy who played the game

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Sylvester Enterprises, USA

The road to unintentional history and fame began in Fitzgerald, Georgia. Joe Louis Reliford was named after the famous boxer, Joe Louis. The farm upbringing and what his parents went through to provide for the family will remain unforgettable and much appreciated. Moving from the city to the country made Joe happy. He wanted to be near his grandparents, who kept him in line. Joe's father died when he was three. Unafraid, of manual labor, Joe worked in the garden, collected and chopped wood. Due to his mother's arthritis, Joe wanted to do more to support the family. Boldly, he crossed the railroad tracks in Fitzgerald, Georgia, in 1950 and approached the manager of a Class D minor league baseball team for employment, at age 10. Manager Ace Adams of the Fitzgerald Pioneers was stunned by the approach of a young kid. Adams abbreviated practice, drove Joe home and sought permission from Joe's mother. Her reply, "Yes, he can work for you." Joe, then 10, earned \$48 every two weeks as a Batboy. He was elated to support his mother. Two years later, on July 19, 1952, in the final inning, the opposing crowd wanted some excitement as they chanted, "Put the Batboy in the Game!" Both the home plate umpire and Pioneers manager allowed the 4 foot 11 youngster to participate. Joe pinched hit, threw out a batter and robbed a hitter from a home run- all in one inning vs. Statesboro Pilots. Joe's last inning catch, which is on display in Cooperstown, caused the fans to mob him in jubilant, as they poured money into his pockets. Today, Reliford is listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as "The World's Youngest Pro Baseball Player". Reliford broke the color barrier in the Georgia State Baseball League as a 12 year old Batboy- paving the way for Hall of Fame Inductees, Frank Robinson and Willie McCovey, among others.

Biography

Kevin Wilson grew up around baseball, thanks to his grandfather, Norman Sylvester Wilson, who played and managed a sandlot baseball team, called "The Glenarden Braves." He intentionally named his small marketing business, Sylvester Enterprises, SP, in 2003, in honor of his grandfather. As C.E.O. of Sylvester Enterprises, SP, its primary mission is to educate, encourage and entertain, hoping to deter a youth from drugs, alcohol, nicotine and gun violence. Our trendsetting clients are promoted in academic/athletic settings, print/broadcast media, government entities, and in film. Additionally, he is an established journalist, who has authored countless of news, features and sports features for local, national and international publications. He is the first black male to graduate from Elon University, in the English/Journalism curriculum- 1981. He has eloquently spoken at recreation centers, career day, prisons and churches. He's been a quest on radio/television talk shows. Chosen by filmmaker Tim Green, he became a Co-Producer/Writer for a Short Film, featuring a Blind Filmmaker.

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