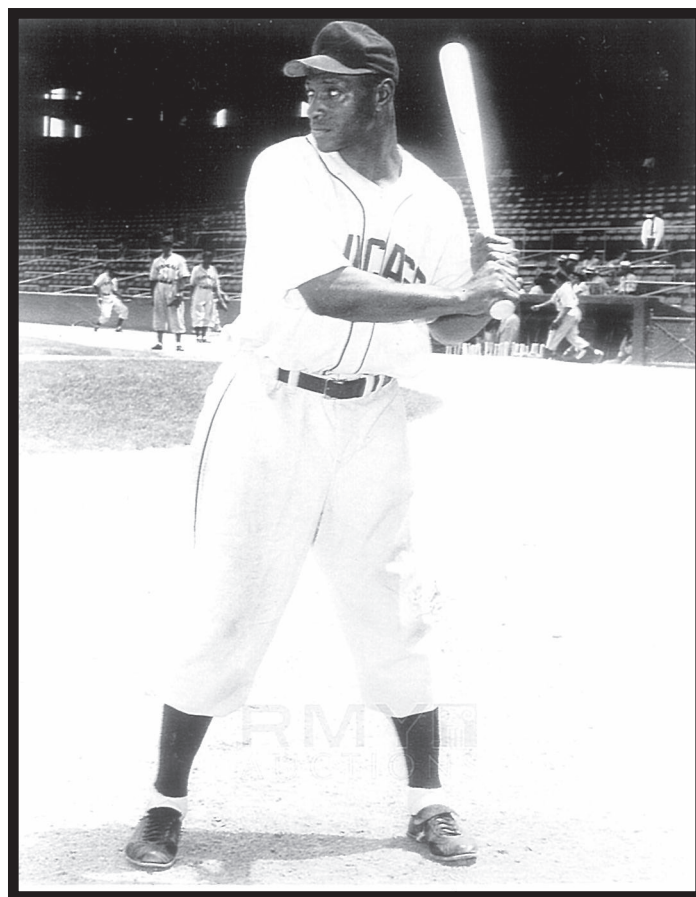


Forgotten Heroes: Ted Strong



by

Center for Negro League Baseball Research

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“Two Sport Super Star”

One problem that every Negro baseball Player faced during their career was that they were not paid enough money during the regular season to last them the entire year. The result was that they needed to find another job during the off season to tide them over. Many individuals played winter baseball but for another very small group of highly athletic players, the choice may be to professionally play another sport. For several Negro baseball players that sport was basketball.

Ted Strong spent ten seasons playing Negro League baseball for the Indianapolis Athletics, Indianapolis ABC's, Kansas City Monarchs and Indianapolis Clowns. He also spent two seasons in Mexico and one season in Canada. Ted was an excellent hitter who compiled an impressive .322 career batting average. For the six foot six, Strong basketball was a very viable option. Ted's exemplary basketball skill set enabled him to play eleven seasons (1936-37 to 1948-49 and 1950-51) with the world famous Harlem Globetrotters. The highlight of Ted's career with the Harlem Globetrotters was being a starting member of their 1940 World Championship team. He also played for the Chicago Studebakers (1942-43) of the National Basketball League. He was one of the first persons to integrate “white” professional basketball.

Playing both Negro baseball and professional basketball was nothing new. Several other Negro baseball players had played professional basketball before and after Ted Strong. **Clarence “Fats” Jenkins** was the most famous and most successful. Jenkins played Negro baseball from 1920 through the 1940 season. He was an excellent hitter who compiled a .324 career batting average and played for many of the top teams in the East during his baseball career. He also played semi-professional and professional basketball from the 1914-15 season through the 1940-41 season. Fats Jenkins is most often associated with the New York Renaissance (Rens) and was considered the best basketball player of his day.

Some of the other Negro baseball players who also played professional basketball were the following:

Zack Clayton – He played Negro baseball for eight seasons from 1932 to 1945. He was a light hitting first baseman who compiled a .212 career batting average. He was also a standout player and coach in professional basketball for fifteen seasons from the 1934-35 to 1948-49 season. Clayton is most often associated with the New York Renaissance, Harlem Globetrotters and Washington Bears. He was a member of two World Championship teams (1939 and 1943). Zack was also a world class boxing referee for over 40 years. Clayton was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 2011.

George Fiall – He played professional Negro baseball for ten years from 1920 to 1929. George mainly played for the New York Lincoln Giants and Harrisburg Giants. He was a solid fielder at third base and shortstop but only compiled a miniscule .210 career batting average. Fiall was a good friend of Fats Jenkins and played basketball for the Commonwealth Big Five, Renaissance Big Five and New York Rens.

Frank Forbes – He was a standout for the Spartan Braves who were one of the top black basketball teams in the country in the late 1910's and 1920's. Frank also played professional baseball for seven seasons from 1913 to 1919. He was primarily a shortstop who hit .249 for his career. He played for Lincoln Giants, Lincoln Stars, Red Caps and Philadelphia Giants.

Bill Yancey – He played Negro baseball for ten years from 1927 to 1936. He was an above average player who batted .259 for his career and was a very solid shortstop. Yancey also played several seasons for the New York Renaissance.

In the 1940's and 1950's there were several other athletes who played both professional Negro League baseball and professional basketball. Some of these players were Walter Burch, Nathaniel “Sweet water” Clifton, Lorenzo “Piper” Davis, Bill Dumpson, Sammy Gee, Ezell King, Everett “Ziggy” Marcell, John Ford Smith, Othello Strong, Reece “Goose” Tatum, Sam Wheeler and “Jumping Johnny” Wilson

Lorenzo “Piper” Davis - was a baseball super star in the Negro Leagues and Minor League baseball. He also played professional basketball for the Harlem Globetrotters for several seasons.

Reece “Goose” Tatum – He was a basketball super star and the marquee player for the Harlem Globetrotters from the 1940-41 season through the 1954-55 season. He continued to play professional basketball with the Harlem Magicians, Harlem Stars and Harlem Road Kings through the 1965-66 season. Goose Tatum was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 2011. Tatum was also a very solid baseball player who hit .259 for his seven seasons in Negro League baseball.

Theodore Relighn “Ted” Strong, Jr. was born on January 2, 1917 in South Bend, Indiana. Ted Jr. was born to Ted Strong, Sr. and his wife Vera. His father was a former athlete who became a minister and his mother Vera worked as a domestic. Ted Jr. was the oldest of a large number of Strong children (Nathaniel, Olivia, Othello, Charlotte, Gwendolyn, Dorothy, Jasper and Tyrone). He also had another sibling who died at a very young age and three others who died at birth. During his early childhood Ted Sr. moved the family to Chicago, Illinois.

Ted stood approximately six feet six inches tall and weighed approximately 210 pounds during his playing days. He also reportedly had the largest hands in basketball and, according to newspaper reports, he could snatch a basketball in mid air with just the fingers of one hand.

He was a switch hitter who threw right handed. Ted hit for average and also possessed tremendous power from both sides of the plate. Strong was known for his mammoth homeruns. His size and power made him an imposing figure at the plate.

He started his career as a shortstop before moving to the outfield. Defensively he had an excellent glove with exceptional range and a very strong throwing arm.

For a big man he possessed better than average speed and was very good at stealing a base.

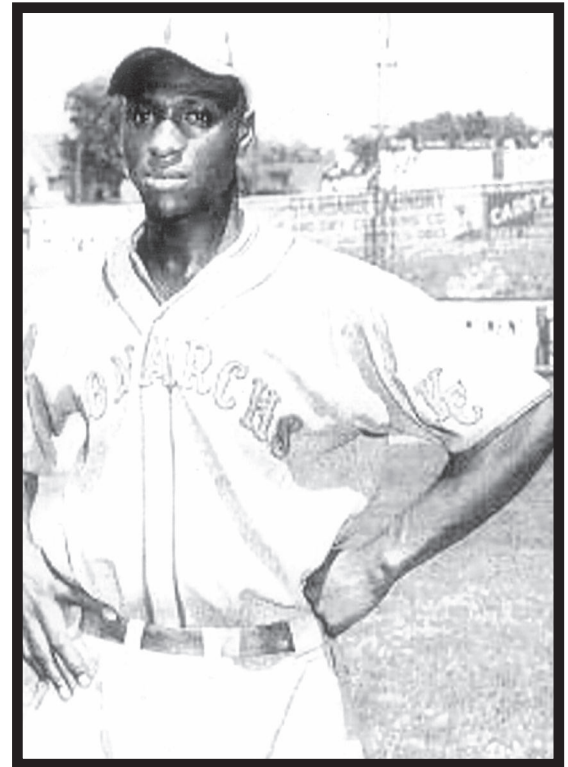
Ted Strong played Negro League baseball from 1936 through 1951. He also spent parts of two seasons in Mexico and two seasons in Canada. In the Negro Leagues he played for the Chicago American Giants, Indianapolis Athletics, Indianapolis ABC’s, Indianapolis Clowns, Harlem Globetrotters and Kansas City Monarchs. In Mexico Ted played with the Telecotes de Nuevo Laredo (1940) and Rojos de Aguila de Vera Cruz (1941). Strong played baseball with the Harlem Globetrotters, Minot Merchants, Minot Mallards and Swift Current Indians in Canada.

Over his Negro League career he was selected to play in seven (7) East-West All Star games. His versatility as a player was really highlighted in the fact that he was selected as an all star at three different positions (first base, short stop and right field) during his career.

Strong was a remarkable athlete. He was a two sport super star in both baseball and basketball. Ted started playing professional basketball for the Harlem Globetrotters during the 1936-37 season and played through the 1950-51 season. He also helped integrate the National Basketball League during the 1942-43 season when he signed with the Chicago Studebaker Flyers.

It needs to be taken into consideration that Ted Strong lost the better parts of three seasons (1943-1945) to military service in the United States Navy during World War II.

Ted Strong Jr. has been characterized as a fun loving individual with an easy going personality. When it came to sports, he knew he was good but was never arrogant about it. As a baseball and basketball player he enjoyed the limelight and reveled in being a super star. He was also an extremely competitive person which he apparently inherited from his father.



Ted Strong
Kansas City Monarchs

Growing Up on the Southside of Chicago

The Strong family lived in what was called the “Black Belt” of Chicago. The area was comprised of a number of contiguous neighborhoods on the Southside of Chicago and was home to over seventy-five percent of the African American population who lived in Chicago.

Ted Jr’s father introduced him to sports at a very early age. The two would go to the gym, play ball together, visit area baseball team’s practice sessions and attend ball games. By the time Ted Jr. entered Wendell Phillips High School he was already recognized as an athlete with an exceptional skill set.

Negro League Career

While he was still in high school Ted was recruited by Abe Saperstein to play for his Harlem Globetrotters basketball team. During his discussions with Ted’s father, Abe got Ted Jr. a tryout with the Chicago American Giants as a shortstop. Saperstein thought Ted playing baseball for Chicago was a good idea because it would help keep him in shape before he joined the Harlem Globetrotters basketball team for their 1936-37 season. Ted impressed the American Giants during his tryout and was signed.

Chicago Giants Beat Sheboygan

Sheboygan, Wis. — The Chicago American Giants, colored aggregation, whipped the Sheboygan Chair-makers, members of the Wisconsin State League, in an exhibition game here Tuesday evening, 5 to 3.

The Chairs had men on base in every inning except the third and fifth but failed to get hits when needed most.

The score:

AMERICAN GIANTS				SHEBOYGAN			
	AB	R	E		AB	R	E
Dial, cf	5	1	2	Hust, cf	5	1	1
Jackson, 3b	4	2	3	Cineas, ss	5	0	1
McCall, 1b	4	0	2	Zarba, lf	3	1	1
Dunlap, cf	4	0	1	J. Norris, 2b	4	0	1
Redus, rf	3	0	0	Posawitz, lb	4	0	1
Strom, ss	4	1	2	H. Norris, rf	4	0	0
Brown, c	4	0	1	Seitz, 3b	4	0	1
Deaux, 2b	4	0	0	Harding, c	4	0	1
Cornelius, p	3	0	1	Roeck, p	3	0	1
Wilson	0	1	0	Gelbuda	0	1	0
Trent, p	1	0	0				
Totals	36	5	12	Totals	34	3	8

Wilson ran for Cornelius in ninth inning.
Gelbuda batted for Roeck in ninth.

American Giants ... 0 0 0 1 0 1 0 2 1-5
Sheboygan ... 0 0 0 1 0 0 0 0 2-3

Runs batted in—Jackson, McCall, Dunlap, Brown, Cineas, J. Norris. Earned runs—Giants 3, Sheboygan 1. Two-base hits—Brown. Triple J. Norris. Three-base hit—Brown. Stolen bases—Posawitz, Jackson, Wilson. Left on base—Giants 5, Sheboygan 5. Bases on balls—Off Cornelius 2, Trent 1, Roeck 1. Struck out—By Cornelius 1, Trent 2, Roeck 3. Hits—Off Cornelius 6, Trent 2, Roeck 3. Winning pitcher—Cornelius. Umpires—A. Kober, D. Kober. Time of game—2:10.

The Chicago American Giants were owned by Horace Hall and managed by Bingo DeMoss. The team played an independent schedule during the 1936 season and called South Side Park (also called American Giants Park), which was located at 39th Street and Wentworth, their home field. Hall chose to have his team not compete in the Negro National League because of the high cost of travel for “league” games.

Chicago started the season handicapped by the loss of most of their best players. Gone from Chicago’s roster were Willie Foster, Alec Radcliff (Alec would return to the team in July), Norman “Turkey” Stearnes, George “Mule” Suttles and Willie Wells. The top offensive players for Chicago during the 1936 season were Subby Byas (C), Lou Dials (OF), Herman Dunlap (OF), Alec Radcliff (3B) and Wilson Redus (OF). As a 19 year old rookie, Ted Strong was the team’s starting shortstop. Only fifteen (15) games with fifty (50) at bats have been found for Ted playing for Chicago in 1936. He only hit a meager .200 (10 for 50) in these games. However, five of his ten (10) hits went for extra bases (two doubles, 2 triples and homerun) and he also drove in eight (8) runs.

The pitching staff for the 1936 Chicago American Giants included Willie “Sug” Cornelius, Norman Cross, K.B. Ivory, Melvin Powell, Walter Thomas and Ted Trent.

On July 17, 1936 the Chicago Daily News published an article that credited the Chicago American Giants with an impressive record of 71-18 (.798) up to that point in the season. However, current research has only identified twenty-four (24) box scores and line scores for Chicago’s 1936 season.

Strong Goes 2 for 4 w/ Triple



Chicago Daily News

Chicago, IL
07-17-36

The American Giants had a won-loss record of 16-8 (.667) in these games. It appears that the American Giants played most of their games close to home. This significantly reduced travel expenses which was one of Hall's primary objectives. According to a newspaper article that appeared in the Chicago Defender when asked about how he was going to run his team, Horace Hall responded as follows: "that he was looking to run it on the cheap." Even with losing most of their best players and taking a frugal approach to running the team, the Chicago American Giants appear to have had a successful season.

Some of the other top independent teams in the country in 1936 were the Brooklyn Royal Giants, Cincinnati Tigers, Claybrook Tigers, Cuban Stars (East), Kansas City Monarchs and Philadelphia Bacharach Giants.

Founding of the Negro American League

In February of 1937 several black baseball team owners and baseball executives gathered in Chicago (IL) for a two day meeting with the goal of forming a "new" black professional league. Some of the key individuals who attended the meetings were J.L. Wilkinson (Kansas City Monarchs), A.M. Walker (Birmingham Black Barons), Horace Hall (Chicago American Giants), G. C. Watkins (Indianapolis), Henry L. Moore (St. Louis) and James Titus (Detroit). When the meetings concluded R.R. Jackson was elected as the president of the "league" and eight cities had been granted franchises in the Negro American League.

According to the Seamheads research team, teams that competed in the 1937 Negro American League season and their final order of standing were as follows:

Team	Won	Lost	Tie	Pct	Games Behind
Kansas City Monarchs	50	19	1	.725	-
Cincinnati Tigers	35	18	1	.660	7.0
Chicago American Giants	36	22	1	.621	8.5
Indianapolis Athletics	17	21	1	.447	17.5
Birmingham Black Barons	14	23	0	.378	20.0
Detroit Stars	13	24	0	.351	21.0
Memphis Red Sox	14	29	0	.326	23.0
St. Louis Stars	4	27	0	.129	27.0

Players Jump to Dominican Republic

The inaugural season of the Negro American League in 1937 was negatively impacted when a large number of Negro League players jumped their contracts and played in the Dominican Republic. Some of the key players who were missing from Negro League rosters for the 1937 season were superstars like James "Cool Papa" Bell, Josh Gibson, Martin Dihigo and Satchel Paige. In addition Sam Bankhead, Ramon Bragana, Chet Brewer, Silvio Garcia, Leroy Matlock, Alejandro Oms, Red Parnell, George Scales and Tetelo Vargas also went to the Dominican Republic.

When these players returned to the United States after the end of the Dominican League, there were serious questions related to whether or not the players would be reinstated into the Negro American League and Negro National League. Players were reinstated on a case by case basis.

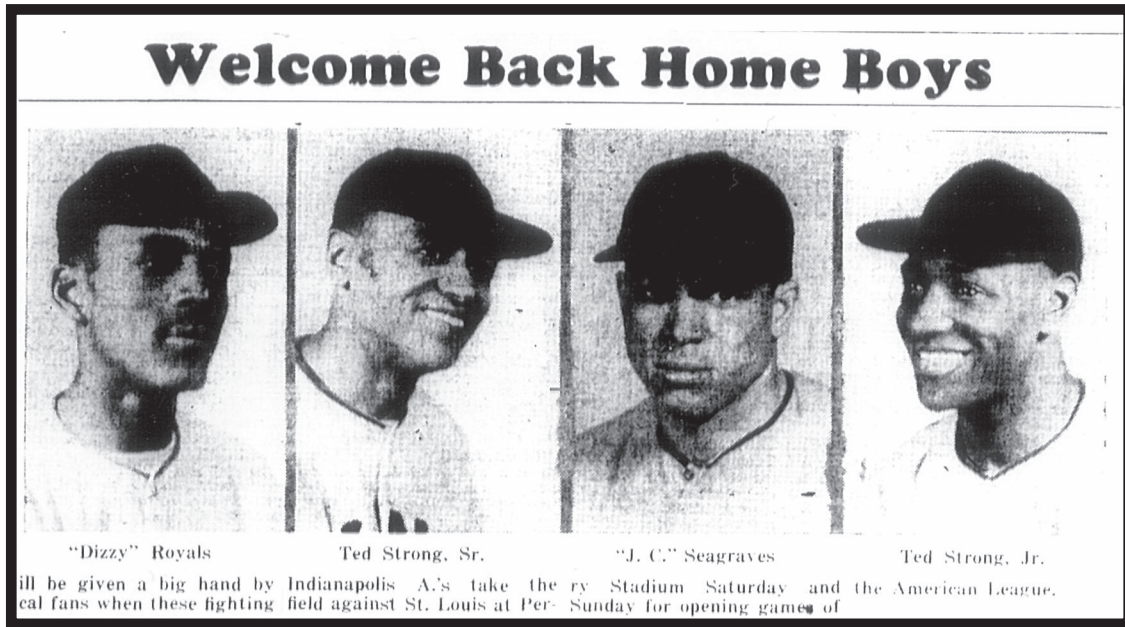
Strong Joins the Indianapolis Athletics

Rather than return to the Chicago American Giants, Ted Strong, Jr. was signed by the Indianapolis Athletics. The Indianapolis Athletics were managed by Ted Strong, Jr.'s father (Ted Strong, Sr.). The team called Perry Stadium in Indianapolis their home field for the 1937 season.

Ted Strong, Jr. was the Athletics' starting shortstop and leading hitter. He finished the season with a .362 batting average and a .565 slugging percentage. His complete hitting statistics were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1937	Indianapolis	35	138	34	50	13	3	3	30	4	.362	.565

Ted Jr. started the season strong with a three run homerun in May against the Indianapolis Baby Lincolns. He never let up the rest of the season.



Indianapolis Athletics (1937) Negro American League

Vet Dunbar (C), Cowan Hyde (OF), Homer "Goose" Curry (OF), Perry Hall (3B), Henry McCall (1B) and Casey Walker (C) also contributed offensively for Indianapolis during the season. The Indianapolis Athletics compiled a .265 batting average in "league" games during the 1937 season.

The starting rotation for Indianapolis during the season was comprised of Claude Hayslett, Leo Hannibal, Cornelius Cook, Robert Hughes, Bill Howard and Joseph "Dizzy" Royal. The Athletics pitching staff compiled a 4.85 team earned run average (ERA) which was fourth best in the Negro American League. Unfortunately, they also allowed opposing hitters a .290 batting average in "league" games.

As the best player on the Indianapolis Athletic roster, Ted was selected to play for the West squad in the 1937 East-West All Star game. He was the leading vote getter at first base with 50,636 votes. The all-star game was played on August 8th at Comiskey Park in Chicago with 25,000 fans in attendance. Ted went two for four with a two run inside the park homerun. His homerun accounted for the only two runs the West would score in a 7-2 loss to the East.

The Indianapolis Athletics finished the regular Negro American League season with a record of 17-21-1 (.447) and were in fourth place in the final “league” standings.

In August of 1937 Ted Strong left the Indianapolis Athletics to sign with the Kansas City Monarchs. Kansas City was led by the hitting of Willard Brown (.380) and the pitching of Hilton Smith (11-4 w/ 1.61 ERA) during the 1937 season.

On August 29th Ted Strong played in the North-South game which was played in Memphis, TN. Ted Strong had an exceptional game hitting for the cycle (single, double, triple and homerun). Behind 19 hits and the pitching of Bill Foster the North came way with a 10-7 victory.

Negro American League Championship Series

The 1937 Negro American League season ended in controversy. Some sources reported that the Kansas City Monarchs had won both halves of the Negro American League season. The Kansas City Monarchs compiled a record of 50-19-1 (.725). The Chicago American Giants disputed the Monarchs claim to winning both halves of the season and Chicago also claimed that they had actually won the second half of the season. To settle the dispute and crown a Negro American League champion, a seven (7) game championship series was held in September.

Led by the hitting of Ted Strong who went 8 for 19 for a .421 batting average and the pitching of Hilton Smith who went 2-0, the Kansas City Monarchs swept the Chicago American Giants winning five of the seven games played with one game ending in a tie.



Willard Brown and Ted Strong
Kansas City Monarchs

After the conclusion of the Negro American League Championship Series, the Kansas City Monarchs and Chicago American Giants combined their rosters to play a team of Negro National League stars from the Homestead Grays and Newark Eagles. The Chicago American Giants added three players from the Kansas City Monarchs team. These players were Frank Duncan (C), Bill Simms (OF) and Ted Strong (SS). There were seven games played in the exhibition series which was played from September 19th through September 26th. Ted Strong was the hero of game seven which was played on Sunday September 26th. Ted went 4 for 5 with three runs scored. In his four hits he got a double, homerun and drove in four runs. The Homestead-Newark team won six of these seven games.

In October of 1937 the Kansas City Monarchs with Ted Strong on their roster played a four game series against the Major League All Stars. The tour was promoted by Ray Doan. Bob Feller, Vince Di Maggio, Johnny Mize and Gus Suhr anchored the Major Leaguers roster. The Major League All Stars won three of the four games played. The Kansas City Monarchs salvaged the series by winning the final game by a score of 8-0.

In his newspaper column that was published in September of 1937, Cumberland Posey called Ted Strong, Jr. “the best young ball player in Negro baseball.”

Strong Returns to Indianapolis

Ted Strong started the 1938 season with the Kansas City Monarchs. Four (4) box scores have been found for him in the starting line-up for the Monarchs early in the 1938 season. He went 9 for 17 for a .529 batting average and a 1.000 slugging percentage in these four games. His nine hits included a double, two triples, a home run and six runs batted in. Ted's best game with Kansas City was played on Sunday, April 10th against Philadelphia. Ted went four for four with one run scored.

By the middle of May, Strong was in the starting line-up for the Indianapolis ABC's. The ABC's were virtually the same team as the Indianapolis Athletics from 1937. Ted Strong Sr. was announced as the manager of the Indianapolis ABC's at the Negro American League meetings that were held at the Appomattox Club in Chicago on February 19th. It is also important to note that Ted Sr. also represented the Indianapolis ABC's at the 1939 Negro American League meeting in Chicago. Some researchers also report that George Mitchell managed Indianapolis during the 1937 season. In addition the Indianapolis ABC's were also reported to have had a working relationship with the Mound City Blues during the 1938 season.

Offensively, Ted had an excellent season for Indianapolis in 1938. He compiled an outstanding .373 batting average with a .667 slugging percentage. His complete hitting statistics for the season were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1938	Indianapolis	21	75	21	28	5	4	3	20	7	.373	.667

The highlight of the season for Ted playing for Indianapolis occurred on Saturday August 6th in a game against the Chicago American Giants. Strong went five for five with a double, triple, three runs scored, three runs batted in and two stolen bases.

Other top hitters for Indianapolis during the season were Buddy Armour (SS), John Lyles (OF), Marshall Riddle (2B) and Quincy Troupe (OF).



Indianapolis vs Brooklyn

Milwaukee Journal

Milwaukee, WI

07- 24-38

Frank "Chip" McAllister was the ace of the pitching staff. Ted Alexander, Fast Ball Anderson, Walter "Lefty" Calhoun, Ossie Brown, Robert Dean and George Mitchell also pitched for the Indianapolis ABCs in 1938.

For his outstanding play during the season, Ted Strong was selected to the 1938 East-West All Star game. Ted came in third in the voting for first basemen with 46,682 votes. He was right behind Jim West (63,401) and Dave Thomas (59,938). This was the second straight year for him making the all star game. The game was played on August 21st at Comiskey Park in Chicago (IL). Approximately 30,000 fans showed up for the game to see the West score a 5-4 win in a closely played game.

Strong played for the Indianapolis ABC's through the end of August of 1938.

The Indianapolis ABC's finished the 1938 Negro American League season with a record of 17-20 (.459). They were 11 ½ games behind the Kansas City Monarchs 45-25-1 (.643) who won the "league" championship.

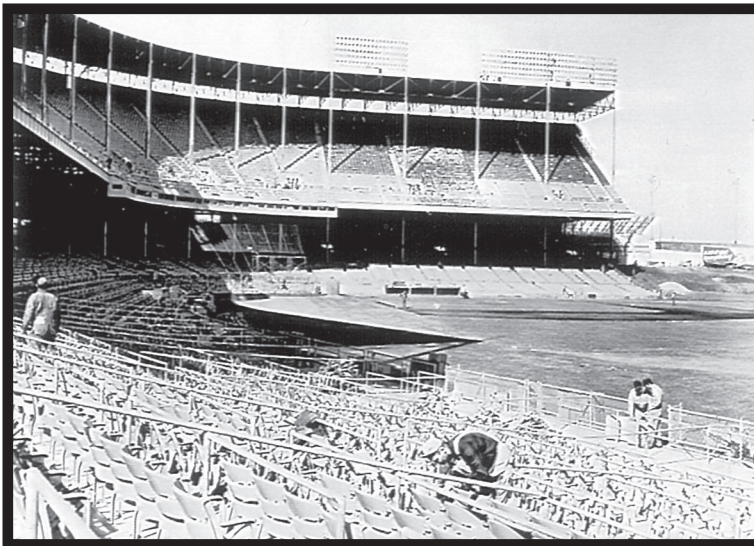


Kansas City Monarchs
Negro American League Champions

(Back row – left to right **Hilton Smith**, **Buck O’Neil**, Floyd Kranson, Unknown, Andy Cooper, Joe Greene, Rainey Bibbs, Jesse Williams, **Norman “Turkey” Stearnes**, Dick Bradley and **Ted Strong**. Front row – left to right Unknown, **Willard Brown**, Unknown, Unknown, Unknown, **Newt Allen** and Unknown.)

Strong Becomes a Monarch

Ted Strong started the 1939 season with the Kansas City Monarchs and played for them the entire season. Strong was obtained by the Monarchs in a trade for Eldridge Mayweather. Ted became Kansas City’s starting shortstop and batted clean-up in the fourth spot in the batting order. The Kansas City Monarchs opened their 1939 Negro American League season on May 14th against the Memphis Red Sox and were considered the top team in the “league.” Andy Cooper managed the team and the Monarch’s played their home games at Ruppert Stadium.



Ruppert Stadium
Kansas City, MO

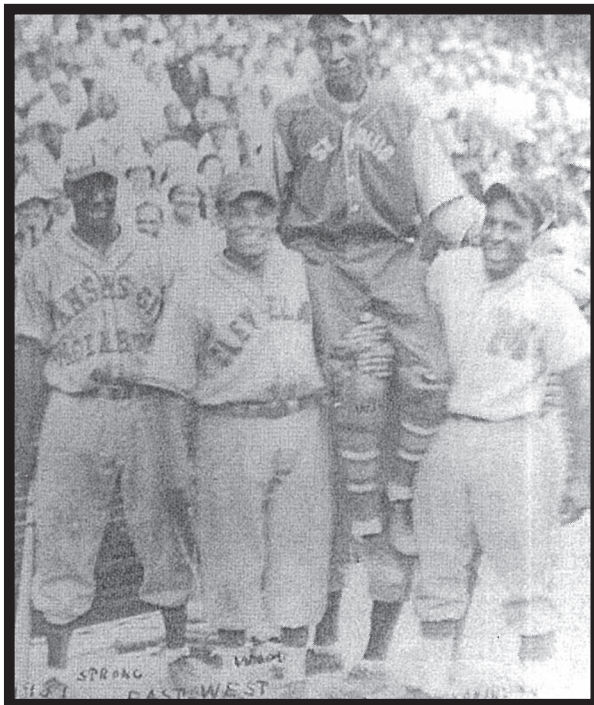
Home of the
Kansas City Monarchs

Willard Brown (.368), Norman “Turkey” Stearnes (.330), Ted Strong (.304) and Rainey Bibbs (.291) were the top hitters for the Monarchs in 1939. Ted’s complete statistics for the season were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1939	Kansas City	53	184	34	56	9	2	3	30	15	.304	.424

The starting rotation for the 1939 Monarchs were George Walker (8-1 w/ 1.99 ERA), Frank Bradley (7-4 w/ 2.75 ERA), Hilton Smith (6-5 w/ 2.43 ERA), Floyd Kranson (2-3) and Willie Hutchinson (1-3). The Kansas City Monarchs’ pitching staff compiled an impressive 2.90 team ERA for the season.

For the third straight season Ted Strong was selected to play in the East-West All Star game. Two all star games were played in 1939. The first game was played on August 6th at Comiskey Park. With 40,000 fans in the stands, the West came away with a 4-2 win. The second game was played on August 27th in New York City with only 17,000 fans in attendance. The East squad won the second game by a score of 10-2. Ted played in both games. He played shortstop and first base in game one and first base in game two.



**East-West All Star Game
(1939)**

**Players celebrate Dan Wilson’s
Game Winning Homerun**

**Ted Strong
(first player on left)**

Kansas City Monarchs Defeat St. Louis Stars in Championship Series

After the conclusion of the regular season, the Kansas City Monarchs (winners of the first half of the season) played the St. Louis Stars (winners of the second half of the season) in a play-off series to crown a Negro American League champion. Originally there were to have been seven games played in the series but when St. Louis failed to obtain a ball park in their home city, the series was changed to the best of five games.

According to the Afro American newspaper, the first two games of the series were played in Oklahoma before the two teams moved to Kansas City. The Monarchs started strong by winning the first three games. The Stars took game four behind a 1-0 shutout win by Ossie Brown. Game five of the play-off series was played in Kansas City on September 4th. The Monarchs won the final game of the series by a score of 7-0 and took the series four games to one to claim the Negro American League pennant.

A summary for the 1939 Negro American League Championship Series is as follows:

Game	Location	Date	Winning Team	Score	Winning Pitcher	Losing Pitcher
1	Oklahoma City	Aug 31 st	Kansas City	4-1	Hilton Smith	Walter Calhoun
2	Muskogee, OK	Sept 1 st	Kansas City	7-2	Andy Cooper	Chip McAllister
3	Kansas City	Sept 3 rd	Kansas City	6-5	Hilton Smith	Theo Smith
4	Kansas City	Sept 3 rd	St. Louis	1-0	Ossie Brown	Willie Hutchinson
5	Kansas City	Sept 4 th	Kansas City	7-0	-	-



**Kansas City Monarchs
Win
Negro American League
Championship**

Afro American
09-09-39

Kansas City finished the season with the best overall record (42-22) in the “league” and also won the play-off championship series.

The Monarchs also played a post season game against the Memphis Red Sox at Recreation Park in Greenville (MS) on September 21st. Kansas City ended their season with a two game series against the Satchel Paige All Stars at Ward Field in Kansas City. Behind the brilliant play of Ted Strong at shortstop, the Monarchs won both games.

Ted Strong Travels South of the Border

Prior to the start of the 1940 baseball season, Ted Strong joined Kansas City Monarchs super star Willard Brown and several other Negro League players to play in Mexico. Some of the other top Negro Leaguers who went to Mexico for the 1940 season were Sam Bankhead, James “Cool Pappa” Bell, Ray Dandridge, Martin Dihigo, Josh Gibson, Ed Stone, Willie Wells and Burnis “Wild Bill” Wright. Strong and Brown were recruited and signed with the Telecotes de Nuevo Laredo of the Mexican League.

The top hitters for the 1941 Telecotes were all former Negro League players. They were Willard Brown (.354), Ed Stone (.342), Buster Clarkson (.338), Ted Strong (.332) and Lonnie Summers (.312). Strong’s complete hitting statistics for his 1941 Mexican League season were:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1940	Nuevo Laredo	71	277	57	92	14	14	11	57	7	.332	.603

Negro League players Frank Duncan (.238) and Lloyd “Pepper” Bassett (.230) were also on Nuevo Laredo’s roster in 1940.

The starting rotation for Nuevo Laredo included primarily Negro League players. Andy “Pullman” Porter (21-14 w/ 3.34 ERA) was the ace of the pitching staff. Robert Griffith (7-6 w/ 4.80 ERA), Tom Glover (8-13), Hilton Smith (5-3) and Joe Fillmore (2-8) also pitched for Nuevo Laredo during the season. It is important to note that Glover, Fillmore and Smith pitched for more than one Mexican League team during the season and their won-loss records include their statistics for the entire season.

Nuevo Laredo ended the season with a disappointing record of 30-48 (.448) and were in sixth place in the final “league” standings. The Telecotes were 24 ½ games behind Mexican League champion Vera Cruz (61-30).

Ted Strong started the 1941 season with the Rojos de Aguila de Vera Cruz of the Mexican League. The top hitters for the Rojos were Lou Dials (.385), Ed Stone (.336), Ted Strong (.329), Jacinto Roque (.325) and Manuel “Cocaina” Garcia (.316). Strong’s complete hitting statistics for his short time with Aguila at the beginning of the season were the following:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1941	Aguila	19	76	19	25	2	4	2	14	1	.329	.539

Armando “Indian” Torres (12-12 w/ 5.31 ERA), Bertrum Hunter (9-11 w/ 5.18 ERA), Juan Guerrero (9-13 w/ 4.48 ERA), Bud Barbee (5-5 w/ 8.48 ERA), Manuel “Cocaina” Garcia (4-3 w/ 3.41 ERA) and Luis Tiant, Sr. (2-5 w/ 5.05 ERA) all pitched for the Rojos during the season.

Aguila ended the season with a losing record of 44-57 (.436) and were in next to last place in the final Mexican League standings. They were 22 ½ games behind Vera Cruz (67-35) who repeated as Mexican League champions.



Kansas City Monarchs (1941)

Standing left to right – Joe Reese, Frank Duncan (Jr) George Walker, Connie Johnson, **Ted Strong**, **Buck O’Neil**, Frank Duncan (Sr) and Dick Bradley. Seated left to right- **Newt Allen**, Rainey Bibbs, **Hilton Smith**, Jesse Williams, **Willard “Homerun” Brown**, Allen “Lefty” Bryant and Bill Sims.)

Strong Returns to the United States

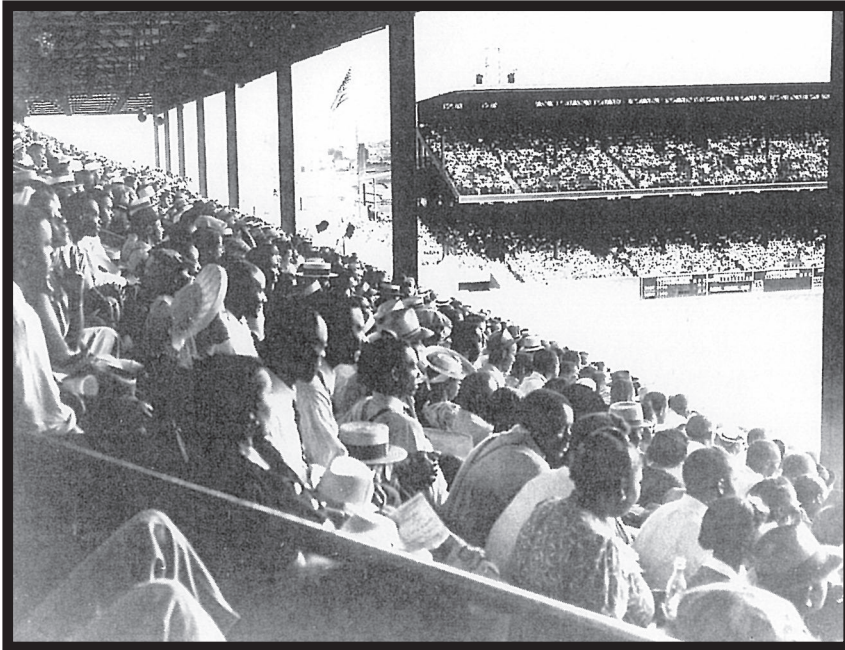
By the middle of May of 1941, Ted Strong was back in the United States playing for the Kansas City Monarchs. In 1941 the Monarchs were managed by Newt Allen and called Ruppert Stadium in Kansas City (MO) their home field.

Ted Strong was the team's best hitter for the season with a .331 batting average and .590 slugging percentage. The other top hitters for Kansas City during the season were Willard Brown (.328), Newt Allen (.279), Jesse Williams (.257) and Joe Greene (.253). Ted's statistics for Negro American League games for the 1941 season were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1941	Kansas City	50	178	46	59	8	7	8	42	2	.331	.590

Hilton Smith was the ace of the pitching staffing with a record of 10-0 and a 1.53 ERA in "league" games. Smith also pitched six (6) complete games in six (6) starts with two (2) being shut outs. Satchel Paige (5-0 w/ 2.35 ERA), Frank Bradley (3-1 w/ 2.32 ERA), Connie Johnson (3-2 w/ 2.45 ERA), John Ford Smith (3-0 w/ 1.77 ERA), George Walker (1-2 w/ 1.46 ERA), Booker McDaniel (1-0 w/ 1.88 ERA), Allen Bryant (1-0) and Jack Matchett (1-0) also pitched for the Monarchs during the season. The Kansas City Monarchs posted an amazing 2.20 team ERA for the season in "league" games.

On July 27th Ted Strong represented the West squad in the 1941 East-West All Star game. Ted went two for four with a double, triple, one run scored and one run batted in. He played right field after finishing sixth in the voting with 176,806 votes. Behind a three run homerun by Buck Leonard the East won the game by a score of 8-3.



East-West All Star Game

Comiskey Park

July 27, 1941

The Kansas City Monarchs won the Negro American League title with a record of 25-11 (.694). They were 2 ½ games ahead of the second place Birmingham Black Barons (24-15) and 8 ½ games ahead of the third place St. Louis-New Orleans Stars (16-19-2).

In early October of 1941 the Kansas City Monarchs played a game against a team representing the Frigidaire Company with Cleveland Indians pitcher Bob Feller as their starting pitcher. The game was played in Dayton, OH. Feller pitched three scoreless innings and struck out five batters but when Frigidaire put in a new pitcher to relieve Feller, Kansas City hitters took advantage of the situation and won the game. Paige and Feller then squared off in Oklahoma City (OK) at

Holland Field. The 2,000 fans in attendance got to witness first hand Bob Feller’s legendary fast ball. Feller pitched three innings for his pick-up “all-star” team. He was relieved by Charles Marleau of the Oklahoma City Indians who was charged with the 3-2 defeat.

Recruited By Grumman

Prior to the start of the 1942 baseball season, Ted Strong was heavily recruited by the Grumman Corporation of Long Island (NY) to come to work for them so that he could play on their company baseball and basketball teams, the Grumman Flyers. Their sports teams also went by the names Grumman Bombers, Long Island Grummans and Long Island Ducks. The company also fielded a semi-professional football team. The Grumman Company had a rich history in semi-professional sports. They had attracted players like former Harlem Globetrotter greats William “Pop” Gates and Dolly King to play for their basketball team. The Grumman Flyers had played the Harlem Globetrotters in the World Professional Basketball Tournament in March of 1942 and beat them by a score of 43-41 for third place in the tournament. Grumman felt Ted Strong would strengthen their baseball and basketball teams which should take them to the next level.

With Grumman’s offer in mind, Ted sat down in Chicago with Tom Baird who was representing Kansas City Monarchs team owner J.L. Wilkinson. According to an article that appeared in the Chicago Defender on April 25th, after a half hour conversation with Baird Ted Strong signed his contract with the Monarchs. Ted immediately left Chicago to join the team at spring training in Monroe, Louisiana.



Kansas City Monarchs (1942)

(left to right – Unknown, **Satchel Paige**, **Ted Strong**, **Hilton Smith**, Dizzy Dismukes, Frank Duncan, Jesse Williams, Jack Matchett, Dick Bradley, Unknown, Jim LaMarque, Connie Johnson, Unknown, Willie Simms, **Buck O’Neil**, Unknown, **Newt Allen**, Joe Green. Seat Dewey Alexander – Bat Boy.)

Kansas City Monarchs Win Negro League World Series

Ted Strong returned to the Kansas City Monarchs as their starting right fielder for the 1942 Negro American League season.

Strong led Kansas City in hitting for the second straight season with a .365 batting average and .558 slugging percentage. His complete batting statistics for “league” games were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1942	Kansas City	40	156	37	57	9	0	7	36	2	.365	.558

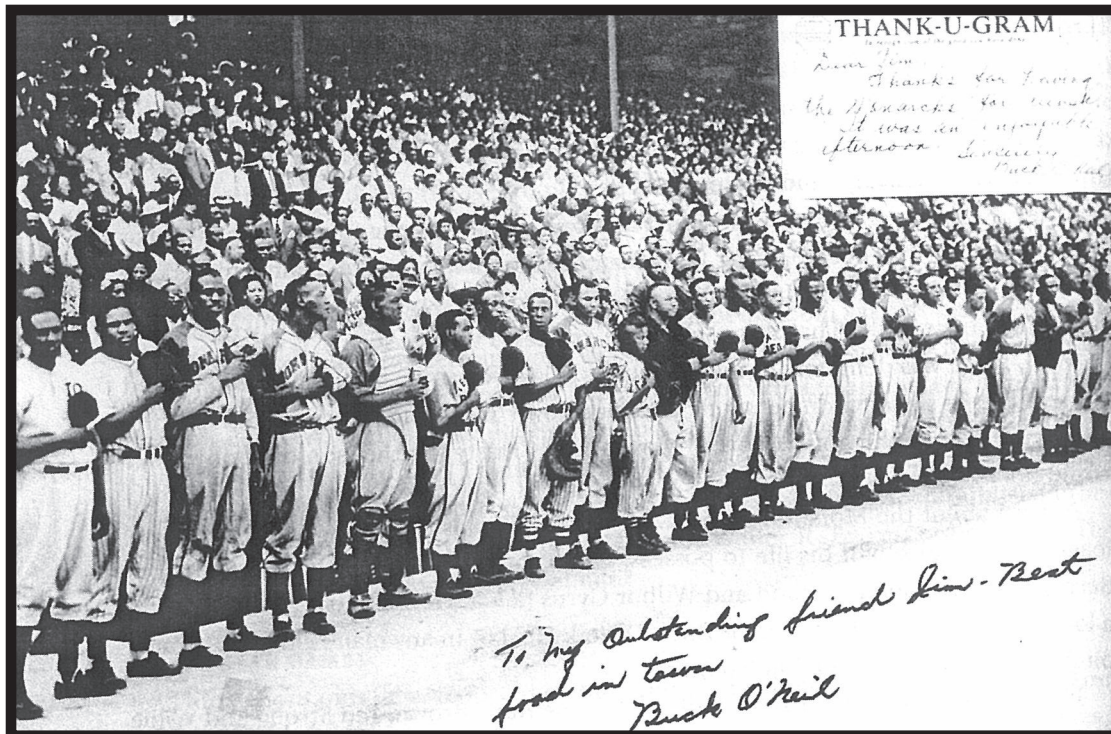
Bonnie Serrell (.360), Willard Brown (.308), Newt Allen (.304) and Buck O'Neil (.280) also had very productive seasons at the plate. Kansas City compiled a .276 team batting average for the season.

Hilton Smith (5-4), Jack Matchett (5-1), Booker McDaniel (5-1), Connie Johnson (4-0), Satchel Paige (7-5), Jim "Lefty" La Marque (2-0), Gread Mc Kinnis (1-0), Frank Bradley (0-1) and Norris Phillips (1-0) all pitched for the Kansas City Monarchs in 1942. The pitching staff posted an excellent 2.86 team ERA for the season.

Frank Duncan replaced Newt Allen as the team's manager and kept the team in championship form. Ruppert Stadium continued to be the Monarchs' home field.

Before the start of the regular season on Sunday afternoon May 24, 1942 the Kansas City Monarchs played an exhibition game against the Major League All Stars team that included Bob Feller and Dizzy Dean. The game was played at Wrigley Field in Chicago. The Monarchs won the game by a score of 3-1. The Monarchs also played several games against the Dizzy Dean All Stars in May of 1942. One game that was played at Wrigley Field in Chicago attracted 29,775 fans and brought in gate receipts of over \$ 30,000.00.

In 1942 Ted Strong was selected to play in both East-West All Star games. The first game was played on August 16th at Comiskey Park with 45,179 fans in the stands. Ted was the starting right fielder and went one for three at the plate. The East prevailed by a score of 5-2. The second Game was held in Cleveland (OH) on August 18th. The proceeds of the game all went to the Army-Navy Relief Fund. The game was played at Municipal Stadium in Cleveland, Ohio. Unfortunately only 10,791 fans attended the game. Ted was the starting right fielder and went two for three. The East won the contest by a score of 9-2.



East-West All Star Game
West Squad

(Standing left to right – W.S. Welch, Art Pennington, **Satchel Paige**, **Buck O'Neil**, Joe Greene, T. J. Brown, Paul Hardy, Joe Scott, **Hilton Smith**, Bat Boy, Ted Radcliffe, Verdell Mathis, Fred Bankhead, Porter Moss, Fred McDaniel, **Sam Jethroe**, **Ted Strong**, Parnell Woods, Ducky Davenport, **Willard Brown**, Gene Bremer, Unknown and Marlin Carter.)

Kansas City Monarchs Win Negro League World Series
(1942)

BASEBALL! BASEBALL!

NEGRO

WORLD SERIES

KANSAS CITY

MONARCHS

CHAMPIONS OF THE NEGRO AMERICAN LEAGUE

— Vs. —

WASHINGTON, D. C.

HOMESTEAD GRAYS

CHAMPIONS OF THE NEGRO NATIONAL LEAGUE

Sunday, Sept. 20 **Ruppert Stadium**

22nd and Brooklyn, K. C., Mo.

ONE GAME ONLY **2:00 P. M.**

Regular American Association Admission Prices
Will Prevail.

Monarchs Win Negro Series

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 20—(AP)—The Kansas City Monarchs won the Negro baseball World Series tonight by beating the Homestead Grays, 9 to 5, before 14,029 at Shibe Park. It was Kansas City's fourth straight win over the Grays.

With Satchel Paige, famed Negro pitcher, warming up in the bullpen Homestead grabbed a 5-2 lead in the first three innings off Southpaw Jack Matchett. Paige took the mound in the fourth and held the Grays hitless for the 5½ innings he worked.

Paige didn't arrive until the game was ready to start. He explained he had been arrested for speeding at Lancaster, Pa., while enroute from Pittsburgh, and fined \$20.

Win Negro World Series

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—The Kansas City Monarchs won the Negro world series championship behind the pitching of Leroy (Satchel) Paige at Shibe park last night, defeating the Homestead Grays, 9 to 5, before 14,000 fans.



**Kansas City Monarchs
(1942)**

Another all-star game was supposed to be played on October 4th in Memphis (TN) but the game got rained out and was never rescheduled.

The Kansas City Monarchs repeated as the champions of the Negro American League. Kansas City posted a won-loss record of 27-12 (.692) for the 1942 season. By winning the Negro American League title, the Kansas City Monarchs went to the Negro World Series and played the Homestead Grays who won the Negro National League title. To promote the series and hopefully increase attendance each game of the series was scheduled in a different city. The Kansas City Monarchs swept the Homestead Grays in four straight games to claim the Negro League World Series title.

A summary of the 1942 Negro League World Series was as follows:

Game	Location	Date	Winning Team	Score	Winning Pitcher	Losing Pitcher
1	Washington, DC.	Sept 8 th	Kansas City	8-0	Jack Matchett	Roy Welmaker
2	Pittsburgh	Sept 10 th	Kansas City	8-4	Hilton Smith	Roy Partlow
3	New York City	Sept 13 th	Kansas City	9-3	Jack Matchett	Ray Brown
4	Kansas City	Sept 24 th	Homestead	4-1	Leon Day	Satchel Paige
5	Philadelphia	Sept 29 th	Kansas City	9-5	Satchel Paige	John Wright

(Note – Game four was thrown out because Homestead used several illegal players.)

Ted Strong also played briefly for the Chicago Brown Bombers during the 1942 season. One box score has been found for Ted Strong in the starting line-up for the Bombers against the Cincinnati Clowns. The game was played on Sunday, May 24th in Chicago.

Ted Strong Enters the Military

On April 22, 1943 Ted Strong joined the military and was assigned to the United States Navy Seabees as an apprentice seaman. He did his initial training at the Naval Training Station at Great Lakes, Illinois. Strong enrolled in the Navy's construction training program and on August 14, 1943 he was transferred to the 100th United States Naval Construction Battalion. Ted was deployed overseas to the Majuro Atoll, Marshall Islands on November 21, 1943. On January 20, 1946 Ted Strong was honorably discharged from the military at the Seattle Naval Receiving Barracks in Bremerton (WA).

Strong missed the 1943, 1944 and 1945 seasons due to military service.

Ted Rejoins the Harlem Globetrotters

Fortunately when Ted Strong was discharged from the military, the Harlem Globetrotters were in Seattle for a series of games and Ted immediately rejoined the team after he was discharged. He was back in the line-up on January 27th. Over the next couple of months the Globetrotters barnstormed all over the west.

The highlight of the season for Harlem was their trip to Hawaii which lasted from April 2nd to April 16, 1946. The tour would match the Globetrotters up against the four best teams in Hawaii plus several other teams from the South Pacific. For Harlem's roster, Abe Saperstein chose his seven best players. They were Ted Strong, Reece "Goose" Tatum, Babe Pressley, Zack Clayton, Tom Sealey, John Scott and Sam Wheeler. Needless to say the tour was a tremendous success.

Strong Returns to the Negro Leagues

After completing the second half of the season with the Harlem Globetrotters basketball team, Ted Strong joined the Kansas City Monarchs' spring training. Other servicemen returning from the war were Willard "Homerun" Brown (OF), Hank Thompson (OF), Buck O'Neil (1B), Joe Greene (C) and John Ford Smith (P).

Even with losing three years to military service, Ted Strong was still very productive at the plate for the Kansas City Monarchs in hitting with a .321 batting average in "league" games during the 1946 season. His complete statistics in Negro American League were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1946	Kansas City	22	84	22	27	2	2	2	18	1	.321	.464

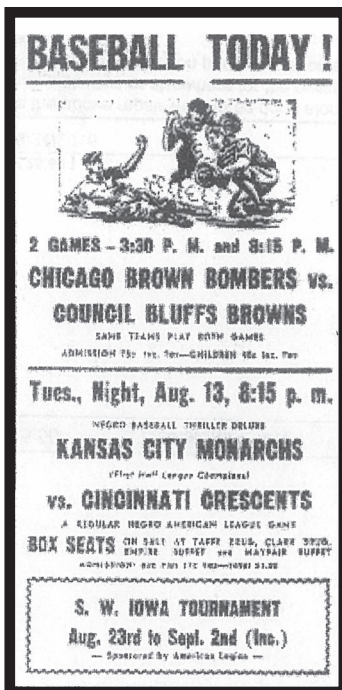
Besides Ted Strong, the Kansas City Monarchs were led by the hitting of Buck O'Neil (.350), Willard Brown (.348), John Scott (.306), Joe Greene (.300), Hank Thompson (.274) and Herb Souell (.273). The Monarchs had a disappointing team batting average of .261 for the season.

Connie Johnson (9-3), Jim "Lefty" LaMarque (6-3), Satchel Paige (5-1), Steve Wylie (5-3), Hilton Smith (5-2), Ted Alexander (4-1), John Ford Smith (3-1), Booker McDaniel (0-0) and Allen "Lefty" Bryant (0-0) all pitched for the Monarchs during 1946.

Frank Duncan managed the Kansas City Monarchs to an amazing season in 1946. They compiled a won-loss record of 50-16-2 (.758) and won the Negro American League by 14 ½ games over the second place Birmingham Black Barons. Kansas City won both halves of the Negro American League season.

Council Bluffs Non Pareil

Council Bluffs, IA
08-11-46





**Kansas City Monarchs
(1946)**

(Back row left to right – Connie Johnson, **Ted Strong**, Jim La Marque, John Ford Smith, Steve Wylie, Frank Duncan (Jr), Frank Duncan (Sr), James Greene and Buck O’Neil. Front row left to right – Allen Bryant, John Scott, Earl Taborn, Herb Souell, Ted Alexander, Chico Renfro, Lee Moody, **Willard Brown** and **Hilton Smith**.)

World Series Scandal

By winning the Negro American League championship the Kansas City Monarchs faced the Newark Eagles (47-16) who won the Negro National League title in the 1946 Negro League World Series. The first game of the series was played in New York City. The Kansas City Monarchs got off to a good start in game one of the Negro League World Series. With Satchel Paige on the mound, Kansas City came away with a 2-1 win over Newark. Game two was played in Newark and the Eagles rebounded with a 7-4 victory. The two teams then traveled to Kansas City for game three. Behind a homerun by Ted Strong the Monarchs beat up on the Eagles to win the contest by a score of 15-5. Game four was also played in Kansas City. Newark ignored the home town fans and posted a decisive 8-1 win with Rufus Lewis on the mound for the Eagles. The two teams then traveled to Chicago for game five and Hilton Smith worked his magic for the Monarchs and produced a 5-1 victory. The Kansas City Monarchs were now in a commanding position because they had won three games as compared to two wins for the Newark Eagles. All Kansas City had to do was win one of the final two games to bring the championship home to Kansas City.

This is when things got really interesting. Ted Strong and Willard Brown did not accompany the team from Chicago to Newark which was to be the site of the final two games of the series. Consequently with both star players absent from the line-up, the Kansas City Monarchs lost both games by the scores of 9-7 and 3-2 and the championship went to the Newark Eagles.

There are two different stories as to why Ted and Willard jumped the team in Chicago. The first account began in the Monarchs’ locker room after game five in Chicago. The following story was told by Ted Strong to the sports editor of the Kansas City Call and appeared in the October 11th edition of the newspaper:

After the game Ted was approached in the locker room by three individuals that he did not know. According to Ted they wanted to know how he felt the series was going and what were the Monarchs' chances of winning one of the final two games to claim the championship. To entice him to talk the three men produced \$ 750 in cash and offered it to him. Ted's specific comments as to what happened next were as follows:

"I told them I would have nothing to do with their scheme and I threatened them if they approached me again. I don't know whether they talked to other team members or not. But I got sore about their coming to me. And the more I thought about it the madder I got. So by leaving time I was thoroughly disgusted and decided not to leave."

The newspaper article went on to quote Ted Strong as follows:

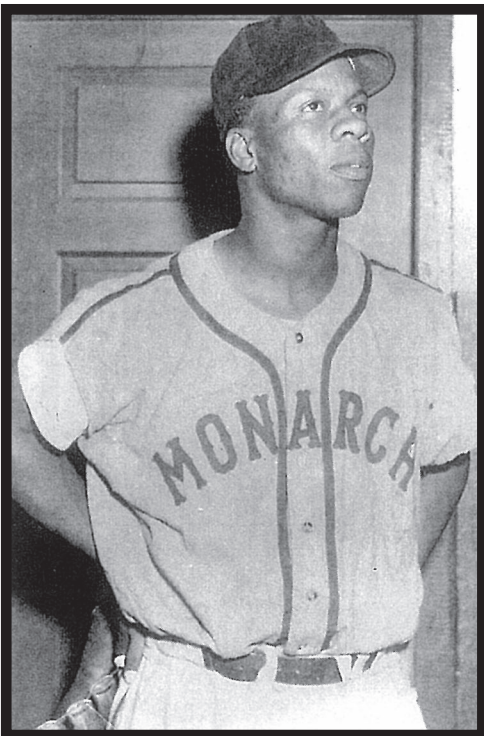
"And when the men tried to buy me at the Chicago game, I just blew my top I guess. But I'm sorry now I didn't talk it over with someone. And I'm sorry if my absence caused the Monarchs to lose the series. I wanted the Monarchs to win the championship."

Kansas City Call
10-11-46

Ted let a lot of people down and in reality Ted's anger got the best of him.

Strong also confessed in the newspaper interview that he knew leaving the team was the wrong thing to do but the incident in the locker room were in Ted's exact words the "final straw." In addition he regretted his actions because he knew the team needed him and they were a team who had overcome many obstacles during the season.

Some of the obstacles/problems that Ted alluded to were poor transportation, inadequate room accommodations and having to play hurt. According to Ted management knew about these conditions and chose to do nothing.



Willard "Homerun" Brown

It is also very important to keep in mind that this had been a very difficult time for Ted personally. On August 21st he was in court for divorce proceedings which did not go in his favor. The judge had awarded Ted's wife \$ 1,400.00 in alimony and required him to pay both his and his wife's legal fees.

Why Ted didn't talk with his manager or another teammates about the incident involving the three unknown men, only he knows.

When the bus was being loaded to make the trip to Newark, Ted put his bags on the bus but at the last minute he jumped into a taxi cab and left the stadium. Strong never related where he went or what he did while the Monarchs were playing their final two games.

According to team owner J.L. Wilkinson, when Ted deserted the team they were left without a right fielder. This, Wilkinson, said was the reason his team lost the championship.

The second explanation for Willard Brown and Ted Strong missing the final two games of the series was that they had gone to New York City to sign contracts to play winter ball in the Puerto Rican Winter League.

From this researcher's perspective this explanation doesn't seem very plausible for three reasons.

- First, this account doesn't come anywhere close to matching Strong's explanation that appeared in the Kansas City Call.
- Second, there is no record of Ted Strong ever playing winter ball in Puerto Rico. Plus Ted already had a winter job playing basketball for the Harlem Globetrotters.
- Lastly, the last two games of the series were played in Newark and if Brown and Strong were in New York City it is just right across the Hudson River from Newark. The travel distance is only about 15-20 miles and if the duo were really in New York City to sign winter league contracts, they could have easily made it to Newark to play.

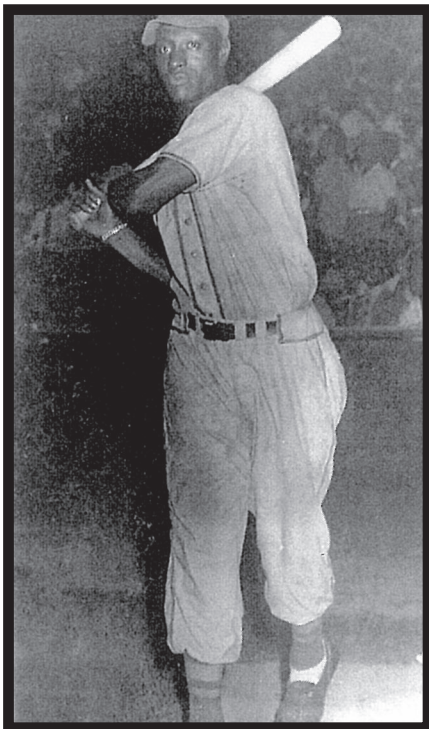
An interesting side note to this incident is that in addition to Brown and Strong missing the two final games, Satchel Paige was also a no show for both games.

A summary of the 1946 Negro League World Series is as follows:

Game	Location	Date	Winning Team	Score	Winning Pitcher	Losing Pitcher
1	New York City	Sept 17 th	Kansas City	2-1	Satchel Paige	Rufus Lewis
2	Newark	Sept 19 th	Newark	7-4	Max Manning	Satchel Paige
3	Kansas City	Sept 23 rd	Kansas City	15-5	Jim La Marque	Lemuel Hooker
4	Kansas City	Sept 24 th	Newark	8-1	Rufus Lewis	Ted Alexander
5	Chicago	Sept 25 th	Kansas City	5-1	Hilton Smith	Max Manning
6	Newark	Sept 26 th	Newark	9-7	Lemuel Hooker	Enloe Wylie
7	Newark	Sept 29 th	Newark	3-2	Rufus Lewis	John F. Smith

Strong's Baseball Career Takes a Nose Dive

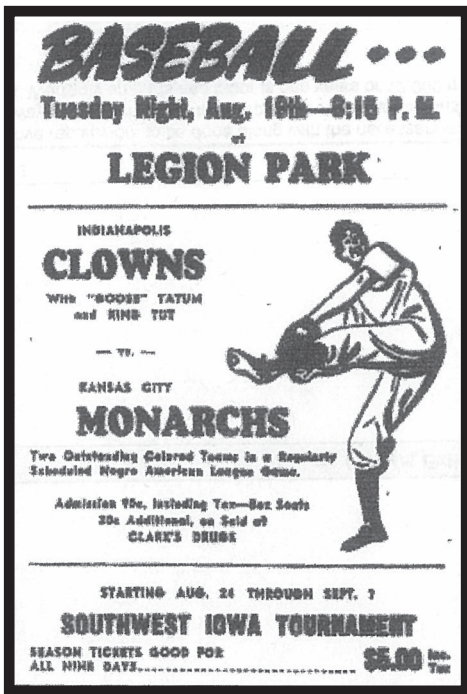
When the 1947 season began, J.L. Wilkinson and the Kansas City Monarchs seemed to have put behind them Ted Strong's absence during the final two games of the 1946 Negro League World Series games. Before the start of the season Strong was signed to a new contract and the Kansas City Monarchs were being touted as being in the running for the Negro American League championship. Even though Kansas City management seemed to forgive Ted for his disappearing act during the World Series, fans were not nearly as forgiving.



Ted Strong

Going into the 1947 season, Ted Strong was only 30 years old and according to newspaper coverage he was still being scouted by Major League organizations, but something seemed to be missing in his game. During the season Ted split playing time in right field with Tom Cooper (.237). Strong had a horrible season at the plate. Current research credits Strong with only a .182 (14 for 77) batting average in the twenty-eight (28) games for which box scores have been found with him in the Monarchs' line-up. In addition he only had three extra base hits (two doubles and one homerun). This was very uncharacteristic for him and the worst season of his career.

During the season the Kansas City Monarchs were led by the hitting of Hank Thompson (.344), Willard Brown (.336), Joe Greene (.324) and Earl Taborn (.309). Kansas City had a team batting average of .289 (605 for 2098) which was third best in the Negro American League.



Council Bluffs Non Pareil

Council Bluffs, IA
08-17-47

Ted and Goose Sign with the Clowns

After the conclusion of the 1947-48 basketball season, it was time for Ted to play baseball. Going back to the Kansas City Monarchs did not seem to be an option for two reasons. First, his mysterious disappearance for the first two games of the 1946 Negro League World Series was still a point of contention for Kansas City Monarchs owner, J.L. Wilkinson. Secondly, it appears that Ted had not resolved his issues with team management during the 1947 season. Ted's best option was to find another team.

Jim "Lefty" LaMarque (12-2) and Hilton Smith (7-0) led the Kansas City Monarchs pitching staff. John Ford Smith (4-3), Gene Richardson (2-0), Connie Johnson (2-0), Cannonball Berry (2-3), Satchel Paige (0-2), Steve Wylie (0-1) and John Scroggins (0-1) also pitched for Kansas City during the season.

Frank Duncan managed the team and the Monarchs called Blues Stadium their home ball park. Kansas City had a good season with a 49-29 (.628) won-loss record. They finished their Negro American League season five (5) games behind the Cleveland Buckeyes who won the "league" title.

Ted had a terrible season and failed to be selected to the East-West All Star game. In addition his lack of productivity for the Monarchs sealed his fate with the team. This would be his last season in a Kansas City Monarch's uniform.



Goose Tatum and Satchel Paige

Before the start of the 1948 season Ted joined his good friend and Globetrotter teammate, Goose Tatum and they both signed with the Indianapolis Clowns. The team was owned by Syd Pollock and managed by both Ramiro Ramirez and Buster Haywood during the season. Indianapolis played in the Negro American League and called Victory Field in Indianapolis their home field.

In March Ted Strong and Goose Tatum reported for spring training with the Clowns in New Orleans (LA).

Luis Cabrera (8-5) Bill Cathey (5-9), Andy "Pullman" Porter (4-5), Johnny Williams (3-7) and Jim Cohen (3-8) comprised the starting rotation for Indianapolis.

Leonard Pigg (.345), Sam Hairston (.319), Verdes Drake (.275), Ray Neil (.272) and Andres Mesa (.267) led the team in hitting during the 1948 season.



Indianapolis Clowns (1948)
Negro American League

Ted Strong appeared in just 46 games for the Clowns. Unfortunately, he only hit a disappointing .242 (37 for 153) with a meager .373 slugging percentage.

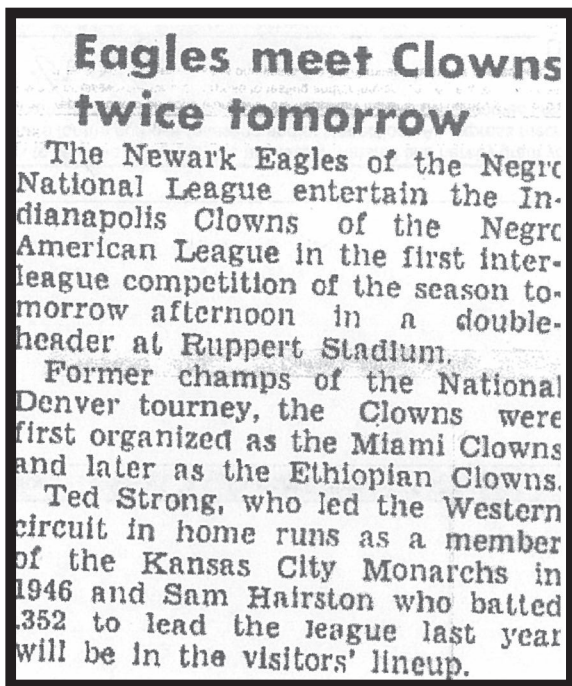
In years past Ted Strong had relied on his natural talent to overcome his lack of conditioning or the effects of too much late night drinking and partying. At age 31 this would no longer be the case. By late June, Strong and Tatum were wearing out their welcome with the Indianapolis Clowns. Ted's drinking and night life partying with his good buddy Goose Tatum ended up with both of them being suspended for the rest of the season. Besides their party life style, neither was productive in game action. Strong was hitting a mere .242 and Tatum was hitting .226.

The Indianapolis Clowns finished the season with a record of 32-48-3 (.400). They were in fourth place and twenty-one games behind the "league" leading Birmingham Black Barons (46-20-1).

Reportedly, Ted played occasionally for the Harlem Globetrotters baseball team during the remainder of the 1948 season. This made a lot of sense because Abe Saperstein, who owned the Harlem Globetrotters basketball team, also controlled the baseball team. The Harlem Globetrotters played an independent schedule while barnstorming across the United States and Canada.

The team was managed by Paul Hardy who also caught for the team. Some of the players featured on the Harlem Globetrotters 1948 roster were Sherwood Brewer (SS), Ulysses Redd (3B), Herb Simpson (1B), Sam Wheeler (OF), Jim Fishback (2B) and Parnell Woods (3B).

Harlem's pitching staff included Joe Bankhead, Johnny Cogdell, Winslow Means, Laymon Ramsey, John Williams and Othello Strong (Ted's younger brother).





Strong and Tatum Featured by Clowns

Newark Star Ledger
Newark, NJ
07-10-48

Harlem Globetrotters Barnstorm Across the Country

BASEBALL—WEDNESDAY
JULY 14 — BORLESKE FIELD — 8:15 P. M.
GREATEST DIAMOND TREAT OF THE YEAR



HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS
—VS—
HONOLULU HAWAIIANS

An All Star Event
—PLUS—
COMEDIAN
ED HAMMAN


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PAUL HARDY
Mgr. and Catcher
Globetrotters

JUN MURAMOTO
Star Centerfielder
Hawaiians

Harlem Globetrotters vs Honolulu Hawaiians (1948)

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Plus SHADOWBALL
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ED HAMMAN
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NEW YORK BLACK YANKEES

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JOHNNY WILLIAMS, Pitcher

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Harlem Globetrotters vs New York Black Yankees (1949)

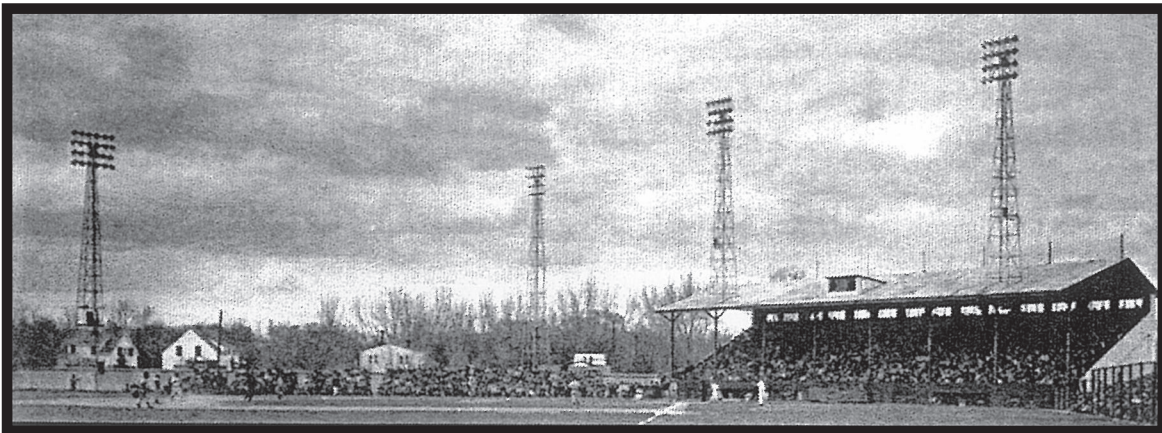
Ted Strong Travels to Canada

Ted Strong started the 1949 season playing for the Harlem Globetrotters baseball team as their starting shortstop. Strong was billed as the featured hitter in the Globetrotters' line-up. The Globetrotters played an independent schedule and went into the season with extremely high expectations. The House of David baseball team was a frequent barnstorming opponent of the Globetrotters during the 1949 season. According to an article that appeared in the July 12th edition of the Oregonian newspaper of Portland (OR), the Harlem Globetrotters had posted a won-loss record of 119-26 (.821) over the previous four seasons. In addition the Globetrotters drew big crowds everywhere they went. The Oregonian newspaper article stated that when Harlem played at Vaughn Street Field in Portland in 1948, they drew a crowd of 7,500 fans to the ball game.

Negro baseball veteran Paul Hardy was the manager and starting catcher for the Globetrotters. Some of the other top players besides Strong on the 1949 Harlem Globetrotters roster were Ameal Brooks (C), Jim Fishback (2B), Paul Hardy (C), Dick Kitamura (SS), Zell Miles (OF), Leon Wheeler (OF), Sam Wheeler (OF) and Parnell Woods (3B). The pitching staff for Harlem included Joe Bankhead, Frank Carswell, Laymon Ramsey, Othello Strong (Ted's younger brother) and Johnny Williams.

Ed Hamman, who would in later years own the Indianapolis Clowns, traveled with the team and performed his comedy routine.

On June 27th the Harlem Globetrotters played the Minot Merchants in Minot, North Dakota. During the game Ted Strong hit a massive homerun that went out of Municipal Ball Park. This feat so impressed Minot management that the team signed him away from the Globetrotters. Also playing for the Merchants during the season were former Negro League players Allen "Lefty" Bryant, Wilbur Greene, Othello Strong (Ted's younger brother) and Steve Enloe Wylie. According to newspaper reports, Ted had a very productive season for the Minot Merchants. He collected 54 hits in 154 at bats for a .351 batting average. Strong's best game with the Merchants came on August 21st when he went four for five with triple, double and two singles.



Municipal Stadium
Minot, ND

The highlight of the 1949 season for the Minot Merchants was winning the twenty-two (22) team Indian Head Baseball Tournament in late July. The Merchants won all four of their games including Steve Wylie pitching two shut out wins. Minot also won the Moose Jaw Tournament with Othello Strong pitching the title game. Behind the hitting of Zoonie McClean (.467) and Ted Strong (.351), the Minot Merchants finished the season with a record of 53-28-2 (.654). Steve Wylie (15-6) was the ace of the pitching staff. The Minot Merchants ended their season on September 11th with a loss to the Brandon Greys.



Minot Mallards (1950)
ManDak League



Swift Current Indians (1950)
Saskatchewan League

After a very successful season in Minot in 1949, Ted Strong was signed by the Minot Mallards of the newly formed ManDak League. When the Senior Manitoba Baseball League disbanded after the 1949 season, a group of team owners got together and formed the ManDak League (Manitoba- Dakota Semi-pro Baseball League). The teams that played in the inaugural season of the ManDak League, their won-loss records and final standings were as follows:

ManDak League (1950)

Team	Won	Lost	Pct	Games Behind
Brandon Greys	32	16	.667	-
Winnipeg Buffaloes	25	23	.521	7.0
Minot Mallards	24	24	.500	8.0
Carmen Cardinals	21	27	.438	11.0
Elmwood Giants	18	30	.375	14.0

The ManDak League was an independent league with teams having a roster of 16 players and each team had a monthly salary cap of \$ 8,500.00. One of the unique aspects of the “league” was that each team was allowed to have an unlimited number of import players.

Ted Strong struggled at the plate for the Minot Mallards during the season. In twenty-four (24) games with the Mallards, Ted went 21 for 77 for a .273 batting average. His best game of the season for Minot came on May 28th when he got three hits (two doubles and triple), scored three runs and drove in three runs to lead Minot to a 21-6 win over the Carmen Cardinals.

On July 10th Strong jumped the team and signed with the Swift Current Indians. During the 1950 season Swift Current played in the Saskatchewan League, participated in Canadian baseball tournaments all over the country and played numerous games against “non-league” opponents. When he joined the team, Strong became the Indian’s starting shortstop. Former Negro Leaguers Len Williams (2B), Lester Witherspoon (3B/OF) and Steve Enloe Wylie (P) also played for the Indians in 1950.

The highlight of Ted’s season with Swift Current occurred on July 27th when he collected three hits (single, double and triple) and drove in five runs to lead the Swift Current Indians to the Moose Jaw Tournament championship.

Ted Strong’s Final Stop

After two seasons in Canada, Ted Strong signed with the Chicago American Giants of the Negro American League for their 1951 season. Prior to the start of the season, Dr. John B. Martin sold the team to a group of businessmen that included Abe Saperstein who also owned the Harlem Globetrotters. Winfield Welch served as the front man for the group and was the manager of the team. With Saperstein being involved in the ownership group, this paved the way for Ted Strong returning to Negro American League baseball.

Comiskey Park served as the home field for the Chicago American Giants during the season.

When Ted joined the team, he reportedly became their starting first baseman. Other key players on the team were Lloyd “Ducky” Davenport (OF), Bubba Hyde (OF), Felix Mc Laurin (OF), Zell Miles (OF), Art “Superman” Pennington (OF), Ulysses Redd (SS/2B), Lonnie Summers (OF) and Parnell Woods (3B).

During the season Chicago was led by the hitting of Parnell Woods (.375), Zell Miles (.338), Lonnie Summers (.331) and Felix Mc Laurin (.311). The Chicago American Giants posted a very good .284 team batting average for the season. Currently only twenty-five (25) at bats have been found for Ted Strong for the 1951 season. He collected nine (9) hits in these twenty-five (25) plate appearances for a .360 batting average.



Ted Strong (Chicago American Giants) and "Prince Joe" Henry (Memphis Red Sox)

Theo Smith was the ace of the pitching staff with a record of 15-2 (.882) and a 2.53 ERA. Othello Strong (5-5 w/ 3.95 ERA), Satchel Paige (2-1 w/ 0.98 ERA) and Jackson Owens (2-2 w/ 3.56 ERA) rounded out the starting rotation. Theo Smith was able to get the vast majority of the starts because the team wasn't playing everyday. The pitching staff for the American Giants also included Harold Gordon, Robert Hinesman, Joe Mitchell, Laymon Ramsey, Al Spearman, Leon Wheeler, Johnny Williams and Danny Wright.

Chicago Meets Southerners In Classic

The 12th Annual North-South All-Star Baseball Classic will be played Sunday afternoon at 2 o'clock in Memorial Stadium here.

The Chicago American Giants, oldest and longest organized colored baseball organization and 1951 pace-setter in the Negro American League, will represent the North All-Stars, while crack semi-pros from the top teams of Dixie will form the South All-Stars.

The "name" players of the North are Ted Strong, home run hitting first baseman, and Thoolie (Fireball) Smith, fast ball hurler, both formerly of the Kansas City Monarch of the Negro American League, which team developed Jackie Robinson for the majors. A third colorful North player is Parnell Woods, hard hitting third baseman who formerly played for the Jacksonville Red Caps and the Cleveland Buckeyes.

The top stars of the South All-Stars include Alvin (Ace) Holly of the High Point Red Sox; Roosevelt Ashford of the Durham Black Sox; Raymond (Whattie) Oates of the Greensboro Red Birds; John (Mickey Mouse) McDougald of the Winston-Salem Pond Giants, and James (Rat) Wilson, also of the Pond Giants. Another seasoned player will be Catcher Carl Brankley from the Canadian League; he will be starting catcher. Hezekiah Day, pilot of the Red Birds, will assist John Wright of the Lancaster (S. C.) Stars as manager of the South Club.

North-South Game

Greensboro Daily News
Greensboro, NC
08-12-51

Ted Strong, a former monarch, singled sharply to right field in the top half of the ninth inning to give the Chicago American Giants a 3-2 victory Sunday night over Kansas City in a Negro American league game before 5,651 paid fans at Blues stadium.

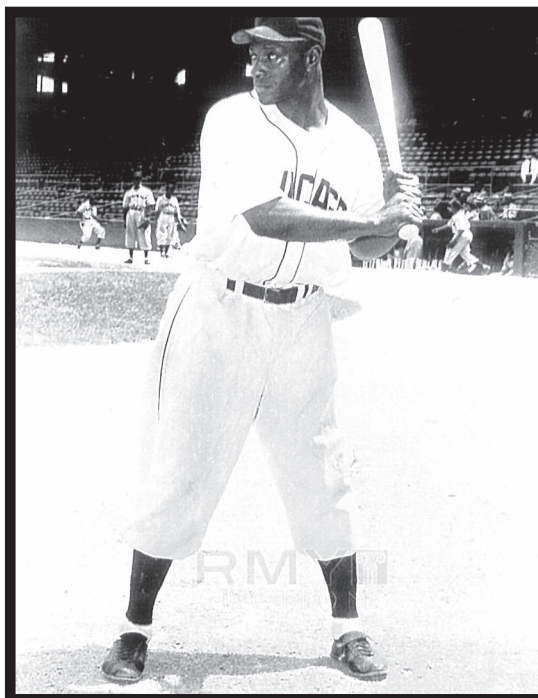
The blow came after two were out and it scored Parnell Woods, who walked, stole second and took third on a wild pitch.

Ted Wins Game for Chicago

Plain Dealer
Kansas City, KS
07-06-51

In mid-August of 1951 the Chicago American Giants were selected to represent the North team in the 12th Annual North-South game that was played at Memorial Stadium in Greensboro (NC). Ted Strong was listed as the starting first baseman for the North. The South team was comprised of stars from primarily the Negro Carolina League.

With timely hitting and spectacular pitching from Theo Smith, the Chicago American Giants had a very good season. They finished the year with a 34-24 (.586) won-loss record and ended up in second place in the Negro American League (West) right behind the Kansas City Monarchs who were 52-21 (.712).





Ted Strong's Basketball Career

Growing up on the South Side of Chicago, Ted Strong, Jr. was always the biggest and most talented kid on the play ground. His natural athletic ability set him apart from all the other boys. In addition he had enormous hands that enabled him to palm a basketball. His first experience on an organized basketball team was playing for the "Black Panthers." They were a youth team who were coached by his father Ted Strong, Sr. When Ted got to Wendell Phillips High School in Chicago he was already a standout in both baseball and basketball. It was while he was playing for Wendell Phillips High School that he caught the eye of Abe Saperstein who owned the Harlem Globetrotters. As soon as Abe saw Ted play, he started recruiting him to play for the Globetrotters.

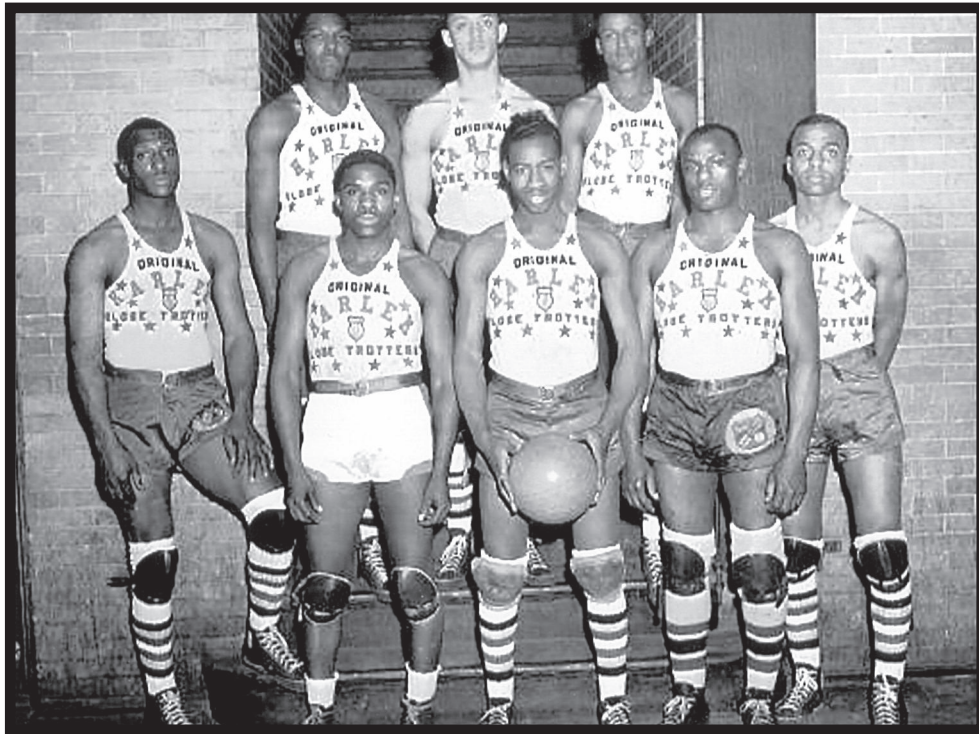
In 1936 Ted was signed by Saperstein to play for the Harlem Globetrotters for their 1936-37 season. Ted Strong played professional basketball for the Harlem Globetrotters for eleven (11) seasons during the winter months from the 1936-37 season through the 1948-49 season and during the 1950-51 season. He was the captain of the western team of the Globetrotters for several seasons during his career. During their winter basketball season the Harlem Globetrotters would play on the average 100-150 games.

Some of the highlights of his career with the Harlem Globetrotters are as follows:

- The 1936-37 season was Ted Strong's first season with the Harlem Globetrotters. Other members of that team were Inman Jackson (center and team captain), Harry Rusan (forward), Johnny Watts (forward), Bill Ford (guard), and Robert Frazier (guard). Ted primarily played guard during his first season in professional basketball.
- The 1936-37 season also marked the tenth anniversary of Abe Saperstein's Globetrotters team. They posted a won-loss record of 1,165-108 (.915) in their first nine seasons.
- On March 25, 1938 the Harlem Globetrotters battled the world famous Original Celtics to a 36-36 tie in regulation time. There was no overtime played because the Celtics reportedly had to catch a train.
- On March 12, 1939 the Harlem Globetrotters destroyed the Original Celtics by a score of 37-24 at the White City Arena in Chicago.
- In March of 1939 the Harlem Globetrotters participated in the World Professional Basketball Tournament which was held in Chicago (IL). The Globetrotters beat the Sheboygan Red Skins by a score of 36-33 to take third place in the tournament.
- The Harlem Globetrotters won the World Professional Basketball Tournament in 1940. Ted was in the starting line-up for the game. In addition to winning the championship, the team also got \$ 1,000 in prize money and a \$ 1,000 contract to play the College All Stars. Abe gave each player a \$ 100 bonus.

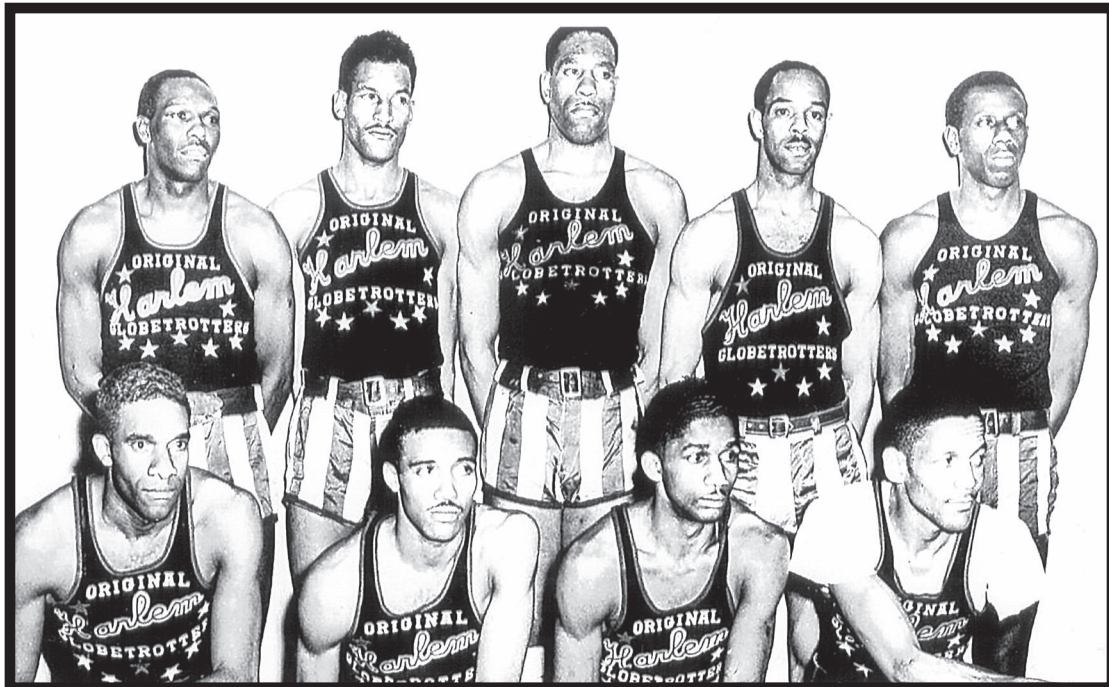
Ted was selected to the All Tournament All Star team. According to team owner, Abe Saperstein, Ted Strong was in his words "the greatest basketball player in the game today."

- During the 1939-40 basketball season the Harlem Globetrotters won their 2000th career game. The Globetrotters finished the season with a record of 159-8 (.952).
- On March 13, 1941 in a benefit game, the Harlem Globetrotters defeated the College All Stars in overtime by the score of 44-42. The game was played at Chicago Stadium with 20,583 fans in the stands. They then played a second game against the College All Stars at the 8th Regiment Armory in Chicago and defeated them for a second straight time. The score of the second game was 30-25 in favor of Harlem.



Harlem Globetrotters (1941)

(Front row left to right – Ted Strong, Tony Wilcox, Roosevelt Hudson, Bill Ford and William Jones.
Back row left to right – Louis “Babe” Pressley, Bernie Price and Everett Marcell)



Harlem Globetrotters (c. 1940's)

- In March of 1941 the Harlem Globetrotters played in the World Professional Basketball Tournament that was held at the Chicago International Amphitheater. On March 16th in the quarter final game they went down in defeat to the Detroit Eagles by a score 37-36.
- On March 26, 1941 the Harlem Globetrotters defeated the powerful Oshkosh All Stars by a score of 41-38.
- The 1941-42 season was the 15th consecutive season for the Harlem Globetrotters. They compiled a record of 2,022-146 (.933) during this period of time.
- In March of 1942 Ted Strong led the Harlem Globetrotters to a 37-32 win over the Original New York Celtics.
- The Harlem Globetrotters played in the 1942 World Professional Basketball Tournament. The tournament was played at the International Amphitheater in Chicago during March. The Globetrotters won their first three games. They beat the Hagerstown (PA) Conoco Oilers (40-33), Sheboygan Redskins (37-32) and the Oshkosh All Stars (48-41). Harlem lost the third place game to the Long Island Grumman Flyers by a score of 43-41.
- On December 9, 1942 the Globetrotters defeated Chihuahua State Teachers who were the Mexican Champions by a score of 34-31.
- On March 6, 1943 the Harlem Globetrotters lost the championship game of the Thomas J. Reese Pro Basketball Tournament which was held at Memorial Auditorium in Buffalo, New York. Rochester Eber-Seagrams beat Harlem by a score of 45-39.
- In 1943 Ted helped integrate the National Basketball League when he was signed by the Chicago Studebaker Flyers.
- Ted Strong played for the South Bend Studebakers in the 1943 World Professional Basketball Tournament in Chicago.
- In 1943 the Harlem Globetrotters won the International Cup which was held in Mexico City.
- While still in the United States Navy in 1945, Ted Strong played for the Seabee Invaders in a Navy league in Honolulu (HI). They were part of the Central Pacific Base Command League.
- During the 1945-46 season the Harlem Globetrotters won their 3000th game and made their first trip to Hawaii.
- On January 24, 1946 Ted Strong scored 23 points to lead the Globetrotters to a 61-59 win over the Fort Lewis All Stars.
- On March 26, 1946 the Harlem Globetrotters defeated the Rochester Royals of the National Basketball League by a score of 57-55. The game was played at the Schenectady State Armory with 3,200 fans in attendance.
- In April of 1946, Abe Saperstein chose his seven best players (Ted Strong, Reece "Goose" Tatum, Zack Clayton, Babe Pressley, Tom Sealy, John Scott and Sam Wheeler) for a barnstorming tour of Hawaii. The tour lasted from April 2nd to April 16th. The Globetrotters played every afternoon and/or evening and did not lose a game during the tour. The Harlem Globetrotters went 17-0 on their Hawaiian tour.



**Harlem Globetrotters
(1946-47)**



**Harlem Globetrotters
Hawaiian Tour**

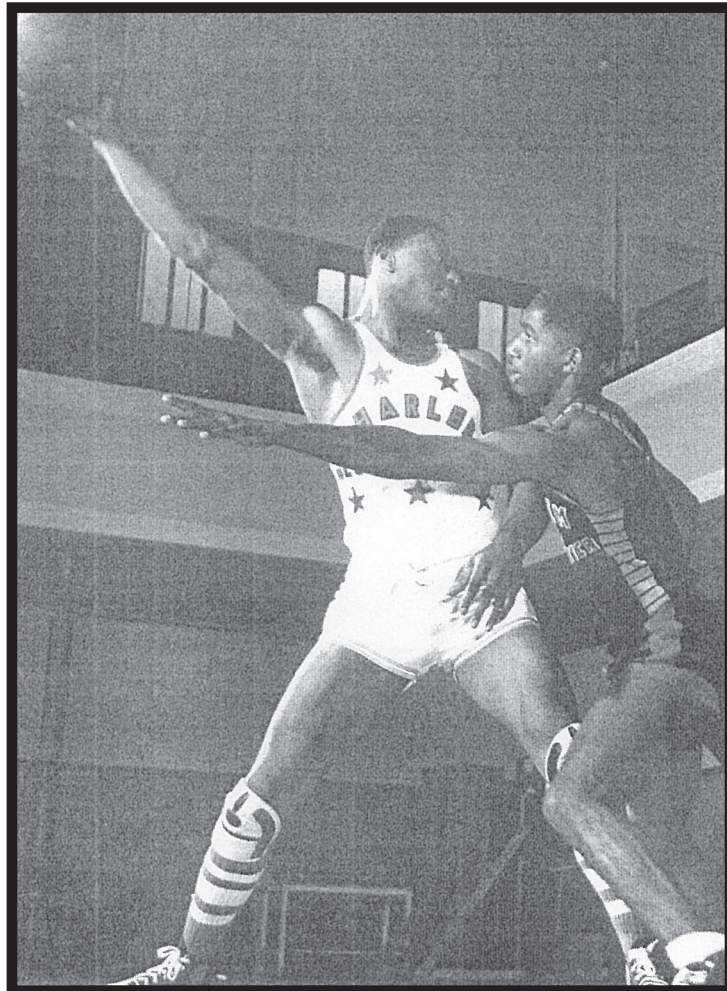
- On February 22nd and 23rd of 1947 the Harlem Globetrotters won a four team tournament in Cincinnati (OH) that included the Kansas City Stars, Hawaii Stars and House of David.
- The Harlem Globetrotters won the Intercontinental Invitational Cup Tournament that was played on February 25-27, 1947 in Havana, Cuba. The Globetrotters defeated the Kansas City Stars in the championship game by the score of 42-38.
- Ted Strong played in the historic game between the Harlem Globetrotters and the Minneapolis Lakers with George Mikan. The game was played on February 19, 1948 at the Chicago Stadium. Harlem won the closely played game by a score of 61-59.
- In early March of 1948 the Harlem Globetrotters, without the services of Goose Tatum, defeated the New York Celtics in Honolulu (HI). When Goose Tatum left the team in Council Bluffs (IA), Ted Strong took over his position and became the leader of the team. Strong scored 11 points in the 53-43 win over the Celtics. The win boosted the Globetrotters record for the season to 130-3 (.977).
- On April 12th of 1948 the Harlem Globetrotters defeated the Police A.C. by a score of 60-39 to win the Hawaiian Open which was played in Honolulu.
- On April 19, 1948 the Harlem Globetrotters defeated the New York Celtics (aka Mikan All Stars) by a score of 78-61 at the Post Gym, Schofield Barracks in Honolulu, Hawaii.
- On November 26, 1948 the Harlem Globetrotters defeated the Philadelphia Sphas of the American Basketball League by a score of 54-45. The game was played at the 69th Regiment Armory in New York with 2,500 fans in attendance.
- On February 28, 1949 the Harlem Globetrotters defeated the Minneapolis Lakers with George Mikan by a score of 49-45. The Lakers went on to win the B.A.A. league title. There were 20,046 fans at the game.
- In 1950 Abe Saperstein named his “all time” Harlem Globetrotter starting line-up and Ted Strong was one of the players named.
- Ted Strong played the 1950 season for the Minot All Americans.
- After a year’s absence, Ted Strong returned to the Harlem Globetrotters for their 1950-51 tour. This was his final season in professional basketball.
- On November 24, 1950 the Harlem Globetrotters defeated the Philadelphia Sphas by a score of 63-38.
- The official won-loss record for the Harlem Globetrotters from 1931 through the 1940 season was 1,482-112 (.917).

It is important to note that when Ted Strong played for the Harlem Globetrotters none of their games were staged against a “prearranged opponent” who was paid to lose like we see today. The Harlem Globetrotters did entertain the fans but they also played a very serious brand of basketball. The majority of their competition was high level amateur and semi-professional teams along with a large number of games against professional teams.

- From 1941 through 1950 the Globetrotters compiled a record of 1,548-109 (.934).



Abe Saperstein
Harlem Globetrotters
Owner/Coach



Ted Strong and Marques Haynes

Globetrotters Play in the Inaugural World Professional Basketball Tournament

In 1939 the Harlem Globetrotters were invited to play in the first ever World Professional Basketball Tournament which at the time was also referred to as the “World Series of Basketball.” The event was held at the Chicago Stadium in Chicago (IL). The following nine teams played in the tournament: Chicago Harmons, Ft. Wayne Harvesters, Harlem Globetrotters, House of David, New York Rens, New York Yankees, Original Celtics, Oshkosh All Stars and Sheboygan Redskins. Ted played at both center and guard positions during the tournament.

The Globetrotters played the Ft. Wayne Harvesters in game one and defeated them by a score of 41-33. In game two they played the Chicago Harmons whom they beat by a score of 31-25. The Harlem Globetrotters met their match in game three when they played the New York Rens. In a closely played game the Rens prevailed by a score of 27-23. The Globetrotters went on to beat the Sheboygan Redskins by a score 36-33 in the third place game that was played at the Chicago Coliseum.

Ted Strong averaged 7.5 points per game during the tournament which was a very respectable scoring average back in those days.

Harlem Globetrotters Win the World Professional Championship

After an outstanding performance at the 1939 World Professional Basketball Tournament, the Harlem Globetrotters were invited back to play in the 1940 tournament. The other teams that competed in the tournament were the Canton Bulldogs, Chicago Bruins, Clarksburg Oilers, Fort Wayne Harvesters, House of David, Kenosha Royals, New York Rens, Oshkosh All-Stars, Rochester Seagrams, Sheboygan Red Skins, Syracuse Reds, Washington Brewers and Waterloo Wonders.

The first round of the tournament was played at the 132nd Infantry Armory in Chicago. In their first game which was played on March 17th the Globetrotters destroyed the Kenosha Royals by a score of 50-26. Their next opponent was the New York Rens who had defeated them the year before. In a closely played classic with 9,000 fans in the stands, Harlem squeaked by the Rens by a score of 37-36. In the semi-final game which was played at the Madison Armory, the Globetrotters defeated the Syracuse Reds by a score of 34-24. By defeating Syracuse, Harlem advanced to the finals against the Chicago Bruins. On March 20th the Harlem Globetrotters defeated the Chicago Bruins in overtime by a score of 31-29. There were 21,000 fans in attendance for the championship game. Sonny Boswell led the team in scoring averaging 12.3 points per game. The Harlem Globetrotters went 4-0 in the tournament and were crowned the “World Champions.”



**Harlem Globetrotters
“World Champions”
1940**

(Ted Strong –
second from right)

Strong Helps Integrate the National Basketball League

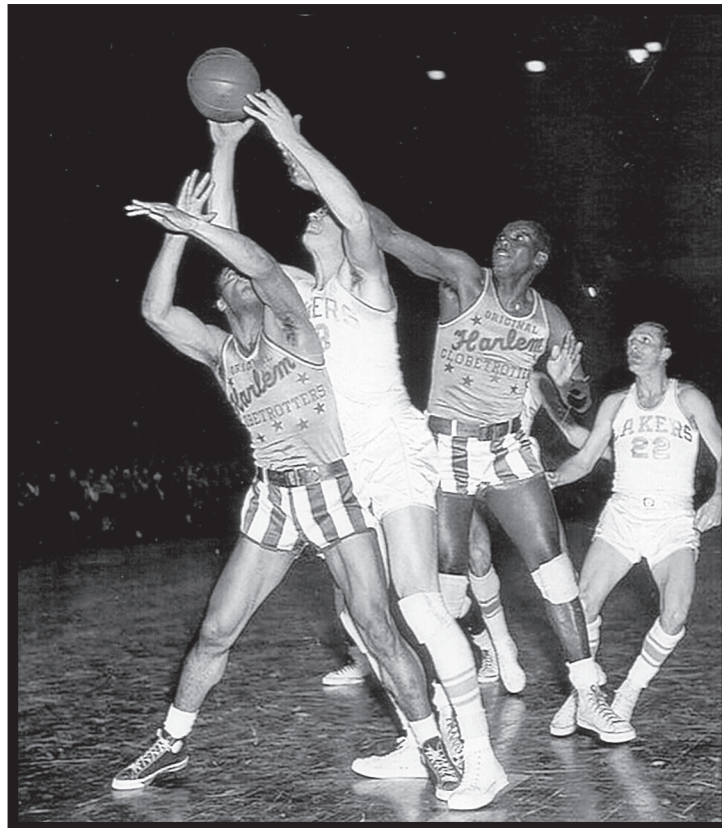
Ted Strong helped integrate the National Basketball League when he signed with the Chicago Studebaker Flyers for their 1942-43 season. The Studebaker Flyers were sponsored by the United Auto Workers. To fill their roster Chicago signed the following seven former Harlem Globetrotter players: Sonny Boswell, Hillery Brown, Duke Cumberland, Rosie Hudson, Tony Peyton, Bernie Price and Ted Strong. The team was coached by Johnny Jordan.

Ted Strong played in ten games for the Chicago Studebaker Flyers before he entered the service.

Reportedly, the black players did not receive the same level of discrimination and racism that Jackie Robinson experienced when he integrated Major League Baseball with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. One major factor to the black players being accepted by the fans and white players was that all seven of Chicago's black players had played for the Harlem Globetrotters. In addition the Globetrotters were nationally known and well respected for their basketball skills.

Harlem Globetrotters Beat the Minneapolis Lakers

On February 19, 1948 Abe Saperstein's Harlem Globetrotters took on the Minneapolis Lakers of the Basketball Association of America (BAA) in what was touted in the media as the "Game of the Century." The Globetrotters were reportedly on a 102 game winning streak and Max Winter, general manager of the Minneapolis Lakers, thought his team was the best basketball team in the world. The Lakers had won the National Basketball League title for the 1947-48 season and were considered the best white basketball team in the country. Minneapolis featured two future National Basketball Hall of Fame inductees in George Mikan and Jim Pollard. George Mikan was considered the greatest player of his day. To settle the issue of who was the best team, Saperstein and Winter agreed to an exhibition game that was played at Chicago Stadium.



Harlem Globetrotters vs Minneapolis Lakers

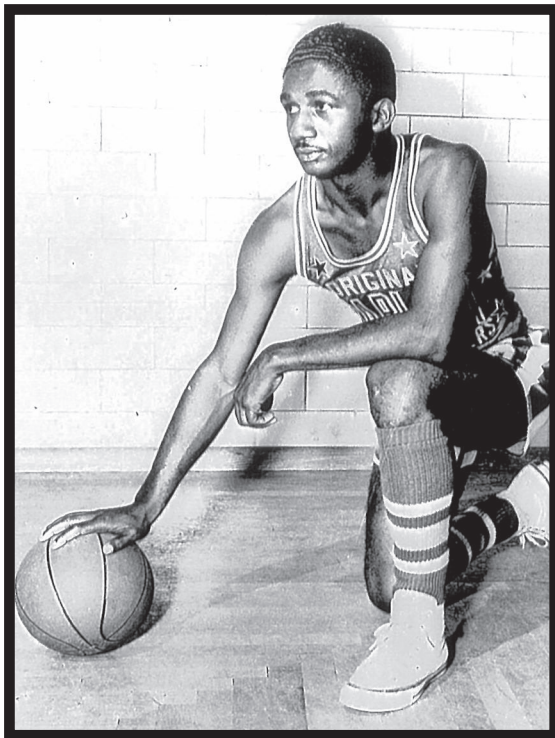
Abe Saperstein took the best players from his eastern and western teams to form one team to play Minneapolis. The starting line-up for the Globetrotters was comprised of Reece "Goose" Tatum, Marques Haynes, Ermer Robinson, Wilbert King and Louis "Babe" Pressley. Ted Strong was picked for the team as a substitute.

The Lakers got off to a good start with a 9-2 run and led at half time by a score of 32-23. George Mikan scored 18 points in the first half. At half time Saperstein changed his defensive strategy and put two men on Mikan. Saperstein also wanted his Globetrotters to fast break every time they got the ball. Saperstein hoped this would wear down the Lakers. When they came out for the second half, the Harlem Globetrotters slowly clawed their way back into the game. With two men (Tatum and Pressley) guarding Mikan he only scored six points in the second half. Then when Babe Pressley fouled out in the second half, Ted Strong took his place and played very well especially at the defensive end of the court.

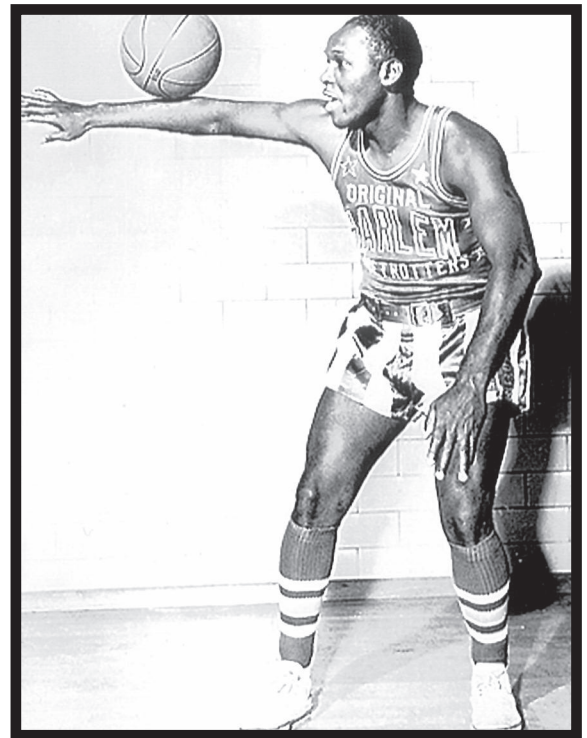
With only 90 seconds left the Lakers scored to tie the game at 59-59. Marques Haynes took the in bounds pass and dribbled down the court. Haynes passed the ball to an open Ermer Robinson who hit a 30 foot set shot as time expired. When the buzzer sounded ending the game, the Harlem Globetrotters had won the contest by a score of 61-59.

Ted Played with the Best

During his career, Ted Strong had the opportunity to play on the same Harlem Globetrotters team with numerous basketball superstars. Some of these players were Inman Jackson, Marques Haynes, Reece "Goose" Tatum, William "Pop" Gates, Bernie Price, Louis "Babe" Pressley, Zack Clayton, Ermer Robinson, Roscoe "Duke" Cumberland, Nathaniel "Sweetwater" Clifton, Wyatt "Sonny" Boswell, Lorenzo "Piper" Davis, Boid Buie and "Big" Frank Washington.

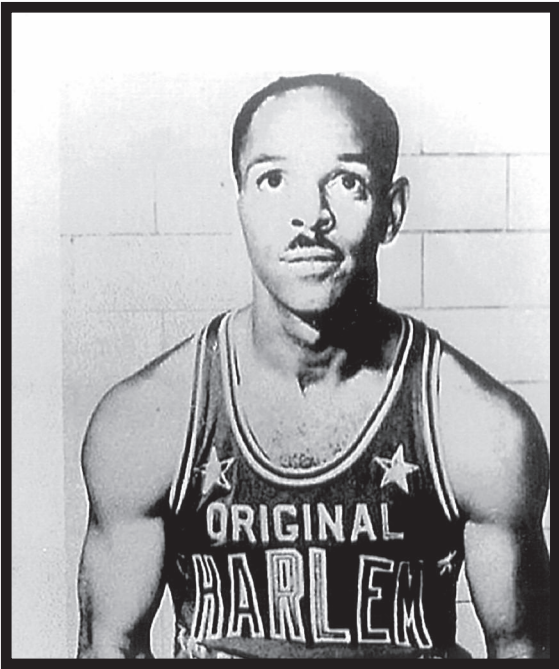


Marques Haynes

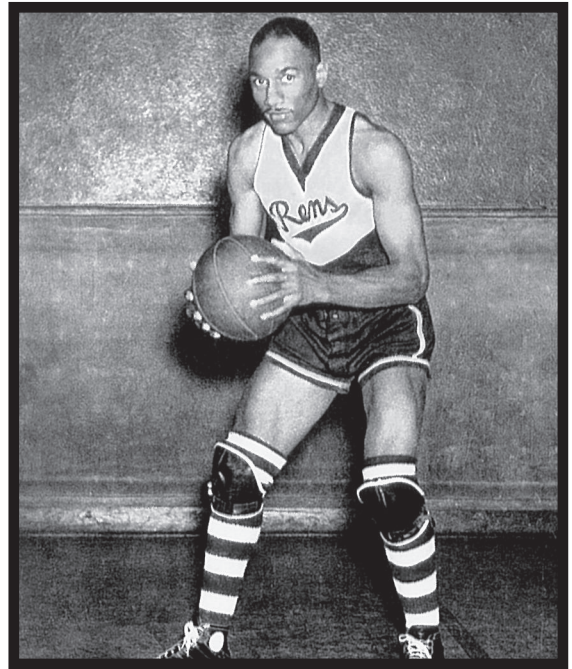


Reece "Goose" Tatum

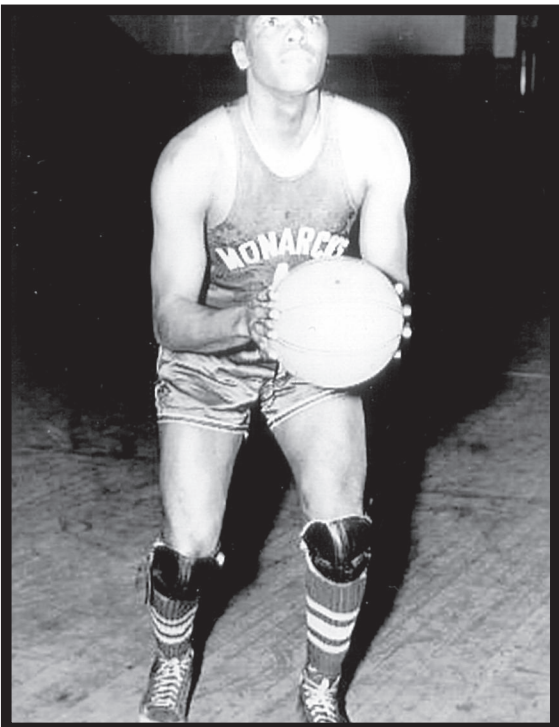
Harlem Globetrotter Team Mates



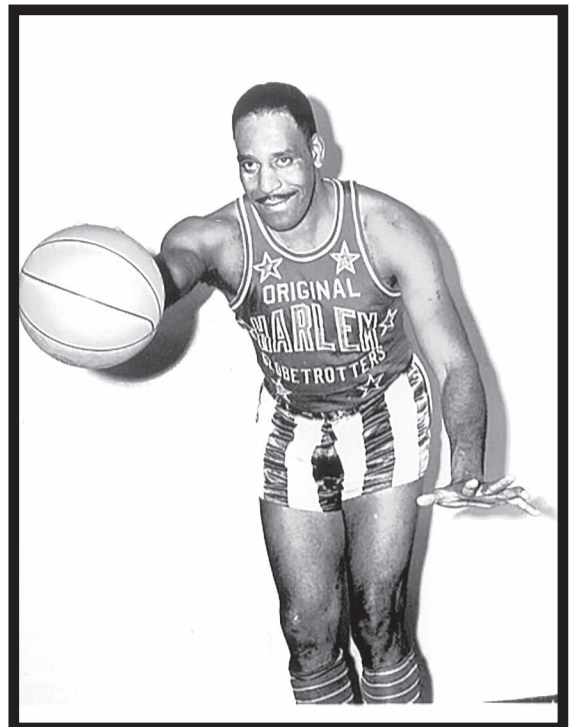
William "Pop" Gates



Zack Clayton



Louis "Babe" Pressley



Nathaniel "Sweet Water" Clifton

Strong's Basketball Career Comes to an End

In a move that surprised everyone, Ted Strong played the 1950 season with the Minot All Americans. They played an independent schedule during the season. The All Americans were a lower level team who played in the small markets. Ted was the team's headliner because he had been a star for the Harlem Globetrotters for eleven (11) seasons and he was also especially well known in the Dakotas and Canada as both a baseball and basketball player.

Harlem Globetrotters are Featured on the Silver Screen

In October of 1950 Columbia pictures started shooting a movie about the Harlem Globetrotters basketball team. Abe Saperstein's Globetrotters team had been in existence for over 23 years and were extremely popular all over the world. The team's popularity stemmed from their entertaining game but also from the fact that they were an extremely good basketball team. Unlike the Harlem Globetrotter teams of the future who played staged games against their own hand picked opponent, the Harlem Globetrotters of the 1930's and 1940's had amassed a legitimate won-loss record of 3241-245 (.930).

Ted Strong was asked to join the production and play himself in the seventy-eight (78) minute movie. The film was released on October 24, 1951 and received favorable reviews. Reportedly, Ted Strong only received a small amount of money for his appearance in the movie.

Life after Baseball and Basketball

In 1952 Ted Strong received an appointment to start work at the United States Post Office (USPO) as a clerk. The job paid \$ 1.66 per hour and Strong needed the security of a steady pay check. When he took the job with the USPO, Ted was forced to give up the idea of going on the 1952 Harlem Globetrotters international tour which had the team playing 141 games in 168 days.

Life outside of sports proved to be very difficult for Ted and he apparently was very unhappy. His star had fallen and no longer was he in the lime light as a sports super star. Strong lost his job at the post office on May 15, 1953 due to excessive absences. Ted Strong spent the remainder of his working career doing odd jobs and occasionally working for Abe Saperstein. Ted was also a frequent guest at recognition ceremonies and events featuring the Harlem Globetrotters.

Passing of a Legend

In his later years Ted Strong was plagued by persistent health problems especially emphysema.

On March 1, 1978 Ted was at home watching television with a female friend when he began coughing and wheezing. An ambulance was called when Ted couldn't catch his breath. He was taken to Provident Hospital where he died shortly after his arrival.

Ted Strong, Jr. passed away at 1:35 am on March 2, 1978 in Chicago, IL. His official cause of death was listed as "arteriosclerotic cardiovascular disease in association with pulmonary emphysema." He was only 61 years old. Ted was laid to rest in the Lincoln Cemetery in Blue Island, IL.

Playing Career (Baseball)

Regular Season:

Year	Team	League
1936	Chicago American Giants	Independent
1937	Indianapolis Athletics	Negro American League
1937-1938	Kansas City Monarchs	Negro American League
1938	Indianapolis ABCs	Negro American League
1938-1939	Kansas City Monarchs	Negro American League
1940	Telecotes de Nuevo Laredo	Mexican League
1941	Rojos de Aguila de Vera Cruz	Mexican League
1941-1942	Kansas City Monarchs	Negro American League
1942	Chicago Brown Bombers	Independent
1943-1945	Military Service	
1946-1947	Kansas City Monarchs	Negro American League
1948	Indianapolis Clowns	Negro American League
1948-1949	Harlem Globetrotters	Independent
1949	Minot Merchants	Independent
1950	Minot Mallards	ManDak League
1950	Swift Current Indians	Saskatchewan League
1951	Chicago American Giants	Negro American League

Post Season and Winter Leagues:

1936	Chicago American Giants	Game vs Jack Kloza's Milwaukee All Stars
1937	North	North-South Game (Memphis, TN)
1937	Kansas City Monarchs	Play-Off Series vs Chicago American Giants
1937	Chicago-Kansas City	Seven Games Series vs Homestead-Newark
1937	Kansas City Monarchs	Four Game Series vs Major League All Stars
1939	Kansas City Monarchs	Five Game Play-Off Series vs St. Louis Stars
1939	Kansas City Monarchs	Post Season Game vs Memphis Red Sox
1939	Kansas City Monarchs	Two Game Series vs Satchel Paige's All Stars
1941	Kansas City Monarchs	Game vs Frigidaire w/ Bob Feller
1942	Kansas City Monarchs	Game vs Major League All Stars
1942	Kansas City Monarchs	Two Games vs Dizzy Dean All Stars
1942	Kansas City Monarchs	Negro League World Series vs Homestead Grays
1946	Kansas City Monarchs	Negro League World Series vs Newark Eagles
1951	North	North-South Game (Greensboro, NC)

Playing Career (Basketball)

Regular Season:

Year	Team	League
1936-37	Harlem Globetrotters	Independent
1937-38	Harlem Globetrotters	Independent
1938-39	Harlem Globetrotters	Independent
1939-40	Harlem Globetrotters	Independent
1940-41	Harlem Globetrotters	Independent
1941-42	Harlem Globetrotters	Independent
1942-43	Chicago Studebaker Flyers	National Basketball League
1943-45	Military Service (United States Navy)	
1945	Seabee Invaders	Military Basketball League (Honolulu)
1945-46	Harlem Globetrotters	Independent
1946-47	Harlem Globetrotters	Independent
1947-48	Harlem Globetrotters	Independent
1948-49	Harlem Globetrotters	Independent
1950	Minot All Americans	Independent
1950-51	Harlem Globetrotters	Independent

World Professional Basketball Tournament:

Year	Team	Finish
1939	Harlem Globetrotters	Third Place
1940	Harlem Globetrotters	First Place – Champions
1941	Harlem Globetrotters	Lost in Quarter Finals
1942	Harlem Globetrotters	Fourth Place
1943	South Bend Studebakers	Ninth Place

International Cup:

Year	Team	Finish
1943	Harlem Globetrotters	First Place – Champions

Cuba Invitational Pro Tournament:

Year	Team	Finish
1947	Harlem Globetrotters	First Place – Champions

Hawaiian Open Tournament:

Year	Team	Finish
1948	Harlem Globetrotters	First Place – Champions

Career Statistics – Hitting (Regular Season – Negro Leagues)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1936	Chicago	15	50	6	10	2	2	1	8	0	.200	.380
1937	Indianapolis	35	138	34	50	13	3	3	30	4	.362	.565
1937	Kansas City	2	8	1	2	2	0	0	1	0	.250	.500
1938	Kansas City	4	17	7	9	1	2	1	6	0	.529	1.000
1938	Indianapolis	21	75	21	28	5	4	3	20	7	.373	.667
1939	Kansas City	53	184	34	56	9	2	3	30	15	.304	.424
1941	Kansas City	50	178	46	59	8	7	8	42	2	.331	.590
1942	Kansas City	40	156	37	57	9	0	7	36	2	.365	.558
1946	Kansas City	22	84	22	27	2	2	2	18	1	.321	.464
1947	Kansas City	28	77	5	14	2	0	1	8	0	.182	.247
1948	Indianapolis	46	153	24	37	10	2	2	28	0	.242	.373
1951	Chicago	-	25	7	9	-	1	-	-	-	.360	-
Total		316	1145	244	358	63	25	31	227	31	.313	.493

Career Statistics – Hitting (Post Season – Negro Leagues)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1937	Chicago	1	5	3	4	1	0	1	4	-	.800	1.600

Career Statistics – Hitting (Play-Off Series – Negro Leagues)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1937	Kansas City	4	19	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	.421	-

Career Statistics – Hitting (Negro League World Series)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1942	Kansas City	4	19	5	6	-	-	1	3	1	.316	.526

Career Statistics – Hitting (North-South Game)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1937	North	1	4	-	4	1	1	1	-	-	1.000	2.250

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

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1937	Indianapolis	1	4	1	2	0	0	1	2	-	.500	1.250
1938	Indianapolis	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000	.000
1939	Kansas City	2	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	.167	.157
1941	Kansas City	1	4	1	2	1	1	0	1	0	.500	1.250
1942	Kansas City	2	6	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	.500	.500
Total		7	23	3	8	1	1	1	3	0	.348	.478

Career Statistics – Hitting (Exhibition Games vs Major Leaguers)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1937	Kansas City	4	18	5	7	-	-	-	3	-	.389	-

Career Statistics – Hitting (Regular Season – Non League Games)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1937	Indianapolis	1	1	1	1	-	-	1	3	-	1.000	4.000
1938	Indianapolis	2	7	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	.143	.286
1939	Kansas City	3	14	2	3	-	-	-	4	-	.214	.214
1942	Kansas City	2	10	3	7	-	-	1	4	-	.700	-
1942	Chicago	1	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	.250	-
1946	Kansas City	3	10	4	5	-	-	1	1	-	.500	.800
1949	Harlem	2	5	3	3	-	-	2	3	-	.600	1.800
	Total	14	51	15	21	1	-	5	15	-	.412	-

Career Statistics – Hitting (Mexico)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1940	Nuevo Laredo	71	277	57	92	14	14	11	57	7	.332	.603
1941	Aguila	19	76	19	25	2	4	2	14	1	.329	.539
	Total	90	353	76	117	16	18	13	71	8	.331	.589

Career Statistics – Hitting (Canada)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1949	Minot	-	154	-	54	-	-	-	-	-	.351	-
1950	Minot	24	77	15	21	2	1	-	10	1	.273	-
1950	Swift Current	1	5	-	3	1	1	-	5	-	.600	1.200
	Total	25	236	15	78	3	2	-	15	1	.331	-

Career Hitting Statistics (Totals)

	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
Negro League	316	1145	244	358	63	25	31	227	31	.313	.493
Post Season	1	5	3	4	1	0	1	4	-	.800	1.600
World Series	4	19	5	6	-	-	1	3	1	.316	.526
East-West All Star	7	23	3	8	1	1	1	3	0	.348	.478
North-South	1	4	-	4	1	1	1	-	-	1.000	2.250
Exhibition (MLB)	4	18	5	7	-	-	-	3	-	.389	-
Non-League	14	51	15	21	1	-	5	15	-	.412	-
Mexico	90	353	76	117	16	18	13	71	8	.331	.589
Canada	25	236	15	78	3	2	-	15	1	.331	-
Total	462	1854	366	603	86	47	53	341	41	.325	.508

Assessing Ted Strong's Baseball and Basketball Career

- Ted Strong was a **remarkable athlete**. He was a **two sport super star in both baseball and basketball**. Strong started playing professional baseball in 1936 with the Chicago American Giants and his last season as a baseball player was in 1951 with the Chicago American Giants. He played ten years in the Negro Leagues, two seasons in Mexico and two years in Canada. His first season as a professional basketball player was the 1936-37 season with the Harlem Globetrotters. Ted played eleven (11) seasons with the Harlem Globetrotters, one season with Chicago of the National Basketball League and one season with the Minot All Americans. Ted Strong's last season as a professional basketball player was 1951.

He was a member of the Kansas City Monarchs who were the "World Negro League Champions" and the Harlem Globetrotters who won the "World Professional Basketball Championship."

Strong lost all or parts of three years (1943-1945) as a professional athlete due to serving in the United States Navy during World War II.

- Strong was an **outstanding hitter who hit for both average and power** from both sides of the plate. At six feet six inches tall he was an imposing figure at the plate.

During his Negro League career he compiled a lifetime batting average of .313 with a slugging percentage of .493 and a career batting average of .325 with a slugging percentage of .508 in games against all levels of competition.

Negro League researchers all have different career batting averages for Ted Strong. These differences are because all researchers have a different number of games, at bats and hits in their research data base. Even though the Negro League baseball researchers have different numbers, they all agree that he was an excellent hitter. The following chart lists the career hitting statistics for Ted Strong as compiled by six leading research groups.

	CNLBR	Seamheads	Lester and Stivers	Baseball Reference	John Holway
1936	.200	.167	-	-	-
1937	.356	.362	.333	.348	.348
1938	.402	.373	.393	.267	.375
1939	.304	.304	.255	.242	.296
1940	.332 (Mexico)	.332 (Mexico)	-	-	-
1941	.329/.331	.331	.307	.284	.333
1942	.365	.365	.345	.359	.322
1946	.321	.293	.259	.264	.278
1947	.182	.188	.324	.333	-
1948	.242	.389	.400	.400	-
1951	.360	-	-	-	-
At Bats	1145	985	605	674	-
Hits	358	314	192	211	-
Batting Average	.313	.319	.317	.313	-

- (Notes – 1. CNLBR stands for the Center for Negro League Baseball Research.
 2. Lester, Clark and Stivers stands for the research team of Larry Lester, Dick Clark and Wayne Stivers.
 3. The CNLBR and the Seamheads research team report Strong's statistics for his play in Mexico in 1940 and 1941 but do not include them in their totals. CNLBR reports two sets of numbers for the 1941 season. The first number is for Mexico and the second number is for the Negro American League.)

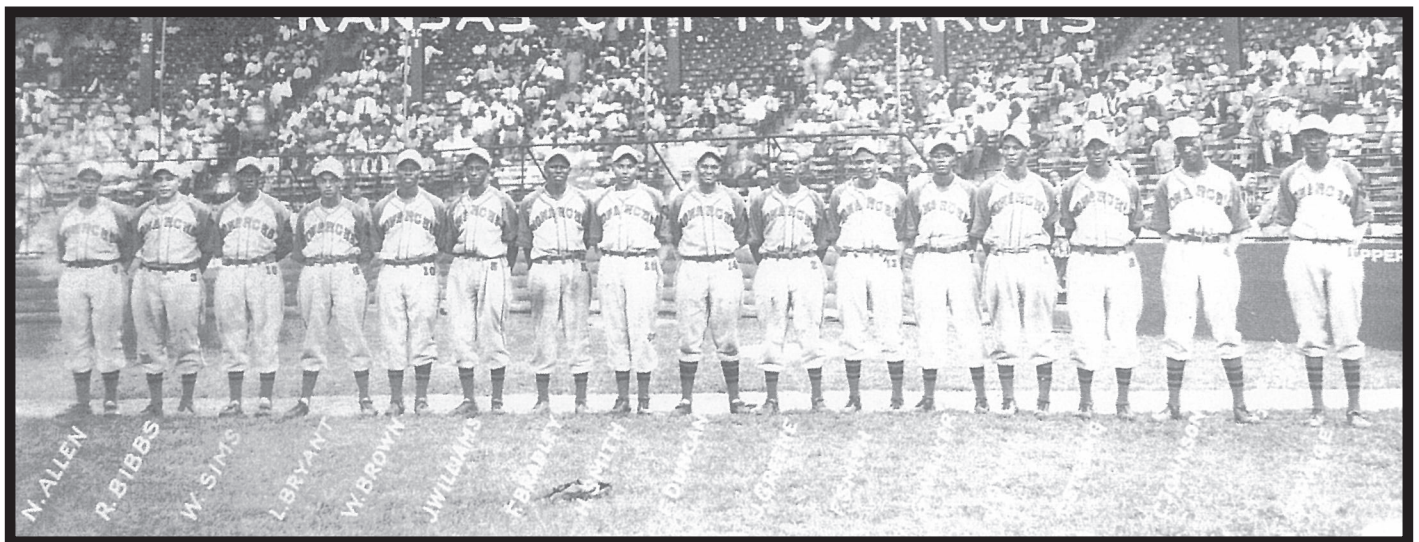
- Ted Strong’s exemplary individual baseball skills resulted in him being **selected to play in seven (7) East-West All Star games** for the West squad. (1937, 1938, 1939 - 2, 1941 and 1942-2).

He was also selected to play in at least two North-South games (1937 and 1951).

- Over the course of his career in professional baseball and basketball, Ted Strong was a **member of several “championship teams.”**

Baseball championships:

Year	Team	Championship
1937	Kansas City Monarchs	Negro American League
1939	Kansas City Monarchs	Negro American League
1941	Kansas City Monarchs	Negro American League
1942	Kansas City Monarchs	Negro American League
1942	Kansas City Monarchs	Negro League World Series
1946	Kansas City Monarchs	Negro American League
1949	Minot Merchants	Indian Head Tournament
1949	Minot Merchants	Moose Jaw Tournament
1950	Swift Current Indians	Moose Jaw Tournament



**Kansas City Monarchs
Negro American League Champions
(1941)**

(left to right – **Newt Allen**, Rainey Bibbs, William Sims, Allen “Lefty” Bryant, **Willard “Homerun” Brown**, Jesse Williams. Dick Bradley, **Hilton Smith**, Frank Duncan, Joe Greene, John Ford Smith, George Walker, **Buck O’Neil**, **Ted Strong**, Connie Johnson and **Satchel Paige**)

Basketball Championships:

Year	Team	Championship
1940	Harlem Globetrotters	World Professional Basketball Championship
1943	Harlem Globetrotters	International Cup
1947	Harlem Globetrotters	Cincinnati Invitational Tournament
1947	Harlem Globetrotters	Cuba International Pro Tournament
1948	Harlem Globetrotters	Hawaiian Open Tournament

- **Defensively Strong was a very versatile player.** He could play anywhere. Ted started his career as a shortstop before he moved to the outfield. He also played a lot of first base and some at third base. He was known to have an excellent glove and was an exceptional fielder. Ted also possessed a strong accurate throwing arm. As an opposing hitter, you had better not try to take an extra base because Ted would throw you out if he was playing in the outfield.

On the basketball court he could and did play all three positions (guard, center and forward). He played each position extremely well as if that was exactly where he belonged on the court.

- Strong was a **complete ball player**. As a baseball player, he could do it all. He could hit, run and play excellent defense.

As a Harlem Globetrotter basketball player, he could and would do whatever was required to get the job done and register a win. If he needed to score, he scored. He could also play excellent defense, shut down the opposing team's "big" scorer, "control the paint" and rebound.

- Ted Strong was **well respected by his peers**. In 1942 Satchel Paige was asked which Negro League players he thought had Major League talent. Paige provided the following list of players that he was convinced would make the Major League grade: Willard Brown, Ray Dandridge, Josh Gibson, Buck Leonard, Hilton Smith and Ted Strong.

Negro League legend, Ted "Double" Duty" Radcliffe, in his book about his life in professional baseball is quoted to having said that he thought that Ted Strong would have been the Negro league player to break the color barrier and integrate Major League Baseball.

- He was a **leader**. During his career with the Harlem Globetrotters basketball team he served numerous seasons as the team's captain.
- From one perspective, Ted Strong had a **lengthy and impressive career** in both baseball and basketball. Ted played professional baseball from 1936 through 1951. His career started in 1936 with Chicago American Giants and ended in 1951 also with the Chicago American Giants. In baseball he is best remembered as a Kansas City Monarch.

When he was still in high school, Abe Saperstein recruited Ted to play for his Harlem Globetrotters basketball team. His first season with the Globetrotters was their 1936-37 season and he ended his career with the Harlem Globetrotters' 1950-51 team. He was a Globetrotter his entire career with the exception of a short stint with the Chicago Studebaker Flyers of the National Basketball League in 1942-43 right before he went into the military and the Minot All Americans in 1949-50.

Strong played thirteen (13) seasons of professional baseball and thirteen (13) seasons of professional basketball. It is important to note that Ted lost the better part of three (3) seasons (1943-1945) in both baseball and basketball to his military service during World War II.

- Ted Strong was **very consistent during the first eight seasons of his baseball career**. From 1937 through 1946 he hit over .300 for seven (7) straight seasons. Then in 1947 when he was only 30 years old things changed. His batting average dropped from .321 in 1946 to a miserable .182 for the 1947 season and his batting average was only .242 in 1948 before he went to Canada for two years. His career seemed to fall apart in 1947.

Speculation is that his dramatic dip in performance was the result of poor life style choices off the field.

He retired from professional baseball and basketball in 1951 when he was only 34 years of age.

Strong had an impressive career that anyone would be proud of but it could have been so much more.

- From 1936 to 1951 excluding the years he was in the military (1943-1945), **Ted was always on the road.** He played a full Negro League baseball schedule then after a short break went on the road with the Harlem Globetrotters with their hectic schedule. Non-stop travel with varying accommodations, irregular sleep schedules and meals on the road of questionable nutritional value had to have a negative effect on his overall health.
- Unfortunately, Ted Strong liked to **drink and party to excess.** This would negatively impact his physical conditioning, reflexes, strength, stamina and his overall performance on the field. It would also reduce the length of his career.

Ted's "live for today attitude" seemed to intensify after the death of Josh Gibson in January of 1947. In Sherman Jenkins' book The Untold Story of an Original Harlem Globetrotter Ted Strong Jr. and Negro Leagues All-Star, Ted's father was quoted as follows:

"I told Ted that he had to keep himself clean because the scouts were still probably looking at him." (Ted Jr. was only thirty-one years old)

Ted Jr.'s response to his father's concerns was as follows:

"Ah, Dad, they are not going to pick us. I might as well enjoy life while I can."

- **Towards the end of his career, his natural ability turned out to be his worst enemy.** When he was younger Ted could make up for his drinking and late night partying with his overall natural ability. As he got older that didn't work anymore and definitely had a significant negative impact on his career.

It would be interesting to see how much better he could have been and how much longer he could have played had he taken good care of himself.

- Being a **professional athlete was all Ted Strong, Jr. knew.** He had a very rough time making the transition from a professional athlete who was always in the lime light to life after sports as a regular person.

Sports – A Strong Family Tradition



Ted Strong, Jr.'s accomplishments as a professional athlete should not come as much of a surprise when you look at the sports careers of his father and younger brother. Athleticism definitely ran in the family.

Ted Strong, Sr. was an accomplished lightweight boxer in his younger days. Reportedly, he had a won-loss record of 69-9 during his boxing career which lasted from 1912-1915. He was also considered a very good baseball player. In 1913 he pitched for the Chicago American Giants. He also spent several seasons playing for the South Bend Colored Giants and Zulu Giants. As he got older he transitioned from a player to a coach/manager. He helped Ted Jr. get started with his basketball career when he coached his youth team, the "Black Panthers." Then when Ted Jr. started playing professional baseball Ted Sr. managed the Indianapolis Athletics of the 1937 Negro American League. Under his leadership the Athletics went 17-21-1 (.447) in "league" games. Ted Jr. was the star of his father's Indianapolis Athletics team. Newspapers also credit Ted Sr. of managing the Indianapolis ABC's for at least part of the 1938 season.

Ted Strong, Sr.

Outside of baseball Ted Sr. worked a variety of manual labor jobs including being a porter before he became a fulltime minister. Ted Sr. was also very active in Chicago politics and social services as a community activist. Theodore "Ted" Strong, Sr. was an institution in Chicago. He passed away in 1984 at the age of 92.

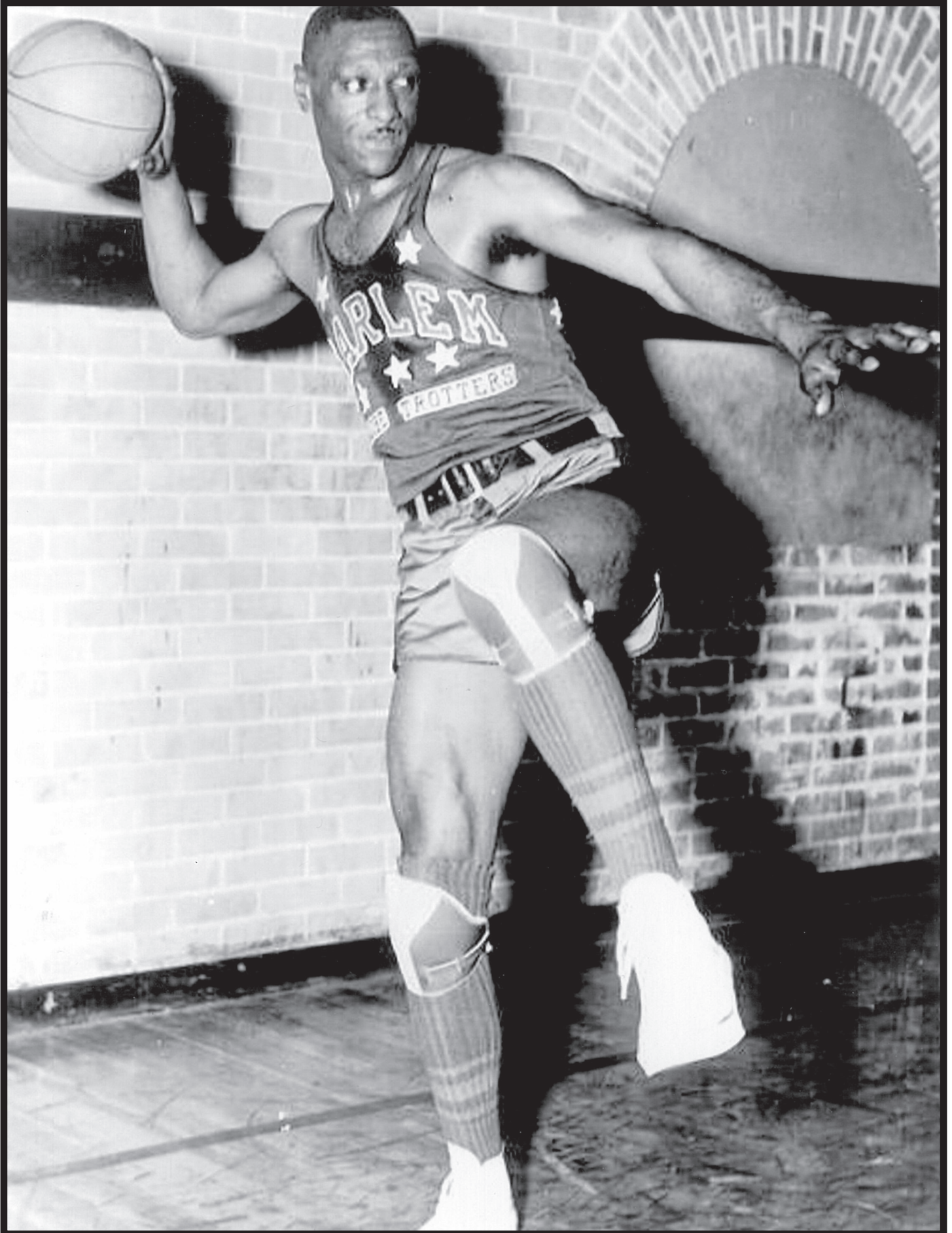
Othello Strong was Ted Jr.'s younger brother and was also an accomplished athlete in his own right. His sports capabilities came to light when he served in the U.S. Army for three years. When he was stationed at Fort Warren his pitching caught the attention of Negro League baseball teams. When he got out of the military he entered professional Negro League baseball. Othello pitched and played in the outfield with the Harlem Globetrotters during the 1947 and 1948 seasons. He also played parts of four seasons with the Chicago American Giants from 1949-1952. In addition Othello played three seasons in Canada. He played for the Minot Merchants (1949), Winnipeg Buffaloes of the ManDak League (1951) and the Winnipeg Giants also of the Man Dak League (1952). Not only was he an accomplished pitcher but he was an excellent hitter. During his Canadian baseball career Othello had numerous outstanding games offensively. Some examples of this from Canadian newspapers were two homeruns in a game on at least two different occasions, went five for five in a game against Carmen, drove in five runs in one game and had six runs batted in another game. Unlike his older brother Ted Jr., Othello got the opportunity to play in "organized" baseball. In 1953 Othello played in ten games in the Chicago White Sox organization for the Danville Dans of the Mississippi-Ohio Valley League. As a pitcher he went 3-2 with an impressive 1.98 ERA in his short career in "organized" ball. Also in 1952 he had reportedly been signed by the Albuquerque Dukes of the West Texas-New Mexico League but he failed to report.

According to an article that appeared in the Sporting News (January 12, 1949), Othello Strong was considered a Major League prospect.

In addition to playing professional baseball Othello also played professional basketball for the Kansas City Stars who were considered the farm team of the Harlem Globetrotters in 1947 and 1948. Othello also played at least one season for the Harlem Globetrotters basketball team.

Selected Career Baseball Highlights

- During his Negro League career Ted Strong, Jr. compiled a lifetime batting average of .313 with a slugging percentage of .493 and a career batting average of .325 with a slugging percentage of .508 in games against all levels of competition.
- In the hey day of his career from 1937 to 1942 and 1946 he hit over .300 in seven (7) straight Negro League seasons (1937 - .356, 1938 - .402, 1939 - .304, 1940 - .332, 1941 - .331, 1942 - .365 and 1946 - .321). Ted was in the military from 1943-1945,
- Ted Strong was selected to play in seven (7) East-West All Star games (1937, 1938, 1939 - 2, 1941 and 1942 - 2).
- In 1937 Ted's hitting (.421 batting average) led the Kansas City Monarchs to the Negro American League Championship over the Chicago American Giants.
- Strong hit for the cycle (single, double, triple and homerun) in the 1937 North-South game that was played in Memphis, TN
- While playing for the Kansas City Monarchs in four exhibition games against a Major League all star team, Ted went 7 for 18 for a .389 batting average. He also had 3 runs batted in and scored five runs.
- He was a member of the Kansas City Monarchs team who won the 1939 Negro American League championship.
- In 1940 Ted Strong traveled to Mexico to play for Nuevo Laredo. He was one of the top hitters in the Mexican League with a .332 batting average and a .603 slugging percentage. He also finished second in the "league" in triples with 14 three baggers.
- He was a member of the 1941, 1942 and 1946 Kansas City Monarchs teams who were the Negro American League champions.
- Strong played on the 1942 Kansas City Monarchs team who won the 1942 Negro League World Series.
- Ted Strong helped lead the Minot Merchants to the prestigious 1949 Indian Head Tournament championship and the 1949 Moose Jaw Tournament title in Canada.
- In 1950 while playing for the Swift Current Indians of Saskatchewan (Canada), he helped lead his team to the Moose Jaw Tournament.
- Ted Strong finished his professional baseball career in 1951 with the Chicago American Giants. Only a hand full of box scores have been found for this season but in the games we have for Ted playing with Chicago, he was batting .360.
- Played in the 12th Annual North –South game in 1951. He played first base for the North squad.
- Ted Strong had an excellent baseball career as well as a remarkable professional basketball career from 1936-1951.
- Theodore Relighn "Ted" Strong, Jr. is truly a "Forgotten Hero."



Harlem Globetrotters