Dudley A. Nichols; Floods, American Radio Relay League, Hollywood and Hall of Fame Athlete(s)

It was Wednesday, March 26, 1913 when torrential rains caused widespread flooding throughout the Midwest. At the University of Michigan wireless telegraph station was chief radio operator Benjamin N. Burglund. Hearing distress messages, in Morse code, from high school-aged students Herbert V. Akerberg and Dudley A. Nichols; both in the State of Ohio, Burglund immediately sends a call to all wireless operators asking for assistance. This marked the beginning of relaying disaster messages using wireless telegraphy. Akerberg would later become Vice-President of Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) while Nichols would obtain his degree from the university and then move



Event Timeline of the American Radio Relay League. 1913; Midwest storms isolate large areas.

to Hollywood to become a screenwriter. As a student at the University of Michigan, 1914-1918, not much is known of Dudley Nichols. His radio callsign, 8IM, is seen within the radio logbooks and The Michigan Technic notes that Nichols was a member of Theta Xi fraternity and was in-charge of the wireless telegraph laboratory and later the radio station at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station.

One year later, 1914, Hiram Percy Maxim and Clarence Tuska created the American Radio Relay League; the national association for amateur radio operators. The purpose of this newly formed organization was solely to relay messages, of importance, using amateur radio operators.



In Hollywood, Nichols received an Academy Award for "The Informer" and wrote or co-wrote the screenplays for "Bringing Up Baby", "For Whom the Bell Tolls", "Scarlet Street", "The Bells of St. Mary's", "The Tin Star", "The Battle of Midway" and "Pinky". Pinky, written by Dudley Nichols and produced by Darryl Zanuck, was an American Race Drama that included a former UCLA athlete, Kenny Washington.

Pinky Movie Trailer: https://m.imdb.com/name/nm0913486/?ref_=vp_back

Kenny "Kingfish" Washington attended UCLA where he was a standout in both baseball and football (his #13 was the first jersey to be retired at UCLA). At UCLA, Washington was considered to be better than his UCLA teammate, Jackie Robinson. As one of the top

collegiate players, Washington was named as a second team All-American. However, when collegiate players were asked to select an All-American team, Washington was the only player to receive the votes of every player who had played against him. Later, playing 3-years with the LA Rams, Washington averaged over 6-yards a carry and still holds the longest run from scrimmage of 92 yards.



L-R: Jackie Robinson, his Mother and Kenny Washington

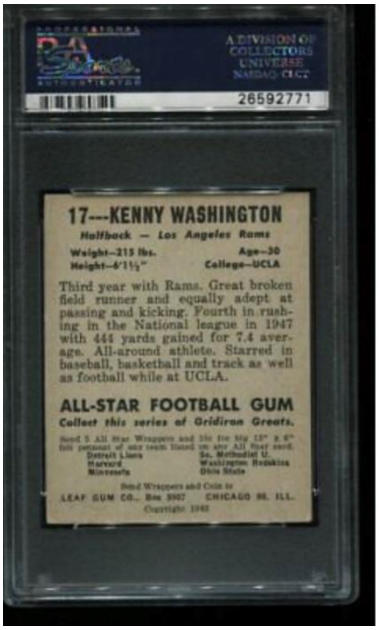


Kenny Washington #13 UCLA

While there was no rule prohibiting African-Americans in the NFL, team owners purposely choose not to sign any to contracts. George Halas, then owner of the Chicago Bears, attempted to sign Washington but was unable to persuade the other NFL teams to allow this to occur. Later, when Dan Reeves moved the Cleveland Rams to Los Angeles, a city anti-discrimination policy threatened to prevent the Rams from playing in the Los Angeles Coliseum. As a result, Washington, and his UCLA teammate Woody Strode, were signed to contracts on March 21, 1946. This marked the re-integration of African-Americans into the NFL.

Kenny's father, Edgar "Blue" Washington, played in baseball's Negro League and also worked as an actor appearing in "Gone with the Wind" and in "The Haunted Gold" with John Wayne. Having connections in the movie industry, Kenny also had roles in the 1949 movie "Pinky", and later in "The Jackie Robinson Story" (1950).





It was Jackie Robinson and Kenny Washington who broke color barriers in their respective sports, however, only Robinson has been inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. While the Pro Football Hall of Fame, in Canton, Ohio, has an exhibit recognizing Washington as the first African-American to break the football color barrier, Washington has yet to be inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Kenny Washington Link: https://youtu.be/7GstE32yLhU

Similarly, in National Hockey League, it was Willie O'Ree who broke the color barrier while playing for the Boston Bruins during 1958. While only playing in 45 games, Willie was inducted into the NHL Hockey Hall of Fame in 2018 as a "Builder" of the sport.



Willie O'Ree Hockey of Fame Induction Link: https://youtu.be/STpRn0MCOs8

Inductee's into the Pro Football Hall of Fame occur on the eve of the Super Bowl. Please encourage your sportswriter that it is time to nominate Kenny Washington to the Pro Football Hall of Fame.
Selection Committee Link: https://www.profootballhof.com/heroes-of-the-game/becoming-a-hall-of-famer/

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The University of Michigan Amateur Radio Club / W8UM History Project. 2021