

Forgotten Heroes: Jose Maria Fernandez



by

Center for Negro League Baseball Research

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Cuban Stars (1916)

Jose Maria Fernandez started his professional baseball career in the United States with Alex Pompez's Cuban Stars in 1916.

Pompez formed the Cuban Stars (East) before the start of the 1916 season and would compete with Abel Linares Cuban Stars (West) for being the top Latin team to tour the United States. The Cuban Stars (East) fielded a roster of young up and coming Cuban ball players. Besides Jose Maria Fernandez, Alex Pompez's roster included Bernardo Baro (OF), Bartolo Portuando (3B), Ramiro Ramirez (OF), Julio Rojo (C), Jose Suarez (P) and Recurvon Teran (2B).



Cuban Stars (1916)

(Jose M. Fernandez – third from the left)

Jose Maria Fernandez, Sr. was born on June 6, 1896 in Guanabacoa, Cuba. His exact birthday is in question because some researchers list Jose as being born in July of 1896. He was a light complexioned Cuban who spent his entire professional career in baseball.

Fernandez batted right handed and threw right handed. He stood five feet eight inches tall and weighed 165 to 175 pounds during his playing career. For the vast majority of his career he was an accomplished defensive catcher with an excellent throwing arm. He also played first base, outfield and occasionally pinch hit. Jose Fernandez hit for a good batting average but unfortunately lacked power and speed on the bases. During the early part of his career, Jose batted in the middle part of the line-up.

He was also known as being a smart/intelligent player and manager. Jose's strong leadership skills provided opportunities for him to coach and manage during his career. As a coach and manager, Fernandez advocated his team playing aggressively and hard but always a "clean" brand of baseball.

Jose Maria Fernandez had a very successful managerial career in the United States. Fernandez managed the Cuban Stars (East) and New York Cubans. The highlight of his managerial career in the United States was leading the New York Cubans to the Negro National League title in 1947. Current research credits Jose M. Fernandez with a won-loss record of 373-345-13 (.519) in the United States. He also coached and managed in Cuba.



Jose M. Fernandez
New York Cubans

During his thirty-five (35) year Negro League career in the United States Jose M. Fernandez played and/or managed with the Cuban Stars (East), All Cubans, Cuban Stars (West), Chicago American Giants and the New York Cubans. During the winter he played and/or managed in Cuba from 1915 until 1961. The majority of his Cuban baseball career was spent with Almendares and Marianao. Reportedly, Jose M. Fernandez also played winter baseball in Panama and Puerto Rico.

Early Baseball Career

Jose M. Fernandez honed his baseball skills playing in his native Cuba. He started playing for small local teams and gradually worked his way up until he was signed as the third string catcher for the 1915-16 San Francisco team of the Cuban Winter League.

Negro League Playing Career

Jose Maria Fernandez made his professional baseball debut in the United States in 1916 when he was signed to play for the Cuban Stars (East). The Cuban Stars were owned by Alex Pompez and managed by Pelayo Chacon. Pompez had formed the team just prior to the start of the 1916 baseball season in the United States. In order to get his "new" team ready for their barnstorming tour of the United States, Alex Pompez scheduled a preseason barnstorming tour of Puerto Rico. When Abel Linares who owned the Cuban Stars (West) heard of this he was outraged. From his perspective, he owned the rights to the name "Cuban Stars" and if Pompez was bringing his new team to the United States, then Alex was encroaching on his territory. Linares immediately cabled Jose Ezequiel Rosario who was the Puerto Rican baseball promoter of Pompez's trip to the island. Abel Linares shared his outrage with Rosario and asked him to cancel the tour because from his perspective Alex Pompez's team was nothing but a group of imposters. Rosario's response to Abel Linares was to hold a game in Puerto Rico with the winner claiming the rights to use the name "Cuban Stars." Alex Pompez having nothing to lose eagerly accepted and Abel Linares reluctantly agreed. When Linares' team arrived in Puerto Rico, his roster was loaded with established star players. Linares' Cuban Stars (West) team included Jose Mendez (P), Cristobal Torriente (OF), Adolfo Luque (P), Gervasio "Strike" Gonzalez (C), Eustaquio "Bombin"

CUBAN TEAM WILL PLAY THE GIANTS

Cracks From Havana Start Tour of United States Against Tampa Negro Nine

The Cuban Stars, a negro organization, and champion of the negro teams of Cuba, will upon its United States tour against the Tampa Giants at Plant Field with games Monday and Tuesday.

The Tampa Giants, greatly strengthened by additions since last season, plan to follow this series with a tour which probably will take them over the greater portion of the United States, east of the Mississippi.

Pedroso (P/OF) and Tatica Campos (3B). Pompez's team on the other hand was composed of up and coming players like Bernardo Baro (OF), Jose Maria Fernandez (C), Bartolo Portuando (3B) and Julio Rojo (C/OF). The game was played in San Juan, Puerto Rico. In a closely played contest, Alex Pompez's team upset Abel Linares' squad by a score of 3 to 2. Abel Linares immediately demanded a rematch, but according to Alex Pompez there was no time because his team was getting ready to sail to the United States. There would be two Cuban Stars teams playing in the United States during the 1916 season.

According to an article that appeared in the Tampa Tribune on April 9th of 1916, the Cuban Stars were promoted as the "champion of the negro teams of Cuba." As a side note there never was a "Negro Cuban Championship" title in the entire history of professional baseball in Cuba.

Tampa Tribune

Tampa, FL
04-09-16

For the first six years of their existence the Cuban Stars did not have a home field and played an independent schedule. The Cuban Stars did play the best teams in the East like the Lincoln Giants (w/ Smokey Joe Williams and Dick "Cannonball Redding), Bacharach Giants (w/ Dick Lundy), Brooklyn Bushwicks, Brooklyn Royal Giants, Hilldale and the Long Branch Cubans (w/ "white" Cuban stars such as Jacinto Calvo, Mike Gonzalez, Adolfo Luque, Luis Padron and Tomas Romanch). The Stars also played an endless string of semiprofessional and local teams like Bethlehem Steel Co., Camden A.C., Camp Dix (NJ), Globe, Jersey City Firemen, Kingsbridge Athletics, Lebanon (PA), Meadowbrook, Millville, Parkesburg Iron Company, Patterson Silk Sox, Potter A.A., Ridgewood, Strawbridge & Clothier and Wildwood. In the early days of the Cuban Stars (East), they were also referred to as the "New York Cuban Stars" and the "Cuban Stars of Havana."

In 1916 Jose served as the back-up for first string catcher Julio Rojo. He also occasionally played first base and in the outfield. Current research has located fifteen (15) box scores with fifty (50) at bats for Jose M. Fernandez in the Cuban Stars line-up during the 1916 season. Jose went 16 for 50 in these games for a very respectable .320 batting average. Bernardo Baro and Bartolo Portuando led the team in hitting. "Cheche" Suarez was the ace of the Cuban Stars' pitching staff. The Cuban Stars opened their barnstorming season in the United States with a series of games against the Tampa Giants at Plant Field in early May. According to the Seamheads research team, the Cuban Stars were the fifth best independent team in the East for the 1916 season.

CUBAN STARS DOWN BETHLEHEM.
BETHLEHEM, Pa., Aug. 12 (Special).—The Cuban Stars defeated Bethlehem Steel Company here today, 9 to 3.

BETHLEHEM S. CO.					CUBAN STARS					
r.	h.	e.	a.	e.	r.	h.	e.	a.	e.	
Roate, 3b.	1	3	3	1	0	Teras, 2b.	0	1	2	2
Machem, ss	0	0	2	4	1	P'ondo, 3b	0	0	1	1
Roth, 1b.	0	1	13	0	0	Levava, rf	0	0	2	1
Wright, c.	0	2	6	2	0	Gueira, 1b	1	1	0	1
Mecherly, 2b	1	4	3	0	0	Baro, p.	2	0	0	1
Teach, cf.	0	1	0	0	1	Fabelo, ss	2	3	2	1
Ekstrom, lf	1	0	1	0	0	R'riez, cf	2	2	4	0
Rawle, rf.	0	0	0	0	0	F'andez, c	3	3	6	2
Lane, p.	0	0	0	2	0	A'ento, lf	0	4	1	0
Dicket, p.	0	0	0	0	0					
Briody, cf.	0	1	0	0	0					
Totals...	3	9	27	14	2	Totals	9	14	27	9
Beth. Steel Co. ...	1	0	0	0	0		2	0	0	0
Cuban Stars	0	0	0	0	1		4	0	3	1

Cuban Stars
vs
Bethlehem Steel

Jose M. Fernandez
Goes 3 for 4

Philadelphia Inquirer
Philadelphia, PA
08-13-16

Before the start of the 1917 season starting catcher Julio Rojo was moved to right field and Jose M. Fernandez was named the Cuban Stars' starting catcher. Fernandez responded to the confidence that Alex Pompey (owner) and Pelayo Chacon (manager/captain) had put in him and was the team's leading hitter with a .386 batting average. Current research credits Jose M. Fernandez with the following hitting statistics during the 1917 season:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1917	Cuban Stars	44	171	25	66	4	1	1	15	1	.386	.439

Other top players on the 1917 Cuban Stars team were Pelayo Chacon (SS), Agustin Parpetti (1B), Ramiero Ramirez (OF), Julio Rojo (OF/C) and Alejandro Oms (OF). As a team the Cuban Stars improved their performance on the field from the prior year. They moved up from being ranked the fifth best team in the East to the second best. The Cuban Stars left Havana in early May and started their United States barnstorming tour as soon as their boat reached New York City. During their 1917 season in the United States, the Cuban Stars were billed as being the "Champions of the Cuban League" (which they were not because they didn't even play as a team in the "league"). The highlight of the Cuban Stars 1917 barnstorming season in the United States was a thirteen (13) game series against the "Colored World Champion" Lincoln Giants. The Cuban Stars made a good showing against the "Colored World Champions" by winning five of the first eleven games that were played. No newspaper reports have been found for the final two games of the series. The Cuban Stars returned to Cuba in late September.

BIG DOUBLE HEADER SUNDAY
 WITH PATRIOTIC MUSICAL SELECTIONS

2 P. M.

JERSEY CITY BALL CLUB

WITH

BIG ED. LAFITTE (Pitcher), formerly of Jersey City International League Club & Detroit Tigers.

FRANK BRIGGE (Catcher), formerly of Boston Braves.

WILL PLAY

CUBAN STARS (Champions of Cuban League)

Battery: **RAMIREZ**, Pitcher.

ROJO, Catcher.

4 P. M.

JERSEY CITY BALL CLUB

WITH

The Great **JIMMY CLINTON** (Pitcher).

CLAUDE SOPER (Catcher).

WILL PLAY

CUBAN STARS (Champions of Cuban League)

Battery: **SCARAZ**, Pitcher.

FERNANDEZ, Catcher.

ADMISSION - - - TWENTY-FIVE CENTS

Jersey City is represented by the greatest independent club in the United States, and have defeated New York Giants, Cincinnati Reds, Washington Americans, Pittsburgh Pirates and Boston Braves. This record has never been equalled by an independent or minor league club. The Jersey City Club will play five games in this month for the Semi-Professional Championship of the World.

Cuban Stars Billed as "Champions of Cuban League"

Cuban Stars vs Jersey City

Jersey Journal

Jersey City, NJ

06-09-17

The Cuban Stars started their 1918 season in May against the Brooklyn Bushwicks at Dexter Park in Queens, New York. Jose Fernandez's hot hitting carried over to the 1918 season and he led the team in hitting for a second straight season with a .362 batting average. Jose's complete hitting statistics for the 31 games for which we have found box scores for him playing for the 1918 Cuban Stars are as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1918	Cuban Stars	31	116	18	42	6	3	0	12	1	.362	.466

Unfortunately, the Cuban Stars as a team were not very impressive on the field during the 1918 season. This was partially due to the loss of Alejandro Oms and Agustin Parpetti. Two of the highlights of the season for the Cuban Stars were a two game series in July and then another double header in September against the Lincoln Giants for what was billed in the media as the "International Championship." According to a newspaper article that appeared in the September 26th issue of the Evening World of New York City, the series was tied at one game each going into a third game that was scheduled for September 29th. No final details of the "championship" series have been found. The Cuban Stars closed out their 1918 season with a game in Jersey City against a team that was comprised primarily of New York Giants players of the National League. Some of the top players on the Giants team that played the Cuban Stars were George Burns, Hal Chase, Al Demaree and Larry Doyle.

3:30
p.m.

BASEBALL SUNDAY

NEW YORK GIANT PLAYERS

Including — LEW McCARTHY, Larry Doyle, Fletcher, Wendell, Wilhoit, Kirke, Demaree, Cansey, George Burns and HAL CHASE.

— WILL PLAY —

CUBAN STARS

Champions of
CUBA

Including — Fernandez, Calderin, Fabre, Munoz, Chacon, Ramiriz, Crespo, Laroga, Cruz and Gonzales.

JERSEY CITY BASEBALL PARK

Admission — — — — — Twenty-Five Cents

Jersey Journal
Jersey City, NJ
10-05-18

Like in years past, when the Cuban Stars returned to the United States for the 1919 season they were billed as the "Champions of Cuba" (which obviously they were not). Jose started the 1919 season as the Cuban Stars starting catcher and for the third straight year led the team in hitting. Jose hit .373 with a .461 slugging percentage in 1919. His complete batting statistics for the 26 games for which we have box scores are as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1919	Cuban Stars	26	102	18	38	5	2	0	17	3	.373	.461

The addition of Lucas Boada to the Cuban Stars' pitching staff and solid hitting from Recurvon Teran (.342) and Pelayo Chacon (.329) improved the 1919 team but not enough to make them a powerful force in the East. The Cuban Stars (East) were also billed as the "Cuban Stars of Havana" during the 1919 season.

The Cuban Stars had a very weak hitting team in 1920 with a .217 team batting average for the season. The team's top two hitters were Ramiro Ramirez (.267) and Jose M. Fernandez (.259). According to research by the Seamheads research team the Cuban Stars were only the seventh best team in the East during the 1920 baseball season.

Even with a name change from the "Cuban Stars" to the "All Cubans" the hard luck Cubans did not improve in 1921. Like the Cuban Stars had done in the past, the All Cubans also billed themselves as the "Champions of Cuba." From the twenty-three (23) box scores that have been found for the 1921 All Cubans, Jose Fernandez hit .287 with a .330 slugging percentage as the team's starting catcher. The lowly All Cubans were considered the seventh best team in the East in 1921.

Before the start of the 1922 season, Alejandro Pompey totally revamped his entire roster. Pompey signed a new outfield that included Bernardo Baro, Pablo Mesa and Alejandro Oms. All three of these players hit exceptionally well during the season. In addition Pompey brought in a new pitching staff that included Oscar Levis, Isidro Fabre, Jose Junco, Juanelo Mirabel and Juan Padron. Catcher Jose Maria Fernandez was the only starter from the 1921 team to keep his job. Only a very limited number of box scores have been located for the Cuban Stars 1922 season. In twenty (20) box scores with Jose M. Fernandez in the Stars' line-up, he hit a respectable .303. Alex Pompey's plan worked to perfection and the Cuban Stars had what was reported as an excellent season. The Evening Public Ledger of Philadelphia (PA) wrote the following about Pompey's 1922 team:

"The Cuban Stars are regarded as the greatest slugging aggregation outside of the Big Leagues."

In their August 31st edition of their newspaper, the Evening Public Ledger reported that the Cuban Stars had a won-loss record of 85-22 (.794) up to that point in the season and that Cuban slugger Alejandro Oms already had 40 homeruns for the season.

By the end of the 1922 season, the Cuban Stars were considered the third best team in the East.



Cuban Stars (c. early 1920's)

Cuban Stars Enter the Eastern Colored League

When Ed Bolden of Hilldale formed the Eastern Colored League (ECL) prior to the start of the 1923 season, the Cuban Stars (East) were one of the charter members. Jose returned to the Cuban Stars in 1923 as the team's starting catcher for the seventh straight season. Thirty-eight (38) box scores and line scores have been found for the Cuban Stars in 1923 and the Cuban Stars went 22-16 (.579) in these games. The Cuban Stars were led by the hitting of Alejandro Oms (.367), Bernardo Baro (.319) and Pablo Mesa (.315). Unfortunately, Jose Fernandez only posted an unimpressive batting average of .250 in Eastern Colored League action for the 1923 season. Oscar Levis, Juanelo Mirabal and Armando Lopez anchored the pitching staff for the Cuban Stars.

According to research by Larry Lester, the Cuban Stars (East) called the Dyckman Oval their home field. The ball park was located in the Inwood neighborhood in Manhattan and very close to Harlem.



Cuban Stars (East)
(1923)

(**Jose M. Fernandez** – back row fourth from right and **Martin Dihigo** - back row second from right)

After a solid season in 1923, the Cuban Stars faltered in 1924. In Eastern Colored League games and games against top level competition, the Cuban Stars posted a disappointing won-loss record of 17-31 (.354). Jose Fernandez remained the team's starting catcher, a position he had held since 1917. Jose's batting average dropped for the second straight season to a disappointing .238 for games in the Eastern Colored League. Alejandro Oms (.325) was the only Stars player to hit over .300 for season.

The fortunes of the Cuban Stars did not improve in 1925. Under manager Pelayo Chacon the Stars recorded another poor season with a record of 18-26-1 (.409). In thirty-five (35) games as the Cuban Stars starting catcher in Eastern Colored League games, Jose hit .278 with a .346 slugging percentage. One of the highlights of the 1925 season for Fernandez occurred on August 15th in Darby (PA) in a game against Hilldale when he broke up Phil Cockrell's no-hitter with the Cuban Stars lone hit of the game.

Jose Maria Fernandez returned to the Cuban Stars as their starting catcher for the 1926 season. The Cuban Stars rebounded during the 1926 season and went 29-22 (.569) in "league" games. Unfortunately, Jose Fernandez only had a mediocre batting average of .267 for the 1926 Eastern Colored League season.

In post season play after the conclusion of the 1926 Eastern Colored League season, the Cuban Stars played a double header against Lew Malone and Bill McCarron's Jersey City Barnstormers who featured the pitching of Herb Thomahlen and Rube Zellars. To build up interest in the two games, the Jersey Journal promoted the Cuban Stars as the winners of the Eastern Colored League title (which they were not). The doubleheader was played at West Side Avenue Park on September 26th in Jersey City (NJ). The Cuban Stars came from behind in both games to win by the identical scores of 4-2.

The Cuban Stars opened the 1927 Eastern Colored League season against Hilldale at Mayo Island Park in Richmond, VA. Jose was the Cuban's starting catcher and went 2 for 4 in the game with a homerun. The Cuban Stars won the game by a score of 8-5. Pelayo Chacon (19-15-1) started the 1927 season as the Cuban Stars manager but half way through the season he was replaced by Bernardo Baro (12-14-1). Both managers had confidence in having Jose M. Fernandez behind the plate. Jose started every Eastern Colored League game for the Cuban Stars in 1927 and ended the season with a solid .305 batting average. Alejandro Oms (.335), Martin Dihigo (.316) and Bernardo Baro (.295) also had outstanding seasons at the plate for the Cuban Stars in 1927. This was Jose's best performance as a hitter in four seasons. The Stars had their second straight successful season. Current research indicates that they went 31-29-2 (.517) in "league" games and games against top level competition.



Richmond Times Dispatch

Richmond, VA
05-08-27

Fernandez Becomes Manager of the Cuban Stars

Prior to the start of the 1928 season, Alex Pompey (owner of the Cuban Stars) made significant changes to the team. First the team moved their home field from David's Stadium (Newark, NJ) to Dexter Park in Queens, New York. Then Jose Maria Fernandez was named as the player/manager of the Cuban Stars. In his first season as a manager Jose experienced mixed success. Fernandez had a very good hitting line-up that included Paito Herrera (.328), Bernardo Baro (.325), Alejandro Oms (.319) and Miguel Solis (.286). In addition Fernandez led the team in hitting with a .333 batting average.

In the thirty-eight (38) game box scores that have been found with Fernandez in the line-up as the team's starting catcher his complete hitting statistics were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1928	Cuban Stars	38	159	15	53	7	1	0	20	2	.333	.390

With a team batting average of .284, the Cuban Stars should have been a dominant force in the Eastern Colored League, but no one expected that the pitching staff would have a 5.69 ERA. Unfortunately, the team only went 9-18-3 (.333) in Jose's first season as their manager. About half way through the season the Eastern Colored League disbanded and teams finished the season playing an independent schedule.

NEW NEGRO BASE BALL LEAGUE HAS SIX CLUBS
PHILADELPHIA, January 16 (AP).— The American Negro Base Ball League has been organized with clubs in six Eastern cities. Edward Bolden, Philadelphia, manager of the Hilldale Clubs, was elected president.
 Members of the circuit are the Homestead Grays of Pittsburgh, Hilldale and the Cuban Stars, both of Philadelphia; Bacharach Giants, Atlantic City; Baltimore Black Sox and the Lincoln Giants, New York.

Formation of the American Negro League

In January of 1929 several Eastern team owners gathered in Philadelphia and formed the American Negro League. Team owners knew that by banding together their chances for a successful season would be greatly improved. The six teams that played in the American Negro League in 1929 were the Atlantic City Bacharach Giants, Baltimore Black Sox, Cuban Stars, Hilldale, Homestead Grays and Lincoln Giants. Ed Bolden of Hilldale was elected the "league" President.

Evening Star

Washington, D.C.
 01-16-29

When the 1929 season got underway, the Cuban Stars were a member of the newly formed American Negro League. The Cuban Stars struggled the entire 1929 season and ended the year with an extremely poor won-loss record of 15-42-12 (.263). Fernandez's problem as the Cuban Stars manager during the season wasn't hitting. The Cuban Stars compiled a .289 team batting average with Jose Fernandez batting .259 as the team's starting catcher. Juan "Tetelo" Vargas led the team in hitting with a .390 batting average. The Cuban Stars pitching staff had several proven starters (Oscar Levis, Isidro Fabre, Basilio Rosell, Willie Gisentaner and Juanelo Mirabal) but they failed to deliver. The pitching staff posted a miserable 6.71 team earned run average for the 1929 season.

Chicago American Giants Sign Jose M. Fernandez

After the collapse of the American Negro League in 1929, Alex Pompez disbanded the Cuban Stars (East) and Jose Fernandez signed with Rube Foster's Chicago American Giants for the 1930 Negro National League season. Almost immediately after Pompez disbanded his team, Nat Strong who was the top promoter of Negro baseball in the East formed a "new" Cuban Stars (East) team. Fernandez would play for this team off and on until 1937 when he became the player-manager of the New York Cubans.

In 1930 Jose M. Fernandez had the best season of his career offensively. He hit .373 which put him fifth place for the final standings for the Negro National League batting title behind Mule Suttles, Willie Wells, Jabbo Andrews and Frank Duncan. Jose's complete batting statistics for Negro National League games for the 1930 season were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1930	Chicago	35	110	12	41	4	2	0	15	0	.373	.445

BLACK BUFFS ARE BEATEN IN FINAL GAME BY CHICAGO

The Houston Black Buffaloes lost the final game of the negro world series to the Chicago American Giants in a 12-inning battle at Buffalo Stadium Wednesday night. The score was 6 to 2.

After the Chicago team had pushed ahead with two runs in the first half of the seventh, the Black Buffs came back in their half of the same frame to knot the count and play the victors to a standstill until the disastrous twelfth inning, when the Giants tallied four runs to cop the series and the negro world baseball championship.

The series was stretched to the full nine-game limit after the Black Buffs had split the first four games of the series at Chicago. The two clubs had stood on even terms with four victories each before Wednesday night's game. Black Diamond, burly Houston pitching ace, went the full route for the Black Buffaloes.

Houston Chronicle

Houston, TX
10-02-30

Jose's 1930 season in Chicago was the only season that he played for a non-Cuban Negro League team.

Other top hitters for the Chicago American Giants in 1930 were Mitch Murphy (.352), Walter Davis (.329), Jim Brown (.320) and Chester Williams (.288). The starting pitchers for the American Giants included Bill Foster (12-7), Satchel Paige (10-3), Murray Gillespie (6-6), Robert Holsey (6-9), Luther McDonald (5-8) and George Mitchell (4-6).

As a team the Chicago American Giants only had a mediocre season in "league" play with a 47-53 (.470) record and finished the 1930 Negro National League season in fifth place in the final standings.

In post season play, the Chicago American Giants won a double header from Rosy Ryan's American Association All Stars on September 25th. Jose M. Fernandez did catch both games of the double header. Only line scores have been found for these two games. In the first game the American Giants collected twelve (12) hits and won game one by a score of 7-4. Then Chicago came back to rack up ten (10) hits and won game two by a score of 9-3. Both games were played at Borchert Field in Milwaukee (WI).

The highlight of the 1930 season for the Chicago American Giants was a "championship series" against the Houston Black Buffaloes who were the champions of the Texas Negro League. The Houston Chronicle promoted the series as the "Negro World Series." The Houston newspaper also reported that the Chicago American Giants were the champions of the Negro National League, which they most definitely were not. The series started in Chicago with the American Giants taking a 9-8 eleven inning win over the Black Buffaloes.

The two teams then moved to Houston for five games that were played from September 27th to October 2nd at Buffalo Stadium. The series was tied four games each going into the final and deciding game of the "world series." In the final game of the championship series, it took the Chicago American Giants twelve innings to prevail by a score of 6 to 2.

Jose Fernandez Returns to a Latin Team

After only one season with the Chicago American Giants, Jose Maria Fernandez returned to a Latin based team when he signed with the Stars of Cuba as their starting catcher. From newspaper reports, it appears that Jose had a very good season at the plate. The Stars of Cuba were managed by Pelayo Chacon. The team played an independent schedule and called Dexter Park in Queens (NY) as their home field. Other Latin stars on the team in 1931 were Pedro Arango (3B), Pelayo Chacon (SS), Isidro Fabre (P), Cocaina Garcia (P), Oscar Levis (P), Cando Lopez (OF), Alejandro Oms (OF) and Jose "Blue" Perez, (1B). The Seamheads research team ranks the Stars of Cuba as the seventh best team independent teams in the East during the 1931 season.

Reportedly, Jose also briefly played for the Cuban House of David in 1931.



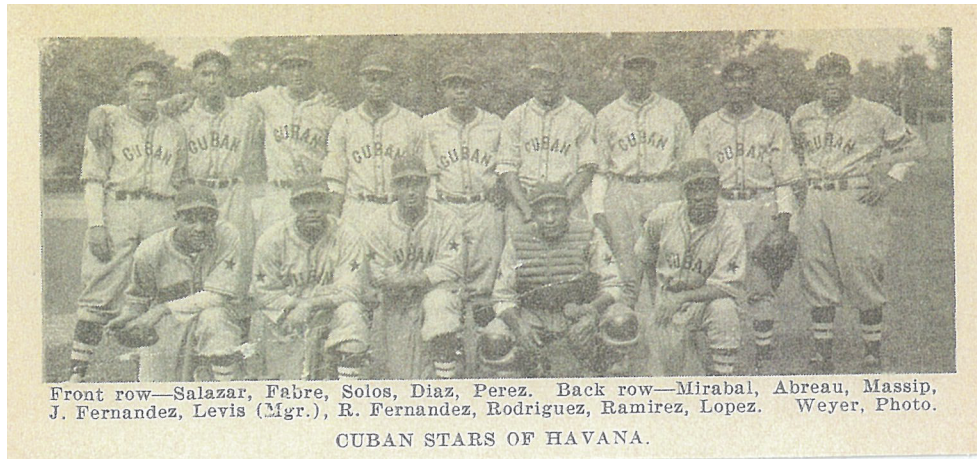
Cuban Stars (c. 1930's)

(Jose M. Fernandez – center of photo in catching pose)

Jose Maria Fernandez returned to the Cuban Stars (East) as the team's player/manager for the 1932 season. With an outstanding hitting line-up that included Pedro Arango (3B), Jose M. Fernandez (C), Cando Lopez (SS) and Alejandro Oms (OF), the Cuban Stars (East) were considered one of the top two independent teams in the East for the 1932 season. The Cuban Stars (East) also had a strong starting pitching rotation that included Isidro Fabre, Rodolfo "Rudy" Fernandez (Jose's younger brother) and Oscar Levis.

Oscar Levis replaced Jose M. Fernandez as the manager of the Cuban Stars for the 1933 season. Jose did return to the Cuban Stars as the team's starting catcher. All of the team's top players from the 1932 team also returned. The team also improved their roster by adding Lazaro Salazar (P/OF) and Cocaina Garcia (P). During the 1933 season Jose was selected as the starting catcher for the Cuban Stars team that traveled to the Dominican Republic. Other stand-out players on the team included Isidore Fabre (P), Manuel Garcia (P), Cando Lopez (OF), Alejandro Oms (OF), Jose Perez (1B), Rodolfo Fernandez (P) and Lazaro Salazar (P/OF). The Cuban Stars started their 1933 season in May when they arrived in Key West (FL) and returned to Cuba in October. During the season they were promoted as the "Champions of the Cuban Winter League." The Cuban Stars were considered one of the top teams in the East during the 1933 season.

Jose M. Fernandez was the starting catcher for the Cuban Stars (East) from 1934 through 1937. Both Jose Fernandez and Oscar Levis managed the team during this period and Nat Strong controlled all of the team's bookings. The Cuban Stars played an independent schedule all four seasons and called Dexter Park their home field in 1935. Jose Fernandez was the captain of the team in 1934. Besides Jose Maria Fernandez, some of the top players on the 1934 squad were Isidro Fabre (P), Rodolfo Fernandez (P), Cando Lopez (OF), Jose "Blue" Perez (1B) and Lazaro Salazar (P/OF). According to an article that appeared in the Springfield Republican of Springfield (MA) on July 26th the Cuban Stars had a won-loss record of 35-8 (.814) up to that point in the 1934 season.



Cuban Stars of Havana (1934)

(Jose M. Fernandez – back row fourth from left)

Jose M. Fernandez returned to the 1935 Cuban Stars as the team captain and starting catcher. In 1934 and 1935 the Cuban Stars (East) were considered one of the top three independent teams in the East but when Alex Pompez formed the New York Cubans in 1935 the Cuban Stars (East) started to lose their best ball players.

During the 1936 season, Jose M. Fernandez played for both the Cuban Stars and New York Cubans. The Cuban Stars played an independent schedule and the New York Cubans played most of their games in the Negro National League. New York fielded a strong line-up that included Martin Dihigo (OF), Frank Duncan (C), Isidore Fabre (P), Jose M. Fernandez (C), Cando Lopez (OF), Alec Radcliffe (3B), Lazaro Salazar (OF/P), Clyde Spearman (OF) and Clint Thomas (OF).



New York Cubans (1936)

(Jose M. Fernandez – fifth from left)

Alex Pompez and the New York Cubans

Alex Pompez had made his money in the numbers racketeering business in Harlem (NY) and was an associate of mobster kingpin Dutch Schultz. When Schultz was killed in 1935 the criminal underworld in the New York City area was left in a state of chaos. This was at the same time that Pompez was forming his new baseball club, the “New York Cubans.”

Pompez had extensive experience in baseball having founded the Cuban Stars (East) in 1916. When he formed the New York Cubans Pompez made Martin Dihigo his player-manager, committed to spending \$ 35,000.00 to build his new team, joined the Negro National League and renovated the Dyckman Oval which was located only fifteen minutes from the Harlem neighborhood.

With the death of Schultz, Alex’s troubles with the law increased exponentially. In 1936 Alex Pompez was indicted by a special prosecutor for New York City. The indictment came down on May 25th when the New York Cubans were only two weeks into their season. Pompez went into hiding before fleeing to Charbourg (France) via Canada. Before he skipped the country Alex appointed Frank Forbes and Roy Sparrow to run his baseball operation. Pompez returned from France in August of 1936 and at the Negro National League meeting in November assured fellow team owners that he was totally committed to his team playing in the “league.”

In January of 1937 a second indictment came down for Alex Pompez’s arrest. He averted arrest and fled to Mexico City under the alias of Antonio Moreno. With the team’s future in jeopardy



Alex Pompez

New York Cubans players started signing with other clubs. Martin Dihigo who was the player-manager was the first to leave. Dihigo went to the Dominican Republic to play ball. Forbes and Sparrow attempted to contact Pompez in Mexico but when they realized that most of their players had signed with other teams, they issued a statement through the New York Age newspaper that there would be no New York Cubans team for the 1937 season.

Pompez was arrested in Mexico City by Mexican federales on March 28, 1937 and after fighting extradition was returned to the United States on October 30th. Immediately upon his return to the United States, Pompez appeared before New York Supreme Court Justice Ferdinand Pecora. Alex was released on a mere \$ 1,000.00 bail bond because he agreed to testify against members of the Dutch Schultz gang.

When Pompez returned in late 1937 his New York Cubans baseball team had no players and he had no home field because the City of New York had taken possession of the Dyckman Oval.

The New York Cubans did not field a team for the 1938 season because Alex Pompez’s time was consumed with court hearings.

This discussion about Alex Pompez and the early years of the New York Cubans is very important to our research on Jose Maria Fernandez because some researchers list Fernandez as playing for Alex Pompez’s New York Cubans team in both 1937 and 1938. Our research shows that Pompez most definitely did not field a team in either season. The confusion stems from the fact that newspaper coverage was not always very accurate in identifying the correct name of the

Cuban team that was playing in their town. In 1937 and 1938 the Cuban team that Jose Fernandez played for was referred to in the newspapers as the Cuban Stars, Cuban All Stars, Cuban Stars of Havana and even the New York Cubans. One example of this appeared in a September 5, 1937 newspaper article that appeared in the Plain Dealer of Cleveland, Ohio. The newspaper article identifies a game that was to be played between the “New York Cubans” and Negro National League All Stars. The “real” identity of the “New York Cubans” was most probably some version of the Cuban Stars (West).



**Dyckman Oval
New York City, NY**

**Home of the New York
Cubans**

Fernandez Continues to Manage the Cuban Stars

During the 1936 season Jose M. Fernandez played the majority of the season for the Cuban Stars (East) but also reportedly played briefly for the New York Cubans of the Negro National League.

Jose Maria Fernandez returned to the Cuban Stars for the 1937 season. Even though he was 41 years of age, Jose was the team’s starting catcher. The highlight of the 1937 season for the Cuban Stars was a six(6) game preseason series against Bill Terry’s New York Giants. Fernandez’s team won five of the six games they played against the Major Leaguers. Besides Jose M. Fernandez, some of the other top players on the team during the 1937 season were Ramon Bragana (P/OF), Carlos Etchegoyen (2B), Isidro Fabre (OF/P), Millito Navarro (SS) and Silvino Ruiz (P).

As player/manager of the 1938 Cuban Stars (East), Jose Fernandez fielded a strong roster that included the following Latin stars: Carlos Blanco (1B), Sungo Cabrera (3B), Isidro Fabre (P/OF), Cando Lopez (OF), Julio Rojo (C), Silvino Ruiz (P) and Juan “Tetelo” Vargas (OF). During the 1938 season Fernandez’s team played an independent schedule. The team was called the Cuban Stars of Havana, Cuban All Stars, Cuban Stars, Cubans and New York Cubans in the news media in 1938.

Pompez Rebuilds the New York Cubans

Going into the 1939 baseball season, Alex Pompez was free of any legal entanglements and was in a position to rebuild his life and business ventures of which baseball was a big part. The first step in this process was being approved by the owners of the Negro National League for his New York Cubans team to rejoin the “league.” Alex also promised to secure a home field for his team by entering into a rental agreement with the management of Yankee Stadium.

Unfortunately for the Cuban Stars (East) when Alex Pompez came back on the baseball scene in 1939, the Cubans Stars (East) would suffer and their long term existence seemed to be in question. From Jose’s perspective this had to have impacted his future with the team. When Alex Pompez, owner of the New York Cubans, approached him in April of 1939 about a job as player/manager of the New York Cubans, Fernandez signed with Pompez. Jose would remain the



Yankee Stadium

**Home of 1938
New York Cubans**

manager of the New York Cubans team until they disbanded after the 1950 Negro American League season.

Pompez and Fernandez then went about the task of signing a new roster.

Going into the 1939 season, Jose Maria Fernandez concentrated significantly more on managing than playing. He continued to play in a back-up role from 1939 to 1944. Even though he was in his 40's Jose Fernandez did deliver at the plate when he was called upon.

Recapping the Highlights of Jose Maria Fernandez's Negro League Career as a Player

Offensively some of Jose's best seasons in Negro baseball in the United States were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1916	Cuban Stars	15	50	6	16	1	0	0	2	3	.320	.340
1917	Cuban Stars	44	171	25	66	4	1	1	15	1	.386	.439
1918	Cuban Stars	31	116	18	42	6	3	0	12	1	.362	.466
1919	Cuban Stars	26	102	18	38	5	2	0	17	3	.373	.461
1922	Cuban Stars	20	66	9	20	0	1	1	3	1	.303	.379
1927	Cuban Stars	-	128	15	39	5	0	1	-	1	.305	.367
1928	Cuban Stars	38	159	15	53	7	1	0	20	2	.333	.390
1930	Chicago	35	110	12	41	4	2	0	15	0	.373	.445
1933	Cuban Stars	13	50	9	20	1	0	0	6	0	.400	.420

Negro League Managerial Career

In 1928 Jose M. Fernandez became the manager of the Cuban Stars (East). The Cuban Stars (East) played in the Eastern Colored League and called Dexter Park in Queens (NY) as their home field. Thirty-six (36) box scores and line scores have been found for the 1928 Cuban Stars with Jose Fernandez as their manager. The Cuban Stars went 14-19-3 (.424) in these games.

Fernandez also managed the Cuban Stars during their 1929 American Negro League season. Before the season even started, Alex Pompez and Jose M. Fernandez were dealt a devastating blow when four of their key players refused to report for spring training because they had gone to the Dominican Republic to play ball as soon as the Cuban Winter League had completed their season. These players were Augustin Bejerano (OF), Pelayo Chacon (SS), Alejandro Oms (OF) and Eustuquio "Bombin" Pedroso (P/OF). Bejerano had a change of heart and reported late. The absence of Oms in the Stars' line-up was the biggest hole to fill because he was by far the team's best hitter. The Cuban Stars struggled all season and ended a disappointing season with a 15-42-2 (.263). They finished the regular season with a sixth place finish in the final "league" standings.

Primary source documentation has been found that identifies that Jose Maria Fernandez managed the Cuban Stars (East) in 1932, 1934 and 1935. The Cuban Stars played an independent schedule during these years. Newspaper reports indicate that the 1934 Cuban Stars had an outstanding record of 35-8 (.814) about mid point of the season. Jose Maria Fernandez also managed the Cuban Stars (East) in 1937 and 1938. It can not be ruled out that Fernandez may have managed the Cuban Stars during all or parts of the 1933 and 1936 seasons. Further research of these two seasons needs to be conducted.

The New York Cubans were formed by Alex Pompez in 1935 and entered the Negro National League during their first season of operation. They also played in the Negro National League in 1936 before they dropped out of the "league" because of owner Alex Pompez's legal problems. They re-entered the Negro National League in 1939. Over the years the New York Cubans played the vast majority of their "league" games at the Dyckman Oval, Polo Grounds (New York City, NY) and Yankee Stadium (Bronx, NY).

After a two year absence (1937 and 1938), Alex Pompez brought his New York Cubans team back to the Negro National League for the 1939 season. One of the first things that Pompez did when he set out to rebuild the New York Cubans was to sign Jose Maria Fernandez in April of 1939 to manage the team. Unfortunately, the Cubans had a weak hitting attack and ineffective pitching staff. Only partial records and a limited number of box scores have been found for the New York Cubans for their 1939 Negro National League season. Based on the seventeen (17) box scores that have been found, the team's best hitters were Ramon Heredia (.354), Jose "Tetelo" Vargas (.333) and Mickey Casey (.320). In these seventeen (17) "league" games, the New York Cubans posted a .238 (142 for 596) team batting average which was next to last in the "league." Silvino Ruiz (4-4 w/ 3.25 ERA) was the ace of the pitching staff. Forty-seven (47) year old veteran Connie Rector, Rodolfo "Rudy" Fernandez, Luis Tiant and Armando Torres also pitched for the Cubans in 1939. The New York Cubans pitching staff had a 5.91 team earned run average which was the worst in the Negro National League. The New York Cubans finished the season in last place in the final Negro National League standings with a won-loss record of 9-23 (.281). Their seventh place finish left them fifteen games behind the Homestead Grays who won the title.

Jose Fernandez at Helm Of New York Cubans

The peer of all catchers in Negro baseball today is Jose Fernandez, playing manager of the New York Cubans, who face the Homestead Grays in Red Bird stadium next Monday night. A veteran of 23 years, Fernandez still catches regularly and is regarded as the team's most dangerous hitter.

The Cubans have a well balanced club and have such prominent players as Jim Casey, "Ducky" Holmes, John Taylor of no-hit fame, "Sligger" Figarola, Jose Martinez, "Speedball" Ruiz and Bill Awkard.

The Grays, popular favorites, with Columbus fans, will be making their first 1940 start here and have such well known players as "Buck" Leonard, Ray Brown, Jerry Benjamin, Manager, Vic Harris, "Jelly" Jackson,

Jose Maria Fernandez returned to the New York Cubans to manage the team for their 1940 Negro National League season. Offensively the Cubans improved from the 1939 season. They increased their team batting average from .238 in 1939 to .256 in 1940. The hitting attack for New York was led by Pancho Coimbre (.330), Alejandro Crespo (.286) and Clemente Carreras (.273). Silvino Ruiz remained the ace of the pitching staff with a 6-2 record and 2.94 ERA in games against Negro National League opponents. Johnny Taylor (1-8), Jose Figueroa (1-6) and Carrenza Howard (0-1) rounded out the starting rotation for Jose M. Fernandez. Researchers disagree with the won-loss record of the Cuban Stars for the 1940 season. According to the Seamheads research group, they finished the regular Negro National League tied for last place with the New York Black Yankees in the final "league" standings. Seamheads credit the New York Cubans with a record of 13-25-1 (.342) and that they were fourteen (14) games behind the Homestead Grays who finished first. Other researchers credit the Cubans with a record of 16-21 (.432) and in fourth place in the final "league" standings. Regardless of whose research you use, it is clearly evident that the New York Cubans improved over their 1939 season.

Columbus Dispatch

Columbus, OH
08-09-40

New York Cubans Win Second Half Championship

The New York Cubans had played their 1939 and 1940 seasons in the Negro National League without a home field. This would not be the case in 1941 because Alex Pompez secured the rights to use Yankee Stadium in the Bronx (NY) to play their home games. Manager Jose Maria Fernandez got both solid hitting and pitching from the New York Cubans during the season. Juan "Tetelo" Vargas (.327), Pancho Coimbre (.313), Clemente Carreras (.283) and Alberto Hernandez (.273) were the team's best hitters. The Cubans posted a .258 team batting average for the season which was the fourth best in the "league." The major factor in the turn around of Fernandez's pitching staff was the addition of Dave Barnhill who became the ace of the pitching staff with a record of 8-5 with a 3.02 ERA. Bill Anderson (3-8) and Carrenza Howard (3-5) rounded out the starting rotation. For the third straight season the New York Cubans improved their Negro National League record. The Cubans went 22-33-2 (.400) for the 1941 season and had moved their way up to fourth place in the final Negro National League standings. According to the Seamheads research team the New York Cubans were the second half champions of the Negro National League. This was a major milestone for manager Jose Maria Fernandez.

After a strong finish for the 1941 season, the New York Cubans could not get untracked in 1942. Jose Maria Fernandez was back as the manager of the team and the Cubans played their home games at Yankee Stadium. Fernandez's biggest problem during the season was both his offense and pitching staff. He didn't get any hitting or pitching during the season. The New York Cubans compiled a miserable .213 team batting average which was last in the "league." Juan "Tetelo" Vargas (.269) and Jim Williams (.264) were the team's two best hitters. Dave Barhnhill continued as the ace of the pitching staff with a 3-6 record and a 2.87 ERA in games against Negro National League opponents. Barney Morris (2-5), Bill Anderson (2-3), Martin Crue (0-3) and Carrenza Howard also pitched for New York during the season. The Cubans had a 4.69 team ERA which was also last in the "league." At the end of the regular Negro National League season, the New York Cubans were back in last place. They ended the season with a record of 13-30-1 (.302) and were twenty-three (23) games out of first place.

Cubans Move Up to Second Place in Negro National League

After a disappointing season in 1942, Alex Pompez and Jose Maria Fernandez were determined to turn the team's fortunes around in 1943. Offensively the duo made three major changes to the line-up.

- Lou Louden became the Cubans' starting catcher.
- Javier "Blue" Perez replaced Herberto Blanco as the team's starting second baseman.
- Pancho Coimbre and Roeglio Linares were signed to add offensive punch.

The plan formulated by Fernandez and Pompez worked to perfection. During the season Fernandez got both excellent hitting and pitching. Juan "Tetelo" Vargas (.471), Pancho Coimbre (.360), Dave Thomas (.322), Lou Louden (.291) and Javier Perez (.281) led the team in hitting. The New York Cubans hit .287 as a team for the season which was significantly better than their .213 team batting average for 1942. New York had the second best hitting team in the Negro National League for the season. With offensive support and run production the pitching staff responded. Dave Barnhill was the ace of the pitching staff with a record of 11-4 and a 2.83 ERA. Bill Anderson (7-2), Carrenza Howard (2-3), Martin Crue (1-2) and

2 Nights Baseball Classic
Presenting
Two Major Negro League Teams
Cincinnati Ethiopian Clowns
and
New York Cubans
—at—
Luther Williams Park
Thurs., Sept. 16,
Friday, Sept. 17
Games Called at 8:15 p.m.
Section Reserved for
White Patrons.
Gen. Admission, 75 Cents.

Macon Telegraph

Macon, GA
09-12-43



**New York Cubans (1943)
Negro National League**

(Back row left to right – **Jose M. Fernandez**, Pedro Diaz, Javier “Blue” Perez, Unknown, Barney Morris, David “Showboat” Thomas, Rudy Fernandez and Carranza “School Boy” Howard. Middle row left to right – William Anderson, Ameal Brooks, **Juan “Tetelo” Vargas**, Francisco “Pancho” Coimbre, Rogelio Linares, Horacio Martinez and Unknown. Front row left to right – Louis Louden, Roosevelt Cox, Carlos Rivero and **Dave Barnhill**.)

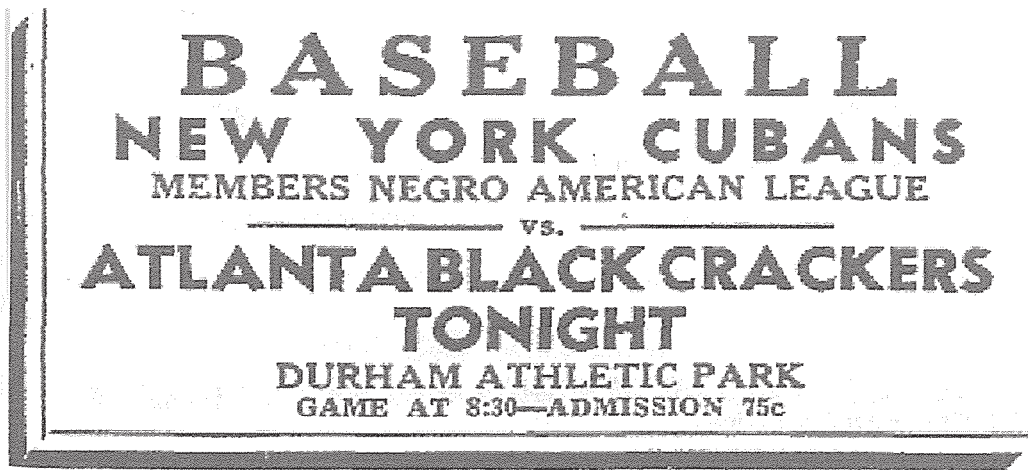
Rodolfo Fernandez (1-2) also pitched for the Cubans in 1943. The New York Cubans posted a team earned run average of 3.95 for the season which was third best in the “league.”

The New York Cubans finished the 1943 season in second place in the Negro National League with a won-loss record of 35-25-2 (.583). Even though they were in second place, the New York Cubans were still seventeen (17) games behind the Homestead Grays (53-14-1).

New York Cubans Continue their Winning Ways

The signing of Pancho Coimbre in 1943 seemed to be the spark the New York Cubans needed. That spark carried over to the 1944 Negro National League season. Jose M. Fernandez finally had his team as a competitive force in the Negro National League. During the season the New York Cubans played their home games at both the Polo Grounds (New York City) and Yankee Stadium (Bronx).

Jose Fernandez’s top hitters for the season were Pancho Coimbre (.357), Lou Louden (.326), Javier “Blue” Perez (.309), Dave Thomas (.276) and Hector Rodriguez (.272). The New York Cubans had a team batting average of .257 for the season. With decent hitting and run production from the offensive unit, Jose’s pitching staff responded with the best team earned run average in the “league.” The New York Cubans had a 3.61 ERA for the season. Over the course of the season Fernandez used six (6) starting pitchers. Barney Morris (5-2), Carranza Howard (4-3), Victor Greenridge (3-2), Luis Tiant (3-2), Pat Scantlebury (3-4) and Dave Barnhill (2-2) all pitched for the New York Cubans in 1944.



Times-Picavune
New Orleans, LA
04-24-44

The New York Cubans finished the season with an impressive won-loss record of 41-25-2 (.621) and ended the season in second place in the final “league” standings. After losing out to the Homestead Grays by seventeen (17) games in 1943, New York cut their deficit to eight (8) games for the 1944 season.

The 1945 New York Cubans held their spring training at Xavier College in New Orleans (LA). Fernandez’s Cubans played well in spring training and ended the pre-season with a record of 7-2. However, their momentum did not carry into the regular season. After two successful seasons, Jose Maria Fernandez and the New York Cubans faltered in 1945. They dropped from finishing in second place in 1943 and 1944 to ending the 1945 Negro National League season in fifth place with a 30-32 (.484) won-loss record.

One of the biggest problems that confronted Jose M. Fernandez during the 1945 season was the lack of hitting. Fernandez’s first problem with his offense was the loss of Pancho Coimbre who had been the team’s leading hitter the prior two seasons. The New York Cubans could only manage a .223 team batting average for the season. Martin Dihigo (.306), Tom Parker (.289) and Lou Louden (.272) were the leading hitters for the Cubans during the season.

Jose Fernandez’s starting rotation for the 1945 season was comprised of Luis Tiant, Dave Barnhill, Barney Morris and Bill Anderson. The Cubans’ pitching staff compiled an earned run average (ERA) of 3.69 in “league” games. This earned run average was the second best in the “league.” New York’s pitching staff led the Negro National League in strikeouts and had the lowest percentage of base on balls in the “league.”

Jose Maria Fernandez returned to the New York Cubans for their 1946 Negro National League season. The New York Cubans played their home games at the Polo Grounds and Yankee Stadium during the season.

Alejandro Crespo (.367), Dave Thomas (.312) and Silvio Garcia (.311) led the New York Cubans in hitting during the 1946 Negro National League season. As a team the Cubans had a team batting average of .253 (fifth in Negro National League) against “league” opponents.

Pat Scantlebury (7-3), Luis Tiant (4-3 w/ 2.35 ERA), Barney Morris (3-5), Dave Barnhill (3-3 w/ 2.66 ERA), Martin Crue (3-3), Bill Anderson (3-1), Pee Wee Jenkins (1-3) and Carrenza Howard (0-2) pitched for the New York Cubans in 1946. Fernandez’s pitching staff finished the season with a team ERA of 4.02 which was fourth best in the Negro National League.

The New York Cubans played solid baseball the entire season. They finished the first half of the 1946 season in second place in the Negro National League with a record of 15-8 (.651) right behind the Newark Eagles who blew away the competition with a 22-7 (.757) record. When the season ended the Cubans had a record of 28-21 (.561) and were in second place in the final “league” standings. The Newark Eagles won the “league” championship with a remarkable won-loss record of 47-16 (.743).

Championship Season

Jose Maria Fernandez’s best season as a manager in professional baseball was 1947. The New York Cubans dominated Negro National League play the entire 1947 season. Fernandez’s starting line-up for the 1947 New York Cubans and their season’s batting average against “league” competition was as follows:

New York Cubans (1947)

Position	Player	Average	Position	Player	Average
1B	Lorenzo Cabrera	.352	OF	Lou Louden	.290
2B	Pedro Diaz	.247	OF	Cleveland Clark	.338
SS	Silvio Garcia	.324	OF	Claro Duany	.297
3B	Orestes “Minnie” Minoso	.294			
C	Ray Noble	.325	P	Luis Tiant	10-0

The 1947 New York Cubans led the Negro National League in hitting with a team batting average of .292 (574 for 1965) with a slugging percentage of .416.

Luis Tiant was the ace of the pitching staff with an undefeated record of 10-0. Pat Scantlebury (10-5), Lino Donoso (8-2), David Barnhill (4-0), Martin Crue (4-1), Barney Morris (4-6) and James “Pee Wee” Jenkins (2-2) also pitched for the Cubans in 1947.



New York Cubans (1947)

(Jose M. Fernandez – back row fourth from right)

The New York Cubans got off to a very good start when they opened the season by winning both ends of a double header against the Homestead Grays at Griffith Stadium. New York won the games by the scores of 8-1 and 5-2. The Cubans didn't let up the rest of the season. A crowd of 8,500 fans were on hand to see their home team go down in defeat. Fernandez's Cubans battled the defending World Champion Newark Eagles the entire season. The Negro National League pennant came down to a double header that was played on September 11th at Ruppert Stadium in Newark. The New York Cubans responded to the challenge and took both games by the scores of 5-4 and 7-5.

The final standings for the 1947 Negro National League were as follows:

Negro National League (1947)

Team	Games	Won	Lost	Tie	Pct.	Place
New York Cubans	60	42	18	0	.700	1 st
Newark Eagles	83	46	37	0	.554	2 nd
Baltimore Elite Giants	76	40	36	0	.526	3 rd
Homestead Grays	66	32	34	0	.485	4 th
Philadelphia Stars	57	26	31	0	.456	5 th
New York Black Yankees	50	10	40	0	.200	6 th

According to the Seamheads research team the 1947 New York Cubans had a record of 46-23-1 (.667) in games against all levels of competition.

By winning the 1947 Negro National League title, the New York Cubans won the right to play the Cleveland Buckeyes who won the Negro American League title in the Negro League World Series. New York won the Negro League World Series by defeating Cleveland four games to one with a tie. A summary of the World Series is as follows:

Game	Location	Date	Winning Team	Score	Winning Pitcher	Loosing Pitcher
1	New York City	Sept 19 th	Tie Game	5-5	-	-
2	New York City	Sept 21 st	Cleveland	10-7	Ramon Bragana	Lino Donoso
3	Cleveland	Sept 23 rd	New York	6-0	Barney Morris	Sam Jones
4	Philadelphia	Sept 24 th	New York	9-4	Dave Barnhill	Gene Bremer
5	Chicago	Sept 26 th	New York	9-2	Lino Donoso	Chet Brewer
6	Cleveland	Sept 27 th	New York	6-5	Pat Scantlebury	Eugene Smith

New York Cubans

Win Negro Series

**Come From Behind To
Take 6-5 Title Match.**

Cleveland, Sept. 28 (UP)—The New York Cubans, Negro National league champs, overcame a five run deficit to win the Negro world series with a 6-5 fifth game victory over the Cleveland Buckeyes at

League park today, before 5400 fans.

The Buckeyes got off to an early lead and tallied two runs in the first and one each in the second and third. Pat Scantlebury replaced Luis Tiant on the mound for the Cubans after that, and, although he gave up two more hits, eighth when Rafael Noble slashed he also got three timely singles.

New York went ahead in the a sharp double to left center to drive in two runs.

Gene Smith went all the way for Cleveland and was tagged for eight hits, while his teammates got one more than that off the Cubans.

New York Cubans
Win Negro League
World Series

Daily Illinois State
Springfield, IL
09-09-47



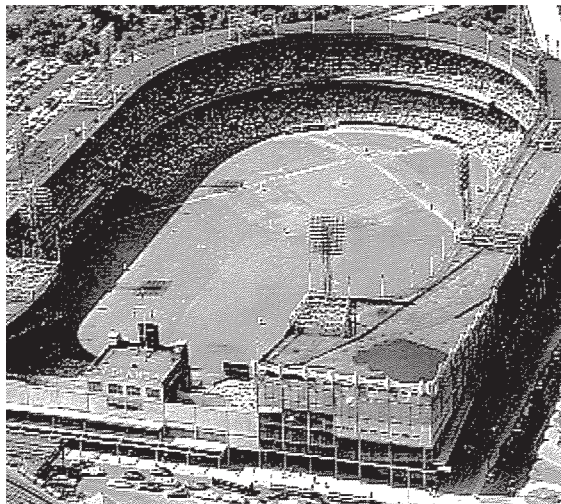
Jose Fernandez in Locker Room with Team

(Jose M. Fernandez – first on left)

Jose M. Fernandez's accomplishments as manager of the New York Cubans were recognized by his selection to coach in the 1947 East-West All Star game which was played at the Polo Grounds in New York City.

In October of 1947 the New York Cubans scheduled a five game series with the Havana Cubans of the Class C Florida International League. The exhibition series was played from October 4th to October 7th with the games being played at the Gran Stadium in Havana. According to newspaper reports, promoters expected to draw a crowd of 150,000 fans for the five game series.

After their 1947 championship season, Alex Pompey, owner of the New York Cubans, began spending more of his time working with the New York Giants as a scout. This would have a tremendous negative impact on the future of the team. Once Pompey started working for the New York Giants, newspapers often referred to the New York Cubans as a farm team of the New York Giants.



Polo Grounds

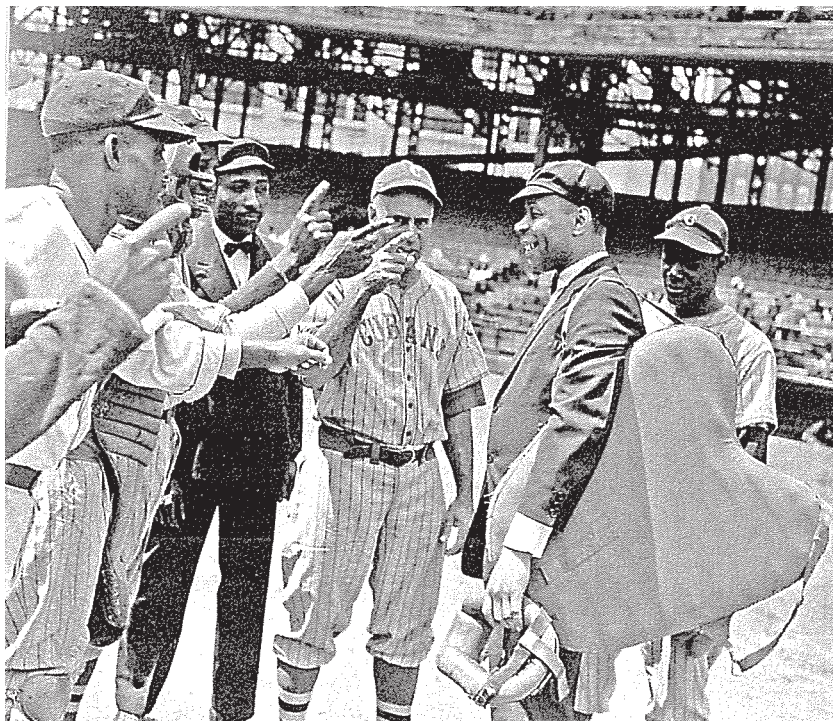
**Upper Manhattan
New York City, NY**

**Home of New York
Cubans
(1947)**

Last Season of the Negro National League

Going into the 1948 Negro National League season, Jose Maria Fernandez had basically the same roster return for the upcoming season as the team who won the 1947 Negro League World Series. However, gone from the starting pitching rotation were Luis Tiant and Lino Donoso who had been two of the top pitchers in the team's starting rotation in 1947. Jose Santiago and Raul Lopez took their place in the starting rotation.

The New York Cubans started spring training for their 1948 season in fine form. According to the Chicago Sun Times, they were undefeated in their first six preseason games. When spring training was over everyone felt the team was on track to defend their Negro World Series title. However, once the regular season got underway, the Cubans never seemed to get on track. In early June and after a disappointing start of 9-11-1 (.450), Alex Pompez replaced Jose Maria Fernandez with Winfield Welch (13-21). According to newspaper reports, Jose remained with the team in a business capacity. Current research indicates that Jose M. Fernandez returned as manager before the end of the season. According to a newspaper article that appeared in the Omaha Star on August 13th, Jose Maria Fernandez was selected as one of the coaches for the East squad in the annual East -West All Star game.



Jose Fernandez Takes Exception to an Umpire's Call

Offensively, the New York Cubans had a very good season in 1948 with a .281 team batting average. Minnie Minoso led the team in hitting with a .356 batting average with a .508 slugging percentage. Other Cubans who had a good season at the plate in 1948 were Silvio Garcia (.335), Claro Duany (.321), Lorenzo Cabrera (.295) and Fernando Diaz Pedroso (.291).

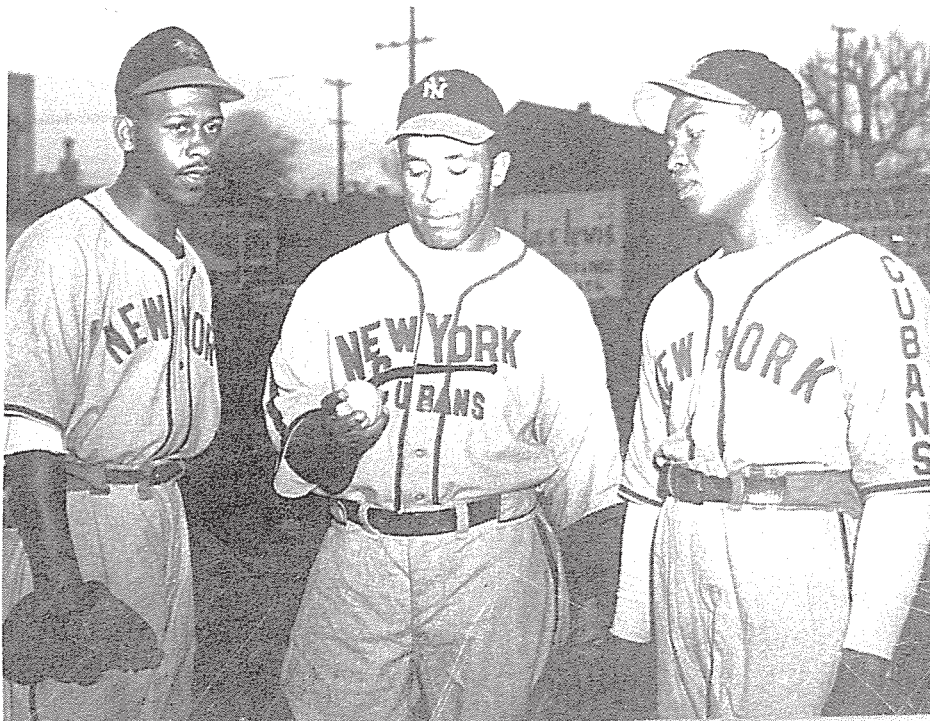
New York employed a three man starting rotation of Pat Scantlebury (5-5 w/ 3.21 ERA), Dave Barnhill (4-7 w/2.85 ERA) and Raul Lopez (1-5 w/ 4.50 ERA) during the 1948 Negro National League season. Jose Santiago, Martin Crue, Barney Morris, Wilfredo Salas, Pee Wee Jenkins

and Alex Newkirk also pitched for New York in 1948. The New York Cubans had a team earned run average of 3.68 in “league” games during the season.

The New York Cubans struggled the entire regular season. They finished the 1948 Negro National League season with a record of 17-30-1 (.362). New York finished seventeen (17) games behind the Homestead Grays. The Cubans were 22-32-1 (.407) in games against both “league” and “non-league” opponents.

New York Moves to the Negro American League

When the Negro National League disbanded after the 1948 season, the New York Cubans entered the Negro American League. The Cubans played the 1949 and 1950 seasons in the Eastern Division of the Negro American League. For some unknown reason, Alex Pompez did not hire Jose Maria Fernandez to manage the New York Cubans for the 1949 season. Pompez’s first choice appears to have been Quincy Troupe whom he acquired from the Chicago American Giants. Troupe, however, chose to go to Drummondville (Canada) instead of reporting to New York. Before spring training had concluded, Ray Dandridge was named the New York Cubans’ player-manager.



New York Cubans

(Pat Scantlebury, **Ray Dandridge** and Quincy Troupe)

It appears that Jose Maria Fernandez managed a lower level team by the name of the “Puerto Rican Stars” during the first part of the 1949 season. An interesting side note was that Jose’s son, Jose “Pepe” Fernandez, was the catcher on the team.

During the first week of June of 1949, the New York Giants signed both Dave Barnhill and Ray Dandridge. This left Pompez without a manager, so he called his old friend Jose M. Fernandez. Jose immediately joined the team and finished the 1949 season as New York’s manager.



Marianao Tigres (1922-23)
Cuban Winter League

(Standing left to right – Augustin Parpetti, Emilio Palmero, Ernie Krueger, Ben Tincup, Lico Mederos, Rogelio Crespo, **Jose M. Fernandez**, Recurvon Teran and Juanelo Mirabal. Middle row left to right – Ramiro Rameriz, Vicente Rodriquez, Lucas Boda, Merito Acosta, Pelayo Chacon, Pedro Silva. Front row left to right – Unknown and Manolo Cueto.)



Almendares Alcranes (1929-30)

(Back row left to right- Cesar Alvarez, Silvino Ruiz, **Dick Lundy**, Martin Dihigo, Cando Lopez, Joseito Rodriguez, Johnny Allen, Oscar Rodriguez and **Manuel "Cocaina" Garcia**. Seated left to right – Eugenio Morin, **Larry Brown**, **Jose M. Fernandez**, **Oliver "The Ghost" Marcelle** and Isidro Fabre.)

One of the major problems that Fernandez faced as the Cubans' manager was that owner Alex Pompez had sold many of the team's best players to Major League Baseball organizations. These players included Minnie Minoso and Jose Santiago to the Cleveland Indians. Pompez also sold Dave Barnhill, Lorenzo Cabrera, Raymond Dandridge, Raul Lopez and Ray Noble to the New York Giants.

The New York Cubans went 26-20 (.565) in 1949 and 18-16 (.529) in 1950.

The Negro Cubans disbanded before the start of the 1951 season and this ended Jose Maria Fernandez's managerial career in the United States.

Cuban Baseball Playing Career

Jose Maria Fernandez spent twenty-four (24) seasons playing professional baseball in Cuba.

Some of the highlights of Jose M. Fernandez Cuban baseball playing career are as follows:

- Jose was selected as the starting catcher for the 1925 All Cubans team that played the All Yankees in the American Series. Other Cuban greats on the team were Pelayo Chacon (SS), Martin Dihigo (P), Valentin Dreke (OF), Jose Mendez (P) and Cristobal Torriente (OF). Major League pitcher Adolfo Luque managed the team. The All Yankee team included John Henry "Pop" Lloyd (Mgr/1B), Dick Lundy (SS), Oscar Charleston (OF), Raleigh "Biz" Mackey (C), Bullet Rogan (P) and Frank Warfield (2B). Jose M. Fernandez had an excellent series with a .321 batting average, double and homerun. The All Yankees won the eight (8) game series with a record of 5-2-1.
- Along with his brother (Rodolfo) they helped lead the Almendares Alacranes to the Cuban Winter League title with a record of 21-9 (.700).

Offensively, some of his best seasons in Cuban Winter League baseball were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1917	White Sox	13	50	6	16	1	1	0	2	0	.320	.360
1922-23	Marianao	45	171	28	52	7	6	2	26	3	.304	.450
1925	All Cubans	5	28	2	9	1	0	1	-	-	.321	
1927-28	Almendares	28	90	12	30	4	1	1	18	3	.333	.433
1928-29	Almendares	-	129	10	41	1	2	0	-	1	.318	
1934-35	Almendares	-	100	11	29	4	3	0	14	-	.290	
1936-37	Almendares	-	173	16	53	5	4	0	22	1	.306	
1939-40	Santa Clara	-	135	8	38	4	0	0	19	0	.281	
1940-41	Almendares	-	62	1	18	1	0	0	9	0	.290	
1941-42	Almendares	-	34	2	11	0	0	0	5	0	.324	

Cuban Baseball Managerial and Coaching Career

One Last Season

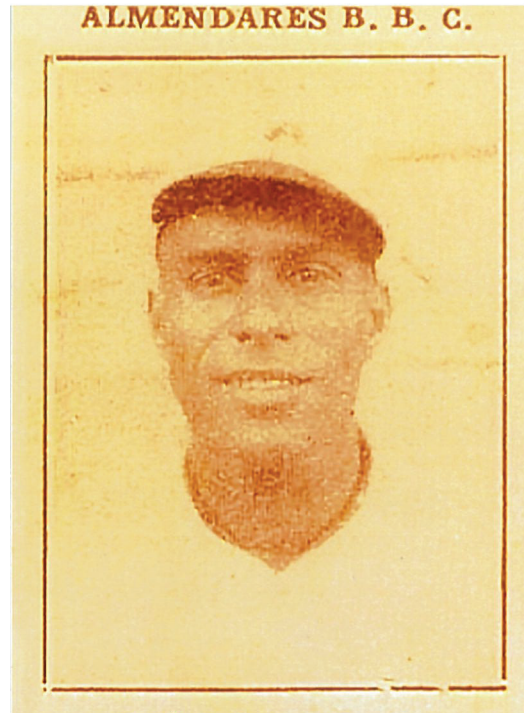
After Cuba came under the control of Fidel Castro, professional baseball was outlawed. Recognizing the importance of baseball to the Cuban people, the Cuban Sports Authority formed the Cuban Serie Nacional in 1962.

Jose M. Fernandez was asked to manage the Habana team in this new amateur league. Unfortunately for Fernandez, Habana finished the season in last place with a record of 10-17.

Passing of a Cuban Legend

Jose Maria Fernandez passed away on July 20, 1972 in Cuba at the age of 76.

Jose Maria Fernandez in Cuba



1923-24 Billiken Cigarette baseball card

1923-24 Tomas Gutierrez baseball card



Jose M. Fernandez, Valentin Dreke and Manuel Cueto

Playing Career

Regular Season:

Year	Team	League
1916-1920	Cuban Stars (East)	Independent
1919	Cuban Stars of Havana	Independent
1920	Havana Cuban Stars	Independent
1921	All Cubans	Independent
1922	Cuban Stars (East)	Independent
1923-1928	Cuban Stars (East)	Eastern Colored League
1928	Cuban Stars (East)	Independent
1929	Cuban Stars (East)	American Negro League
1929	Cuban Stars (West)	Independent
1930	Chicago American Giants	Negro National League
1931	Stars of Cuba	Independent
1931	Cuban House of David	Independent
1931-1933	Cuban Stars (East)	Independent
1934-1936	Cuban Stars (East)	Independent
1936	New York Cubans	Negro National League
1937-1938	Cuban Stars (East)	Independent
1939-1948	New York Cubans	Negro National League
1949	Puerto Rican Stars	Independent
1949-1950	New York Cubans	Negro American League

Winter Leagues and Post Season:

Year	Team	League
1915-16	San Francisco	Cuban Winter League
1916	Cuban Stars (East)	Barnstorming Tour of Puerto Rico
1916	Cuban Stars (East)	Exhibition Game vs Cuban Stars (West) (San Juan, PR)
1917	White Sox	Cuban Winter League
1918-19	Almendares	Cuban Winter League
1919-20	America	Cuban Winter League
1922-23	Marianao	Cuban Winter League
1923-24	Almendares	Cuban Winter League
1924	Almendares	Gran Premio (Cuba)
1924-25	Almendares	Cuban Winter League
1925	All Cubans	American Series (Cuba)
1925-26	Almendares	Cuban Winter League
1926-27	Cuba	Cuban Winter League
1926	Cuban Stars	Doubleheader vs Jersey Barnstormers
1926	Cuban Stars	Three game series vs Newark Bears
1926-27	Marianao	Special Season – Triangular (Cuba)
1927	Cuban Stars (East)	Barnstorming Tour of Panama
1927-28	Almendares	Cuban Winter League
1928-29	Almendares	Cuban Winter League
1929-30	Almendares	Cuban Winter League
1930	Chicago American Giants	Championship Series vs Houston Black Buffalos
1930	Chicago American Giants	Series vs American Association All Stars
1930	Chicago American Giants	Series vs Rosy Ryan's American Association All Stars
1930	Almendares	Cuban Winter League
1930	Almendarista	Special Season – UNICO (Cuba)



Marianao (1946-47)

(Coach Jose M. Fernandez – back row third from right)



Oriente

(Coach Jose M. Fernandez – kneeling third from right)

Winter Leagues and Post Season: (continued)

Year	Team	League
1931-32	Almendares	Cuban Winter League
1932-33	Almendares	Cuban Winter League
1933-34	Cuban Stars (East)	Barnstorming tour of Dominican Republic
1934-35	Almendares	Cuban Winter League
1935	Cuban Stars (East)	Series vs Marianao in Havana, Cuba
1935	Cuban Stars (East)	Exhibition Game vs New York Cubans in Havana
1935-36	Almendares	Cuban Winter League
1936	New York Cubans	Exhibition Game in Puerto Rico vs Cincinnati Reds
1936-37	Almendares	Cuban Winter League
1937	Cuban Stars	Six game series vs Bill Terry's New York Giants
1937	New York Cubans	Double Header vs Negro National League All Stars
1937-38	Almendares	Cuban Winter League
1938-39	Almendares	Cuban Winter League
1939-40	Santa Clara Leopards (Manager)	Cuban Winter League
1940-41	Almendares	Cuban Winter League
1941-42	Almendares	Cuban Winter League
1941-42	Cienfuegos	Cuban Winter League
1944	New York Cubans	Game vs Army All Stars
1945	New York Cubans (Manager)	Barnstorming Tour of Cuba
1945-46	Marianao (Coach)	Cuban Winter League
1945-46	Marianao (Manager)	Cuban Winter League
1946-47	Marianao Frailes Grises (Coach)	Cuban Winter League
1946-47	Oriente (Coach)	Federacion (Cuba)
1947	New York Cubans	Negro League World Series vs Cleveland Buckeyes
1947	New York Cubans	Five Game Series vs Havana Cubans of the Florida International League
1949-50	Marianao Tigres (Coach)	Cuban Winter League
1954-55	Marianao Tigres (Coach)	Cuban Winter League
1955-56	Marianao Tigres (Coach)	Cuban Winter League
1956-57	Marianao Tigres (Coach)	Cuban Winter League
1957-58	Marianao Tigres (Coach)	Cuban Winter League
1958	Marianao Tigres (Coach)	X Caribbean World Series
1960-61	Marianao Tigres (Manager)	Cuban Winter League

(Jose M. Fernandez also reportedly played winter baseball in Mexico and Venezuela.)



**Gran Stadium
(1946)**

**Home of Cuban
Winter League
Baseball**

Havana, Cuba

Career Statistics – Hitting (Regular Season – Negro Leagues)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1916	Cuban Stars	15	50	6	16	1	0	0	2	3	.320	.340
1917	Cuban Stars	44	171	25	66	4	1	1	15	1	.386	.439
1918	Cuban Stars	31	116	18	42	6	3	0	12	1	.362	.466
1919	Cuban Stars	26	102	18	38	5	2	0	17	3	.373	.461
1920	Cuban Stars	15	58	6	15	2	0	0	10	0	.259	.293
1921	All Cubans	23	94	18	27	1	0	1	19	0	.287	.330
1922	Cuban Stars	20	66	9	20	0	1	1	3	1	.303	.379
1923	Cuban Stars	16	60	10	15	3	0	0	10	0	.250	.300
1924	Cuban Stars	47	168	10	40	3	0	0	17	1	.238	.256
1925	Cuban Stars	35	133	13	37	4	1	1	14	2	.278	.346
1926	Cuban Stars	42	146	19	39	7	2	1	19	2	.267	.363
1927	Cuban Stars	-	128	15	39	5	0	1	-	1	.305	.367
1928	Cuban Stars	38	159	15	53	7	1	0	20	2	.333	.390
1929	Cuban Stars	35	135	16	35	6	1	0	9	0	.259	.319
1930	Chicago	35	110	12	41	4	2	0	15	0	.373	.445
1931	Cuban Stars	-	16	4	8	1	0	0	-	0	.500	.563
1932	Cuban Stars	6	26	5	9	0	1	0	4	0	.346	.423
1933	Cuban Stars	13	50	9	20	1	0	0	6	0	.400	.420
1934	Cuban Stars	2	7	0	4	0	0	0	-	-	.571	.571
1935	Cuban Stars	4	13	4	7	0	1	1	-	-	.538	.846
1936	Cuban Stars	1	6	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	.500	.500
1937	Cuban Stars	1	3	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	.333	-
1940	New York	-	48	8	12	1	0	0	-	0	.250	.271
1941	New York	16	44	1	12	1	0	0	4	-	.273	.295
1942	New York	-	14	1	3	0	0	0	-	-	.214	.214
1944	New York	1	5	1	2	2	0	0	-	-	.400	.800
Total		466	1928	246	604	64	16	7	196	17	.313	.374

Career Statistics – Hitting (Regular Season – “Non-League” Games)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1923	Cuban Stars	1	4	2	2	0	1	0	-	-	.500	1.000
1924	Cuban Stars	2	9	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	.111	.111
1925	Cuban Stars	1	4	0	2	-	-	-	-	-	.500	.500
1926	Cuban Stars	3	14	1	4	2	-	-	-	-	.286	.429
1929	Cuban Stars	6	18	4	6	-	-	-	-	-	.333	-
1930	Chicago	2	5	0	3	-	-	-	-	-	.600	.600
Total		15	54	8	18	2	1	-	-	-	.333	.389



CUBAN STARS (Management Nat Strong, Inc., New York)—Front row: Abreau, Ruiz, Torres, Martinez, Millito, Perez, Fabre, Etchegoyen. Back row: Carreras, Diaz, Lorenzo, Bragana, Fernandez, Carabello, Echeverria. Kart Luke, White Plains, Photo.

Cuban Stars (1937)

(Jose M. Fernandez – back row third from right)

Career Statistics – Hitting (Cuba)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1915-16	San Francisco	11	32	1	6	1	0	0	1	0	.188	
1917	White Sox	13	50	6	16	1	1	0	2	0	.320	.360
1918-19	Almendares	-	128	10	27	4	2	0	-	2	.211	
1919-20	America	-	39	2	10	0	0	0	-	0	.258	
1922-23	Marianao	45	171	28	52	7	6	2	26	3	.304	.450
1923-24	Almendares	58	182	21	48	2	2	0	28	3	.264	.297
1924	Almendares	-	58	6	14	-	-	-	-	2	.241	
1924-25	Almendares	-	45	4	8	3	0	0	-	0	.178	
1925	All Cubans	8	28	2	9	1	0	1	-	-	.321	
1925-26	Almendares	-	140	15	39	2	3	0	-	0	.279	
1926-27	Cuba	-	20	6	6	2	0	0	-	1	.300	
1926-27	Marianao	-	88	18	21	-	-	-	-	-	.259	
1927-28	Almendares	28	90	12	30	4	1	1	18	3	.333	.433
1928-29	Almendares	-	129	10	41	1	2	0	-	1	.318	
1929-30	Almendares	-	69	11	19	1	0	0	-	-	.275	
1930	Almendares	-	16	2	5	2	0	0	-	-	.313	
1930	Almendarista	-	22	3	9	0	0	1	-	0	.409	
1931-32	Almendares	-	57	5	14	2	0	0	4	-	.246	
1932-33	Almendares	-	86	12	22	3	1	0	13	-	.256	
1934-35	Almendares	-	100	11	29	4	3	0	14	-	.290	
1935-36	Almendares	-	149	9	36	3	0	0	11	-	.242	
1936-37	Almendares	-	173	16	53	5	4	0	22	1	.306	
1937-38	Almendares	-	75	7	20	1	1	0	4	1	.267	
1938-39	Almendares	-	47	2	9	0	0	1	2	0	.194	
1939-40	Santa Clara	-	135	8	38	4	0	0	19	0	.281	
1940-41	Almendares	-	62	1	18	1	0	0	9	0	.290	
1941-42	Almendares	-	34	2	11	0	0	0	5	0	.324	.324
Total		-	2225	230	610	54	26	6	178	17	.274	

Career Statistics – Hitting (Puerto Rico)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1936	New York Cubans	-	5	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	.600	-

Career Hitting Statistics (Totals)

	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
Negro League	466	1928	246	604	64	16	7	196	17	.313	.374
Non-League	15	54	8	18	2	1	-	-	-	.333	.389
Cuba	-	2225	230	610	54	26	6	178	17	.274	-
Puerto Rico	-	5	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	.600	-
Total	-	4212	484	1235	120	43	13	374	34	.293	-

Jose Maria Fernandez Coaches in Cuba



Marianao Tigres (1956-57)

(Coach Jose M. Fernandez – seated third from right)



Marianao Tigres (1958)
X Caribbean World Series

(Coach Jose M. Fernandez – back row forth from left)

Managerial Career - Statistics

Year	Team	League	Games	Won	Lost	Tie	Pct.	Place
1928	Cuban Stars (East)	Eastern Colored League	30	9	18	3	.333	4 th
1928	Cuban Stars (East)	Independent	6	5	1	0	.833	-
1929	Cuban Stars (East)	American Negro League	59	15	42	2	.263	6 th
1929	Cuban Stars (East)	Independent	5	3	1	1	.750	-
1932	Cuban Stars (East)	Independent	8	6	2	0	.750	-
1934	Cuban Stars (East)	Independent	43	35	8	0	.814	-
1935	Cuban Stars (East)	Independent	4	3	1	0	.750	-
1937	Cuban Stars (East)	Independent	10	7	2	1	.778	-
1938	Cuban Stars (East)	Independent	-	-	-	-	-	-
1939	New York Cubans	Negro National League	32	9	23	0	.281	7 th
1940	New York Cubans	Negro National League	37	16	21	0	.432	4 th
1941	New York Cubans	Negro National League	40	19	21	0	.475	4 th
1941	New York Cubans	Independent	2	1	1	0	.500	-
1942	New York Cubans	Negro National League	44	13	30	1	.302	6 th
1943	New York Cubans	Negro National League	62	35	25	2	.583	3 rd
1943	New York Cubans	Independent	3	2	1	0	.667	-
1944	New York Cubans	Negro National League	68	41	25	2	.621	3 rd
1945	New York Cubans	Negro National League	62	30	32	0	.484	5 th
1945	New York Cubans	Independent	9	7	2	0	.778	-
1946	New York Cubans	Negro National League	49	28	21	0	.571	2 nd
1946	New York Cubans	Independent	9	5	4	0	.556	-
1947	New York Cubans	Negro National League	60	42	18	0	.700	1 st
1947	New York Cubans	Negro League World Series	6	4	1	1	.800	1 st
1947	New York Cubans	Independent	3	2	1	0	.667	-
1948	New York Cubans	Negro National League	43	16	27	0	.372	5 th
1948	New York Cubans	Independent	1	1	0	0	1.000	-
1949	New York Cubans	Negro American League	-	-	-	-	-	-
1950	New York Cubans	Negro American League	34	18	16	0	.529	3 rd
1950	New York Cubans	Independent	2	1	1	0	.500	-
Total			731	373	345	13	.519	-

(Note – Both Jose M. Fernandez and Winfield Welch managed the New York Cubans in 1948. Statistics presented here are only for the games that Fernandez managed. Both Raymond Dandridge and Jose M. Fernandez managed the New York Cubans in 1949.)

Managerial Career (Cuba)

Year	Team	League	Games	Won	Lost	Tie	Pct.	Place
1935	Cuban Stars (East)	Spring Training	1	1	0	-	1.000	-
1939-40	Santa Clara	Cuban Winter League	51	24	27	-	.471	3 rd
1945	New York Cubans	American Series	5	0	4	1	.000	-
1945-46	Marianao	Cuban Winter League	-	-	-	-	-	-
1960-61	Marianao Tigres	Cuban Winter League	66	31	35	-	.470	4 th
Total			123	56	66	1	.455	-

(Note – Both Armando Marsans and Jose Maria Fernandez managed Marianao during the 1945-46 season. The Tigres went 23-37 .383 and were in fourth place in the final “league” standings. At this time it is unclear what the won-loss record of each manager was for the 1945-46 season.)

Managerial Career – Career Records

	Games	Won	Lost	Tie	Pct.	Place
Negro Baseball	731	373	345	13	.519	-
Cuba	123	56	66	1	.455	-
Total	854	429	411	14	.510	-

Assessing Jose M. Fernandez's Career

- Jose Maria Fernandez was an **outstanding hitter** during his professional baseball career. During his Negro baseball career he batted a very respectable .314. He also compiled a .274 batting average for his career in Cuba. In games against all levels of competition Jose Maria Fernandez had a career batting average of .293.

Negro League researchers differ on Jose M. Fernandez's exact career batting average but all agree that he was a very good hitter. Fernandez's career at bats, hits and batting average as reported by four of the leading Negro League historian groups are as follows:

	Center for Negro League Research	Larry Lester and Dick Clark	Seamheads	Baseball Reference
Games	481	436	520	-
At Bats	1982	1543	1800	1483
Hits	622	414	481	411
Career Batting Average	.314	.268	.269	.277

- Fernandez was known as an **exceptional good defensive catcher**. He reportedly possessed a very strong throwing arm. Fernandez was always known for his ability to handle pitchers and call a good game.
- The **longevity of his career** is very impressive. Jose Maria Fernandez played and managed in Negro League baseball in the United States for 35 years. In addition Jose played baseball in Cuba for twenty-four (24) seasons and managed/coached in the Cuban Winter League until 1961. No player in the history of professional baseball in Cuba played more seasons than Jose Maria Fernandez. Ranking right behind him are Pelayo Chacon (23), Mike Gonzalez (23), Martin Dihigo (22) and Julio Rojo (21).
- Jose M. Fernandez was a **winner**. During his career as a player, coach and/or manager he was an integral part of at least sixteen (16) championship teams.

Year	Team	League	Won	Lost	Pct.
1922-23	Marianao	Cuban Winter League	35	19	.648
1924-25	Almendares	Cuban Winter League	33	16	.673
1925-26	Almendares	Cuban Winter League	34	13	.723
1930	Chicago American Giants	Championship Series vs Houston	5	4	.556
1930	Almendares	Cuban League	3	1	.750
1930	Almendarista	UNICO (Cuba)	9	4	.692
1931-32	Almendares	Cuban Winter League	21	9	.700
1934-35	Almendares	Cuban Winter League	18	9	.667
1941	New York Cubans	Negro National League (second half champions)			
1941-42	Almendares	Cuban Winter League	25	19	.568
1947	New York Cubans	Negro National League	42	18	.700
1947	New York Cubans	Negro League World Series	4	1	.800
1956-57	Marianao Tigres	Cuban Winter League	40	28	.588
1957	Marianao Tigres	IX Caribbean World Series	5	1	.833
1957-58	Marianao Tigres	Cuban Winter League	43	32	.584
1958	Marianao Tigres	X Caribbean World Series	4	2	.667

- He was an **incredibly durable player** who was seldom injured. Reportedly he never had a finger or hand injury during his entire catching career.
- He was an **extremely reliable ball player**. It didn't matter whether he was the team's starting catcher or back-up, Jose could always be relied upon to put forth his best effort. The best example of this can be seen during his 1941-42 season with the Almendares Alacranes. This was his last season in professional baseball in Cuba. As a back-up he went 11 for 34 for a .324 batting average.

- Jose Maria Fernandez had a **successful managerial career in the Negro Leagues in the United States as a manager**. Current research indicates the Jose had a managerial record of 373-345-13 (.519) in games against Negro League competition.

The highlight of his Negro League managerial career was leading his New York Cubans to both a Negro National League title and a Negro League World Series championship in 1947.

Jose ranks first among the top three Latin American managers who managed in Negro baseball. He is second in wins with “373” and ranks first in **winning** percentage with “.519.” The top three (3) Latin managers in Negro baseball are as follows:

Manager	Teams	Won	Lost	Tie	Pct.
Jose Maria Fernandez	Cuban Stars (East) New York Cubans	373	345	13	.519
Augustin “Tinti” Molina	Cuban Stars (East) All Cubans	380	513	14	.426
Pelayo Chacon	Cuban Stars (East) Stars of Cuba	170	219	6	.437

- Jose M. Fernandez possessed an **exceptional ability to recognize, recruit and develop ball players**. During his tenure as manager with the New York Cubans, Jose had twenty-eight (28) players on his roster who would be elected to a baseball hall-of-fame in Cuba, Mexico or Puerto Rico. He also had eight (8) players on his New York Cubans’ roster who would play in the Major Leagues.



Cuban Stars (1922)

Baseball - A Fernandez Family Business

Jose Maria Fernandez, Sr. was not the only member of his family to play Negro baseball. Rodolfo “Rudy” Fernandez, Jose’s younger brother, played, coached and managed in professional baseball from 1932 through the 1961 season. In addition Jose Maria Fernandez, Jr. who was Jose’s oldest son played in the Negro Leagues.

Rodolfo entered Negro baseball in 1932 with the Cuban Stars. Over his Negro baseball career Rudy played for the Cuban Stars (East), New York Cubans and New York Black Yankees. He also played for Ciudad Trujillo (Dominican Republic), Licey (Dominican Republic), Maricaibo (Venezuela), Cordoba (Mexico), Torreon (Mexico) and Sherbrooke (Canada). During the winter Rodolfo played, coached and/or managed in Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Puerto Rico and Venezuela.

Jose Maria Fernandez, Jr. was a catcher like his father. He played for the New York Cubans from 1948 to 1950. In 1950 Pepe was also the bull pen catcher and batting practice pitcher for the New York Giants. In June of 1950 he was assigned to the Trenton Giants of the Interstate League. He pitched in the Giants Minor League system from 1950 through 1952. His best season was with the Lafayette Bulls of the Evangeline League where he was 14-5 in 1951.



Jose Maria Fernandez Jr.
New York Cubans



Rodolfo "Rudy" Fernandez
New York Cubans

Selected Career Highlights

- After a weak start to his professional career in Cuba during the 1915-16 season, Jose Fernandez's playing career really took off when he went to the United States for the 1916 regular season. In his first season in the United States he showed that not only was he a very good catcher but that he could also hit for average. In his first, second, third and fourth seasons with the Cuban Stars (East), he hit .320 (1916), .386 (1917), .362 (1918) and .373 (1919).
- In their very first year of operation, Jose helped lead Marianao to a Cuban Winter League title. Fernandez had a team leading 15 extra base hits with a .303 batting average and a .446 slugging percentage for the season.
- Jose batted .333 as the starting catcher for the Cuban Stars (East) in 1928.
- In 1930 he was the starting catcher for Rube Foster's Chicago American Giants. Jose had the best season of his career offensively in 1930. He hit .373 with a .445 slugging percentage.
- Along with Lazaro Salazar he offensively led the Almendares Alacranes to a Cuban Winter League title with a record of 18-9 (.667). Jose batted .290 for Almendares during their championship season.
- Jose Fernandez became the manager of Alex Pompez's New York Cubans in 1939 and remained in that position until the team was disbanded at the end of the 1950 Negro American League season.
- Under the management of Jose M. Fernandez the New York Cubans won the second half of the 1941 Negro National League season.
- He closed his Cuban Winter League playing career during the 1941-42 season with Cienfuegos and Almendares. In a back-up role at the age of 46 he batted an outstanding .324 for the season.
- Jose led the 1947 New York Cubans to a Negro National League title and Negro League World Series championship.
- He was selected as a coach for both the 1947 and 1948 East-West All Star games.
- During his playing career in Cuba, Jose Fernandez played in twenty-four (24) seasons. This is the most playing seasons of any player in Cuban baseball history.
- Jose M. Fernandez sent the following eight (8) players to the Major Leagues: Sandy Amoros, George Crowe, Lino Donoso, Orestes, Minnie" Minoso, Ray Noble, Hector Rodriquez, Jose Santiago and Pat Scantlebury.
- Twenty-seven (27) players who played for Alex Pompez and Jose Maria Fernandez were named to the baseball hall-of-fames in Cuba, Puerto Rico or Mexico. Some of the most notable of these players were Bernardo Baro, Ramon Bragana, Pancho Coimbre, Martin Dihigo, Manuel "Cocaina" Garcia, Silvio Garcia, Orestes "Minnie" Minoso, Ray Noble, Alejandro Oms, Hector Rodriquez, Luis Tiant (Sr.) and Juan "Tetelo" Vargas.
- For his numerous contributions to baseball, Jose Maria Fernandez was elected to the Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame in 1965.

New York Cubans (1947)
Negro National League

Negro National League and Negro World Series Champions



New York Cubans (1947)

Back row left to right – Pedro Ulacia, Homero Ariosa, Pat Scantlebury, Lorenzo Cabrera, **Ray Noble**, **Jose M. Fernandez**, Pedro Diaz, Barney Morris and Claro Duany. Middle row left to right – Louis Louden, **Minnie Minoso**, Pedro Pages, Martin Crue, **Dave Barnhill** and **Silvio Garcia**. Front row left to right – Lino Donoso, Horacio Martinez, Jose Santiago, Chiflan Clark, James “Pee Wee” Jenkins and Luis Tiant, Sr.)