

**Forgotten Heroes:
Clarence “Fats” Jenkins**



by

Center for Negro League Baseball Research

Dr. Layton Revel

and

Luis Munoz

Clarence “Fats” Jenkins: Two Sport Super Star

Clarence “Fats” Jenkins played professional baseball from 1920 to 1940. In his twenty-one (21) year career in Negro League baseball, he established himself as one of the best players in the game. He could hit, run and play defense. According to Negro League researcher John Holway, Fats had a Negro League career batting average of .337 which ranks him in the top ten hitters of all time in Negro League baseball. As a fleet footed outfielder he was considered one of the best outfielders of his day.

Jenkins was also an exceptional basketball player. Fats was considered one of the best basketball players of the 1920’s and 1930’s. He certainly was the highest paid. During the height of his basketball career, he made as much as \$ 10,000.00 a season which lasted approximately six months. This was an extraordinary sum when you take into consideration that during this time a loaf of bread cost a nickel, a new Chevrolet automobile was \$ 475.00 and an apartment in New York rented from \$ 35.00 to \$ 55.00 a month.

He played and coached amateur and professional basketball from 1917 to 1941. He was the captain of the New York Renaissance or the Rens as they were most often called. The Rens are considered the best black basketball team of all time. The success of the New York Renaissance led them to being inducted as a team into the National Basketball Hall of Fame in 1963.

In addition to being an exceptional baseball player and great basketball player, Jenkins was known for his blazing speed. While there is no evidence of Clarence having a track career, he would have undoubtedly excelled at the sport. He was considered one of the fastest players in baseball during his playing days and was billed as the “fastest man in basketball” during his basketball career.

Clarence Jenkins’ abilities as a player and what he brought to his team was best summarized by legendary sports writer, Sam Lacy, in an article that he published in the Afro American on November 7, 1939. The following are excerpts from that newspaper article:

“ He was arrogant but likeable, ornery but a gentleman, chunky but fast, little but rugged.”

“ He could run away from an opponent in a surprise move and leave him as if he were tied to a spectators seat and then turn around and laugh at him. But in the next minute he’d be patting the same opponent on the arm as if to say don’t let it worry you the same thing may happen to me next time.”

“...shrewd from the top of his head to the bottom of his nimble feet.”

“ ...bubbling over with confidence, he could take advantage of any situation and turn the most barely noticeable weakness of the opposition into a weapon for himself and his team.”

“ ... a crackerjack player, smart as the proverbial whip, swift as a frightened gazelle and tough as an hombre as ever donned a pair of basketball trunks.”

Whether he was a baseball player who played basketball in the “off” season or a basketball player who played baseball in the basketball “off” season, one thing is or sure: Clarence “Fats” Jenkins was an exceptional athlete.

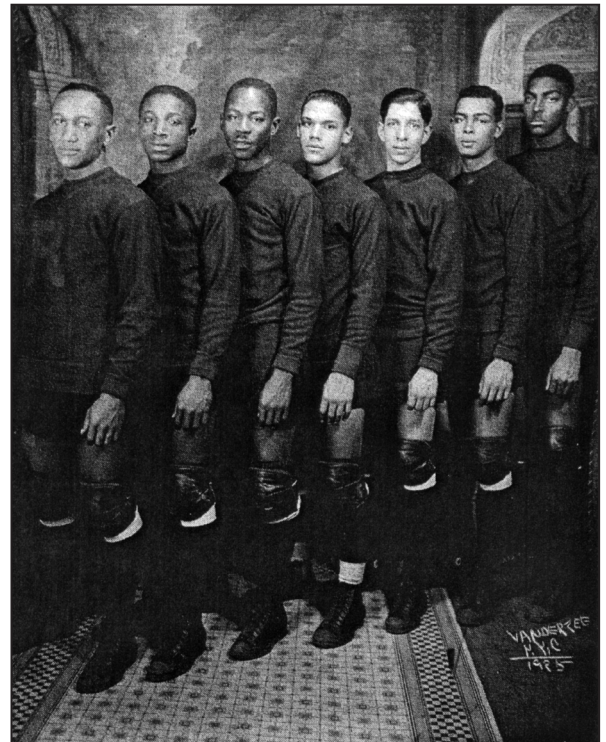
Clarence Reginald “Fats” Jenkins was born in New York City, New York on January 10, 1898 to Charles B. and Nellie Jenkins. Clarence was the older of two sons. His younger brother, Harold, was the one who gave him the nickname of “Fats.” The ironic part of his nickname was that he was not “fat.” He was muscular, stout and built like a fire plug, but he possessed incredible speed and quickness. The Jenkins brothers honed their baseball and basketball skills on the playgrounds and in the church gyms of New York City.

Fats stood 5 feet 7 inches tall and weighed between 165 to 180 pounds during his playing career. He was a true left hander who hit from the left hand side of the plate and threw the ball left-handed.

As a baseball player, he is considered one of the finest Negro League players of his day. Clarence Jenkins was best known for his blazing speed on the base paths, could steal a base with the best of them, possessed exceptional quickness and was one of the Negro League’s fastest players from the batter’s box to first base. Defensively he had exceptional range in his ability to cover the outfield. He was an excellent hitter who always made good contact with the ball. Most Negro League researchers credit Fats with a career batting average in the mid .330’s. In addition, Clarence was always known for constantly studying the game and the end result was that he was highly respected by both players and managers as one of the smartest players in the game.

On the basketball court, he was a superstar. Clarence “Fats” Jenkins is remembered as one of the best if not the best black basketball player of the 1920’s and 1930’s. Jenkins’ greatest asset as a basketball player and in baseball was his pure speed and quickness. This allowed him to blow by the defensive player at will. Jenkins could pivot, pass, shoot the ball outside, tie defenders in a knot, play a smothering defense and was virtually unstoppable. Fats was also often described as having brute strength that enabled him to break free from the defender in the “grab and hold” defense style that was played back in the 1920’s and 1930’s. Fats also had exceptional jumping ability and even though he was most often the shortest player on the court, it was not uncommon for him to jump center. This was extremely important because up until 1936 there was a jump ball after every basket was scored. In addition his outstanding ball handling abilities made him the first great “point” guard in basketball history.

Both baseball managers and basketball coaches considered Clarence Jenkins as a model athlete. He was extremely smart and had an exceptional work ethic. In addition, he didn’t drink, smoke, chew or stay out late at night partying. Fats was always the best conditioned athlete on his team whether it was basketball or baseball.



New York Renaissance (1925)
(Jenkins – first on left)

Unlike most other Negro League baseball players, Fats never played in Latin America and did very little barnstorming after the regular season. He was born in the East, lived in the East and played his baseball and basketball career in the East. In the baseball off season, he played professional basketball. In many respects it is hard to determine if he was basketball player who played baseball in the off season or a baseball player who played basketball. From the research that we have done, we feel that Fats probably saw himself as a basketball player first.

Negro League Career

Jenkins started his professional baseball career with the New York Lincoln Giants in 1920. The Lincoln Giants were led by the hitting of Spottswood Poles and the pitching of Smoky Joe Williams. The New York Lincoln Giants were one of the top black teams in the East. They barnstormed all over the East playing an independent schedule during the 1920 baseball season. The highlight of the New York Lincoln Giants season occurred on July 11th, when Smoky Joe Williams faced off against Dick "Cannonball" Redding of the Bacharach Giants in a game at Ebbets Field in Brooklyn. This marked the first time two black teams played in a Major League stadium in the East. Redding led the Bacharach Giants to a 5-0 win over the Lincoln Giants. Fats also appeared in the Lincoln Giants line-up on October 9, 1920 when they played the New York Giants of the National League in an exhibition game at the Dyckman Oval in New York. The Lincoln Giants won the game behind the pitching of Smoky Joe Williams, who struck out thirteen of the Major Leaguers in a 4-1 victory. Jenkins scored the first run of the game when he singled, stole second and then scored on a base hit by Smoky Joe.

BASEBALL
ATHLETIC PARK
 Wednesday and Thursday
JULY 26 - 27

C. I. TAYLOR'S A. B. C.'s
 VS.
BACHARACH GIANTS
of New York

BOTH GAMES CALLED AT 4 P. M.

These Teams are Members of the
NEGRO NATIONAL LEAGUE

Bacharach Giants of New York vs ABC's
Kokomo Tribune
 07-24-22

It is unclear where or if Fats played professional baseball during the 1921 season. In 1922 Jenkins played baseball for the Bacharach Giants of New York. They played an independent schedule in the East during the 1922 baseball season.

Clarence's play during the 1922 baseball season got him noticed by Colonel C.W. Strothers who owned the Harrisburg Giants. Before the start of the 1923 baseball season, Fats signed to play for Harrisburg. Besides Fats, the top players for the 1923 Harrisburg Giants were Negro League great Herbert "Rap" Dixon, Zack Pettus, Harold Treadwell and Burlin White.

Before the start of the 1924 baseball season, the Harrisburg Giants joined the Eastern Colored League (ECL). The Eastern Colored League was made up of the top black teams in the East. The teams that played in the Eastern Colored League and the final standings for the 1924 season were:

**Williams, Negro Hurler,
Fans 13 of N. Y. Giants**

Dyckman Oval was the scene of another Giant downfall yesterday, when the Lincoln Colored Giants defeated the runners-up in the National League race by a score of 4 to 1. It took "Cyclone" Joe Williams eleven innings to show the major leaguers that he is a real baseball hinger. Williams fanned thirteen men and walked only one, besides winning his own game by knocking in one run and scoring himself.

Larry Doyle scored the Giants' only run when he lapped the ball over the center field fence in the first inning. From then on, not a Giant player saw second base. The colored lads made their initial tally in the fourth inning, after Lefevre had thrown out Wiley and Thomas Jenkins singled and stole second. Williams scored him with a single to left. Hall also hit safely, but Williams was caught off second when the hit and run failed. The fifth inning saw "Pol" Perritt on the mound for the Giants. Perritt moved along smoothly till the eleventh, when hit by Wiley, Williams and Johnson, a base on balls and an error accounted for three runs.

The score:

Lincoln Giants:				N. Y. Giants:							
Name	ab	r	h	by	a	Name	ab	r	h	by	a
Poles, cf.	4	2	1	0	Lefevre, ss.	4	0	0	0	0	0
Kendall, 2b	4	0	1	1	Smith, c.	5	0	1	1	4	
Wiley, c.	5	0	1	1	Doris, 2b.	5	1	2	2	2	
Thomas, 1b	5	0	1	1	Kauf, cf.	4	0	0	2	0	
Jenkins, rf	4	2	1	2	Kelley, 1b.	4	0	1	1	1	
Williams, p	1	1	0	0	Lee, 3b.	5	0	1	1	2	
Fraser, p	1	1	1	1	Wynn, rf.	5	0	1	2	0	
Johnson, lf	4	0	1	2	Carroll, lf	5	0	1	1	1	
Morgan, 3b	4	0	1	0	Barnes, p.	7	0	0	0	1	
					Perritt, p.	3	0	0	0	0	
Totals..	45	4	13	13	16						
						Totals..	41	1	7	13	21

Lincoln Giants... 0 2 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 1
 N. Y. Giants... 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 1

Errors—Kendall, 2; Thomas, Frail, Doyle, Lee.
 Two-base hits—Thomas, Kendall.
 Wiley, Home runs—Doyle, Sacrifice hit—Perritt.
 Error base on error—Lincoln Giants, 1; N. Y. Giants, 1.
 Steals bases—Poles, Jenkins, Smith, Kauf, Kelley.
 Double plays—Doyle to Kelly, Barnes on balls—Ot Barnes, 2; off Perritt, 1; off Williams, 1.
 Struck out—by Perritt, 1; off Williams, 4; by Williams, 13.
 Hit by pitcher—By Perritt, Morgan, Hitt—Ot Barnes, 4 in 4 innings.
 Umpires—Mark and Ready. Time of game—3 hours 58 minutes.

Lincoln Giants
 vs
 New York Giants
 10-10-20

Eastern Colored League

1924	Games	Record	Pct.
Hilldale	69	47-22	.681
Baltimore Black Sox	51	32-19	.627
New York Lincoln Giants	57	32-25	.561
Atlantic City Bacharach Giants	59	30-29	.508
Harrisburg Giants	54	26-28	.481
Brooklyn Royal Giants	42	16-26	.381
Washington Potomacs	58	21-37	.362
Cuban Stars (East)	48	17-31	.354

The Harrisburg Giants were led by the hitting of Fats Jenkins (.354), Edgar Wesley (.348) and Oscar Charleston (.342). The Giants pitching staff was anchored by Daltie Cooper (12-9), Kenneth "Ping" Gardner (8-8) and Charles Corbett (6-4). Fats had an outstanding year in his first season of Negro "League" ball. His statistics for the 1924 Eastern Colored League season were:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1924	Harrisburg	60	243	65	86	11	0	0	27	13	.354	.399

The Harrisburg Giants, however, only had a mediocre year as a team and finished in fifth place in the extremely competitive league.



Clarence "Fats" Jenkins
Harrisburg Giants
1923-1927

Fats returned to the Harrisburg Giants for their 1925 Eastern Colored League season. Colonel Strothers made several changes to the Giants before the start of the season. First Oscar Charleston was named as the team's manager. The second major change was that Ben Taylor (first base) and Walter "Rev" Cannady (shortstop) were signed to strengthen the line-up. During the 1925 ECL season the Harrisburg hitting attack was led by Oscar Charleston (.416), Rev Cannady (.399), Herbert "Rap" Dixon (.344), Ben Taylor (.333), Fats Jenkins (.317) and Richard Jackson (.302). The Giants also got solid pitching from Ping Gardner (11-4), Charles Corbett (10-3) and Daltie Cooper (7-5). Fats hit over .300 for the second straight year and posted a slugging percentage of .393.

With six players in the starting line-up hitting over .300 for the season and strong pitching, the Harrisburg Giants finished in second place in the league. The final standings for the 1925 Eastern Colored League season were:

BASEBALL

Wednesday, May 6th.

6:15 P. M.

Lincoln Giants

vs.

Harrisburg Giants

(LEAGUE GAME)

Smedley Park, 7th & Lloyd Sts.

Hilldale Giants vs Lincoln Giants
Chester Times
05-05-25

Eastern Colored League

1925	Games	Record	Pct.
Hilldale	67	52-15	.776
Harrisburg Giants	55	37-18	.673
Baltimore Black Sox	51	31-20	.608
Atlantic City Bacharach Giants	52	26-26	.500
Brooklyn Royal Giants	33	13-20	.394
Wilmington Potomacs	35	13-22	.371
Cuban Stars (East)	41	15-26	.366
New York Lincoln Giants	46	7-39	.152

When the 1926 Eastern Colored League season got underway, Fats was back with Harrisburg as the starting left fielder. The leading hitters for the Giants were Herbert "Rap" Dixon (.348), John Beckwith (.330) and Fats Jenkins (.319). Harrisburg's pitching staff was led by Sam Cooper (8-5), Kenneth "Ping" Gardner (8-10) and Charles Corbett (5-1). The Harrisburg Giants had another good season and finished in second place in the final Eastern Colored League standings for the second straight season.

Eastern Colored League

1926	Games	Record	Pct.
Atlantic City Bacharach Giants	54	34-20	.630
Harrisburg Giants	42	25-17	.595
Hilldale	58	34-24	.586
Cuban Stars (East)	49	28-21	.571
New York Lincoln Giants	41	19-22	.463
Baltimore Black Sox	47	18-29	.383
Brooklyn Royal Giants	27	7-20	.259
Newark Stars	11	1-10	.091

Jenkins returned to Harrisburg for the 1927 Eastern Colored League (ECL) season. The Giants had a strong starting line-up in 1927 that included six players who hit over .300 for the season: These players were Fats Jenkins (.379), Herbert "Rap" Dixon (.375), Oscar Charleston (.342), John Beckwith (.340), Rev Cannady (.321) and Oscar "Heavy" Johnson (.312). The Harrisburg pitching staff was anchored by Cliff Carter (18-9) and Daltie Cooper (18-11). The 1927 ECL season was one of Fats best in his professional baseball career. His complete statistics for ECL games for the 1927 season according to the research of Larry Lester and Dick Clark are as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1927	Harrisburg	49	206	48	78	7	4	4	18	11	.379	.510

The Harrisburg Giants team had another good season in 1927 finishing in second place in the league standings. This was the third straight year that they finished just short of a pennant and the second year in a row that the Atlantic City Bacharach Giants won the title. The Harrisburg Giants had claimed the title for the second half of the 1927 season by using a forfeited win to add to their overall won-loss record. When the Atlantic City Bacharach Giants refused to participate in a Play-Off Series, the ECL officials threw out the disputed game and declared Atlantic City the league champion. The final Eastern Colored League standings for the 1927 season were:

Eastern Colored League

1927	Games	Record	Pct.
Atlantic City Bacharach Giants	89	54-35	.607
Harrisburg Giants	73	41-32	.562
Cuban Stars (East)	65	33-32	.508
Baltimore Black Sox	70	35-35	.500
Hilldale	81	36-45	.444
New York Lincoln Giants	30	12-18	.400
Brooklyn Royal Giants	46	15-31	.326

The 1928 season started off in controversy for Fats Jenkins. The Harrisburg Giants failed to field a team for the 1928 Eastern Colored League season and this left Fats without an employer. In addition the rights to his contract came into dispute. According to a newspaper article that appeared in the Chester Times on 03-19-28, when the Harrisburg Giants dissolved their players were divided up between the remaining "league" teams. Oscar Charleston went to the Atlantic City Bacharach Giants, Rap Dixon went to the New York Lincoln Giants and Fats Jenkins, who was still playing basketball with the New York Harlem Renaissance, became the property of the Baltimore Black Sox. Needing a place to play after the Renaissance finished their basketball season, Fats and fellow Harrisburg teammate Walter "Rev" Cannady signed to play with the New York Lincoln Giants. According to an article that appeared in the Baltimore Afro American on May 19th, George Rossiter (President of the Baltimore Black Sox) claimed that Fats was the property of his team and that Jenkins had played for Jim Keenan's New York Lincoln Giants under the assumed name of "Williams" while he was still the property of the Black Sox. Jenkins never returned to Baltimore and after getting off to a slow start at the plate, he was dealt to the Atlantic City Bacharach Giants in late May. The Eastern Colored League disbanded in June and the Atlantic City Bacharach Giants finished the season by playing an independent schedule. Jenkins also played for the Hilldale club during September of the 1928 season. Even after getting off to an incredibly slow start, playing for three different teams and the league disbanding; Fats had another excellent season at the plate. His hitting statistics for the 1928 season were:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1928	Atlantic City	56	226	47	79	6	2	0	16	8	.350	.394

Before the start of the 1929 baseball season in the East, the American Negro League (ANL) was founded. The new league included the following teams: Atlantic City Bacharach Giants, Baltimore Black Sox, Cuban Stars, Hilldale, Homestead Grays and the New York Lincoln Giants. Fats spent the entire 1929 season as the starting left fielder for the Atlantic City Bacharach Giants. Jenkins started the season with the same hot hitting he had ended the previous season with and for the sixth straight year, he batted over .300 for the season. His complete statistics for American Negro League games during the 1929 baseball season were:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1929	Bacharach Giants	36	150	32	52	6	2	2	14	5	.347	.453

JENKINS WALLOPS DEFEAT HILLDALE

ATLANTIC CITY, N. J., Aug. 8—

Jenkins' timely blows broke up a great pitchers' battle between Fred Ryan and Gardner here yesterday when the Bacharach Giants defeated Ed Bolden's Hilldale team by the score of 4 to 2. Biz Mackey and Cannady led the Hilldale attack, each contributing long triplets. Warfield's brilliant work at second featured the game.

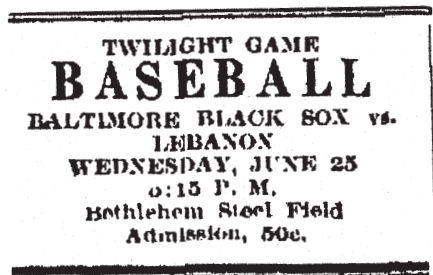
Hilldale		r.	h.	e.	a.	e.
Driggs, rf	.....	0	0	2	1	0
Warfield, 2b	.....	0	0	3	6	0
Cannady, 1b	.....	3	1	9	0	1
Mackey, c	.....	0	1	2	0	0
Charleston, cf	.....	0	0	3	1	0
Johnson, 3b	.....	0	0	0	2	0
Duffard, cf	.....	0	0	1	0	0
Stevens, ss	.....	0	1	4	2	1
Wynn, p	.....	0	0	0	7	0
Totals	.....	2	3	24	14	2

Bacharach		r.	h.	e.	a.	e.
Held, 2b	.....	2	1	1	3	1
Marcell, 3b	.....	0	0	1	2	0
Jenkins, lf	.....	0	2	1	0	0
Carr, 1b	.....	0	0	12	0	0
White, cf	.....	1	1	4	0	0
Thomas, rf	.....	1	0	2	0	0
Lundy, ss	.....	0	1	1	2	0
Cannon, c	.....	0	1	5	0	0
Gardner, p	.....	0	0	0	4	0
Totals	.....	4	6	27	11	1

Hilldale 0 0 0 0 0 2 0 0-2
Bacharach 1 0 1 0 0 2 0 0 x-1

**Jenkins Leads Giants
to Victory**
08-08-28

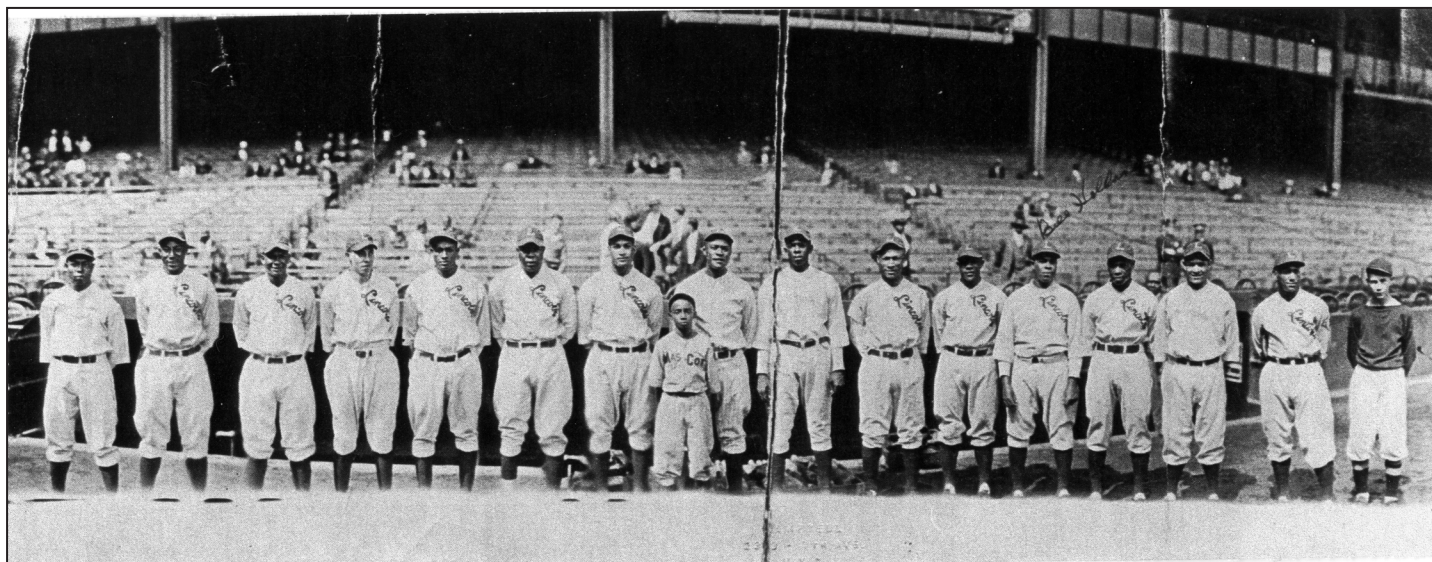
The Bacharach Giants got good hitting during the year from George "Tank" Carr (.385), Chaney White (.357), Fats Jenkins (.347), Clint Thomas (.342) and Ben Taylor (.306). Unfortunately their pitching staff struggled all year and Atlantic City finished the ANL season in next to last place in the final league standings with a dismal record of 19-45 (.297). The Baltimore Black Sox won the American Negro League title with a record of 49-21 (.700).



Baltimore Black Sox vs Lebanon
Lebanon Daily News
 06-24-30

The American Negro League disbanded before the start of the 1930 baseball season. In addition the Atlantic City Bacharach Giants chose not to field a team for the upcoming baseball season. With no league and his team gone, Fats was forced to look around for another job in baseball. George Rossiter, the owner of the Baltimore Black Sox, saw a way to strengthen his line-up and signed Fats for the 1930 season. Rossiter also signed George "Mule" Suttles (St. Louis Stars) and up and coming pitcher Leroy "Satchel" Paige (Birmingham Black Barons). These signings strengthened an already strong team who were coming off a championship season. When Fats joined the Black Sox he became part of a starting line-up that included: Mule Suttles (.389) at first/outfield, Dave "Showboat" Thomas (.340) also at first base, Dick Lundy (.344) at shortstop, Jud Wilson (.415) at third base and Herbert "Rap" Dixon (.375) in the outfield. The pitching staff for Baltimore included Willis "Pud" Flournoy (11-2), Rube Currie, Scrip Lee, Laymon Yokley and Leroy "Satchel" Paige.

There was no "formal" league in the East in 1930 and all the teams played an independent schedule for the season. Fats got off to an incredibly slow start at the beginning of the 1930 season and on June 8th he was batting a mere .235. His lack of productivity got him dealt by Baltimore to the New York Lincoln Giants.



New York Lincoln Giants (1930)
 Yankee Stadium

(left to right – Clint Thomas, Orville Riggins, Julio Rojo, Merven "Red" Ryan, Walter "Rev" Cannady, John Beckwith, Luther Farrell, John Henry "Pop" Lloyd, Jesse "Nip" Winters, Charles "Chino" Smith, William Yancey, Bill Holland, Connie Rector, Larry Brown, Clarence "Fats" Jenkins and Bat Boy)

The Lincoln Giants were managed by John Henry “Pop” Lloyd and were arguably the strongest team in the East. The starting lineup for the 1930 New York Lincoln Giants was as follows:

New York Lincoln Giants

Player	Position	1930 Stats
Pop Lloyd	1B	.434
Rev Cannady	2B	.269
John Riggins	SS	.333
John Beckwith	3B	.493
Julio Rojo	C	.294
Clint Thomas	OF	.437
Chino Smith	OF	.492
Turkey Stearnes	OF	.377
Fats Jenkins	OF	.362

The pitching staff for the Lincoln Giants was anchored by Bill Holland (12-1), Luther “Red” Farrell (9-1), Mervyn “Red” Ryan and Connie Rector (3-1).

**LINCOLN GIANTS TO
PLAY AT STADIUM**

NEW YORK, Aug. 28—For the first time in the history of baseball in this city, a colored club will use a major league ball park as its regular home grounds. Starting September 14, the Lincoln Giants, considered the leading Eastern colored nine, will play their games every Sunday at the Yankee Stadium until the end of the season.

The deal whereby the Linx use the House That Ruth Built for Sunday games until Noember 1 was closed, yesterday. The Lincolns already played one game in the Yankee Stadium, meeting the Baltimore Black Sox there last month in a charity game.

Fats went on a hitting streak as soon as he joined the Lincoln Giants. By July 6th he had raised his season batting average to .323. The highlight of the season for Negro League baseball also occurred on July 6th when the Lincoln Giants played the Baltimore Black Sox in a doubleheader at Yankee Stadium. This marked the first time two black teams had ever played in Yankee Stadium. The event was held to benefit the Brotherhood of Pullman Porters. Fats went 2 for 4 in each game, scored two runs in each game and hit two doubles for the day. The event was such a success that Yankee Stadium became the home ball park for the Lincoln Giants for the rest of the season. It was also the first time that a black team had used a Major League Stadium for its home games.

**Yankee Stadium Becomes
Lincoln Giants Home Park**
Chester Times
08-28-01

Fats’ hot hitting continued throughout the rest of the season and he finished the year with a .362 batting average. Jenkins’ complete hitting statistics for the 1930 season were:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1930	Lincoln Giants	40	163	46	59	4	3	1	11	5	.362	.442

Even though there was no “formal” league in the East for the 1930 season, the New York Lincoln Giants and Homestead Grays agreed to play an eleven game Play-Off Series to determine who would be crowned “Colored Champions of the East.” Fats had a very good series and went 15 for 42 for a .357 batting average. The series between the Lincoln Giants and Grays was one of the most exciting “championship” series ever played in black baseball. The Homestead Grays won the series six games to five with a 5-2 victory in game number eleven.

Even with all the success that the New York Lincoln Giants had in 1930, they did not field a team for the 1931 season. Under the ownership of Bill “Bojangles” Robinson and John Powers, Pop Lloyd took the nucleus of the Lincoln Stars (Larry Brown, Bill Holland, Fats Jenkins, Connie Rector, Orville Riggins, Red Ryan and Clint Thomas) and formed the New York Harlem Stars.

BASEBALL
 STATE HOSPITAL GROUNDS
 TUESDAY EVENING at 6:30
HARLEM STARS
 vs.
MIDDLETOWN GRAYS

Harlem Stars vs Middletown Grays
 06-22-31

The team also appeared as the New York All Stars and the New York Black Yankees. The biggest problem the Harlem Stars were faced with was their lack of hitting. Fats Jenkins was the team's leading hitter with a .273 batting average. The Baltimore Afro American reports that the team disbanded in late July because as co-owner John Powers put it "they couldn't draw." Fats finished out the 1931 baseball season with the Hilldale club, who were also playing an independent schedule. The highlight of the Hilldale season was when they played a five game exhibition series against a team of Major League all stars. Fats had a good series against Major League pitching and collected 4 hits in 13 plate appearances for a .308 batting average. Hilldale won the series four games to one for the Major Leaguers.

Fats Jenkins started the 1932 season with the New York Black Yankees. The Black Yankees were an associate member of the newly formed East-West League but played most of their games on an independent schedule basis. New York was managed by George "Tubby" Scales who was also their starting second base man. The Black Yankees were a good hitting team with Crush Holloway (.364), Ted Page (.341), Harry Williams (.333), Clint Thomas (.317), Showboat Thomas (.313), Fats Jenkins (.294) and George Scales (.292). They also got solid pitching from Bill Holland, Connie Rector and Jesse Hubbard. In games against the top level teams in the East, New York compiled a respectable record of 14-11 (.560). During their barnstorming schedule, the New York Black Yankees totally dominated their opposition. The Black Yankees finished their 1932 barnstorming season with an unbelievable record of 148-27 (.846). Clarence Jenkins also played briefly for the Pittsburg Crawfords during the 1932 season.

BASEBALL
 STATE HOSPITAL GROUNDS
 Monday, July 25th, at 6:30 p. m.
 RETURN ENGAGEMENT
Black Yankees
 ONE OF THE LEADING COLORED CLUBS OF THE EAST.
 Featuring FARRELL, the Pitcher and Home-Run Hitter
 VS.
State Hospital Grays

Black Yankees vs State Hospital
 07-22-32

New York Black Yankees played an independent schedule for the 1933 season and Fats was back with the team as their starting left fielder. The Black Yankees were led by the hitting of John Beckwith (.391), George Scales (.375), Rev Cannady (.364) and Clint Thomas (.318). Bill Holland, John "Neck" Stanley and Ted Trent were the top pitchers for New York. Jenkins' performance during the 1933 season earned him a selection to the East-West All Star game.

The New York Black Yankees joined the Negro National League as an associate member for the 1934 season and also played an independent schedule. The Black Yankees played their home games in Hinchliffe Stadium in Paterson, New Jersey. New York also played an extensive barnstorming and independent schedule during the 1934 baseball season. During their independent and barnstorming play the New York Black Yankees billed themselves as the "Negro Baseball Champions of the World" which, based on their play against Negro National League opponents, was not totally accurate. Two of their most high profile barnstorming tours were against the House of David with Babe Didrikson and against the Dizzy Dean All Stars. Fats Jenkins was the starting left fielder for the Black Yankees for the third year in a row. From the limited number of box scores that have been uncovered, it appears that Fats was the team's leading hitter with a .354 batting for the season.

**DIZZY'S TEAM FAILS
 IN NEW YORK GAME**

Black Yankees Take 6-0 Decision Before 10,000

(Associated Press Dispatch.)
 New York, Oct. 18.—The celebrated Dean brothers, with Dizzy doing all the pitching that was done by the family, and abetted by Joe Medwick, brought their barn-storming act to New York last night but their presence as members of the Bushwicks, a semi-pro team, failed to stop the Black Yankees from taking a 6-0 decision before a crowd of 10,000 at Dexter Park.
 Dizzy hurled the third, fourth and fifth innings and then supplanted Brother Paul in right-field for two frames. While on the mound the Yankees got to Dizzy for one run and two hits, one of the safe blows being a pop triple into the territory patrolled by Paul.
 Both Deans and Medwick went hitless.

**New York Black Yankees
 Defeat Dizzy Dean**
 10-18-34



Brooklyn Eagles (1935)
Negro National League

Before the start of the 1935 baseball season, Effa and Abe Manley (owners of the Brooklyn Eagles) were determined to make the Eagles a first class baseball operation. To accomplish their goal, they made three major changes. First they gained entry into the Negro National League. Secondly, they hired Ben Taylor to manage the team. Their third strategy was to sign new players by offering the players higher salaries than they could get from their present teams. The Manleys concentrated on recruiting the best players from the New York area and specifically Soldier Boy Semler's New York Black Yankees. Fats Jenkins was one of the key players targeted for signing by Effa and Abe Manley. Even though most of the New York Black Yankees players were returned to Semler's team via a court order, Fats was allowed to stay with the Brooklyn Eagles.

The top players for the Eagles during the 1935 Negro National League season were Leon Day (9-4), Bob Griffith (.440), Herbert "Rap" Dixon (.395), Jose "Blue" Perez (.353), George Giles (.345) and Harry Williams (.331). Both the Eagles as a team and Jenkins individually failed to produce. Brooklyn finished the season in fifth place in the league standings with a record of 29-32 (.475) and Jenkins hit only .265 for the season. Jenkins was, however, selected to represent the Black Yankees in the 1935 East-West All Star game.

Jenkins was back with the New York Black Yankees for the 1936 season. Fats had another poor season at the plate and finished the year with a .260 batting average in "league" play. The Black Yankees also had a rough season. They finished the season in last place in the Negro National League standings.

The 1937 Negro National League season was a repeat of 1936 for Fats and the Black Yankees. Jenkins hit .246 and the Black Yankees finished in last place in the Negro National League for the second straight year.

BROOKLYN HERE FOR TILT WITH NEGRO GIANTS

STARTING NINES

Brooklyn—	Grasselli—
Jenkins, lf.	Ard, 2b.
Giles, 1b.	G. Rollins, 1b.
Walls, 2b.	Miles, cf.
Stone, cf.	Rogers, rf.
Perez, cf.	Bolan, ss.
Burnet, 3b.	Rancifer, lf.
Palm, c.	Roberson, c.
Yancey, ss.	Dalizo, 3b.
Day or	R. Rollins or
Jackson, p.	Lyda, p.

The Brooklyn Eagles, leaders of the Eastern division of the Negro National League, invade Grasselli park at 6 o'clock tomorrow night to play the Giants in what promises to be another of those nip and tuck, red hot baseball battles.

Brooklyn Eagles Starting Line-up
06-25-35

New York Black Yankees on the Road

BASEBALL
 The Game of 1934, for Orange Co.
 The Famous Grover Cleveland Alexander
HOUSE OF-DAVID
 Under the Arc Lights
 VS.
BLACK YANKEES
 State Hospital Grounds, Middletown, N. Y.
Monday Evening, August 6
 8:30 p. m.
 Also the FAMOUS PEPPY'S GAME will be played after the 5th inning
 The FAMOUS DONKEY BALL GAME will be played on real donkeys, immediately after the regular game. This game will be worth the price of the admission alone.
 SPECIAL FEATURE—Babe Didrikson, World's Olympic Woman Champion Athlete is With the House of David and Will Pitch 1 or 2 Innings Against the BLACK YANKEES.

Middletown Times Herald
 Middletown, NY
 08-04-34

BASEBALL
MONDAY, JUNE 29
 Coming The Famous
BLACK YANKEES
 Representing the Middletown Grays
 VS.
PITTSBURGH CRAWFORDS
 THE NATIONAL COLORED LEAGUE CHAMPIONS OF 1933.
 The team that the fans are talking about
STATE HOSPITAL GROUNDS
 MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.
GAME CALLED 6:30 P. M.
 Keep on the lookout for further big attractions every MON-
 DAY NIGHT



Middletown Times Herald
 Middletown, NY
 06-25-36

NIGHT BASEBALL
 UNDER THE FLOOD LIGHTS
SATURDAY, AUG. 28, AT 8:45 P. M.
 THE FAMOUS
HAVANA STARS OF CUBA
 Featuring RAMON BRAGANO the greatest of all Cuban Pitchers
 Will Play the Renowned
BLACK YANKEES
 IN A SPECIAL GAME
 Ramon Bragano rated by Manager Terry of the N. Y. Giants as one of the greatest pitchers seen in 30 years will POSITIVELY pitch for the Cuban Stars in this game.
 Bragano is the pitcher who defeated the N. Y. Giants including Carl Hubbell 3 times this year in Havana. Also beat the famous Jimmy Bush of St. Louis Cardinals 3 to 1—11 innings.
 See This Special Attraction—
 One of the Outstanding Events of 1937
STATE HOSPITAL GROUNDS

Middletown Times Herald
 Middletown, NY
 8-28-37

NITE DOUBLE-HEADER
BASE BALL
 American League vs. National League
NEW YORK vs. **WASHINGTON**
BLACK YANKEES vs. **ELITE GIANTS**
WINNER VS. CINCINNATI TIGERS
Thursday Nite, Aug. 12th, 8 P. M.
ARMCO FIELD
 MIDDLETOWN — ADMISSION 35c

Hamilton Daily News
 Hamilton, OH
 08-11-37

 **BASEBALL** **N. Y. BLACK YANKEES** VS. **PENN DRAKES** 
 OF TITUSVILLE
SATURDAY — Carter Field — 4:30 p. m. — Prices 35c & 50c
 The Black Yankees Have Defeated the Pittsburgh Crawfords 7 Out of 10 Games

Titusville Herald
 Titusville, PA
 08-27-36



East-West All Star Game (1935)
 (Jenkins – front row kneeling second on left)



During the 1938 Negro National League season, Fats played for three different teams: New York Black Yankees, Washington Black Senators and Pittsburg Crawfords. For the 22 “league” game games in which Fats played and box scores have been found, Jenkins compiled a batting average of .271 (23 for 85).

The Pittsburg Crawfords moved the franchise to Toledo for the 1939 season and started the season playing an independent schedule. Jenkins started the season with Toledo before moving to the Brooklyn Royal Giants as their player-manager. The Brooklyn Royal Giants played the season on an independent schedule basis. Besides Jenkins the other top players for the Royal Giants were Lamb Barbee, John Beckwith, Buddy Burbage, Zack Clayton and Dave “Showboat” Thomas.

Fats Jenkins started the 1940 season with the Philadelphia Stars of the Negro National League before joining the Atlantic City Bacharach Giants. “Father Time” was finally catching up with the one of the “fastest” players in baseball.

Jenkins made one more appearance in professional baseball when he was a member of the Philadelphia Daisies team of the Negro Major League in 1942. Fats managed the team and played in the outfield. The Negro Major League was short lived and didn’t even complete its first season. Besides the Philadelphia Daisies, the other teams that competed in the Negro Major League were the Baltimore Grays, Boston Royal Giants, Chicago Bombers, Detroit Black Sox, Ethiopian Clowns, Minneapolis-St. Paul Gophers and Nashville Stars.

NEGRO MAJOR LEAGUE
BASEBALL
OLD HILDALE PARK
 9th & CEDAR AVE. DARBY, PA.
OPEN LEAGUE GAME
SUNDAY, MAY 10
 AT 3:00 P. M.

PHILA. DAISES 
 — VS. —
BALTIMORE GRAYS 

OPEN DAY CEREMONIAL 2:00 P. M.
FLAG RAISING and BAND CONCERT
JESSE OWENS
 World's Fastest Human Will Toss The First Ball

Music by **DARBY HIGH SCHOOL BAND**
 BLEACHERS 35¢ - GRAND STAND 55¢ - CHILDREN 25¢
BUY VICTORY BONDS

Basketball Career

Fats began his basketball career playing amateur ball for the St. Christopher's Red and Black Machine in 1916. The team was sponsored by the St. Phillip's Episcopal Church in New York City and boasted one of the top black basketball teams in the East. His younger brother, Harold "Legs" Jenkins, joined him on the Red and Black Machine team a short time later. Fats played for the St. Christopher Red and Black Machine for five consecutive seasons from 1916 through the end of the 1920-21 basketball season. Also appearing with the Jenkins brothers for St. Christopher's during the teens was Paul Robeson (Rutgers All American athlete, actor and concert singer). The Red and Black Machine were named by the New York Age as the "Colored Basketball World's Champions" for three straight seasons (1916-17, 1917-18 and 1918-19). Before the start of the 1922-23 season both Clarence Jenkins and George Fiall were released by St. Christopher's because they had played professional basketball the preceding summer.



St. Christopher Red and Black Machine (c. early 1920's)
(Jenkins – seated in middle and George Fiall – seated first on left)

Fats also played for Cumberland Posey's Loendi Big Five Club of Pittsburgh and Will Anthony Madden's Incorporators Club (New York City) during the mid teens to early 1920's. Madden's Incorporators were named the "Colored World's Champions" for the 1914-15 season and shared the title with St. Christopher's for the 1916-17 and 1917-18 seasons. The Loendi Club claimed the "Colored World's Championship" for the 1919-20, 1920-21, 1921-22 and 1922-23 seasons. Jenkins and James "Pappy" Ricks (future New York Renaissance star) also played for the Puritans of Orange, New Jersey during the 1921-22 season.

Jenkins "officially" turned pro in basketball in 1922 when he signed to play for the McMahon brothers' (Robert "Jess" and Edward) Commonwealth Big Five basketball team. Before they formed the Commonwealth basketball team, the McMahon brothers already had a strong background in black sports. They had owned the Lincoln Giants baseball team from 1911 to 1914 and were two of the top boxing promoters in the country. The Commonwealth Big Five team played their home court games at the Commonwealth Casino located on 135th Street in Harlem. Besides Fats the 1922-23 Commonwealth team included George Fiall, Creed "Hop" Hubbard, Specs Morton, Leon Monde, Hilton Slocum and Frank "Strangler" Forbes (player-coach).



Commonwealth Big Five vs Loendi 5
(1923)

The Commonwealth Big Five played their first official game on November 5, 1922 against Cumberland Posey and the Monarch Big Five. The Commonwealth team had an outstanding 1922-23 season and posted a won-loss record of 75-15 (.833). When Forbes left the team in December of 1923, Jenkins was named the player-coach. The McMahon's confidence in Fats was rewarded when at the end of the 1923-24 season, the Commonwealth Big Five defeated the New York Rens 38-35 on 2-29-24 and 31-21 on 3-9-24 to claim the "Colored World Championship." In the final game, Fats led the way for the Commonwealth Big Five to give them the title. Even though the Commonwealth Big Five team was one of the top two or three black basketball teams in the country, they couldn't draw enough fans to make it financially worthwhile for the McMahon brothers. When the Commonwealth team broke up in 1924, the McMahon brothers concentrated their efforts on their boxing promotions business and Fats and George Fiall were signed by the New York Renaissance.

New York Renaissance (Rens)

When the Commonwealth Big Five disbanded in 1924, Fats was immediately signed by the New York Renaissance or the Rens as they were commonly known. The New York Renaissance team is also often referred to as the Harlem Renaissance Big Five. The Rens were formed in February of 1923 by Robert "Bob" Douglas and had quickly become one of the dominant teams in black basketball. The Rens were named after the Harlem Renaissance Casino and Ballroom (located at 138th and 7th Ave in New York City) which also served as their home court when the team wasn't barnstorming. The second floor ballroom of the Harlem Renaissance Casino didn't make for the best basketball court because the floor was slippery and the court layout was nowhere near regulation size (baskets on poles were set up at opposite ends of the dance floor), but with the lack of gym space available to black teams it was the best option for Douglas's new team. The Rens played their first game in the Harlem Renaissance Casino on November 30, 1923 and defeated the Chicago Collegians by a score of 28-22.

With Fats at point guard and running the offense, the New York Rens started the 1924-25 season off with a twenty-six (26) game home winning streak and were 60-8 by early March. During the season the Rens won the New Jersey Championship by defeating the National Turners by a score of 29-19. At the end of the season (1924-25) the New York Rens were named the "Colored Basketball World's Champion" in their first season of play.



New York Renaissance (1925)
(Jenkins – seated in middle)

The highlight of the 1925-26 basketball season for the Renaissance was defeating the Original Celtics by a score of 37-30 before 2,500 screaming fans at the Harlem Renaissance Casino.

In 1926 the New York Rens were refused admission into the American Basketball League (ABL). The ABL represented the highest level of professional basketball in the country at that time. In an effort to protest the decision and show their support for the Rens, the Original Celtics declined an invitation to join the league. This is important because the league did not have the best white team in the country (Original Celtics) or the best black team (New York Renaissance) as part of their basketball promotion. Throughout Fats' career with New York, the Original Celtics would remain their best competition and provided them with their most heated rivalry.

The biggest game of the 1927-28 season for the Rens was playing Syracuse (New York State League Champions) on March 15, 1928. The Rens totally dominated Syracuse, defeating them by a score of 52-24.



New York Renaissance (c. 1928)

(left to right – **Clarence “Fats” Jenkins**, George Fiall, James “Pappy” Ricks, Harold Mayers, Eyre Saitch, Hilton “Kid” Slocum and William “Longie” Sanders)

Douglas put the team out on the road for a barnstorming tour through the Midwest in 1928. The tour was extremely successful. By 1931 the Rens were barnstorming on a regular basis. The revenue that the team could generate by playing six to seven games a week on the road made the New York Renaissance a profitable venture. The team traveled in a first class bus which made travel and life on the road a whole lot easier for the players. Over the years, it was easy for Douglas to book a full schedule of barnstorming games each season. White teams were always eager to play the Renaissance because they were the biggest attraction in American basketball. The Rens always drew a good crowd which enabled everyone to make money. In addition according to Clarence “Puggy” Bell, who joined the Rens in 1938, Douglas had an unwritten policy that the Rens were not to beat anyone by more than 10 points. The Rens owner didn't want his opponents to look too bad, so that they wouldn't play his team the next time they came to town. Douglas did occasionally back off that policy especially if they were playing teams like the Harlem Globetrotters, Original Celtics or a team from one of the “white” professional leagues like the American Basketball League (ABL).

The New York Renaissance won their second World's Championship in 1932 when they defeated the Original Celtics by a score of 37-30 on March 30, 1932. The Original Celtics did get some measure of revenge when they defeated the Rens 30-25 in a charity game on April 21st.

The highlight of the 1932-33 basketball season for the New York Rens was their 88 game winning streak that started on January 1, 1933 and ended on March 27, 1933 when they were defeated by Joe Lapchick and the Original Celtics (white team). Ironically the Original Celtics who ended the Rens record streak were the previous record holder with 44 straight wins. The Original Celtics were also the Rens number one competitor over the years. It was not uncommon for there to be a crowd of 10,000 to 15,000 fans in attendance at a Rens-Celtics game. The Rens were always the best black team and the Original Celtics were consistently the best white team in the United States. The Rens finished the season with a record of 127-8 (.941).



New York Renaissance
(Jenkins - first row first on left)



Original Celtics
(Joe Lapchick – standing first on right)

After a season long battle with the Original Celtics, the Rens were declared the World's Champions for the second straight year. The Rens also won a post season game against the Philadelphia Spahas (one of the top two or three white teams in the country) by a score of 32-24 on April 9th. The Spahas were the most dominate team in the American Basketball League (ABL) winning seven league championships during the 1930's and 1940's.

During the 1933-34 season the Renaissance consistently beat the Original Celtics and every other team they faced. New York finished the season with a record of 121-9 (.931) and their third straight World's Championship.

The Rens started the 1934-35 season just like the way they ended the 1933-34 season. They beat everybody. By the end of the season they had compiled a won-loss record of 128-17 (.883) and won their fourth consecutive World's Championship.

During the 1935-36 season, the Renaissance played in two different World Championship Series. The first was held in February at the White City Arena in Chicago. The Renaissance won the championship game on February 28th when they defeated the Kate Smith Celtics. The second World Championship Series was a best of five games series versus the Oshkosh All Stars. The Rens defeated the All Stars three games to two to take their second World's Championship of the basketball season.

In an article that appeared in the Baltimore Afro American on April 18, 1936, the Rens are reported to have honored Fats with a traveling bag to commemorate his 13th season with the Rens.

Even though the New York Renaissance were considered the best "black" team and most probably the best overall team (white or black) in basketball, they were denied admission to the National Basketball League (NBL) when it was formed in 1937.



New York Renaissance (c. mid-late 1930's)
(Jenkins – second on right)

The highlight of Fats' basketball career came during the 1938-39 season. The Rens had another exceptional season, posting a won-loss record of 112-7 (.941) for the regular season. In March of 1939 the Chicago Herald-American sponsored the "\$10,000 World Professional Basketball Tournament (World Series of Basketball)." This was the first ever "true" professional World Championship tournament. The event was held at Chicago Stadium in Chicago, Illinois and included the top eleven basketball teams in the country. The following teams participated in the tournament: Chicago Harmons, Clarksburg (West Virginia) Oilers, Fort Wayne Harvesters, Harlem Globetrotters, House of David, Illinois Grads, New York Celtics, New York Yankees, Oshkosh All Stars, Sheboygan Redskins and New York Renaissance. The team that represented the New York Renaissance in the tournament included: Clarence "Puggy" Bell, Zack Clayton, Charles "Tarzan" Cooper, William "Pop" Gates, Johnny "Wonder Boy" Isaacs, Clarence "Fats" Jenkins (player-coach), Eyre "Bruiser" Saitch and Willie "Wee Willie" Smith. The Rens' road to the championship went as follows:

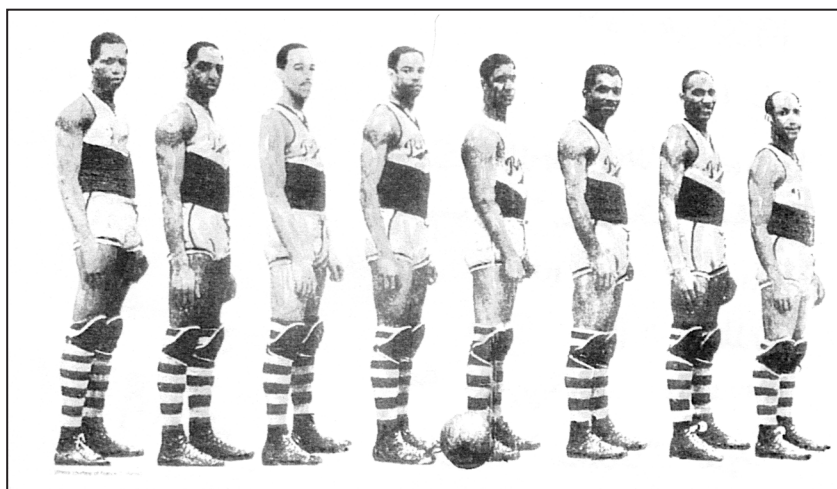
World Professional Basketball Tournament (1939)

First Round	Bye	
Quarter Final	New York Rens	30
	New York Yankees	21
Semi Final	New York Rens	27
	Harlem Globetrotters	23
Championship Game	New York Rens	34
	Oshkosh All Stars	25

National Basketball Hall of Famer, William "Pop" Gates, who was a rookie on the Rens team led them in scoring in the championship game with 12 points. When the tournament was concluded, the Rens walked away as the "World's Champions of Professional Basketball." They had finally achieved the recognition they had so justly deserved for so many years. New York Rens guard, Clarence "Puggy" Bell, was named the Most Valuable Player for the tournament. In addition, each Rens player earned a \$ 1,000.00 paycheck for the tournament victory, but the recognition they received carried a higher value to the players than any amount of money ever could.

Some of the highlights of the New York Rens during the years that Fats played and coached for them include:

- In the 1920's and 1930's, the New York Renaissance was consistently considered the best basketball team (white or black) in the United States.
- Claimed the title of "Colored World's Champions" or "World Champions" the following seasons: 1924-25, 1931-32, 1932-33, 1933-34, 1934-35, 1935-36 and 1938-39.
- Won eight-eight (88) straight games during the 1932-33 season.
- Won the first ever "\$10,000 World Professional Basketball Tournament (World Series of Basketball).



New York Renaissance (1939)
World's Champions of Professional Basketball

(left to right – William "Wee Willie" Smith, Charles "Tarzan" Cooper, John "Wonder Boy" Isaacs, William "Pop" Gates, Clarence "Puggy" Bell, Eyre Saitch, Zack Clayton and Clarence "Fats" Jenkins)

Over the course of the team's history, the New York Rens posted an unbelievable won-loss record. For the seasons that Fats played with the Rens club their won-loss record was as follows:

Year	Won-Loss Record	Percentage
1924-25	60-8	.882 (Record not complete)
1925-26	81-17	.826
1926-27	84-19	.816
1927-28	111-20	.847
1928-29	107-19	.849
1929-30	112-20	.848
1930-31	114-22	.838
1931-32	115-23	.833
1932-33	127-8	.941
1933-34	121-9	.931
1934-35	128-17	.883
1935-36	121-14	.890
1936-37	122-19	.865
1937-38	121-19	.864
1938-39	112-7	.941
Total	1636-241	.872

CRUSADERS DEFEAT ALL STARS, 49-41

Oshkosh Team Loses to Chicagoans at Beaver Dam, Play at Omro Tonight

The Chicago Crusaders proved to be an outstanding cage aggregation Thursday evening, when they defeated the Oshkosh All Stars in an exhibition game at Beaver Dam by a score of 49 to 41.

It was the first of two games between the two teams, the second to be played this evening at 8:30 o'clock at the Omro High school gymnasium.

The Crusaders took a 10 to 7 lead at the first quarter and widened it to 23 to 14 at the half. Oshkosh still failed to get going to any extent in the third period and were on the short end of a 36 to 21 score going into the last quarter.

In that final session, however, "Lefty" Edwards and "Scoop" Putnam hit with consistency and the Stars made 20 points in 10 minutes, only one less than they made for the other 30 minutes of the game. Edwards led Oshkosh in scoring with 14 points and Putnam made 13 to continue his fine average since joining the Stars a week ago. He will see competition in a league game for the first time tomorrow evening against Hammond.

The Crusaders were led by Agis Bray with 20 points on nine field goals and two charity tosses.

The box score follows:

All Stars (41) (Oshkosh)		Crusaders (49) (Chicago)	
FG	FT	FG	FT
Barle, f	1	J'Brown, f	5
Berry, f	4	Bray, f	9
Edwards, c	5	DeJernett, c	9
Mueller, g	0	Hudson, g	3
Putnam, g	4	J'Johnson, g	3
Lillie, g	1	Darden, g	0
Batterman, g	0		1

Totals 17 7. Totals 20 9

Personal fouls: Oshkosh—Barle 2, Berry 2, Edwards, Mueller, Lillie 2, Putnam 2, Batterman 2, total 12. Chicago—Brown 4, DeJernett 5, Hudson 2, Johnson 2, total 13.

Free throws missed: Barle, Edwards 5, Putnam, Batterman, total 8; Chicago—Brown, Bray, Hudson 2, Johnson, total 5.

Scores by periods:
Oshkosh 7 7 7 20-41
Chicago 10 13 13 13-49
Officials: Mansfield and Dillingsfaki.

Crusaders Defeat All Stars
Oshkosh Daily Northwestern

Oshkosh, WI
01-26-40

Fats left the New York Rens prior to the start of the 1939-40 basketball season. Jenkins didn't stay away from basketball very long, as he signed as the player-coach of the Chicago Crusaders. The Chicago Crusader's billed their barnstorming basketball team as the "Western World's Colored Champions" or the "Midwestern Professional Champions." The complete season won-loss record for the Crusaders has yet to be found, but we do know from an article that appeared in the Syracuse Herald on 12-29-39 that Chicago started the season with 16 straight victories. One of the biggest victories of Chicago's season was a 49-41 win over the Oshkosh All Stars who were the Western Division Champions of the National Basketball Association (NBA). The 1939-40 Crusaders team was perhaps the strongest line-up they ever put on the court in the team's history (1933-1947). Besides Fats the team included: David "Big Dave" De Jernett, Al Johnson, Agis Bray, Hillery Brown and "Brick Top" Wright. The Crusaders also appeared as the Chicago Collegians.

Reds in Watertown To Open Two-Game Chicago Series

Syracuse's Reds will travel to Watertown tonight for the start of a two-game series with the strong Chicago Crusaders, claimants of the midwestern professional championship. The Reds and the crack Negro quintet will play Saturday night at the Armory here.

Capt. Wilmeth Sidat-Singh's Reds will be after their fifth victory in a row against the Crusaders. The Syracuse team will enter the game with the Chicago club boasting 10 wins in 15 starts.

Led by "Fat" Jenkins, the Crusaders are on an Eastern tour with a record of having won all 16 games they have played this season. The series with the Syracuse club was arranged on the travel of the Chicagoans toward New York, Philadelphia and other large cities in the East.

Ed Hargaden, former Georgetown captain, will join the Reds for the week-end series with the Crusaders. He isn't expected to start, but will see service in the contest, it was indicated.

Syracuse Herald
12-29-39

Jenkins retired after the end of the 1939-40 basketball season, but Sam Lacy, noted black sports writer, enticed him to come out of retirement to coach the Washington Bruins for the 1940-41 season. The Washington Bruins also included former Rens star Tarzan Cooper. The Bruins were owned by Harold Jackson, Art Carter and Lacy. The team was based out of Washington, D.C. Fats' tenure with the team was short-lived when he left over a contract dispute. Before the start of the next season, Lacy was also gone and the team had changed ownership becoming the Littman Bears.

Life after Baseball and Basketball

After his baseball and basketball career, Jenkins became a well-respected boxing referee in the New York City area. He also opened a successful package store in the Bronx.

Clarence Reginald "Fats" Jenkins passed away on December 06, 1968 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He was 70 years of age.

Assessing Clarence “Fats” Jenkins Career

- Clarence “Fats” Jenkins was an **excellent hitter**. Even though different researchers have identified different statistics, all agree that Jenkins was a solid .324 to .337 career hitter in the Negro Leagues. Based on career batting average (for players with at least 2,000 plate appearances), Fats ranks as the 8th all time hitter in Negro League history. In addition to being among the top fourteen (14) Negro League hitters of all time, Clarence Jenkins is the only player in this group not in the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown.

The following chart identifies Fats’ yearly Negro League batting average as reported by four leading Negro League researchers.

Year	Larry Lester and Dick Clark	John Holway	MacMillan BB Encyclopedia	James Riley
1924	.354	.345	.317	.317
1925	.317	.316	.315	.315
1926	.319	.324	.283	.283
1927	.379	.413	.398	.398
1928	.350	.342	.379	.379
1929	.347	.317	.380	.365
1930	.362	.333	.385	.329
1931	.267	.272	.258	.256
1932	.294	.311	.288	.288
1933	.219	.222	-	-
1934	.354	.333	.327	-
1935	.265	.259	.317	.321
1936	.260	.209	.185	-
1937	.246	.310	.300	-
1938	.271	.286	.351	-
Career Average	.324	.337	.335	.334

- Fats was an extremely **productive hitter** throughout his career. In the 540 “league” games for which we have box scores, Jenkins collected two or more hits in 215 games. Fats got two hits in 147 of the 540 Negro League games he played, three hits in 61 games and four hits in 7 games.
- Impact of **starting the baseball season without the benefit of spring training** or opportunity to smoothly transition from basketball to baseball. It is important to note that the skill set required to play professional baseball is significantly different than those required to play professional basketball.

Jenkins’ commitment to the New York Harlem Renaissance meant that he **always missed spring training**. Over the basketball seasons from 1924 to 1932 the New York Rens generally played an average of more than 130 games per season. In addition the end of the basketball season always overlapped the beginning of the baseball season. Therefore Clarence had to consistently play himself into “baseball” shape during the regular season. To make the transition from basketball to baseball even tougher, Jenkins never got a break to recover from the wear and tear of all the travel and the demanding physical toil of playing 130 basketball games in a short five to six month period. The net result was that he almost always (seven of eight seasons) got off to a slow start but by the end of the season his final yearly batting average was usually over 100 points higher than at the start of his season.

The following chart provides a yearly analysis of the impact that missing spring training and having to play himself into shape that Jenkins was faced with during the prime years of his baseball career from 1924 to 1932. During these seasons there was only one season (1926) that Fats got off to a fast start. During all the other seven seasons, Jenkins started slowly but by the end of the season he had increased his batting average significantly over the season as he got into “baseball” playing shape.

Impact of Starting the Baseball Season without the Benefit of Spring Training

Year	Early Season Batting Average	End of Season Batting Average	Batting Average Points Made up over Course of the Season
1924	.238	.354	116
1925	.206	.317	111
1926	.342	.319	(23)
1927	.267	.379	112
1928	.200	.350	150
1929	.267	.347	80
1930	.214	.362	148
1931	.200	.267	67
1932	.100	.294	194

- There is a tremendous amount of **missing documentation** related to Fats’ baseball career. It is also important to keep in mind that for at least ten (10) seasons the teams on which Fats appeared played predominately an independent schedule and we are missing virtually all of those records. Currently we have located only 29 “non-league” games with one hundred and five (105) “official” at bats. Fats collected 43 hits in these 105 at bats for a .410 batting average and a .533 slugging percentage. We are still missing hundreds of box scores for games in which he played.
- Fats Jenkins was a **complete baseball player**. Besides being a great hitter, he was also one of the fastest players in the Negro Leagues during his career. In addition he was known as an excellent defensive player with exceptional range.
- His baseball career was undoubtedly impacted by **playing on a second division or independent teams** for most of his career. His basketball career was completely different; Fats always played on the **best black basketball teams** in the country. Over his career he played for St. Christopher’s, the Incorporators, Leondi Club and the New York Renaissance. All four of these teams won multiple “World Championship” titles.
- When evaluating his professional athletic career, it important to take into consideration the **longevity** of his baseball and basketball careers. Fats played professional baseball for twenty-one (21) seasons from 1920 through 1940. He started playing “organized” basketball in 1916 and played and coached for twenty-five (25) years through the 1940-41 season.
- Clarence Jenkins was **one of basketball’s first superstars**. He was the captain of the New York Renaissance. Fats played or coached on at least ten (10) “World Championship” teams during his career.
- Clarence “Fats” Jenkins is probably the **greatest two sport athlete in the history** of American professional sports. The media of the 1930’s often called Clarence Jenkins the “greatest athlete in the world.”

Baseball Playing Career

Year	Team	League
1920	New York Lincoln Giants	Independent
1922	Bacharach Giants of New York	Independent
1923	Harrisburg Giants	Independent
1924-1927	Harrisburg Giants	Eastern Colored League
1928	Baltimore Black Sox	Eastern Colored League
1928	New York Lincoln Giants	Eastern Colored League
1928	Atlantic City Bacharach Giants	Eastern Colored League
1928	Atlantic City Bacharach Giants	Independent
1928	Hilldale	Independent
1929	Atlantic City Bacharach Giants	American Negro League
1930	Baltimore Black Sox	Independent
1930	New York Lincoln Giants	Independent
1931	New York Black Yankees	Independent
1931	New York Harlem Stars	Independent
1931	Hilldale	Independent
1932	Pittsburgh Crawfords	East-West League (Associate Member)
1932	New York Black Yankees	East-West League (Associate Member)
1933	New York Black Yankees	Independent
1934	New York Black Yankees	Negro National League (Associate Member)
1934	New York Black Yankees	Independent
1935	Brooklyn Eagles	Negro National League
1936-1937	New York Black Yankees	Negro National League
1937	Negro National League All Stars	Independent
1938	New York Black Yankees	Negro National League
1938	Washington Black Senators	Negro National League
1938	Pittsburgh Crawfords	Negro National League
1939	Toledo Crawfords	Independent
1939	Brooklyn Royal Giants	Independent
1940	Philadelphia Stars	Negro National League
1940	Atlantic City Bacharach Giants	Independent
1942	Philadelphia Daisies	Negro Major League



New York Black Yankees (c. mid 1930's)
(Jenkins - front row fourth from right)

Basketball Playing Career

1916-17	St. Christopher Club Red and Black Machine	Independent
1917-18	St. Christopher Club Red and Black Machine	Independent
1918-19	St. Christopher Club Red and Black Machine	Independent
1919-20	St. Christopher Club Red and Black Machine	Independent
1920-21	St. Christopher Club Red and Black Machine	Independent
1921-22	Puritans of Orange (NJ)	Independent
Mid Teens-Early 1920's	Incorporators	Independent
Mid Teens-Early 1920's	Loendi Big Five	Independent
1922-23	Commonwealth Big Five	Independent
1923-24	Commonwealth Big Five	Independent
1924-25	New York Renaissance (Rens)	Independent
1925-26	New York Renaissance (Rens)	Independent
1926-27	New York Renaissance (Rens)	Independent
1927-28	New York Renaissance (Rens)	Independent
1928-29	New York Renaissance (Rens)	Independent
1929-30	New York Renaissance (Rens)	Independent
1930-31	New York Renaissance (Rens)	Independent
1931-32	New York Renaissance (Rens)	Independent
1932-33	New York Renaissance (Rens)	Independent
1933-34	New York Renaissance (Rens)	Independent
1934-35	New York Renaissance (Rens)	Independent
1935-36	New York Renaissance (Rens)	Independent
1936-37	New York Renaissance (Rens)	Independent
1937-38	New York Renaissance (Rens)	Independent
1938-39	New York Renaissance (Rens)	Independent
1939-40	Chicago Crusaders	Independent
1939-40	Chicago Collegians	Independent
1940-41	Washington Bruins	Independent



New York Renaissance (c. 1933)

(left to right – **Clarence “Fats” Jenkins**, Bill Yancey, John Holt, James “Pappy” Ricks, Eyre Saitch, Charles “Tarzan” Cooper and William “Wee Willie” Smith) (insert photo Robert Douglas – owner)

Career Statistics – Hitting (Regular Season – Negro Leagues)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1920	Lincoln Giants	1	3	1	2	1	0	0	-	-	.667	1.000
1922	Bacharach Giants	2	6	2	3	0	0	0	1	1	.500	.500
1923	Harrisburg	3	15	5	6	0	0	0	1	-	.400	.400
1924	Harrisburg	60	243	65	86	11	0	0	27	13	.354	.399
1925	Harrisburg	70	290	78	92	9	2	3	28	17	.317	.393
1926	Harrisburg	59	229	62	73	9	1	0	22	17	.319	.367
1927	Harrisburg	49	206	48	78	7	4	4	18	11	.379	.510
1928	Lincoln Giants	56	226	47	79	6	2	0	16	8	.350	.394
	Bacharach Giants											
	Hilldale											
1929	Bacharach Giants	36	150	32	52	6	2	2	14	5	.347	.453
1930	Baltimore	40	163	46	59	4	3	1	11	5	.362	.442
	Lincoln Giants											
1931	Harlem	16	60	7	16	2	0	1	3	4	.267	.350
	Hilldale											
1932	New York	15	68	13	20	3	0	0	3	2	.294	.338
1933	New York	8	32	5	7	1	0	0	4	0	.219	.250
1934	New York	13	48	7	17	1	0	0	4	2	.354	.375
1935	Brooklyn	35	151	22	40	7	0	2	6	6	.265	.351
1936	New York	20	77	16	20	3	0	0	3	4	.260	.299
1937	New York	31	118	13	29	4	0	2	9	2	.246	.331
1938	New York	22	85	11	23	1	0	0	2	1	.271	.282
	Washington											
	Pittsburgh											
1939	Brooklyn	3	8	5	5	3	0	0	1	2	.625	1.000
1940	Philadelphia	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	.000	.000
	Total	540	2179	485	707	78	14	15	174	100	.324	.394

Career Statistics – Hitting (Championship Series)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1930	Lincoln Giants	-	42	-	15	-	-	-	-	-	.357	-

Career Statistics – Hitting (Exhibition Series vs Major Leaguers)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1920	Lincoln Giants	1	4	2	1	-	-	-	-	1	.250	-
1931	Hilldale	4	13	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	.308	-
	Total	5	17	2	5	-	-	-	-	1	.294	-

Career Statistics – Hitting (East-West All Star Game)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1935	East	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000	.000
1937	East	1	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000	.000
	Total	2	7	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000	.000

Career Statistics – Hitting (Non-League)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1923	Harrisburg	1	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	.333	-
1924	Harrisburg	3	12	2	4	1	-	-	-	-	.333	.417
1925	Harrisburg	1	4	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	.250	-
1926	Harrisburg	1	3	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	.333	-
1930	Lincoln Giants	1	4	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	1.000	-
1931	New York	1	4	0	2	-	-	-	-	-	.500	-
1932	New York	2	8	0	2	-	-	-	-	-	.250	-
1933	New York	1	4	3	3	0	0	1	-	-	.750	1.500
1934	New York	1	4	1	1	1	0	0	-	-	.250	.500
1935	Brooklyn	2	9	5	6	1	-	-	-	-	.667	.778
1936	New York	6	22	3	7	1	-	-	-	-	.318	.363
1937	New York	2	6	2	3	0	0	1	-	-	.500	1.000
1939	Brooklyn	7	22	3	8	1	1	0	5	-	.363	.500
	Total	29	105	27	43	5	1	2	5	-	.410	.533

Career Hitting Statistics (Totals)

	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
Negro League	540	2179	485	707	78	14	15	174	100	.324	.394
Championship Series	-	42	-	15	-	-	-	-	-	.357	-
East-West All Star Game	2	7	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000	.000
Exhibition	5	17	2	5	-	-	-	-	1	.294	-
Non-League	29	105	27	43	5	1	2	5	-	.410	.533
Total	576	2350	515	770	83	15	17	179	100	.328	-



New York Black Yankees
 Negro National League
 (Jenkins – kneeling first on left)

Selected Career Highlights

- Compiled a career batting average in the Negro Leagues of .324 and an overall lifetime batting average between .328 and .337.
- Had his best year at the plate in 1927 when he hit .379 with a .510 slugging percentage.
- Had a final season batting average of over .350 for five different Negro League seasons 1924 (.354), 1927 (.379), 1928 (.350), 1930 (.362) and 1934 (.354).
- Member of the Harrisburg Giants team that finished second in the Eastern Colored League (ECL) for three straight seasons (1925, 1926 and 1927).
- While playing for the New York Lincoln Giants in the “Colored Championship Series” against the Homestead Grays in 1930, Jenkins went 15 for 42 for a .357 batting average.
- Selected to the East-West All Star game in 1933 and 1935.
- In twenty-nine (29) “non-league” games for which box scores have been found batted .410 with a .533 slugging percentage.
- Member of the St. Christopher Club basketball team that was named the “Colored Basketball World Champions” in 1916-17, 1917-18 and 1918-19.
- Player-manager of the Commonwealth Big Five basketball team who was crowned “Colored World’s Champions” for the 1923-24 season.
- Captain of the New York Rens team that won 88 consecutive basketball games during the 1932-33 season. The Rens team also won the “World’s Championship” when they defeated the Original Celtics (white team) eight games to six.



New York Renaissance (1939)
World Championship Team
(Jenkins – first on right)

- Led the New York Rens to the titles of “Colored World’s Champions” or “World Champions” during the following seasons: 1924-25, 1931-32, 1932-33, 1933-34, 1934-35, 1935-36 and 1938-39.
 - Player-Coach of the New York Rens team that won the first ever World Professional Basketball Tournament in 1939.
 - Led the New York Rens to an unbelievable overall record of 1636-241 (.872) during his career with the team.
- Inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 1963 as a member of the New York Renaissance (Rens).



Harrisburg Giants
Eastern Colored League

(left to right - Back row – unknown, **Herbert “Rap” Dixon**, Colonel C. W. Strothers (owner), unknown, unknown, unknown and **Oscar Charleston**. Middle row – Kenneth “Ping” Gardner, **Edgar Wesley**, unknown, unknown and unknown. Front row – Daltie Cooper, **Clarence “Fats” Jenkins**, unknown and unknown.)