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Curt Flood's Impact on Collective Bargaining

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Curt Flood's Impact on Collective Bargaining

Curt Flood is not a new name in the baseball industry because of the significant contribution he led to the players. Although the impact contributed to players collecting bargaining, Flood is also among players in the record book. Curt played for fifteen seasons from the year 1956 to 1971. Batting at .293, Curt was a three-time all-star and won the gold glove for seven uninterrupted seasons. Furthermore, Flood was a centerfield player and contributed a lot to several teams, including the St. Louise Cardinal and the Cincinnati Red Legs (Kessock, 2016). Curt became one of the fundamental characters in the sports labor development because of the rejected trade in the year 1969, eventually appealing the lawsuit in the United States Supreme Court. Nevertheless, the lawsuit was not fruitful, thus, resulted in furthering unity among players as they struggled over baseball reserve agency and required free agency.

The decision made by Flood in 1969 to reject the trade was the foundation of the beginning of the players' free agency and thus collective bargaining. Flood was playing for St. Cardinal during this year. After completing the 1969 season, Curt requested the Cardinal owner, August Busch for a thirty thousand dollar pay increase, however, Bosch was infuriated and refused the request. Later on, Curt discovered his transfer to the Philadelphia Phillis. Surprisingly, Cult turned down the deal since it was not like others made before. Curt needed to live in St. Louis and thus wrote a letter to commissioner Kuhn requesting him to invalidate the trade (Dworkin, 2016). Similarly, Curt argued that being in major leagues for twelve years does not make him a piece of property that can be sold or purchased regardless of his wishes, and he takes that as a defilement of his rudimentary rights. With the reverse clause, players were being tied up to the team hence regarded as the team property. However, Kuhn refuted the demand from Curt and told him that he had two picks which were to either play for Phillies or ruin his

career and stop playing. The assistance from the MLBPA Curt managed to file an antitrust suit in court asking for free agency.

The Wagner Act developed and accepted by Congress in 1935 was to control interactions of unions, corporations and experts. Mainly, the act aimed to ensure employees' rights to form unions are respected. Nonetheless, the antitrust laws did not aim to regulate the progress, scope or power of particular trades; nevertheless, they aimed to deal with supplementary noncompetitive tactics used to get or maintain market governance. Consequently, the antitrust presentation has had a significant influence on the game industry because players are taken as team property and thus can only be traded or released for retirement. Moreover, the reserve clause did not only lead to the enslavement of players but also it held that if one played for a team, they must play for the same team the coming season (Das, 2003). Although other two players had tried to challenge the reserve clause, they had run against the baseball exemption from antitrust laws developed in the year 1921.

Moreover, after refusing to go and play for the Phillies, Flood went to his lawyer and Mervin Miller who was the then ¹ executive director of the Players Association and informed them that he needs to prosecute Major League Baseball. Miler told Flood earlier that chances of winning were minimal because of the court's history based on unfair judgment favoring the team owners and their monopoly. Also, Miller added that even if Flood could win the case, he will never be enrolled in any baseball team (Kessock, 2016). Filing a lawsuit against the major league baseball resulted in a shock in many baseball specialists; however, Flood did not hesitate despite the knowledge that the case would cost him. Regardless of the consequences of the lawsuit, he focused on changing the whole baseball game for the benefit of the upcoming players.

The motivation obtained by Curt Flood towards bringing transformation in Baseball teams was tremendous. Since Flood was determined to end the reverse clause because he termed it as slavery, and thus one must have faced the consequences to end the situation. Notably, after realizing that his teammate and colleagues are not available to help him in the case, he still pushed on with the case. Fortunately, two former players Hank Greenberg and Jackie Robinson supported his decision in court (Das, 2003). After several appeals, the supreme court concluded that Curt has the right to be a free agent, even though the baseball antitrust laws cannot be detached by the court but only through Congress. Additionally, free agency for players was to be achieved through collective bargaining. The pressure Curt lawsuit brought resulted in unions, Miller and the team owners to bargain for a necessary negotiation on complaints. Furthermore, the Curt Flood Act of 1998 accomplished the requirements of Flood and stopped team owners governing players' agreements and professions (Das, 2003).

Flood recognition did not come until 1992 after being awarded the NAACP Jackie Robinson Award for involvement in the black athletes (Messeloff, 2017). Also, in the year 1994, the most significant event of his life provided a talk in unity to players when they were planning to go on strike. Curt Flood's bravery and athletic ability made him the big name he has earned today in sports industry. Similarly, Flood changed the baseball game for all players after his time and which presented a lack of selfishness having a significant impact on Americans. Moreover, his involvement in collective bargaining concerning baseball changed the way players get approached, the pay they deserve or promised as well as the degree of consent the players have upon completing or meeting requirements from contracts.

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