

Magic Johnson a Perfect Marriage for Dodgers When Tying in Jackie Robinson

Written by Maury Brown
Thursday, 29 March 2012 08:57

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[Magic Johnson on WhoSay](#)

“Character”, or what many have said has been lacking, is what has plagued Frank McCourt through the whole sordid mess that the Dodgers wound up in. Using the club as a personal fund to fuel a grotesquely opulent lifestyle was part of it. “Why have a family business but to support the family lifestyle,” Jamie McCourt was quoted as saying before her divorce from Frank.

Character matters, especially in the historical context of the Dodgers.

It’s why Magic Johnson works so well with the club. He is, by most accounts, the perfect face for the organization.

While baseball was the epitome of Jim Crow laws for most of its early days, it has spent well over a half-a-century touting its place in promoting racial diversity. That really begins with Jackie Robinson, and the Dodgers.

So, the thread – Jackie Robinson breaking the color barrier and Magic Johnson being the first African-American to become the ownership face of a club – all ties together in Dodger Blue.

Johnson is more than just the iconic Laker that brought Showtime to Los Angeles. He has become an advocate for not only promoting and developing minority businesses through the Magic Johnson Foundation, but also, through his own personal experience, become an advocate for AIDS and HIV awareness.

None of this has been lost on MLB, who has scored very high in terms of minority hiring at the executive level. Johnson has the capacity to possibly rekindle the African-American youth with its love affair with baseball again, something that has waned in the last 15-20 years.

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“It is extraordinarily exciting for Major League Baseball that Magic Johnson, a beloved figure in Los Angeles and around the world, has entered into an agreement, along with Guggenheim CEO Mark Walter and longtime baseball executive Stan Kasten, that would make them a part of our national pastime,” said Commissioner Selig at the beginning of his statement on the sale. But it’s his comments in the second paragraph that highlight where Johnson fits from that character perspective that the Dodgers need, and fits in with MLB’s push on social initiatives.

“I believe that a man of Magic’s remarkable stature and experience can play an integral role for one of the game’s most historic franchises, in a city where he is revered,” added Selig. “Major League Baseball is a social institution with important social responsibilities, and Magic Johnson is a living embodiment of so many of the ideals that are vital to our game and its future.”

It’s here that Selig and the league latch onto what Johnson can achieve. The league sees itself as a “social institution with important social responsibilities”. Selig sees Johnson as the “living embodiment” of many of the ideals that Selig proclaims the league is about.

In that, Johnson becomes more than a knight in shining armour saving the Dodgers. He also pushes the social initiatives envelope for MLB like they could never do before. Having him do so with the Dodgers, and all the Jackie Robinson has meant to the game, is nearly a storybook marriage.

The news of Magic Johnson being an owner of the Dodgers is great news, not only for Angelinos, but for Major League Baseball.



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