



Many historians believe the 1930s Pittsburgh Crawfords of the Negro League were the best baseball team to have ever taken the field. With the likes of legendary Satchel Paige, Josh Gibson, Cool Papa Bell, Judy Johnson and Oscar Charleston, all eventual Major League Baseball Hall of Fame members, it's easy to see how this team captured the imagination and curiosity of our national past time.

WE GOT GAME is a musical that highlights the highs and the lows of this historic team: the struggles, the joys, the heartbreaks, the dreams, the prejudices, and the lifelong friendships. The Pittsburgh Crawfords played in a time of extreme discrimination, openly demonstrated by the hate crimes of the Klu Klux Klan and white supremacists in the south. This was a decade before Branch Rickey and Jackie Robinson changed the landscape of baseball... and the nation.

created & written by:
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The 1934 PITTSBURGH CRAWFORDS



Top Row (left to right): Jimmie Crutchfield, Cool Papa Bell, Josh Gibson, Oscar Charleston, Leroy Morney
Second Row: Judy Johnson, Nate Hunter, Rap Dixon, Satchel Paige, Clarence "Spoony" Palm
Bottom Row: William Bell, Vic Harris, Chet Williams, Ted Page, Harry Kincannon

ACT I

Scene 1: **LIFE ON THE ROAD**

1A: Time to Reminisce (1975 @ restaurant)

Now in their 70s, Satchel Paige, Cool Papa Bell and Judy Johnson get together at a restaurant to reminisce about their years playing with the Pittsburgh Crawfords. Their conversation takes them back to July 1934.



1B: Welcome Into Our World (1934 on the Crawfords team bus)

It's mid-season in 1934 and the Pittsburgh Crawfords Negro League baseball team is ready to head to their next barnstorming destination. The team's newest member has stepped foot for the first time onto the Crawfords team bus. Team coach Oscar Charleston welcomes their newest player, Clarence "Spoony" Palm. "**Welcome Into Our World**" is a playful song that introduces Spooky to his new teammates. The song puts on display the team's diverse personalities and confidence as a great team.



1C: Rhythm of the Road (1934 on the team bus)

A common Crawfords activity during long bus rides is spontaneous rhythm sessions. In this scene players join in with team musicians by tapping on windows, bats, bus benches, and each other to create an energy filled rhythm section as they sing "**Rhythm of the Road**". This session includes various team members ham-boning, skull knocking, cheek slapping, arm pit flapping and scat dancing. They all join in as the bus pulsates with rhythm, laughter, and joy.



1D: My Destiny (1934 on the team bus)

Scene I ends with a heartfelt dose of reality as Judy Johnson, the Crawfords veteran third-baseman, sings "**My Destiny**". Judy shares his devotion, reverence and

commitment to the game, no matter what hardships that he might encounter. Rookie "Spoony" takes it all in.



Scene 2: **PLAY BALL**

2A: Uneven Playing Field (1974 @ restaurant)

The retired Crawfords conversation turns to the field: the competition and the discrimination.



2B: Ya Gotta Be Cool (1934 on the field and inside the Crawfords dug-out)

The organist plays "America the Beautiful" while the Crawfords finish their warm-ups and all move to the dugout. White home town fans heckle the team, shouting racial slurs, and flashing derogatory gestures. The players try to tune out the jeers, but it's impossible for some of the players to ignore. "**Ya Gotta Be Cool**" is veteran Cool Papa Bell's reminder to his fellow players that they need to remain calm, and that if they do, they will eventually earn respect.



2C: Batter Up (1934 in the broadcast booth)

Now to the broadcast booth with the home team's announcer. Special guest, veteran Crawfords player/coach Oscar Charleston, is invited to the booth for an interview. It's apparent the announcer expected an uneducated, inarticulate Negro indigent. While asking questions of Charleston, the announcer is increasingly impressed with his knowledge of the game and his mastery of the English language. Coach Charleston runs through the Crawfords line-up, giving stats, history, and highlights of a few players.

As the game plays-on the announcer is amazed by the talents, and inspired play of the Crawfords, who have no problem dominating the home team 9 to 0. Satchel Paige pitches 9 innings of shut-out baseball.



2D: From the Heckled to the Heroes (1934 by the Crawfords dug-out)

Amazed by the talented Crawfords, the home town crowd makes their way to the team dug-out after the game, requesting autographs from the players. These are the same fans who were heckling the Crawfords before the game. Under the watchful eye of coach Charleston, the team members respectfully interact with the fans.



2E: Satchel You Are Da Man (1934 in the dug-out)

Following the game and in the dug-out, several of the team players begin to rib Satchel Paige, who is a jokester himself. He just pitched a complete, two-hit shut-out. "**Satchel You Are Da Man**" is a playful tune sung by the team, giving Satchel high praise, but also kidding him about his antics and of-the-wall quotes, often found in the local newspapers whenever the team enters a new town.



Scene 3: AFTER THE GAME

3A: Outside the Lines (1975 @ restaurant)

Cool Papa Bell talks about the highs and lows the team experienced off the field. Jimmy recalls a budding relationship that Spoony had with a young girl. Trouble was brewing.



3B: In Your Hands (1934 behind the bleachers)

After the game was over and the fans had left the stadium, Spoony is found behind the bleachers with a white girl. As they sing "**In Your Hands**", it becomes obvious that the couple has a budding relationship. Realizing that their romance might cause issues, they have met in secret. From a distance two of Spoony's teammates see the couple holding hands. The players are shocked by what they see and quickly leave, undetected by Spoony, to go back to the team bus.



3C: Are You Crazy? (1934 on the team bus)

Finally arriving back at the bus, the two teammates who observed Spoony with the white girl couldn't wait to tell the rest of the team what had just happened. Spoony then enters the bus and the entire team greets him by shouting, "**Are You Crazy?**" They are scared that the home town community will learn about Spoony's relationship with one of their white daughters and retaliate by attacking the entire team. The emotions run high! The team demands that Spoony put an end to the relationship immediately.



3D: Please Let Me Know (1934, Spoony by himself)

Spoony is devastated by his teammates' reaction to his relationship with his girlfriend, Candice. All alone, he prays for an answer on what to do, singing "**Please Let Me Know**".



END – Act I

ACT II

Scene 4: **LIBERTY & JUSTICE FOR ALL**

4A: Gentlemen's Agreement (1975 @ restaurant)

The retired Crawfords talk about their past thoughts of not being allowed to play in the Major League. They wonder among themselves what it must have been like at the 1934 Winter meetings of the major league owners, especially with Commissioner Kennesaw Mountain Landis at the helm.



4B: For The Good Of The Game (1934 in a corporate meeting room)

It's back in 1934 once again and the 16 Major League Baseball owners assemble in New York City for their annual winter meeting, with Commissioner Kennesaw Mountain Landis residing. The meeting is brought to order and the commissioner is proud to review the successes baseball had encountered over the past few years. Despite in the middle of the Great Depression, most teams are flourishing. The first All Star game took place in 1933, the inductees into the newly established Hall of Fame are ready to be announced, and baseball is preparing to launch its first night game under the lights in 1935. Gate receipts are rising, and most owners are prospering.



For more than 4 decades there had been a gentleman's agreement not to allow Negro players into the Major League. Even though there are a few owners that think otherwise, the commissioner re-iterates loudly that they will not have it. The majority of the owners believe that this silent agreement is "**For The Good Of The Game.**"

4C: Mr. Fine (1934 in a non-descript place)

Candice, Spooky's girlfriend, and her friends get together to share pictures of their new man crushes, as they sing "**Mr. Fine**". It's a fun time until Candice shows them a picture of her new boyfriend, Spooky. The girls are shocked and dismayed because he's a Negro.



Scene 5: CURVE BALL

5A: Every Once in a While (1975 @ restaurant)

Satchel remembers a time when the team visited the owner's night club to celebrate a victory. It was their time to unwind and party into the night.



5B: There's a Party Goin' On (1934 in a popular local night club)

After a home game, the team visits the Crawford Grill and Dance Hall (owned by Pittsburgh Crawfords owner, Gus Greenlee) to blow off some steam. The players are in a great mood following their win. Several team members pick up instruments and begin to play and sing as celebrity friends, including popular singer Lena Horne, and legendary dancer "Bojangles", join in on "**There's A Party Goin' On**".



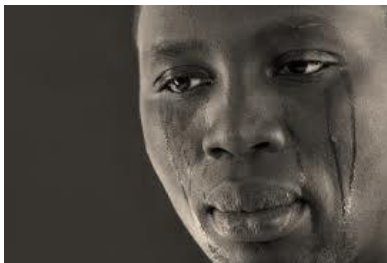
5C: I Surrender to You (1934 at the Night Club)

Following the performance by the Crawfords the club owner introduces a female vocalist who will sing an old southern spiritual called "**I Surrender to You**". The players are apprehensive that this white girl can actual sing a gospel song. The song starts off with a beautiful vocal with orchestration... but as the hymn continues it crosses over to a truly soulful gospel arrangement. The players are astonished by the power of the vocalist's voice as the entire house joins in. It begins to feel like a good-old southern revival and the Crawfords love it! Two of the players recognize that this is Spoony's girlfriend, Candice. After the song ends, the two players spread the news that this is Spoony's girlfriends and Coach Oscar warns Spoony that he is flirting with disaster.



5D: It's Not Our Time (1934 at the same Night Club)

As the team beginning to leave the nightclub, Candice finds Spoony. She tells him about the difficulties she is experiencing because of their relationship. He feels guilty for putting her through it all, and knows what they must do. "**It's Not Our Time**" underscores the mindless bigotry of this time, and the hardship it put on innocent lives.



Scene 6: YANKEE STADIUM

6A: Game of a Lifetime (1975 @ restaurant)

Satchel, Cool Papa Bell and Judy Johnson share stories about their 1934 season with the Crawfords. Some of their stories are provocative, but most are humorous and upbeat. The conversation leads to a game they played late that year at Yankee Stadium.



6B: More Than A Dream (1934 in the team bus)

The Craws have been invited to play against a team of Major League players in an exhibition game at Yankee Stadium. The team is extremely excited for the opportunity to play in the most prestigious ballpark in baseball. As the bus gets within viewing distance of the stadium, young Jimmie Crutchfield asks the driver to stop so they can take in the awesome sight. It has been Jimmie's life-long ambition to play in the house that Ruth built. "**More Than A Dream**" is Jimmie's moment to voice his hope to one day play in the Major League.



6C: Gimme The Ball (1934 on the field at Yankee Stadium)

Once on the field at Yankee Stadium, the Craws begin to warm up, entertaining the early arriving fans. "**Gimme The Ball**" is a Harlem Globetrotter-style exhibition of antics showcasing the players' God-given talents. From ball tricks to juggling, leaping, miming and dancing, the Crawfords introduce a whole new way to prepare for a game. The team captures the hearts of the fans... as well as the Major League players.



6D: LORD DEM BOYS CAN PLAY (1934 in the dug-out and on the field)

Close to the end of his career, Babe Ruth is a member of the team of Major Leaguers playing against the Crawfords at Yankee Stadium. He always took every opportunity to compete against the most talented players in the world and the Babe knew the Negro League had some of the very best. "**Lord Dem Boys Can Play**", praises the Craws natural gifts and their style of play. There was no doubt in the Babe's mind that these players belonged with him, in the Major League.



Scene 7: FINALE

7A: We Got Game (1975 @ restaurant)

Back in 1975 at a restaurant, the three retired Crawfords begin playing and singing a song that they often sang on the team bus in the '30s. As they sing, they start to hear the 1934 players join in. Commissioner Landis then appears, as if from the dead, to ask forgiveness for his transgressions of the past. Finally, the entire cast joins in "**We Got Game**", singing the praises of the 1934 Pittsburgh Crawfords.

THE END

(draft update: 04/28/2021)