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For the Record (Arthur Ashe signs book contract)

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From left: **Charles Harris**, executive director of the Howard University Press; **Arthur Ashe**, writer **Kip Branch** and research assistant **Sandra Jamison**.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARVIN JONES

For the Record

"I approached Howard University Press because of my long standing knowledge of the intellectual tradition of Howard University..."

Arthur Ashe

Arthur Ashe and Howard University Press signed a contract on April 13 to publish "The History of the Black Athlete in America," from the pre-Civil War period to the present. As a reference tool, this 1,000-page volume will be a compilation that details the life of every Black athlete who has made a significant contribution to sports or who has achieved special status because of his or her knowledge of or participation in sports.

Additionally, more than being archival in purpose, it will serve as a sociological study by examining the implications of the Black American athlete within an historical framework and cultural context. The proposed book goes beyond simply being a collection of essays about outstanding athletes.

One of the main elements of the work will be the encyclopedia section which will contain biographical sketches of America's accomplished Black athletes, past and present. These sketches will document the specific achievements of great Black athletes for posterity, and offer perspectives on the larger implications of those achievements. For example, the narrative will analyze the racial and political implications of Jack Johnson's reign as heavy-weight champion; present the global importance of Jesse Owens' phenomenal suc-

cess at the Olympic games in Germany in 1936 and the Joe Louis-Max Schmeling fight; and discuss the scope and depth of the issues surrounding Jackie Robinson breaking the color barrier in major league baseball. These individual stories will represent crucial reference points in American history that clearly transcend the sports arena.

The basic structure of the book will consist of seven parts: (I) Pre-Civil War period; (II) Civil War-1900; (III) 1900-1930s; (IV) World War II-1963; (V) 1963-1968; (VI) 1968-Present and (VII) Encyclopedia section. Within this structure, several facets will be highlighted: loosely organized games brought to the New World by African slaves; specification of athletic skills for spectator sports during and after the Jackie Robinson era; the emergence of organized Black college sports; the emergence of the Black professional team; the modern Black athlete; the Black coach and Black college varsity athlete in the television era; and future trends.

The reference section will focus upon the following areas: the qualified or tour professional; those Black athletes who have attained All-American status; those who attained high school All-American status; those who attained Olympic or world class status; those who attained Pan-American status; all Black head coaches at Black and

white colleges; Olympic, Pan-American and professional teams; and prominent Black sports writers and Black authors of books on Black athletes and Blacks in sports.

Illustrations and photographs also will be included in the volume to highlight significant achievements, document meetings and generally serve as historical reference.

The project will draw upon the knowledge of national and international scholars in several disciplines—history, political science, economics and sociology—and primary source material gathered from references and personal interviews with athletes, coaches, trainers, sportswriters, authors, sports analysts and nationally recognized sports experts.

Working under the direction of Arthur Ashe, who will write the principal portion of the narrative, this massive project will be compiled by a team of researchers and writers—among them, writer Kip Branch and research assistant Sandra Jamison.

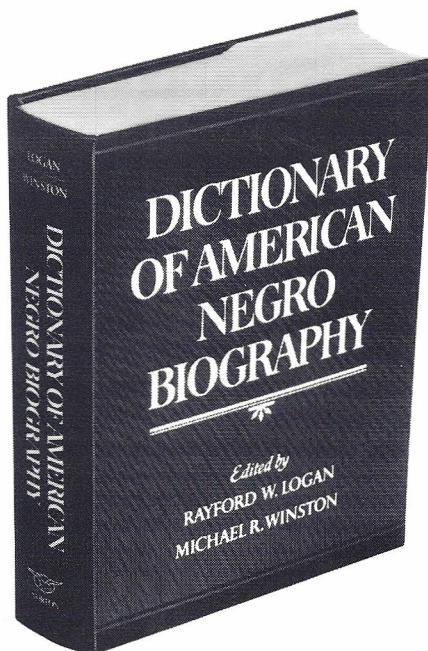
"I approached Howard University Press because of my long standing knowledge of the intellectual tradition of Howard University and because of my knowledge of the development, professionalism and the philosophy of the Howard University Press publishing program," Ashe said. "Additionally, Howard University has the world's most comprehensive depository of information on people of African descent, the Moorland-Spangarn Research Center, which will be invaluable in accomplishing this project."

It is estimated that this project will require an expenditure of approximately \$500,000, half of which will be provided by Howard University Press and Arthur Ashe. The remaining \$250,000 will be solicited from public and private philanthropic sources.

In commenting on this historical contractual arrangement, Dr. James E. Cheek, President of Howard University, stated, "We are extremely honored to be the publisher of this great body of work which we are sure will find great receptivity throughout all segments of this society and throughout the world. When one considers that sports in America generates, on an annual basis, revenue in the billions of dollars, it is plain to see that a book dealing with such a major subject will take on great importance in the minds of the public. We are most appreciative of Mr. Ashe's choice of Howard University as his publisher." □

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