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CIVIL WAR TO CIVIL RIGHTS: KENTUCKY TROJANS BASKETBALL TEAM



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HARLAN COUNTY — The Kentucky Trojans was a semi-professional, all-black basketball team in Harlan County in the mid- to late-1940s. Local coal miner Charles A. Banks Sr. coached the team.

Because of the Day Law and Jim Crow customs, professional sports remained segregated throughout Kentucky and the South in the early and mid-20th century. The Trojans could not compete against white teams and spent most of its time

playing other segregated basketball teams, especially those from West Virginia.

The picture above is of the 1945 Trojans. On stage: Coach Charles Bank and trainer George "Piggy" Smith; Standing: Sylvester Baskins, Sanford (Buck Dust) Baskins, Billy Ward, Archie Atkinson, Anderson (Boots) Evans, Louis (Dip) Baskins; Squatting: Anderson (Tunney) Gist.

The Kentucky Historical Society (KHS) links Kentuckians with their past via archival collections that document people from every walk of life, reaching back to 1509. Letters, diaries, oral histories and photographs, as well as the first and second Kentucky Constitutions, are included. Find these and other KHS collections online at khscatalog.kyvl.org

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