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**Exciting Discovery at Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory:
Never-Before-Seen Evidence of Bats Made for Negro Leagues**
Hall of Famer George "Mule" Suttles Designed His Own Model

(Louisville, KY) February 25, 2009 -- Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory has uncovered a one-of-a-kind artifact that proves Hillerich & Bradsby Co. created bats for players in the Negro Leagues. While company lore indicated that Louisville Slugger did business with Negro League players, no evidence in the form of contracts, bat record cards, or other paperwork was known to exist.

That changed on February 5, when Tour and Programming Director, PJ Shelley, noticed a connection between the S128 Model and Mule Suttles, a superstar who played for the Newark Eagles and other Negro League teams. Investigating the clue with Curator Dan Cohen, they discovered a bat record card for Suttles that dated back to 1937. On the back of the card were the measurements for the S128 Model which was created specifically for Suttles.

Today, Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory recreated the Mule Suttles S128 model and added it to its hallowed Louisville Slugger Bat Vault. The S128 bat was crafted by hand, as it would have been back in the days of the Negro Leagues.

"It is especially fitting that we uncovered this exciting piece of history during Black History Month," said Anne Jewell, Executive Director of Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory. "The Negro Leagues were loaded with fantastic baseball players and unfortunately, compared to their contemporaries in the all-white major leagues, not as much is known about them. We're proud to offer up some additional information, especially about such a remarkable hitter as Mule Suttles."

George "Mule" Suttles preceded Josh Gibson as the most intimidating right-handed power hitter in the Negro Leagues, but he also racked up consistent high averages. The six-and-a-half-foot, 250-pound first baseman and outfielder was a standout for the Birmingham Black Barons, St. Louis Stars, Chicago American Giants, and Newark Eagles. He was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 2006.

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The historic bat record card details orders Suttles placed with Louisville Slugger from July 3, 1937 to July 31, 1939. During that time frame, Suttles batted .323 with a .642 slugging percentage, numbers that rival the league leaders in the majors at the time. His entire career spanned from WWI to WWII. When asked by his pitcher how to throw to Suttles during an exhibition game, Hall of Fame Manager Leo Durocher replied, "Just throw the ball and pray."

About Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory:

Experience history-in-the-making as you stroll through the factory where world-famous Louisville Slugger bats are created. Award-winning factory tour, interactive exhibits, historic memorabilia, the World's Biggest Bat, and more. Create a Louisville Slugger bat with your very own name on it, just like the pros. Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory, 800 West Main Street, is open Monday – Saturday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., and Sundays 12 noon – 5 p.m. Admission is \$10.00 for adults, \$9.00 for seniors (60+), \$5.00 children (6-12), and free for children 5 and under. For more information, log on to www.sluggermuseum.com or call 502-588-7228.

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