

THE CALL

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Old Stadium Site Now A Landmark

The site of the old Municipal stadium, located at 22nd and Brooklyn, was recognized Thursday as a historical landmark, with the unveiling of a marker that paid tribute to it as an important part of Kansas City sports history.

Over a span of more than 50 years, sports fans gathered at the stadium to watch games of the Kansas City Blues, the Negro Leagues' Kansas City Monarchs and Kansas City Athletics and other events including bathing beauty contests, parades and outdoor concerts.

The legacy of the landmark began in 1917, when Blues' owner George Muehlebach promised fans a new ballpark. The stadium began as a single deck steel and concrete grandstand, that held approximately 16,000 people while thousands more would sit in temporary bleachers or stand to watch the games. The park was named Muehlebach field.

Seating was open only to white fans during the Blues' games, but open to all when the Kansas City Monarchs played. Thousands of fans watched players like Jackie Robinson and Satchel Paige. The Negro Leagues World Series was played sev-

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eral times in the stadium.

In 1932, Muehlebach retired as owner of the Blues but the stadium continued to bear his name. Jacob Ruppert, owner of the New York Yankees, took over the team in 1937 and changed the name of the park to Ruppert Stadium. Exhibition games between the Blues and the Yankees later became a special treat for fans. Area college teams also began to use the stadium for special events.

During the late 1950's, both the Monarchs and the Blues were dis-

placed as major league teams deseregated and Arnold M. Johnson moved the Philadelphia Athletics to Kansas City, replacing the Blues. The stadium was expanded to hold 31,000 and the named changed to the Municipal stadium.

The Kansas City Chiefs and Kansas City Royals even played their first games at Municipal stadium. In 1973, both teams moved to a new state-of-the-art ballpark at the Truman Sports Complex. In 1976, the old ballpark was torn down.

DEDICATION OF THE OLD MUNICIPAL STADIUM . . . A historical marker was unveiled Thursday, April 6, at the site of the old Municipal stadium, 22nd and Brooklyn Ave. The stadium, which was open from 1922-1976, serves as a landmark for Kansas City sports history. The marker was funded by a grant from the Kansas City 150th Anniversary Legacy Fund. Shown above, from left to right, are Buck O'Neil, former Kansas City Monarch; Ray Doswell, curator of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum; City Councilman Troy Nash and Bob Kendrick, director of marketing at the museum. — CALL photo By Jerry Lockett.

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