

5-9-2008

Ahead of the Pack: The New York Pioneer Club & the Integration of Track and Field in New York City

Joseph Blankenship

Fordham University, aaas45@fordham.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://fordham.bepress.com/aaas_senior

Part of the [African American Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Blankenship, Joseph, "Ahead of the Pack: The New York Pioneer Club & the Integration of Track and Field in New York City" (2008). *African & African American Studies Senior Theses*. 51.
https://fordham.bepress.com/aaas_senior/51

This Dissertation/Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the African and African American Studies at DigitalResearch@Fordham. It has been accepted for inclusion in African & African American Studies Senior Theses by an authorized administrator of DigitalResearch@Fordham. For more information, please contact considine@fordham.edu.

Research Seminar
Dr. Mark Naison
9 May 2008

Ahead of the Pack:

The New York Pioneer Club & the Integration of
Track and Field in New York City

By: Joseph Blankenship

Joseph Blankenship
AARU 4890 Research Seminar
Rough Draft
Dr. Mark Naison
9 May 2008

Ahead of the Pack:

The New York Pioneer Club & the Integration of Track and Field in New York City

Introduction:

When people think of the Bronx, they think of a few things—the Yankees, Hip Hop, and Jenny from the block. What they generally do not think about, however, is an international powerhouse in track and field. This powerhouse has produced many great athletes and instilled pride in the community. The names Joe Yancey, Ed Levy, Larry Ellis, Ted Corbitt, and Fred Thompson are names most people outside of track and field would not know. Inside the world of track and field, however, they are all legends connected to one organization: the New York Pioneer Club.

The New York Pioneer Club is a non-discriminatory, ground-breaking organization that has spawned some of the richest talent that has represented the United States in the Olympic Games. The Club has created community leaders and given rise to some very important city politicians. Out of its ranks have emerged college professors and administrators. Many other running clubs throughout the city and country have either been influenced by, or have been created by, former members of the Pioneer Club, including the organization responsible for

putting on one of the world's most famous sporting events, the New York City Marathon. Additionally, Pioneer Club members have been involved in famous local and international political statements and demonstrations.

So why is it, then, that when people think of the Bronx and New York City sports in general, they do not think of the New York Pioneer Club? This is the central question my thesis will attempt to investigate, as I try to bring this organization's great history and significance to the foreground.

Beginnings

The New York Pioneers Club (hereafter the Pioneers) was established in 1936 by Joe Yancey, Robert Douglas and William Culbreath. It had its origin as a track club for area high schoolers and college students. At that time, the New York Athletic Club would not allow African-Americans, Jews, or other minorities to join their organization. In response to that reality, the Pioneers established themselves as one of the first interracial running groups in the New York City area. This did not mean that the Pioneers were an all African-American or Jewish organization. The main point that the club's first coach, Joe Yancey, tried to drive home was the message of openness and equality. Anyone from the area could join the organization. With this understanding, the Pioneers set out to make history. Based at Macomb's Dam Park in the South Bronx during the summer, and the 369th Regiment Armory in Harlem during the winter, Pioneers of all backgrounds and levels practiced and trained together.

By the early to mid-1940s, the Pioneers were making their presence known in the National Amateur Athletic Union, with members of the club winning national championships beginning in 1941. The Pioneers began a string of Olympic appearances, beginning with the

London games in 1948, where Irv Mondschein competed. In six subsequent Olympic games—1952 Helsinki, 1956 Melbourne, 1960 Rome, 1964 Tokyo, 1968 Mexico City, and 1976 Montreal—Pioneers numbered among the United States Track and Field team—many with great success. Approximately 24 men who had run and trained with the New York Pioneer Club were Olympians at some point.

One of the more famous Pioneer Club Olympians, John Carlos, had a greater impact on the Olympics than the stats alone could measure. At the 1968 Mexico City Olympic Games, Carlos, a Pioneer Club member from 1962-1968, placed 3rd in the 200-meter race. Tommy Smith, who was not a Pioneer Club member, placed 1st. During the award ceremony, as the national anthem of the United States was being played, both John Carlos and Tommy Smith raised their clenched fists in the “Black Power to the People” salute. Additionally, both men received their medals without footwear, instead choosing to wear only black socks to represent black poverty. These actions resulted in both Carlos and Smith being thrown off the team and sent back home. The timing of this action was not random either, coming only six months after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The actions of Carlos and Smith sent ripples throughout the country. In fact, Carlos and Smith are remembered more for that single statement than for their actual sporting accomplishments at the '68 games. A recent television show, *The Best Damn Sports Show*, ranked this action as one of the top 50 most inspiring sports moments in sports history. Clearly, members of the New York Pioneer Club have had their hands in some very significant international events.

Abiding Influence

Another New York Pioneer Club Olympian, Ted Corbitt, had international significance as well. Considered the “father” of the ultra-marathon and distance running, Corbitt founded the Road Runners Club of America in 1957 and was the co-founder and first president of the New York Road Runners Club in 1958. Since 1958, four out of the nine New York Road Runners Club presidents were former Pioneer members. The New York Road Runners Club is the main organization behind the New York City Marathon, which is one of the most significant marathons today. *Running Times Magazine* has described Track and Field as one of the only competitive sports where an open field of competition is intact. Unlike professional sports, Track and Field in the United States has remained accessible to the average citizen. Nowhere is this more evident than in the marathon. Major marathons, while world class events are open to professionals, amateurs, and average Joes alike; and organizations like the New York Road Running Club have ensured its credibility and accessibility. “Without Corbitt’s work and his 1964 book, *Measuring Road Running Courses*, it is doubtful that distance running would be anything like the sport we know today.”¹ Just to give an example of the kind of athlete Ted Corbitt was, consider that, at the age of 81, Corbitt walked a 240-mile, six-day race, and in the following year, he walked 303 miles in the same race.² The heart and stamina of a New York Pioneer never quits. Ted Corbitt is such a significant figure in the history of road running and marathoning in the United States and internationally that his son, Gary, established the Ted Corbitt Archives, which documents not only Ted’s career, but also the history of road running in the United States and abroad. Obviously, then, this Pioneer was truly a pioneer in his own right.

¹ Barry Lewis, “On Any Given Sunday: Ted Corbitt: The Father of Long Distance Running,” *Running Times Magazine*, July/August 2002.

² Frank Litsky, “Ted Corbitt, a Pioneer in American Distance Running Dies at 88,” *The New York Times*, December 13, 2007.

In addition to the athletes who participated in the Olympic Games, Joe Yancey and former Pioneer Club member Larry Ellis served as Track and Field coaches for Olympic teams. Unfortunately, Coach Yancey never coached the United States Track and Field Team. While he produced numerous Olympic athletes, he was never selected as the United States Track and Field Coach. He was, however, the coach of three Jamaican Track and Field teams. In 1984, Larry Ellis, who was from the Bronx and practiced and trained under Yancey, was the head coach of the 1984 United States Olympic men's track and field team. Ellis was also the first African-American head coach in any Ivy League sport, coaching track and field at Princeton University from 1970-1992. Before that, Ellis had coached at Jamaica High School in Queens. It was there that he coached Bob Beamon (also a New York Pioneer Club member), who went on to become an Olympic champion and world-record holder for the long jump. Additionally, Larry Ellis served as the president of USA Track and Field—track and field's governing body—from 1992-1996.³ Clearly, members and coaches of the New York Pioneers made significant contributions to the world of sports over the years.

Other leaders emerged from the ranks of the New York Pioneer Club in arenas other than sports. Mal Whitfield, who participated in the 1948 and 1952 Olympic Games and won 4 gold medals, was also a United States diplomat in 20 countries in Africa over the span of 47 years. Warren Halliburton, a collegiate professor and writer, was one of the first men to get the history and story of African-Americans onto the shelves in American libraries, schools and universities. He too was a New York Pioneer Club member. The list of Pioneers who have gone on to be teachers and city officials is lengthy. The actor, Roscoe Brown, was once a Pioneer. Fred Thompson, who founded the Atoms Track Club in Brooklyn—which is highly celebrated in its own right as one of the first clubs for women—was also a product of the Pioneer Club. Other

³ Frank Litsky, "Larry Ellis, Olympic Coach For U.S., Dies at 70," *The New York Times*, November 6, 1998.

running clubs throughout the country, such as the Philadelphia Pioneer Club, were modeled after the New York Pioneer Club.

So why, then, is the New York Pioneer Club, with all its achievements and the significant people who have been associated with it, at such a critical point in its history? With the New York Yankees having destroyed the Pioneers home park to build their new stadium, the Pioneer Club's story is in danger of being lost, in spite of its influence on the history of sports in the Bronx, New York City, and the general world of sports. This story needs to be told. The athletic feats are amazing on their own, but what makes this organization so special is what it meant to its members and its neighborhood. This was not some exclusive Olympic club. This was a grass-roots organization that fostered community and equality in a time when most of the country and New York City did not. It spawned brother and sister organizations that spread the same message. People who were members of the club tell of an organization and coach in Yancey who drove the principles of hard work, integrity, and opportunity into every member. The New York Pioneer Club, while at a standstill in its current form, cannot be forgotten. It would be a travesty to this Borough and city if its history were to be lost and forgotten.

Chapter 1:

Formation, Ideologies, and Places of Historical Significance

Founded in 1936, at the tail end of the Harlem Renaissance, the Pioneer Club embodied the values and spirit of the Harlem Renaissance and the New Negro movement inspired. Robert Douglas, as the club's first president, chose Yancey to become its first coach. The Pioneer's motto—"for the betterment of the Negro youth"—spoke to the feel of the Renaissance and how Yancey would treat his athletes. Yancey, a Captain in the New York State Guard, has been

described by former pupils as very caring and compassionate. The mission of the Pioneer Club was to develop top athletes and people. Originally founded as the New York Olympic Club—but soon after forced to change its name to the New York Pioneer Club after insistence from the A.A.U.—an article kept in the personal scrapbook of Joe Yancey tells the story:

The New York Olympic Club, despite its recent birth, has been making great strides in its effort to support and advance the athletic aspirations of the Negro youth...the New York Olympic Club aims to put athletics on a permanent, recognized, and highly efficient basis. The organization not only plans to support and stimulate athletics, but to encourage and advise the young athlete....The club intends to sponsor a track and field team that will bring honor to the citizens of Harlem.⁴

Clearly, then, the intent of the club was to develop productive members of society of whom the community could be proud. As the club members gained more attention in the *New York Amsterdam Newspaper*, membership and notoriety increased. By the 1950s, the Pioneers held their own annual track meet at the 369th Armory, according to Frank Belton, current president of the Pioneer Club and other former members. Based on the many accomplishments of the members of the club, it seems as though this goal was achieved quite successfully throughout its more than fifty-year heyday.

Joe Yancey was not only a coach, but a mentor on many levels. Whether a person was a world class athlete or just running for fun, Yancey treated his students with the same respect and love. Winning was not as important as developing into a caring and decent human being. Every former Pioneer with whom I spoke said the same things about Yancey—that he was a serious man who knew how to nurture young men into productive men and members of society. No

⁴ "Olympic Club Aims At Bigger Program; Douglas Group Will Sponsor Track and Field Team," May 21, 1936. Unknown newspaper, recovered from Joe Yancey's and the Pioneer Clubs scrapbook.

matter what caliber of athlete, Yancey stressed humility and using what talents that were available to some to help others improve as runners. The fact that the club was comprised of all types of athletes did not mean, however, that the elite runners were more serious as competitors. “Everybody had a winning attitude,” stated John Carlos in an interview.⁵ The Pioneers were about winning on and off the field, and Yancey made sure to instill the message in each person he mentored.

Frankie Bowen, who was a world class runner, ran track and field in many European countries for a time with the AAU while he was a Pioneer. Bowen, a resident of Brooklyn, joined the Pioneers as a quarter-miler after hearing of the Club through a neighbor who was on the St. John’s track and field team in the mid 1950s, right after he finished high school. When he met with Yancey, he thought Yancey was both exciting and understanding. As for Yancey’s philosophies of becoming a better person and a gentleman, Bowen remembered a story when he was traveling to a Jersey City meet with Yancey and other Pioneers. Bowen said he had a shirt and jacket on, but no tie, and Coach Yancey came up and told him that, “it behooves you to present yourself better. We always carry ourselves as gentlemen.” After saying this, Yancey took Bowen to a local store and bought him a tie, and from then on, Frankie Bowen and his mother never left to travel with the team without a tie on.⁶ This story shows exactly what being a member of the Pioneer Club meant. It was more than just training for a sport—which they did very well. It was about training for life. The Pioneer Club was a “sort of early mentoring program,” according to James Richardson, who was a member of the Club in the ‘50s and ‘60s.⁷ Many members have described Yancey as a second father. Joe Yancey had a lasting impact on

⁵ John Carlos, interviewed by Joseph Blankenship, May 8, 2008.

⁶ Frankie Bowen, interviewed by Joseph Blankenship, May 7, 2008.

⁷ James Richardson, interviewed by Joseph Blankenship, May 8, 2008.

every person who was in the club. This was more than a running club; it was a life skill club too, and Yancey is forever remembered by his former athletes as a great and humble person.

With this sort of attitude, it is easy to understand that the Pioneer Club was not closed to anybody. Race, religion, and even age did not matter. Every person interviewed stated that the club's open door policy is what set it apart from groups like the New York Athletic Club. Former Pioneer Jimmy Grant, discussed how he went to Automotive High School in Brooklyn and lived in Harlem, where he found out about the Pioneer Club through a friend. Grant recalls that, while he ran with the Pioneers in the '50s and '60s, all races were a part of the club. He even remembered that there was a young man from Huntington, Long Island, who would drive all the way in to Harlem just to practice with the Pioneers. This was a truly unique group of people.

Another man interviewed, Dr. Roscoe Brown—who during his professional life was a professor at New York University and later the president of the Bronx Community College—discussed how he did not join the club until the beginning of the 1970s, when he was 50 years old. He joined as a “master’s” runner and practiced alongside high school and college-aged young men, including some of his very own students.⁸ Clearly then, the philosophies of the Pioneer Club were not limited to young people, but anyone and everyone who wanted to join. Even further, Dr. Brown ^{pointed out} discussed that women began to run with the club in the late 1970s and mid '80s. Although Joe Yancey had this message of unity and respect, Dr. Brown suggested that Yancey was not too happy when women began running with the Pioneers. Still, Yancey let women join the club and held true to his philosophy of being a gentleman and a respectable person, and the club became even more integrated than before.

⁸ Dr. Roscoe Brown, interviewed by Joseph Blankenship, May 7, 2008.

From its outset, Pioneer members were involved in fighting for what was right in the world. One of the first Pioneers was John Woodruff, who was a teammate of Jesse Owens in the 1936 Olympic Games. These games were significant because Owens and his teammates—one of whom was a Pioneer—showed the world that Hitler's idea of Aryan dominance was faulty. Occurring in the same year as the Pioneer Club's founding, the triumphs of Owens and others at the Berlin Olympics were significant political statements. The tradition of making political statements on an international level continued with John Carlos and his black power salute. The fact that Pioneers were able to have an impact on the international human rights struggle spread over 32 years is very significant and displays the sort of pride and self respect that Yancey instilled in his athletes.

While the Pioneers practiced at Macomb's Dam Park during the summer months and when it was nice outside, their home base in the winter was the 369th Armory in Harlem at 142nd St. and 5th Avenue. As one of the most celebrated and historic National Guard regiments in the country, the Harlem Hellfighters were one of the first black regiments to participate in combat in World War I. Although they were not allowed to fight next to white American soldiers, the regiment was allowed to fight beside the French. When the war was over, the Harlem Hellfighters came out as one of the most decorated units. Additionally, the Armory, which is a city landmark, combines "medieval and Art Deco styles [and] 'is considered a community symbol of unity, service and pride.'"⁹ Having this history available and told to Pioneers was most significant. Yancey knew what the 369th meant to the community and in terms of United States military history and race relations, and he most certainly imparted this message to his athletes.

⁹ Josh Barbanel, "Harlem Armory Selected as Site for New Shelter," *The New York Times*, December 6, 1985. Sec. B

Additionally, one of the places the New York Pioneers held fundraisers in the 1930s and 1940s was the Renaissance Casino and Ballroom (see appendix A). As the 369th Armory was historically significant for the Pioneers and Harlem, so too was the Renaissance Casino and Ballroom. Home of the first professional black basketball team, the Rennies or Rens, the Renaissance was a club in which the community took pride, and vice versa.¹⁰ Unlike clubs such as the Cotton Club of Harlem, which basically played to the desires of whites coming uptown to play, the Renaissance was a place for residents of Harlem. This was a club for local residents which upheld local ideals and was not afraid to be honest with itself and the community. Places like the Cotton Club were places for whites to bring their culture into Harlem. The Cotton Club was not authentic; it was merely a show that blacks put on for whites. The Renaissance Casino and Ballroom, however, was quite the opposite—it was a place of pride.

This sense of pride is what held the Rens—named in honor of the Harlem Renaissance—together and made them one of the more successful basketball teams of the time. With a 3,000 seat capacity, the Renaissance Casino and Ballroom opened in 1923 and was home to this famous basketball team.¹¹ Unlike the Harlem Globetrotters—who were actually from Chicago—the Rens were not a showboating team; the Rens were serious contenders. Just as the Renaissance was a fixture of the community, so too were the Rens. “The Renaissance Casino and Ballroom was a hub of black culture in Harlem.”¹² With this Casino and Ballroom a centerpiece of Harlem, home to a famous basketball team and great music and dance, there could really be no better place for the New York Pioneer Club to have its fundraisers. Joe Yancey was a man who cherished his community and the human race. Their slogan—“for the betterment of

¹⁰ Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. *On the Shoulders of Giants: My Journey Through the Harlem Renaissance*. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007).

¹¹ William c. Rhoden, “D-League Team Could Bring Rens Back to Harlem,” *New York Times*, November 12, 2007.

¹² William c. Rhoden, “D-League Team Could Bring Rens Back to Harlem,” *New York Times*, November 12, 2007.

the Negro youth"—exemplifies this feeling. Since the New York Athletic Club had an open policy of segregation, Yancey's approach was not only to start an interracial running club, but to start a club that focused not only on performing at the highest levels of sport, but infusing pride, hope, and justice into each and every participant, and the fact that these historical places—the 369th Armory and the Renaissance Club—had such significance in and of themselves shows the roots of Yancey's philosophy which became an ingrained part of every Pioneer. The Pioneer Club instilled both individual pride and pride in the community.

Chapter 2:

Political Action: The Mexico City Games and John Carlos

As the New York Pioneers' founding mission stated, the club was established "for the betterment of the Negro youth."¹³ It should come as no surprise that when speaking of Pioneer members and political involvement and action, the two are not separate. One of the most famous examples of political involvement by a pioneer member dealing with racial injustice occurred during the 1968 Mexico City Olympic Games. During these games, Tommie Smith and John Carlos—placing first and third respectively in the 200 meter sprint—stunned the sports and political world when they threw up the black power salute. The year 1968 was a year of turmoil and uncertainty in America. With the deaths of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy, the country surely was in a state of unrest. David Wiggins describes 1968:

The year began with North Korea's capture of the USS *Pueblo* and ended with Apollo 8's circling of the moon. Sandwiched between these two historic events were such incidents as the launching of the Tet offensive in Saigon, the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, student rebellion at

¹³ Slogan of the New York Pioneer Club imprinted on Pioneer materials & mailers.

Columbia University, a poor people's march in Washington, D.C., and riots at the Chicago Democratic Convention....The year severed past from future, signaling the end of Lyndon Johnson's great social vision and the Civil Rights struggle while ushering in the Women's Liberation Movement and newfound interest in environmental issues....In all, 1968 combined both revolutionary bombast and spiritual fulfillment, ecstasy and self-destruction, success and failure.¹⁴

With so much cultural, civic, and social unrest, it surely took a lot to be noticed in this kind of atmosphere. Yet, John Carlos and Tommie Smith grabbed the attention of the world by bringing the issue of racial injustice in the United States to the forefront of the Olympic stage.

This incident did not come out of the middle of thin air, however. The year leading up to the 1968 Games was a tumultuous one in track and field, specifically in dealing with the New York Athletic Club and the United States participating in the upcoming Mexico City Games. A central organization involved in demonstrating against the racist practices of certain track and field organizations in the US (such as the New York Athletic Club) and certain countries (such as South Africa) was the Olympic Project for Human Rights (OPHR). Founded by Harry Edwards of San Jose State College (John Carlos' alma matter), members of the OPHR included black athletes, such as John Carlos and Tommie Smith, Roy Innis of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), H. Rap Brown of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and an AAU official, Marshall Brown.¹⁵ At the time of the founding of OPHR in 1967, Edwards brought these individuals and others together in order to discuss a possible Olympic boycott because of discriminatory practices against Blacks. At a press conference in New York City,

¹⁴ David K. Wiggins, *Glory Bound: Black Athletes in a White America* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 104.

¹⁵ David K. Wiggins, *Glory Bound: Black Athletes in a White America* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 108.

Edwards announced that the Mexico City Olympics would be boycotted by participating black athletes unless certain demands were met. The demands were: the reinstatement of Muhammad Ali as the heavyweight champion; the removal of the president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Avery Brundage; the end to the New York Athletic Clubs discriminatory practices against blacks and Jews; an additional appointment of a black coach for the Olympic track and field team; a black man selected to the US Olympic Committee, and, finally, the banning of South Africa and Rhodesia from the Games.¹⁶ Beside Edwards at this press conference were Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Floyd McKissick.¹⁷ If the Olympic Games were supposed to promote international cooperation and pride, then the OPHR thought it only appropriate that a country such as South Africa, with its apartheid policies, be barred from competition; and in a time when the United States was going through such a transformation, the support of Martin Luther King lent credibility to Edwards' organization and political stance.

In order to show how serious the organization was about potentially boycotting the '68 Games, they first took on the New York Athletic Club. In celebration of its 100-year anniversary, the New York Athletic Club held a track meet at the new Madison Square Garden. In order to show its strength as a legitimate organizing body and about possibly boycotting the upcoming games, Harry Edwards and the OPHR attempted to dissuade black athletes from participating in this event. Athletes such as Tommie Smith and John Carlos were among other notable black athletes who chose not to participate in the meet. The protest was successful and it was the first real demonstration of force by the OPHR. Also involved in the organization and its protest were

¹⁶ David K. Wiggins, *Glory Bound: Black Athletes in a White America* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 108

¹⁷ Amy Bass, "Whose Broad Stripes and Bright Stars? Race, Nation, and Power at the 1968 Mexico City Olympics," in *Sports Matters: Race Recreation, and Culture*, eds. John Bloom and Michael Nevin Willard (New York: New York University Press, 2002), 186.

three very famous non-track and field athletes—Muhammad Ali, Bill Russell, and Jim Brown.¹⁸ With the support of such athletes and the OPHR's demonstration against the NYAC's 100th Anniversary meet, surely it came as a surprise when on the same day as the NYAC boycott, the International Olympic Committee and Avery Brundage announced that South Africa would be allowed to compete in the Olympics that year.¹⁹

Obviously this decision enraged the OPHR and other organizations, because the issue of racial injustice and discrimination was at the center of an international event now. The American Committee on Africa—with members such as Sidney Poitier, Martin Luther King, and Jackie Robinson—state that allowing South Africa to compete should not have been allowed because the “racist policies in South Africa violated Olympic Rules against discrimination and political interference.”²⁰ The decision to allow South Africa to compete was eventually reversed and the OPHR did not organize a protest of the Games.

Carlos and Smith took symbolic action into their own hands, however, recognizing that political injustices and suppression were still a part of international and United States politics and societies. When the black power fists were raised, the eyebrows of the world were raised at the same time. By protesting during the playing of the national anthem, Smith and Carlos contributed to a much needed dialog on race relations. This small moment had international implications. Thus the legacy of Joe Yancey—always fighting for justice and doing the right thing—was lived out for the entire world to see.

During a phone interview, I asked John Carlos about his participation in the New York Pioneer Club and his involvement in the 1968 Mexico City Olympic Games. Carlos began by

¹⁸ Russell T. Wigginton, *The Strange Career of the Black Athlete* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006), 66.

¹⁹ David K. Wiggins, *Glory Bound: Black Athletes in a White America* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 109.

²⁰ David K. Wiggins, *Glory Bound: Black Athletes in a White America* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 109.

stating that he joined the Pioneers as a freshman in high school in 1962. When asked how he heard of the Pioneers, he responded by telling me that he heard about them through the local police department. Carlos stated that he was involved in a series of minor break-ins at abandoned lots and such, and every time he would run into the police, they could never catch him. He had always been a good athlete, but he had never taken running seriously as a competitive sport until he joined the Pioneers. Since the police could never catch Carlos, they contacted his parents and told them what he was up to and suggested that he should join the Pioneers and learn from Joe Yancey. Carlos went to a Police Athletic League event and met Yancey and then became a Pioneer.

AMAZING
STORY

Joe Yancey's philosophy of conducting yourself a certain way did not mesh with Carlos right away. Carlos described Yancey as a "gentleman's gentleman," and "old school." He then went on to explain that he himself was sort of a "new breed" of adolescent, kind of "contradictory to the old school. So there was an adjustment period when I joined Yancey's club."²¹ Despite this adjustment period, when Carlos and Yancey were not only learning to adjust to each other but Carlos was learning to get along with established Pioneers, Yancey was certainly a father figure to him and the others. "He was without a doubt a mentor to us. Not only was he a father figure to the athletes, but to the assistant coaches, especially Ed Levy who took over after Yancey."²² Clearly, Yancey's message stuck with Mr. Carlos, because it was this message and philosophy of treating all people with respect and courtesy that sparked Carlos into taking political action, such as boycotting the NYAC's 100th anniversary meet at Madison Square Garden and the '68 Games.

²¹ John Carlos, interviewed by Joseph Blankenship, May 8, 2008.

²² John Carlos, interviewed by Joseph Blankenship, May 8, 2008.

In terms of political action through sport, Carlos had some very interesting insights. When speaking about the 1967 Boycott of the NYAC's track meet, Carlos was quick to point out that it wasn't just him and other elite athletes; it was all black competitors in the area that refused to participate. He went further to explain the reason behind the boycott: "We're all created equal. Whose place is it for one organization to discriminate against this type of person or that type of person? We all live and die the same way. How can you tell someone that they are not good enough as a human being to represent this or that organization? That's why we boycotted the meet, to get this issue attention."²³ This was part of the larger OPHR campaign to bring the issue of human rights—not just civil rights—to the forefront of the international stage. In any demonstration or protest, Carlos said, the point is to get the message out there so people can research the issue and formulate their own opinions.

When the boycott of the 1968 Games did not happen, Carlos wanted to make sure his message went public. I asked Carlos if the scene on the podium was something that was planned, he responded by saying that he and Tommie Smith had not really talked about it before, but he approached Smith and told him he wanted to do something. Smith agreed, and said that he would supply some things—such as the beads, black scarf, etc. Carlos came with the socks and Puma shoes on. The Puma brand was important to Carlos. Puma had been a supporter of minority athletes for a while and even helped Yancey send Carlos and other Pioneers to San Diego in 1965 for a championship. Unlike other major shoe brands like Adidas—which Carlos has never worn—the Puma Company was supportive. So with these items, Carlos and Smith set out to make an international statement. Carlos went on to explain that after the race, for the 30 minutes prior to the awards ceremony, he and Smith went over what they would do. During the

*This
is
amazing!*

²³ John Carlos, interviewed by Joseph Blankenship, May 8, 2008.

singing of the national anthem, Smith and Carlos raised their fists in order to show their support of human rights struggles all over the world.²⁴

This statement was not well received by many, according to Carlos. Even amongst other Olympic teammates, the reaction was one of shock. The entire stadium was in shock, no one really knew what was going on or what had just happened, according to Carlos. But Carlos was prepared for this. He told me that when he was about eight years old, he had had a vision in which he did this sort of action. All the faces were the same at the actual event as in the vision. When I asked about being kicked out of the Olympic Village, he told me the ironic part was that he only stayed in the Village three nights—right before competition. Otherwise, he had stayed in the same hotel as many Olympic officials. He went further and stated that “they could remove me from the team and the Village, but they couldn’t remove the team from me. They tried to bury us, but they couldn’t.”²⁵ After this shocking incident, many tried to skew the message that Carlos and Smith had made. According to Carlos, those who disapproved of the action, including the media, tried to interpret the OPHR and Carlos and Smith’s power fist as a statement for the Black Power Movement. While they did hold up the Black Power Salute, it was not merely a statement for the organization. The statement was made to make people understand the human rights violations happening all across the globe—from racial injustice in the United States to more severe oppression elsewhere. “It [the salute] was about all social ills. It was a universal picture for all races.”²⁶ This is a message surely Joe Yancey and other Pioneers could stand behind. Furthermore, it shows that the Pioneer Club had a lasting message, even for those who went on to become celebrities in the sports world.

²⁴ John Carlos, interviewed by Joseph Blankenship, May 8, 2008.

²⁵ John Carlos, interviewed by Joseph Blankenship, May 8, 2008.

²⁶ John Carlos, interviewed by Joseph Blankenship, May 8, 2008.

Chapter 3:

The Ending of an Era

With the Pioneers so active in track and field and political action both locally and internationally—especially in the 1950s and '60s—, why then, has it faded from memory? In speaking with former pioneer members, many have stated that perhaps it was the fact that other running clubs were coming into existence in the late '60s and '70s. With Jackie Robinson integrating Major League Baseball in 1947 when he joined the Brooklyn Dodgers—after leaving the Kansas City Monarchs, which was a Negro League team—the Negro Leagues began to decline. Many of the Leagues most talented black athletes began to integrate the Majors. By the mid-1960s, the Negro Leagues were all but extinct. The same seems to be true for the New York Pioneer club. The Curator of the 369th Armory Historical Society, Sgt. Herb Tremble, helped to shed some light on this idea. “As the decline of the Negro Leagues happened, the same is true for the Pioneers—people started to see that blacks could compete at bigger and better levels. This in turn made clubs and other organizations become more and more integrated, and the Pioneer Club sort of faded out.”²⁷ As professional sports began to integrate and with the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights act and the 1968 Olympic Games statement, the Pioneer Club began to lose ground to more and more running organizations. With more clubs forming—including those with big name sponsors, such as Nike, that could entice top athletes with monetary contracts—elite black athletes that would have potentially run with the New York Pioneer Club began taking their talents elsewhere.

In addition to this, one former runner and current Pioneer President, Frank Belton, suggested that there were three things that led to the decline of the Pioneer Club in the mid 1970s and '80s. First, that “big name shoe companies” were winning over elite runners by offering

²⁷ Herb Tremble, interview by Joseph Blankenship, March 27th, 2008.

them contracts and organizing semi-professional and professional shoe teams. Secondly, that the college programs in the local area began to decline. Up until this time, according to Mr. Belton, schools like Fordham, NYU, and St. John's had very strong track and field programs. In the 1970s and '80s, these programs—which supplied the Pioneer Club with a sizeable amount of their membership—began to lose importance, so their programs faded to a certain extent. Finally, Mr. Belton suggested that the mentality of the New York City area high-school-aged students began to shy away from track and field. Belton stated that “the mentality of high school runners has decreased over the last twenty years or so.”²⁸ According to Belton, high schoolers no longer view track and field as when he ran in the '50s and '60s. Perhaps these things led to the decline of the Pioneer Club.

Dr. Roscoe Brown, who began running with the New York Pioneers when he was about 50 years old in the 1970s as a Master's runner, agreed with the sentiments of Frank Belton. As he explained, “in the 1970s other track clubs started up. After the 1960s and '70s, African American runners were more accepted into the mainstream. Additionally, the decline in popularity surrounding track and field hurt the Pioneers.”²⁹ Unlike the previous years when they had been so potent, however, the Pioneers “no longer had a corner on the [track and field] market,” because of integration and additional competition.³⁰ When it had been the Pioneers versus the New York Athletic Club's all white squad, for example, it was easy to recruit additional runners, no matter what their skill level. With the integration of sports and African American athletes becoming more and more accepted, clubs like the New York Pioneers became increasingly less valuable. Quick to point out that the Pioneers did not go into the '70s and '80s a completely deficient group, Dr. Brown stated that in the '70s and '80s the members of the

²⁸ Frank Belton, interviewed by Joseph Blankenship, May 7, 2008.

²⁹ Dr. Roscoe Brown, interviewed by Joseph Blankenship, May 7, 2008.

³⁰ Dr. Roscoe Brown, interviewed by Joseph Blankenship, May 7, 2008

Pioneers still won relays and masters championships. So even during the waning years of the club, Joe Yancey and his predecessor Ed Levy maintained a winning tradition.

Echoing the sentiments of Frank Belton and Dr. Roscoe Brown, former Pioneer Jimmy Grant believes that the Pioneers faded out due to additional competition with shoe companies, like Nike, who began paying athletes. This competition began to hurt the New York Pioneers because elite athletes went to other clubs, whereas before they potentially would have become Pioneers. Grant added that a lot of college athletes during this time stopped running for the Pioneers during their summer breaks. Furthermore, after graduating college, fewer athletes returned to the club to run. While Jimmy Grant did not go to college, he did note that those like him—who had to work and start supporting new families—faced difficulties in trying to find time to fit in their running, especially on an organized level such as the Pioneers. Finally, Jimmy Grant stated that when Joe Yancey stepped down as coach of the New York Pioneers and handed the reins over to Ed Levy, the club began to fade a little more. While Levy did a fine job and held up the same morals and standards as Yancey, he just wasn't the greatest track and field coach.³¹ With so many forces pulling and weighing on the New York Pioneers, it seems understandable how this great organization began to fade from activity.

Frankie Bowen, who also ran for the New York Pioneer Club from the mid 1950s into the early 1970s agreed with the sentiments expressed by the others. As more clubs came along, "Pioneers began to leave the club for other organizations, even the New York Athletic Association, for money."³² James Richardson, who is still a member of the Pioneer Club, expanded on this idea and tied the decline of the Pioneers into the decline of the Negro Leagues. Richardson stated the decline of the Pioneers was "similar to the Negro Baseball Leagues. Also,

³¹ Jimmy Grant, interviewed by Joseph Blankenship, May 7, 2008.

³² Frankie Bowen, interviewed by Joseph Blankenship, May 7, 2008.

members of the Pioneer Club began to get more and more scholarships to go to college. John Carlos left to go to San Jose State; Steve Williams [another Pioneer at the time] went to El Paso. So the Pioneers did not get the clientele they used to because guys started going right to college, instead of joining or keeping up with the Pioneers. Also other clubs popped up, like the Bruce Track Club of City College and the Brooklyn Athletic Club.”³³ These things, in Richardson’s opinion, are what led to the decline of the Pioneer Club. While Frankie Bowen expressed the same sorts of ideas as the other members, he expressed a new theory—perhaps the 1968 New York City teachers’ strike had to do with the decline of the Pioneer Club.

The 1968 New York City School Strike and Its Effects:

The 1968 New York City teachers’ strike “at the time...was the largest and longest set of school strikes in American history.”³⁴ In Brooklyn’s section of Ocean Hill-Brownsville in 1968, 19 educators in the district were fired. Local boards wanted control of local schools, and the Ocean Hill-Brownsville superintendent wanted the mostly black and Hispanic students to be taught by teachers of a similar racial makeup, instead of the majority white staff that was in place. After a court trial, the firings remained valid and the community did not know how to react. The Ocean Hill-Brownsville board superintendent, Rhody McCoy stated that his “ultimate goal was an all-black teaching force in his district,” and since eighteen of the nineteen fired were white, this was obviously what was in the works for this district.³⁵ In response to these firings and after the teachers were not reinstated, Albert Shanker, head of the United Federation of Teachers, proposed the entire New York City teaching force go on strike, and for 36 days from

³³ James Richardson, interviewed by Joseph Blankenship, May 8, 2008.

³⁴ Richard D. Kahlenberg, “Ocean Hill-Brownsville, 40 Years Later: The Lessons of the New York City School Strike,” *The Chronicle Review of The Chronicle of Higher Education* 54:33 (2008): B7.

³⁵ Richard D. Kahlenberg, “Ocean Hill-Brownsville, 40 Years Later: The Lessons of the New York City School Strike,” *The Chronicle Review of The Chronicle of Higher Education* 54:33 (2008): B7.

September to November 1968, teachers went on strike, which left one million students out of school.³⁶ As the strikes continued, black and Jewish relations in the area began to deteriorate. "The strike pitted Jewish teachers against black parents and administrators in a dispute over who should control the schools and the hiring and firing of educators."³⁷ Additionally, there was an increasingly anti-Semitic tone in certain Black Power advocates' voices and leaflets.

With black and Jewish relations growing tense, the teachers union and Shanker prevailed, but not without damaging the black and Jewish relationship in New York, which is why Frankie Bowen stated that "the 1968 teachers strike had a lot to do with the decline [of the Pioneers]. Blacks and Jews were all upside down after the strike and things were more tense."³⁸ Since the Pioneer Club was made up of individuals of every race and religion that wanted to join, obviously many members were black and Jewish. The tension in the city between the two groups at the same time as the Pioneer Club began to weaken would make one believe that the two correlated to a certain degree. Sergeant Herb Tremble expressed the same sentiments, adding that when the teachers strike happened, not only were the kids that participated in the club left out of school and after-school activities, but the teachers that helped Joe Yancey run the day to day operations were gone too. Whether this is one of the main reasons why the club deteriorated over the next two decades is merely speculation, it does provide an interesting insight.

Wow!

Finally, one additional idea was tossed around by Frank Belton, who said he had been trying to figure out for himself why exactly the Pioneer Club faded from active participation in the track and field world. In 1985, the 369th Armory at 142nd Street and 5th Avenue was turned

³⁶ Richard D. Kahlenberg, "Ocean Hill-Brownsville, 40 Years Later: The Lessons of the New York City School Strike," *The Chronicle Review of The Chronicle of Higher Education* 54:33 (2008): B7.

³⁷ Enid Weiss, "Series Examines a Troubled Era in Black-Jewish Relations," *The New Jersey Jewish News*, (2006), <http://www.njjewishnews.com/njnn.com/020906/SXSeriesExamining.html>.

³⁸ Frankie Bowen, interviewed by Joseph Blankenship, May 7, 2008.

over to the city for use as a homeless shelter, which would house 200 men.³⁹ When this happened, the Armory's open gym floor, which had been utilized as the track field, became the space which housed hundreds of men. When the Police Athletic League took over the Armory years later, the track and field space was turned into tennis courts. While the community remains in the 369th Armory, the track and field program moved to the 168th Street Armory.

With so many changes occurring in the 1960s, '70s, and '80s, it is no wonder that the New York Pioneer Club was swallowed up during that time. While it is understandable that certain outside forces influenced the club's decline, it is a shame that this wonderful group has become a sort of defunct alumni organization. From the integration of sports and the passage of Civil Rights legislation, to tense relations among blacks and Jewish people in New York, to competing clubs and organizations that lured elite athletes away, to the decline in track and field popularity on a whole, the fall of the New York Pioneer Club is understandable, yet regrettable. This organization means so much to the men that were interviewed and its story needs to be told.

Chapter 4:

Current Action to Preserve the Pioneer Club's Memory

With such a story, why is it that many have never heard of the New York Pioneer Club or of Joe Yancey? Personally, as a student in the Bronx for the past four years, I was astonished to discover that I had never heard of this club. Joe Yancey was such an incredible man and talented coach, that in 1986 he was elected to the Track and Field Hall of Fame.⁴⁰ On top of this, in the mid 1990s, the City of New York honored Yancey and the rest of the Pioneers by dedicating the track and field at Macomb's Dam Park—former home to the Pioneer Club's clubhouse—as “Joe

³⁹ Josh Barbanel, “Harlem Armory Selected as Site for New Shelter,” *The New York Times*, December 6, 1985. Sec. B

⁴⁰ *The New York Times*, “Joseph Yancey, 80, Olympic Track Coach,” February 25, 1991.

Yancey Track and Field.” How appropriate that a man who produced so many Olympians (about 24) should have a dedicated space directly across the street from the New York Yankees and their 26 World Championships? Unfortunately, the Yankees and the Bronx did not seem to think it that important.

Over the last year the New York Yankees have destroyed this living memory. Joe Yancey Track and Field stands no more. In its place is a brand new stadium for the Yankees. While building a new stadium is not the worst thing to do in the world, it did not help that they not only erased the one living memory of this incredible man and his organization, but they destroyed the majority of the only major park space in the United States poorest congressional district. Since this has happened, no track and field space has been re-dedicated in Yancey’s honor and the Pioneer Club’s clubhouse is non-existent. So many Olympians, educators, and politicians came out of the Pioneer Club that it is a wonder that the Bronx Borough President’s office would let this stand. In order to combat this issue of neglect, over the course of this semester, former members of the Pioneer Club have met on a few occasions to discuss the appropriate steps to take.

The most significant of these meetings occurred on February 29, 2008 at Fordham University’s campus in the Bronx. In attendance at the meeting were not only former Pioneers, but current Fordham University professors, current Pioneer Club president Frank Belton, former New York City politician Cyril Tyson, and a member of the Bronx Historical Society. Three initiatives were set out at this meeting. First, to reclaim the history of the New York Pioneers by collecting all remaining papers and artifacts of the club and setting them in one specific location; second, to get the Pioneer Club into an operational organization with strong support; and third, to facilitate and encourage the Bronx Borough President’s office in making sure the legacy of Joe

Yancey and the Pioneers lives on. At this meeting a letter writing campaign was suggested. In addition to that, it was suggested that the Pioneers that are still active in the organization begin to collect dues and turn themselves into a true association, instead of merely being a sort of alumni organization. Finally it was suggested that a meeting take place between members of the Pioneers, the Bronx African American History Project at Fordham, and the Bronx Borough president to see about how legislation could move forward in order to compensate for the loss of the Joe Yancey Track and Field.

While nothing has really come to fruition as of yet, it is evident that this club meant so much to those that were involved with it. To take the time to even plan to start a grass roots campaign like this provides evidence for the fact that this club meant so much to all that were involved. In each of the meetings that were held over the last few months, all the members in attendance were passionate about this club and its history. The New York Pioneer Club was a shaping force in these men's lives and they wish to see its legacy remembered, as well it should be.

Conclusion:

What stands out about the New York Pioneer Club and why should anyone even care? These are some of the thoughts that have run through my mind as I have researched the club and spoken with some of its past and present members. This was an organization that sparked the mind as well as the body. Its origins are based out of the Harlem Renaissance and are deeply tied into the Civil Rights Movement. This organization set out to make the community proud. From the South Bronx to Harlem to Long Island and points further out and in between, the New York Pioneer Club has affected many. In the beginning and to the end, the New York Pioneer

Club has been a club that broke barriers, set new standards, and touched many people's lives. For this reason, I believe that the legacy of Joe Yancey and the New York Pioneer Club is an important one to remember and ultimately the reason I have learned to love and appreciate the accomplishments of this club and its members.

The New York Pioneer Club began as the New York Olympic Club, and what a foresight that name was. At the very beginning it faced challenges with the New York Athletic Club and the Amateur Athletic Union. One of the main reasons the club was organized was to give blacks, Jews, and any and every person who was not white the opportunity to run and participate in organized sport. When the club announced that they would be called the New York Olympic Club, the AAU required them to change their name to the New York Pioneer Club. This did not detour the efforts of the club. After changing the name and establishing themselves as local competitors, they became a permanent part of the community of the South Bronx and Harlem for the next 40 to 50 years.

In order to establish themselves, the Pioneers obviously needed to raise attention and money. In order to do that, they held fundraisers like dinners, dances, and smokers in the 1930s and '40s at local Harlem establishments. The place of some of these fundraisers was the Renaissance Casino and Ballroom. The significance of this should not go unnoticed. In the '30s and '40s, at the end of the Harlem Renaissance, this club was a club for the community. It did not placate to the desires of the white bourgeoisie that came uptown to establishments such as the Cotton Club in order to cut loose. The Renaissance Casino and Ballroom—as the name suggests—was a club meant to be enjoyed by the local Harlem community. Additionally, the Renaissance Casino and Ballroom was the original home to the Harlem Rens, who were the first all black, fully salaried professional basketball team, and what a team they were. The Rens'

lifetime record was 2,318 wins and 381 losses and “were the first black team to win a world professional title in any sport.”⁴¹ The fact that this Casino and Ballroom meant so much to the community in which the Pioneers were based is significant to note.

Another significant site to note that has even deeper Pioneer Club connections is the 369th Armory on 142nd Street and 5th Avenue. This armory, which is a New York City landmark because of its art-deco style and historical significance, is home to the famed Harlem Hellfighters. This World War I all black regiment of the National Guard was not allowed to serve under the United States flag, but ultimately served alongside the French in support of Allied efforts. The regiment became one of the most highly decorated regiments from the United States because of their valiant efforts in the Great War. Upon their return home to Harlem, they became a symbol for the community and for what the community could accomplish. Since the armory was opened up to public use and facilitated many community activities, the Pioneers were based there during the winter season when Macombs Dam Park was not suitable to train at. The 369th Armory was even where the New York Pioneer Club held its annual track and field meet in the 1950s. This space was certainly significant to the story of the Pioneers.

A final space that was significant for the Pioneers’ story is the Macombs Dam Park, across the street from the New York Yankees—the most winning team in Major League Baseball history. Practicing under the shadows of Yankee Stadium night after night surely inspired many to accomplish the great things that were eventually done. Since the Pioneers founding mission was to bring pride to the community, develop talented young men into great athletes and more importantly great men, and specifically stated “for the betterment of the Negro youth,” it is not a coincidence that these great spaces were a part of this great organization’s history.

⁴¹ Arthur R. Ashe, Jr., *A Hard Road to Glory: A History of the African-American Athlete 1919-1945*, (New York: Warner Books, 1988) pp. 46, 50.

Great spaces and wonderful coincidences are not all this club's history has to offer. This club has produced 24 Olympians. From one of its first members having been on the 1936 Games in Berlin beside Jesse Owens, to the 1968 Mexico City Games with John Carlos, the Pioneers have accomplished many feats. Mal Whitfield, Bob Beamon, Reggie Pearman, Ted Corbitt, Harry Bright, and the list goes on from there. From 1948- 1976, at least one Pioneer has represented the United States on an international stage at the Olympic Games. This surely must have taken great coaching. Additionally, Joe Yancey coached for 5 different Olympic teams, the most notable being his Jamaican Track and Field Teams of 1948, '52, and '56. On top of that, one of the men to come out of the leadership and guidance of the Pioneer Club and coach Yancey was Larry Ellis, who was the first African American Track and Field coach for the United States Track and Field team in the 1984 Olympic Games. Ellis himself also became the first coach of any Ivy League school to coach any sport, coaching the Princeton Track and Field team. The sporting accomplishments of the New York Pioneers alone should stand out for all to know.

The accomplishments of those involved in the Pioneer Club extend far beyond the boundaries of the athletic field, however. Roscoe Brown became a successful actor; Ted Corbitt founded the Road Runners Club and became one of the pioneering men of long-distance running and the ultra-marathon. Many professors and college administrators were products of the Pioneers. In addition, many of the men I interviewed were local businessmen or community activists and social workers. The men who came out of the Pioneer Club have served the community well, and Joe Yancey and the Pioneer Club certainly played a role in that.

Finally, the Pioneer Club has a tremendous history of political involvement which should not be ignored. From having the 1936 Berlin Games connection, where the Aryan supremacy

ideology was questioned and disproved, the Pioneers have always stood for what was right. The most poignant example of this would be John Carlos and his involvement with the Olympic Project for Human Rights and their 1967 boycott of the NYAC's 100th Anniversary meet at Madison Square Garden and the 1968 Mexico City Olympic Games, where he and Tommie Smith made the world understand that issues of human rights should not be ignored. This sort of political action was based, in my opinion, on the fact that Joe Yancey instilled the sense of righteousness, self-worth, and self-awareness in his players. Yancey was all about respecting oneself and each other and never closed the door in anyone's face. The club was open to anyone and everyone and taught men how to be men. Besides producing great athletes, the club and Yancey produced wonderful people who stood up for what they believed in.

Despite its decline in its later years, the New York Pioneer club and the legacy of coach and mentor Joe Yancey—who was like a second father to most of the men involved in the club—should not be forgotten. With the destruction of Macombs Dam Park and the 369th Armory not being home to a track and field program anymore, this wonderful history is in jeopardy of being lost. The mission of this paper was to impart the significance of this club, its members and products, and the message behind it all. If this history is forgotten, we are all doing the New York area and international sporting and history communities a great disservice.

Bibliography

- Abdul-Jabbar, Kareem. *On The Shoulders of Giants: My Journey Through the Harlem Renaissance*. New York: Simon & Schuster. 2007.
- Ashe, Arthur R. Jr. *A Hard Road to Glory: A History of the African-American Athlete 1919-1945*. New York: Warner Books. 1988.
- Barbanel, Josh. "Harlem Armory Selected as Site for New Shelter." *The New York Times*, December 6, 1985. Sec. B.
- Belton, Frank. Interviewed by Joseph Blankenship. May 7, 2008.
- Bloom, John and Michael Nevin Willard, Eds. "Whose Broad Stripes and Bright Stars? Race, Nation, and Power at the 1968 Mexico City Olympics," by Amy Bass in *Sports Matters: Race, Recreation, and Culture*. New York: New York University Press. 2002.
- Bowen, Frank. Interviewed by Joseph Blankenship. May 7, 2008.
- Brown, Roscoe. Interviewed by Joseph Blankenship. May 7, 2008.
- Carlos, John. Interviewed by Joseph Blankenship. May 8, 2008.
- Grant, Jimmy. Interviewed by Joseph Blankenship. May 7, 2008.
- Kahlenberg, Richard D. "Ocean Hill-Brownsville, 40 Years Later: The Lessons of the New York City School Strike." *The Chronicle Review of The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Volume 54: 33. <http://chronicle.com>.
- Lewis, Barry. "On Any Given Sunday—Ted Corbitt: The Father of Long Distance Running." *Running Times Magazine*, July/August 2002.
- Litsky, Frank. "Larry Ellis, Olympic Coach For U.S. Track, Dies at 70." *The New York Times*, November 6, 1998.

Litsky, Frank. "Ted Corbitt, a Pioneer in American Distance Running, Dies at 88." *The New York Times*, December 13, 2007.

The New York Times. "Joseph Yancey, 80, Olympic Track Coach." February 25, 1991.

Pioneer Club Scrapbook.

Rhoden, William C. "D-League Team Could Bring Rens Back to Harlem." *The New York Times*, November 12, 2007.

Richardson, James. Interviewed by Joseph Blankenship. May 8, 2008.

Tremble, Herb. Interviewed by Joseph Blankenship. March 27, 2008.

Weiss, Enid. "Series Examines a Troubled Era in Black-Jewish Relations." *New Jersey Jewish News*. 2006. <http://www.njjewishnews.com/njjn.com/020906/SXSeriesExamining.html>.

Wiggins, David K. *Glory Bound: Black Athletes in White America*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press. 1997.

Wigginton, Russell T. *The Strange Career of the Black Athlete: African Americans and Sports*. Westport, CT: Praeger. 2006.

Appendix A

Second Annual Benefit Bazaar
THE PIONEER CLUB
Wednesday Evening June 2nd 1937
8:00 P.M.
RESERVANCE LAUNDS
1000 Broadway
Admission Free
Refreshments 50 Cents
at the Reservations Office

The Pioneer Club is pleased to announce the second annual benefit bazaar to be held at the Reservations Office, 1000 Broadway, on Wednesday evening, June 2nd, 1937, at 8:00 P.M. The bazaar will feature a variety of refreshments and refreshments will be served at the Reservations Office. The bazaar is a most successful and profitable one and we hope you will be able to attend.

Refreshments 50 Cents
at the Reservations Office

