

Early Pioneers of the Negro Leagues:

Abel Linares



by

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Too Many Cuban Teams to Count

The biggest dilemma in researching Cuban teams that played in the United States is that there were so many teams that used the word “Cuban” in their team’s name. Currently we have identified at least seventy-one (71) different teams that presented themselves as “Cuban.”

- **All Cubans** (1896-1906) - Abel Linares (owner) and Agustin “Tinti” Molina (manager).
- **Cuban Giants** (1885-1915) - Frank P. Thompson (founder), John F. Lang (owner)(1885) Walter E. Simpson (1886), Walter Cook (owner) (1886), Stanislaus “Cos” Govern (owner/officer/manager) (1885-1889) & J. M. Bright (owner/officer)(1887-1915).
- **Cuban House of David** (1929-1932) - Ramiro Ramirez (manager).
- **Cuban Stars** – team based out of Brooklyn, NY - Manuel Camps (owner).
- **Cuban Stars** (1907-1930) - Abel Linares (owner).
- **Cuban Stars of Havana** (1906-1915) – Athol (MA) Manuel Camps (owner)
- **Cuban Stars of Santiago de Cuba** (1905-1906) - Manuel Camps (owner)
- **Cuban Stars (East)** (1923-1928 - ECL) (1929-1934- IND) - Alex Pompez (owner)
- **Cuban Stars (West)** (1932 – EWL) and 1933 (IND) - Ramiro Ramirez (manager)
- **Cuban Stars (West)** (1917-1919 – IND) (1920-1930 – NNL) - Abel Linares (owner)
- **Cuban X-Giants** (1896-1907) - E.B. Lamar, Jr. (owner/ manager)
- **Genuine Cuban Giants** (1900-1901) - “Pop” Watkins (manager/officer)
- **Havana Stars** (1906) - Alfredo Pastor (manager)
- **Long Branch Cubans** (1913-1916) – Dr. Carlos Henriquez (President) and Richard Henriquez (manager). New York-New Jersey League champions (1913) went 65-29.
- **New York Cubans** (1916) - Alex Pompez (owner)
- **New York Cuban Stars** (1921) – Alejandro Pompez (owner/manager)
- **New York Cuban Stars** (1935-1936 & 1939-1948 - NNL) (1949-1950 - NAL)
- **Original Cuban Giants** (1887-1888) – Stanislaus K. “Cos” Govern (manager) “Colored World’s Champions” (1887 and 1888)
- **Original Cuban Giants** (1896-1914)
- **Stars of Cuba** (1910) - Allyn McAllister (owner) and then William C. Niesen (owner)
- **Trenton Cuban Giants** (1889) - Middle States League champion – Cos Govern (Mgr)

Other “Cuban” teams that played in the United States are as follows: All Cubans (1908), All Cubans (1911), All Cubans (1921), All Havanas (1905), Ansonia Cuban Giants (1891), Brooklyn Cuban Giants (1926-1928), Brooklyn Cuban Giants (1934), Brooklyn Cuban Giants (c. late 1940’s – early 1950’s), Cincinnati Cubans (1921 - NNL), Cuban A.C. (1928), Cuban All Stars (1926), Cuban Athletics (1913), Cuban Giants Jrs. Of Philadelphia (1889), Cuban Giants of Pittsburgh (1908), Cuban Giants of Pittsburgh (1923), Cuban Giants Reserves (1889), Genuine Cuban Giants (1908), Cuban Stars (Philadelphia) (1905), Cuban Stars (Canton, OH) (1905), Cuban Stars of Havana (1916), Cuban Stars of Havana (1919-1920), Cuban Stars of Havana (1929), Cuban X-Giants (1919), Green Cuban Giants (1888), Famous Cuban Giants (1906), Fast Havana Stars (1911), Harrisburg Cuban Giants (1902), Havana Black Cubans, Havana Cuban Giants (1930’s), Havana Cubans (1917), Havana Cubans (1935), Havana Cuban Stars (1906-1907), Havana Cuban Stars (1920), Havana La Palomas (1947-1948), Havana Reds (1915), Havana Reds (1924), Havana Red Sox (1913 and 1917-1919), Jersey City Cubans (1916), Jersey City-Poughkeepsie Cubans (1916), Mobile Havana Cuban Giants (1957 - NAL), Newark Cubans (1914), Newark Cubans (1927), New York Cuban Stars (1916-1920), Padrone’s Cuban Giants (1934), Philadelphia Cuban Giants (1908-1909), Seventh Ward Cuban Giants (Lancaster, PA) (1889), Stars of Cuba (1910), Stars of Cuba (1931), Wonderful Cuban Giants (1886), World Famous Cuban Giants (1912) and York Cuban Giants (1890).

To make matters even worse, the media often used the generic term “Cubans” to refer to a number of different supposedly Latin ball clubs. In addition researchers often confuse teams and attribute box scores to the wrong team. For the purpose of this research project our research team has only concentrated only on the teams with which Abel Linares was involved as an owner, officer or manager.

Abel Linares was born in 1872 in La Habana, Cuba.

During his career in professional baseball which ranged from 1899 to 1930, Abel Linares was an owner, officer and manager of several very successful Cuban baseball teams. Linares owned teams in both the United States and Cuba during his career. In the United States, he owned the All Cubans and Cuban Stars. In Cuba Abel owned Almendares, Habana and Santa Clara. In addition for many years Abel Linares also served as the President of the Cuban Baseball Association.

Abel Linares was also the leading baseball promoter in Cuba. He organized trips for Cuban teams to the United States and brought teams (Negro League, Minor League and Major League) from the United States to Cuba. One of his most unusual promotions was bringing Babe Ruth to Cuba in 1920.

In addition to being a team owner, team official, league official, manager and promoter, Abel Linares was also a sports writer. From 1902-1904 he wrote a column about baseball in Cuba entitled "Cuba's Chapter" for the Sporting Life.

He is also considered the leading entrepreneur and most powerful man in Cuban baseball during his day. Abel Linares was very successful at every aspect of his baseball empire and it made him a millionaire.

Abel Linares had a tremendous impact on baseball in the United States with his All Cubans and Cuban Stars baseball teams. From around 1903 to 1930 Linares controlled baseball in Cuba. A history of early professional baseball in Cuba is a history of the Cuban baseball career of Abel Linares.

All Cubans Travel to the United States

In late July of 1899 Abel Linares took his team the "All Cubans" on a barnstorming tour of the United States. Linares and his team took a steamer from Habana to Mexico and then to New York City. This was an important historical event because it was the first time that a Latin team came to the United States to play. The All Cubans team that came to the United States in 1899 was white but as years went on the All Cubans were a racially integrated team. Abel Linares' All Cubans set the stage for other Latin teams touring the United States.

Abel Linares, of Havana, will invade the United States about Aug. 1 with a team of players called the All-Cubans. He has written for games with the Western Association teams, not having heard that the association has disbanded. The independent team, which is to be organized here in a few weeks, should get a date with the Cubans.

Morning Star
Rockford, IL
06-24-1899



Abel Linares
1872-1930

The tour was promoted by former baseball player Alfred Lawson. During their barnstorming tour of the United States, the All Cubans played both white semiprofessional teams and black teams. The All Cubans' schedule called for them to play games in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Indiana and Missouri. Linares and his twelve (12) man team arrived in New York City in July. Reportedly Abel only had \$ 25.00 in his pocket when the tour started.

The starting line-up for this historic team was as follows:

All Cubans (1899)

Position	Player	Position	Player
1B	Esteban Prats	OF	Jose M. Baeza
2B	Daniel Miguel		M. Lopez
SS	Bernardo Carrillo		Alfredo Arcano
3B	Miguel Prats/Salvador Rosado		E. Hernandez
C	Agustin "Tinti" Molina		
C	Moises Quintero	P	Felo Rodriguez
			Carlos "Bebe" Royer
			A.M. Garcia

CUBAN PLAYERS ARRIVE.
 Manager Abel Linares and the team of All Cuba ball players, who will tour the country for two months, arrived in New York yesterday on the steamer Mexico from Havana. There are 13 players in the party, and they comprise the pick of the National League of Cuba. The men are quartered at the Hotel Griffin. Following is the complete team: Abel Linares, manager; Felo Rodriguez, A. M. Garcia and C. Royer, pitchers; M. Quintero and A. Molina, catchers; E. Prats, first base; D. Miguel, second base; M. Prats, third base; B. Carrillo, shortstop; A. Arcano, M. Lopez, E. Hernandez and J. M. Baeza, outfielders. All understand baseball thoroughly and have been professional players for several years. Beginning today the Cubans will spend several hours in practice every day for the rest of the week on the Weehawken grounds, where they will play their first game next Sunday with the West New York Field Club.

New Haven Register
 New Haven, CT
 07-26-1899

When Abel Linares arrived in New York City in the summer of 1899, he set up headquarters at the Hotel Griffin and worked out arrangements to have his team use the Weehawken Grounds as a practice field.

The first recorded game for the All Cubans in the United States was played on July 28th against a local semiprofessional team from Weehawken, New Jersey. Linares' All Cubans team beat their white opponent by a score of 12 to 4.

During their trip to the United States, the All Cubans also played a two game series against the Cuban X-Giants who were considered one of the premier black clubs in the United States. The importance of this series wasn't the scores of the ball games, but the fact that Linares met E.B. Lamar, Jr. who owned the Cuban X-Giants. Their meeting started a relationship between the two owners that would result in numerous games in the United States and the Cuban X-Giants coming to Cuba. According to the New York Sun the Cuban X-Giants won both games by the scores of 7-3 and 11-6.

The All Cubans returned to Habana in early September. The tour was evidently a financial disaster. Reportedly, Abel and two of his players were stranded in New York City until money could be sent from Cuba to pay for their return passage.

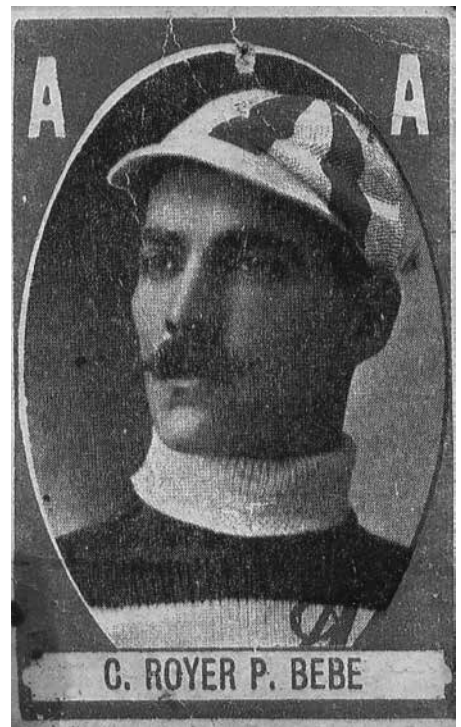
According to the research of Gary Ashwill and his Seamheads research team, the All Cubans were the fourth best independent team in the United States during the 1899 season. Other top independent teams in 1899 were the Chicago Columbia Giants, Chicago Unions, Cuban Giants and the Cuban X-Giants.

Even though their 1899 tour of the United States had been a financial bust, the All Cubans returned to the United States in 1900 for another barnstorming tour. Linares' roster for his American tour included Alfredo Arcano, Jose M. Baeza, Bernardo Carrillo, Antonio M. "El Ingles" Garcia, Emilio Hernandez, Julio "El Cartero" Lopez, Daniel Miguel, Miguel Prats, Moises Quintero, Rafael "Felo" Rodriguez, Jose "Pepillo" Romero and Carlos "Bebe" Royer. Carlos "Bebe" Royer was the team's best player and ace pitcher.

One of the most interesting aspects of the team's roster was that they were "all white." The Spalding Official Base Ball Guide documents the All Cubans trip to the United States. The majority of the All Cubans schedule in 1900 was played in the North around the New York City area.

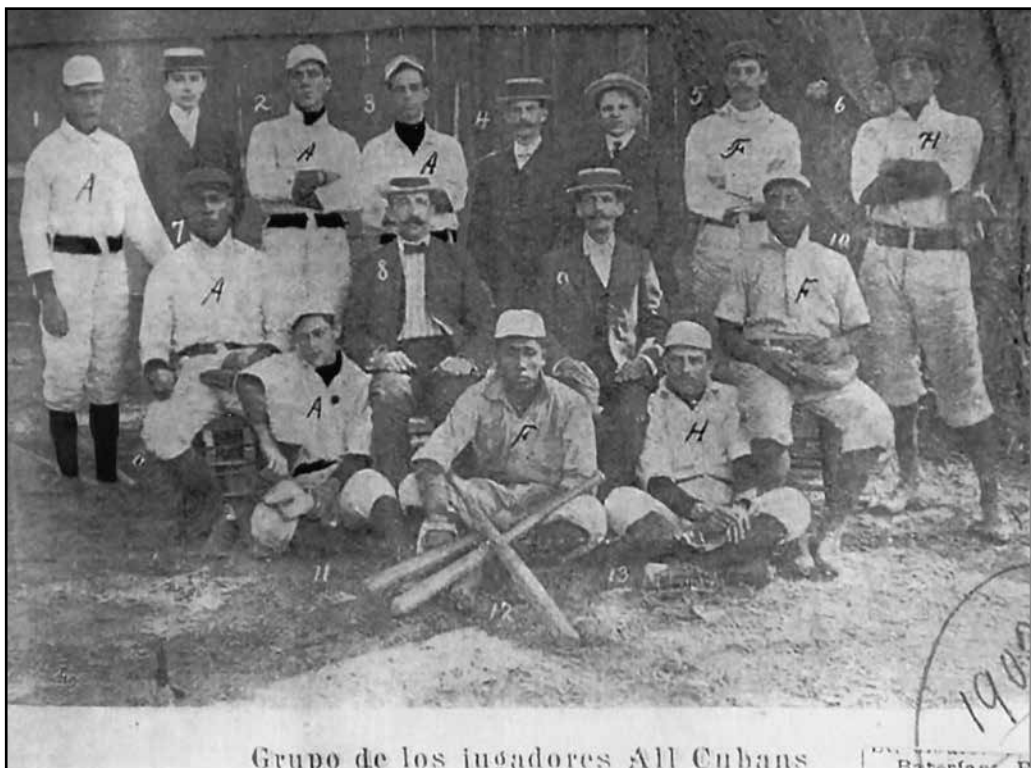
In May of 1901 the All Cubans arrived in Florida for a barnstorming tour. They returned to the United States in 1902 and had a very successful season with a won-loss record of 77-22-1 (.770). Carlos "Bebe" Royer (P) led the team during their 1902 tour of the United States.

The May 22, 1903 issue of Havana's Score magazine reported that Linares had experienced significant difficulty in Florida when he had three black players on his All Cubans squad. The All Cubans barnstorming tour started in Key West (FL) with four games before traveling to Tampa (FL). After playing two games in Tampa, the All Cubans barnstormed north until they reached the New York City area. By 1903 when the All Cubans returned to the United States for their annual barnstorming tour, they had developed a reputation as an outstanding ball club and were able to schedule games against the best white semiprofessional teams on the East coast like Murray Hills (NY).



Carlos "Bebe" Royer

The All Cubans also played the best black teams in the East like the Philadelphia Giants. The top players on the 1903 team were Luis Bustamante (SS), Alfredo Cabrera (1B), Julio Lopez (OF), Agustin "Tinti" Molina (C), Jose Munoz (P/OF) and Luis Padron (2B/OF). All six of these players have been elected to the Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame. The All Cubans posted an impressive won-loss record of 89-28-1 (.754) for their 1903 United States barnstorming tour.

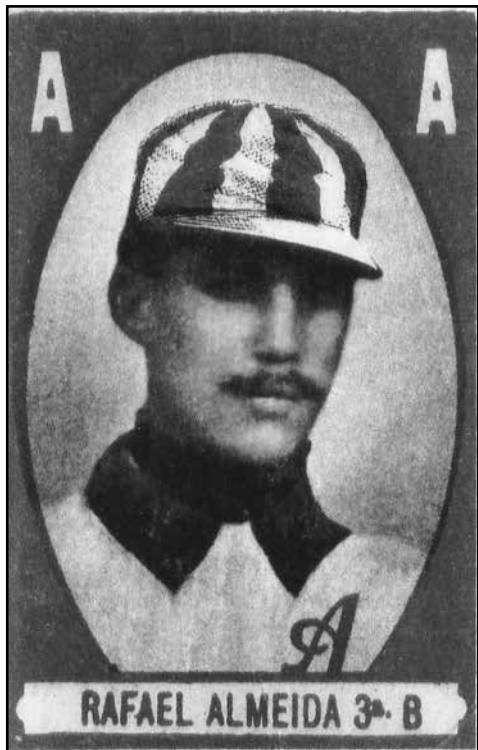


All Cubans (1902)



Tampa Tribune
Tampa, FL
03-15-04

Abel Linares managed the team during the 1904 season. The All Cubans team was led by the hitting of Rafael Almeida (SS), Jose Borges (2B), Luis Bustamante (3B), Gonzalo Sanchez (C) and Emilio Palomino (OF). Rafael Almeida would go on to play in the Major Leagues from 1911 to 1913 with the Cincinnati Reds of the National League. Jose Munoz was the ace of the pitching staff.



Rafael Almeida

In March after the conclusion of the 1904 regular Cuban baseball season, Abel Linares took the All Cubans to the United States. Linares relied on his relationship with E.B. Lamar, Jr. to help him schedule games. Abel also looked to Lamar to help him build relationships with semi-pro team owners and ball park managers. Lamar's motivation for working with Linares was very simple; E.B. wanted to expand into the Cuban market.

The team landed in Florida and after playing several games in Florida and Louisiana the team headed north. While on the East Coast they played the majority of their games in New Jersey and New York. The All Cubans also traveled through the Midwest with "big" games being played in the Chicago area. Linares' plan was to concentrate on cities with large Latin populations like Tampa, Chicago, New Orleans and New York City.

The highlight of the 1904 season for the All Cubans was a "championship series" they played against the Philadelphia Giants. According to Sol White in his book Sol White's History of Colored Baseball with other Documents on the Early Black Game, 1886-1936, the Philadelphia Giants played a championship series against the All Cubans. The All Cubans were led by Cuban Hall of Fame player Luis Bustamante. The Philadelphia team won three of the five games they played against the All Cubans and were crowned "Champions of Cuba."

On August 21, 1904 the All Cubans played a "big" game against Camden of the Tri-State League. Camden was managed by former Major League player John O'Rourke. With Jose Munoz on the mound for the All Cubans, Camden managed only two hits while being shutout by a score of 3-0.

Abel Linares' All Cubans were considered one of the top three independent teams in the United States for the 1904 season. They spent most of the regular season playing in the North and East.

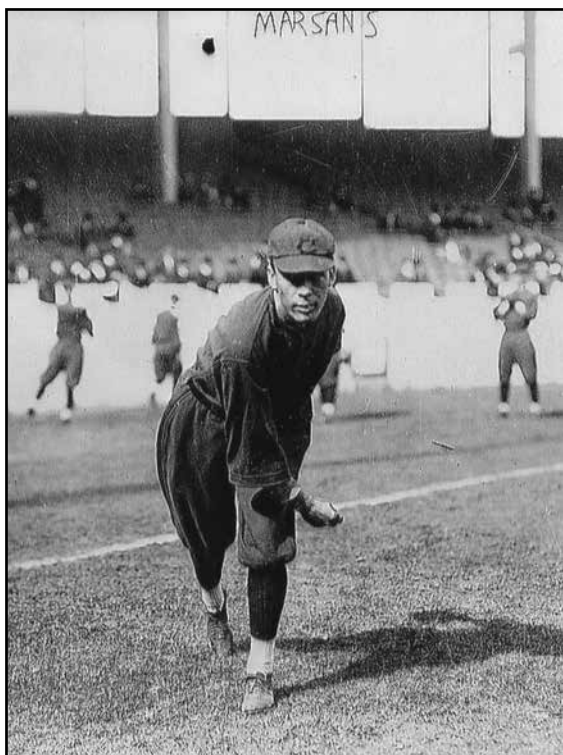
CUBANS HERE FOR SUNDAY'S GAME

BEST TEAM LINARES HAS YET BROUGHT TO TAMPA—PLAYED WINNING GAMES ALL THROUGH EAST—TAMPA ATHLETES HAD A LIVELY PRACTICE YESTERDAY.

Tampa Tribune

Tampa, FL
10-01-04

When the team sailed into Tampa on their way home to Cuba, they had reportedly compiled a won-loss record of 98-32 (.754). The All Cubans played their final game in the United States at De Soto Park against the Tampa Perfectos. Abel Linares took his team home to Havana, Cuba after playing Tampa.



Armando Marsans

This was one of the All Cubans best seasons but it was their last under the ownership of Abel Linares

It is unclear what Abel Linares did during the 1906 and 1907 seasons before he bought the Cuban Stars of Havana (Cuban Stars) from Manuel Camps in 1908.

In 1905 the All Cubans returned to the United States for their annual barnstorming tour. The All Cubans team was led by the following hitters: Rafael Almeida (3B), Luis Bustamante (SS), Alfredo Cabrera (1B), Antonio Maria Garcia (1B), Regino Garcia (C), Armando Marsans (OF) and Emilio Palomino (OF). All seven (7) of these players have been inducted into the Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame. Angel D'Meza and Inocencio Perez comprised the pitching staff for the team.

One of the top games of the 1905 season for the All Cubans was on October 27th against the Cuban X-Giants. With Rube Foster and Dan McClellan on loan from the Philadelphia Giants, the Cuban X-Giants defeated the All Cubans. The All Cubans and the Philadelphia Giants were considered the top two independent teams in the Eastern part of the United States for the 1905 season.

The All Cubans and the Philadelphia Giants were considered the top two independent teams in the Eastern part of the United States for the 1905 season. The two teams met in August for the Colored Championship. The results of the series are not known at this time.

ALL CUBANS NOW ON DECK
Are Anxious to Play Philadelphia Giants for Colored Championship
 The All Cubans are now on the track of the Philadelphia Giants for a series of five games. the following telegram was sent to this paper from Manager Linares to manager Schlichter of the Philadelphia Giants:
 "August 5, 1905.
 "Sporting Editor Philadelphia Inquirer—If Manager Schlichter, of the Philadelphia Giants, wishes to play a series of five games for the colored championship, winner to take all, say that the All Cubans will play him on those terms. Abel Linares, manager, Champion National League of Cuba."

Philadelphia Inquirer

08-07-05

Linares Buys the Cuban Stars of Havana from Manuel Camps

On May 22, 1908 the Cuban magazine, El Score, reported that Abel Linares purchased the Cuban Stars of Havana from Manuel Camps.



Manuel Camps

Linares reportedly changed the name of the team to the “Cuban Stars” when he bought Manuel Camps’ team but both the names “Cuban Stars” and “Cuban Stars of Havana “ seem to have been interchangeable for quite some time after the sale.

With his ownership of the Cuban Stars, Abel Linares formed the Cuban Stars Baseball Association of which he was the President.

Abel Linares traveled with the Cuban Stars as the team’s field manager. The 1908 Cuban Stars of Havana (Cuban Stars) were led by the hitting of Luis Bustamante (SS) Emilio Palomino (OF) and Agustin Parpetti (1B). The pitching staff for the Cuban Stars included Jose Mendez, Luis Munoz, Luis Gonzalez and Carlos Royer.

During the 1908 season, the Cuban Stars of Havana (Cuban Stars), played an independent schedule but also played in the National Association of Colored Baseball Clubs of the United States and Cuba.

National Association of Colored Baseball Clubs of the United States and Cuba

The National Association of Colored Baseball Clubs of the United States and Cuba (NACBC) was founded in late 1906 by Walter Schlichter (owner of the Philadelphia Giants) and sports promoter Nat Strong. Schlichter and Strong held a meeting in Brooklyn (NY) to which they invited representatives of the major Eastern black teams. The organization was “officially” formed on October 22, 1906 in the Bronx, New York. The original five teams that joined the “association” were the Brooklyn Royal Giants, Cuban Giants, Cuban Stars of Havana, Cuban X-Giants and Philadelphia Giants. Three of these five teams were also members of the International League of Professional Baseball Clubs of America and Cuba (ILBCAC). There was no apparent relationship between these two organizations.

In an article that appeared in The Trenton Evening Times on October 6, 1906 the stated goal of the “association” according to Schlichter and Strong was as follows:

“to place colored baseball on a solid business basis and to protect both players and managers and prevent jumping from one club to another, on the slightest pretext, as was done this last season. It is intended to protect the managers from unscrupulous and unreliable managers of independent clubs who engage the colored clubs and unceremoniously cancel the dates at the last moment if so inclined. It is intended to cut out all such clubs which treat any of the national agreement clubs in that manner.”

The newspaper article went on to say that the creation of the “association” became necessary for financial reasons when supposedly all of the colored clubs in the East lost money during the 1906 season. The reasons given for the financial problems of black team owners were high player salaries and a lack of cooperation among the clubs.

More specifically the goals of the National Association of Colored Baseball Clubs of the United States and Cuba (NACBC) were as follows:

1. Perpetuation of colored baseball.
2. Encourage a spirit of mutual cooperation between teams.
3. Foster public confidence in its integrity and methods while maintaining a high standard of skill and sportsmanship in its players.
4. Safeguard the property right of those engaged in colored baseball as a business without sacrificing the spirit of competition in the conduct of the game.
5. Promote welfare of the colored ball players as a class by perfecting them in their profession and enabling them to secure adequate compensation and expenses.
6. Hold teams accountable that engaged in unethical practices.

According to an article that appeared in The Item newspaper, the NACBC was organized and operated along the same guidelines that the American League and National League operated under.

The organization tried to place black baseball on solid economic footing, get owners working with each other for the betterment of the game of black baseball and prevent players from jumping from one team to another for higher salaries. The National Association of Colored Baseball Clubs of the United States and Cuba proved to be only marginally successful at best.

The National Association of Colored Baseball Clubs of the United States and Cuba (NACBC) lasted only three seasons (1907-1909) and ceased operation before the start of the 1910 season. The decline of the Philadelphia Giants and Nat Strong’s shift in interest to the teams he controlled playing more games against white semi-pro and town teams significantly impacted the demise of the NACBC.

The final National Association of Colored Professional Baseball Clubs “league” standings for 1908 were:

National Association of Colored Professional Baseball Clubs (1908)

Team	Won	Lost	Tie	Pct.
Brooklyn Royal Giants	19	10	1	.655
Philadelphia Giants	16	15	0	.516
Cuban Giants	6	12	1	.333
Cuban Stars	3	7	0	.300

During the 1908 season two members of the National Association of Colored Professional Baseball Clubs barnstormed through the Midwest. They were the Cuban Stars and Philadelphia Giants. The All-Cubans joined the Cuban Stars and Philadelphia Giants on their Midwestern barnstorming tour. The trio of Eastern teams played games against the best semi-professional teams everywhere they traveled.

Late in the 1908 baseball season Walter Schlichter and Sol White organized a baseball tournament to declare a “Colored Champion of the East.” The teams that were invited to play in the tournament were the Brooklyn Royal Giants, Cuban Giants, Cuban Stars and Philadelphia Giants. All the teams agreed to play five games against each other and the team that won the most games would be crowned the “Colored Champions of the East.” The Philadelphia Giants won the

tournament and along with it came the bragging rights of being the “Colored Champions of the East.”

Only twenty-three (23) box scores and line scores have been found for the 1908 Cuban Stars of Havana (Cuban Stars). The Cuban Stars had a dismal record of 9-14 (.391) in these games. Significantly more research needs to be done before any judgment of how good the team really was can be determined.

Cuban Stars Start to Gain Momentum

The 1909 baseball season was marred by growing disunity among the black baseball teams in the East. By July this disunity resulted in a split between the NACBC and ILBCAC.



Jose Mendez

Luis Padron (.344) led the Cuban Stars in hitting and was considered the best hitter in the East during the 1909 season. Other Cuban Stars hitters who contributed during the season were Jose Munoz (.310), Manuel Villa (.309), Regino Garcia (.280) and Agustin Parpetti.

Jose Mendez was the ace of the pitching staff and considered the best pitcher in the East during the 1909 season. According to newspaper reports, Jose Mendez went 44-2 (.957) in 1909. This won-loss record is probably highly exaggerated. Negro League researcher, Scott Simkus, has located box scores for fifty (50) of the Cuban Stars games for the 1909 season. Simkus credits Mendez with a primary source documented record of 14-2 (.875) with two saves. In addition Jose lost about three weeks during the season with an injury he sustained to his thumb in a game against the Leland Giants. In his first start back after the injury Mendez pitched a no-hitter against Rogers Park who were one of the top semiprofessional teams in the Chicago area.

Luis Munoz, Pastor Pareda, Conrado Rodriguez, Rube Washington and Johnny Davis also pitched for the Cuban Stars in 1909.

During the 1909 season, the Cuban Stars of Havana (Cuban Stars) played an independent schedule and also played in the International League. The International League was founded before the start of the 1906 season by William Frehofer who owned a chain of bakeries in the Philadelphia area. The original five teams and their owner/managers in the “league” were as follows: Cuban Stars of Habana (Manuel Camps), Cuban X-Giants (E.B. Lamar, Jr.), Havana Stars (Alfredo Pastor), Philadelphia Professionals (William Frehofer – owner and John A. O’Rourke – manager) and the Philadelphia Quaker Giants (Jess and Eddie McMahon).

The final International League standings for the 1909 season were as follows:

International League (1909)

Team	Won	Lost	Tie	Pct.
Brooklyn Royal Giants	9	3	0	.750
Cuban Stars of Havana	8	5	0	.615
Philadelphia Giants	6	12	0	.417
Cuban Giants	0	3	0	.000

After the Philadelphia Giants victory over the Leland Giants in a “supposedly” championship series to crown the best team in the West, Philadelphia played a seven game series against the Cuban Stars. Ironically the two eastern teams played the series in Chicago. The Cuban Stars took the first three games of the series. Philadelphia took game four by a score of 9-5. The two teams split the next two games. The Philadelphia Giants collapsed in the seventh game and lost by a humiliating score of 16-6. When all was said and done, the Cuban Stars won the series five games to two wins for Philadelphia.



Luis “Mulo” Padron

The Cuban Stars of Havana (Cuban Stars) had an excellent season touring the United States during the 1909 season. They compiled a won-loss record of 43-27-2 (.597) against all levels of competition in 1909.

Linares Sells Luis Padron to Chicago White Sox

In 1909 Abel Linares sold the rights to Luis Padron’s contract to the Chicago White Sox. Luis had been playing for Linares’ Cuban Stars of Havana. Padron was coming off a good season where he batted .344 for the Cuban Stars. Charles Comiskey, owner of the Chicago White Sox, paid Linares \$1,000.00 in the deal. The importance of this transaction was that Luis Padron became the first Cuban player to be signed by a Major League team.

Luis Padron spent seven seasons in the Minor Leagues but was never called up to the Majors. Stops in Padron’s Minor League career included Jacksonville, Jersey City, Long Beach, Long Branch, Newark, New Britain, Peoria and Poughkeepsie.

Cuban Stars Tour the East

At the end of March of 1910 Cuban Stars also referred to as the Cuban Stars of Havana arrived in New Orleans (LA) to start their annual barnstorming tour of the United States. Scheduling arrangements for the tour were made through New York City promoter Nat C. Strong. Linares’ plan was to spend the month of June in the Chicago area before heading back East.

CUBAN PLAYERS TO TOUR THIS COUNTRY
Fans to Get an Idea of Spanish Coaching

The Cuban Star Baseball association of Havana Cuba, under which name the pick of the best men from the Havana and Almendares teams of the Cuban league annually play throughout the United States under the management of Abel Linares, will arrive in New Orleans about the end of March and will make their usual tour through the states being scheduled the entire month of June in Chicago, after which they will tour Canada and the eastern states.

The club will be made up of the crack players who so easily defeated the Cincinnati Nationals, Detroit Americans and the Indianapolis team of the American association, and will be composed of Mendez, Pedrosa, Munoz, Garcia, Parpetti, Gonzales, Govantes, Hernandez, Buster, Santa, Cruz, Royer, Magriant, Acosta, and General S...

Abel Linares appointed Agustin “Tinti” Molina to manage the team. Regino Garcia (.347), Luis Bustamante (.312), Agustin Parpetti (.297) and Carlos Moran (.288) led the team in hitting in 1910. Jose Mendez, Eustaquio “Bombin” Pedroso, Jose Munoz, Pastor Pareda, Luis Gonzalez, Lico Mederos and Will Horn all pitched for Molina in 1910. Unfortunately for Linares, Mendez, Munoz and Pedroso spent the majority of the 1910 season with Allyn McAllister’s Stars of Cuba baseball team.

Evansville Courier and Press

01-29-10

During the 1910 season the National Association of Colored Baseball Clubs of United States and Cuba (NACBC) sent the Cuban Stars and Philadelphia Giants on a Midwest barnstorming tour. Abel Linares accompanied the Cuban Stars on the tour. The Philadelphia Giants started the tour strong by winning six of their first eight games but from June 11th to June 25th the Giants lost eight of nine games. The Cuban Stars had an excellent tour. They had a won-loss record of 23-14 (.622) in the 37 games they played on their Midwestern tour.

CUBANS PLAY IN DETROIT
Speedy Islanders and Philadelphia Giants Are Coming Here.
 Never before in the history of semi-professional baseball in Detroit has a series of games been staged here of the magnitude of the Cuban-S. & S. Philadelphia Giants series which is to be played at Mack Park starting Sunday next. By special inducements made the two clubs through his New York agent Manager Roesink was able to secure the Cubans and Philadelphia Giants to come to Detroit at the same time to play a series for the world's semi-pro title and also games against the Mack Parkers. In order to get the Cubans here it was necessary for him to book the team for this week in nearby towns and cities.
 Following are the dates for the big series of games as booked: Wednesday, May 24, Cubans vs. Mt. Clemens at Mt. Clemens; Thursday, 25, Cubans vs. St. Clair at St. Clair; Friday, May 26, Cubans vs. Port Huron at Port Huron; Saturday, May 27, Cubans vs. Windsor at Windsor; Sunday, Monday and two games Memorial day, May 28, 29 and 30, Cubans vs. S. & S. at Mack Park, Detroit; Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 31, June 1 and 2, Cubans vs. Philadelphia Giants for the semi-pro world's title, at Mack Park, Detroit; Saturday, Sunday and Monday, June 3, 4 and 5 Philadelphia Giants vs. S. & S. at Mack Park.
 The Cubans are known the world over as the team which defeated the American league champion Tigers, the World's Champion Athletics and the Cincinnati National league team. This team last fall defeated the Athletics in a series of 12 games taking nine of the dozen.

The Cuban Stars were considered the second best team in the East during the 1910 season. The Brooklyn Royal Giants under the management of Sol White were considered the best team in the East for the 1910 season.

The 1911 version of the Cuban Stars (Cuban Stars of Havana) were managed by Linares' trusted friend and loyal associate, Agustin "Tinti" Molina. The top hitters of the Cuban Stars were Pelayo Chacon (SS), Gervasio Gonzalez (C), Ricardo Hernandez (OF), Heliodoro Hidalgo (OF), Carlos Moran (3B) and Luis Padron (OF). The pitching staff for the Stars included Jose Mendez, J.F. Mariota, Pastor Pareda, Julian Perez, Eustaquio "Bombin" Pedroso and Lico Mederos.

During the season the Cuban Stars traveled to Detroit where they played a "championship series" against the Philadelphia Giants. The five game series which was played at Mack Park lasted from May 31st to June 4th. Promoter John Roesink billed the series as the "World's Semi-Professional Championship." In order to entice the Cuban Stars to travel all the way to Detroit, Roesink had to guarantee the Cuban Stars games with local teams to make it financially worthwhile for the Stars. Some of the local teams that the Cuban Stars played were Mt. Clemmons, Port Huron, St. Clair, Schmitz & Shroder and Windsor. Behind a strong relief effort from Jose Mendez, the Cuban Stars won the first game by a score of 4-3. The Cuban Stars won their series with the Philadelphia Giants by taking four out of the five games they played. With their victory they were crowned the "World's Semi-Professional Champions."

Detroit Free Press
 Detroit, MI
 05-23-11

Gary Ashwill and his Seamheads research team rate the Cuban Stars (Cuban Stars of Havana) as the best team in the East in 1911. They have located 30 box and line scores for the season. Linares' team had a record of 18-11-1 (.621) in these 30 games. Other top teams and their managers in the East in 1911 were New York Lincoln Giants (Sol White and John Henry "Pop" Lloyd), Brooklyn Royal Giants (Charles Earle), Philadelphia Giants (Grant "Homerun" Johnson) and the Cuban Giants (Clarence Williams).

GIANTS LOSE TO CUBANS IN FIRST
 Mendez Goes to Mound for Third Time This Week and Wins His Game.

Detroit Free Press
 06-01-11

Abel Linares' Cuban Stars were also referred to as the All-Cuban Stars and Cuban Stars of Havana during the 1911 season.



All Cuban Stars
1911

Cuban Stars Move West

Before the start of the 1912 baseball season in the United States, Abel Linares and Agustin "Tinti" Molina made a major decision to move their base of operation from the East Coast to the Midwest.

The 1912 Cuban Stars were managed by "Tinti" Molina. From the twenty (20) box scores that have been found for the Cuban Stars 1912 season, they appear to have had a relatively weak hitting team during the season. Jose Magrinat (.355), Carlos Moran (.288) and Bombin Pedroso (.288) were the team's best hitters in this limited number of games. The Cuban Stars did, however, have an outstanding pitching staff that included Jose Mendez, Bombin Pedroso, Jose Junco and Luis Gonzalez.

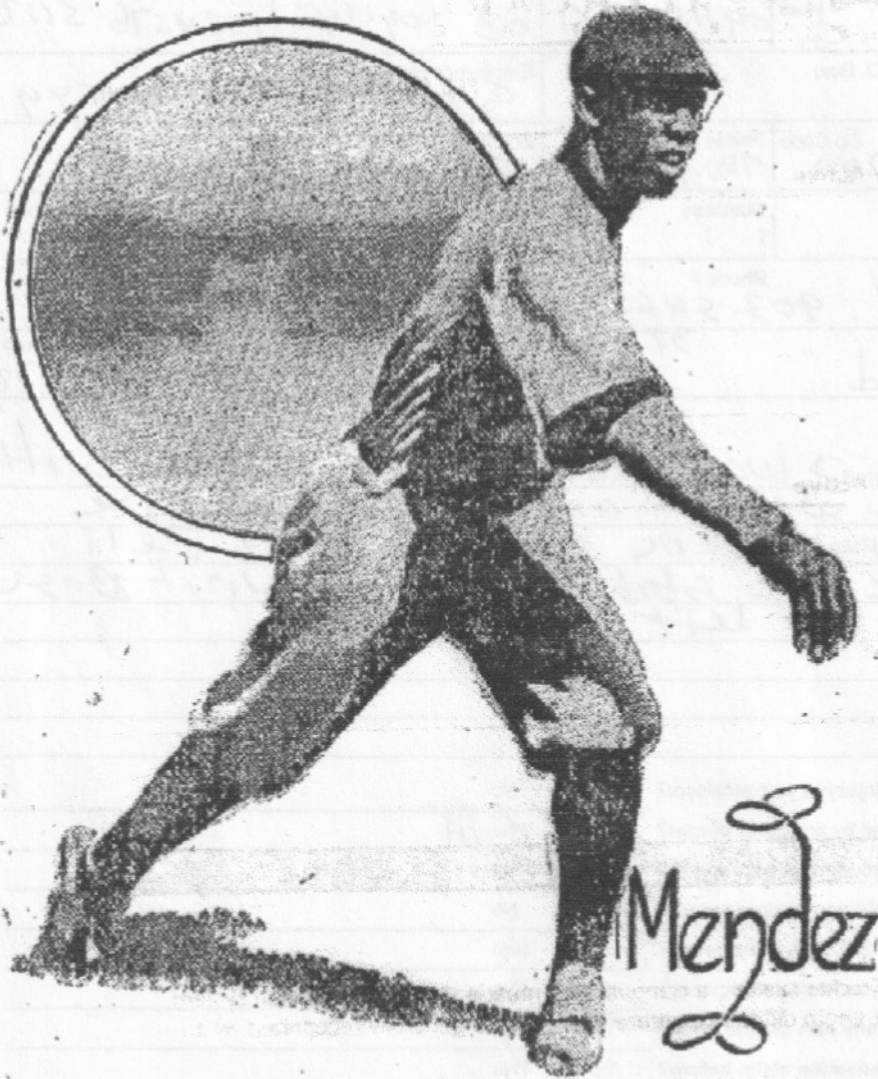
One of the highlights of Abel Linares 1912 season was the discovery of a young pitcher-third baseman by the name of Adolfo Luque. Luque had played ball while in the Cuban military and for the prestigious Vedado Tennis Club. Linares recommended Luque to his associate Dr. Henriquez who owned the Long Branch Cubans.

Cuban Stars
vs.
MARSHALL
LEAGUE PARK
TUESDAY, JUNE 11th
4:00 P. M.
Best Attraction of the Season

This team, composed of native Cubans, defeated the World's Champion Athletics nine out of twelve games. Mendez, considered by many experts as the best pitcher in the world, will probably pitch. Pedrosa, the hitless wonder, is also with them.

Admitted Post

FAMOUS CUBAN PITCHER WHO WILL FACE TELLINGS TODAY



Jose Mendez

“Black Mathewson”

Cleveland Plain Dealer
Cleveland, OH
08-20-12

reinforced by Gene Krapp of the Naps and a Class A player, who, for reasons best known to himself, played under the alias of Deering, the Tellings of Cleveland played a tie game with the Cuban Stars of Havana at League park yesterday, neither team scoring in the five innings that were contested prior to the arrival of the rain.

The veteran Jack Lee was pitted against Pedrosa, considered next to Mendez in ability among the Cuban hurlers. Lee was hit a trifle harder than the colored man, but with some excellent support managed to hold the Cubans scoreless. Pedrosa struck out six men and had the Tellings completely baffled. A running catch by Mendez of a line drive hit to right field by Davidson in the first inning was the feature play.

Gene Krapp played second base. He was twice at bat. He struck out once and forced a runner at third the other time. He fielded ground balls hit to him cleanly, but by the time he finished

massaging the ball on one occasion the runner had crossed first base. He will scarcely get Lajoie's job away from the Franchman this season.

Another contest will be staged by the same teams this afternoon. Mendez, called the "Black Mathewson," will pitch for the Cubans, while Manager Schlemmer of the Tellings is trying to secure George Sisler of Harborton to pitch for his team. Score:

	A	R	H	O	A	Cubans	A	R	H	O	A
Davidson, l.	2	0	2	0	Moran, 3.	3	0	2	0		
Parratt, m.	2	0	3	0	Garcia, 1.	2	0	2	0		
Smith, s.	2	0	1	3	Hidalgo, m.	2	0	2	0		
Deering, l.	2	0	1	2	Pedrosa, p.	2	0	0	1		
Krapp, 2.	2	0	0	1	Magnum, l.	2	0	0	0		
Edgington, 3	2	0	0	1	Villa, 2.	2	0	1	0		
Evana, 1.	2	0	3	0	Mendez, r.	2	0	0	2		
Armstrong, c	2	0	0	0	Figarola, c.	3	0	0	1		
Lee, p.	1	0	0	1	Chacou, s.	2	0	1	0		

Totals... 17 0 1 15 0 | Totals... 19 0 2 15 2

Tellings 0 0 0 0 0-9
Cubans 3 0 0 0 0-9

Errors—Krapp, Edgington, Garcia.
Struck out—By Pedrosa 6. Stolen bases—Figarola, Chacou.

Adolfo Luque played for the Long Branch Cubans in 1913 and this embarked upon a career that would take him to the Major Leagues with the Cincinnati Reds. Luque played in the Major Leagues from 1913 to 1932. He won 195 ball games in his Major League career.



Cuban Stars
1912

In the twenty-three (23) box scores and line scores that have been currently located they reveal a won-loss record of 12-9-2 (.571). The 1912 Cuban Stars were considered the third best team in the West right behind the Chicago American Giants and the Kansas City Royal Giants.

In 1913 the Cuban Stars barnstorming tour of the United States concentrated in the Midwest. The team was managed by Agustin "Tinti" Molina. The Cuban Stars featured a very strong team offensively during the 1913 season. They were led by the hitting of Cristobal Torriente (.380), Manuel Villa (.363), Pelayo Chacon (.330) and Luis Bustamante (.323). Eustaquio "Bombin" Pedroso, Jose Junco, Pastor Pareda, Gunboat Thompson and Cristobal Torriente made up the Cuban Stars pitching staff.

Gary Ashwill and his Seamheads research team have found forty (40) box scores and line scores for the 1913 baseball season. Linares' Stars compiled a record of 16-14 (.533) during the 1913 season. Ashwill considers the Cuban Stars the fourth best team in the West for the season. The top three teams in the West in 1913 were the Chicago American Giants, St. Louis Giants and Chicago Giants. The Chicago Union Giants, French Lick Plutos, Indianapolis ABCs and West Baden Sprudels also fielded teams during the season.

In October of 1913 Abel Linares announced that he would send two Cuban teams to the United States in 1914. These two teams would be the Cuban Stars and a team representing the University of Habana. The University of Habana was to be made up of entirely "white" players. It is unclear at this time if the University of Habana team toured the United States in 1914.

Tinti Molina was back to manage the Cuban Stars for their 1914 barnstorming season in the Midwest. The Cuban Stars were led by the hitting of their young rookie Cristobal Torriente (.393). Torriente was also considered the best hitter in the West in 1914. Other top hitters for the



Cristobal Torriente

season were Gervasio Gonzalez (.295), Manuel Villa (.291) and Carlos Moran (.278). Pastor Pareda (11-5), Jose Junco (2-3), Bombin Pedroso (3-11) and Cristobal Torriente (4-3) comprised the pitching staff for the Cuban Stars.

Currently, forty-one (41) box scores and line scores have been found for the 1914 season. The Stars were 21-19-1 (.525) in these games. At the end of the 1914 season, the Cuban Stars (Cuban Stars of Havana) were considered the third best team in the West after the Chicago American Giants and Indianapolis ABCs.

Cristobal Torriente returned to the United States with the Cuban Stars (Cuban Stars of Havana) for their 1915 Midwestern season. Torriente batted .347 in the 52 games which have been found with him playing for Abel Linares' team. Manuel Villa (.312) and Agustin Parpeti (.281) also contributed offensively during the season for the Stars. Jose Junco, Pastor Pareda, Juan Padron, Bombin Pedroso and Tatica Campos all pitched for the 1915 Cuban Stars.

The Cuban Stars (Cuban Stars of Havana) had an off year in the United States in 1915. In the 55 games for which box scores have been found, the Cuban Stars posted a losing record of 24-29-2 (.453). C.I. Taylor's Indianapolis ABCs under C.I. Taylor was the best team in the West in 1915.



Cuban Stars (1915)

(Back row left to right – Bartolo Portuondo, Bienvendio Jimenez, Vicente Rodriquez, Marcelino Guerra, Jose “Tatica” Campos and **Eustaquio “Bombin” Pedroso**. Middle row left to right – **Gervasio “Strike” Gonzalez**, **Agustin “Tinti” Molina**, Manolo Villa and Jose Padron. Front row left to right – Matias Rios and Jose Junco)

By 1916 the Cuban Stars were no longer also referred to as the “Cuban Stars of Havana.”

Linares’ Cuban Stars Challenge Pompez’s Cuban Stars in Puerto Rico

In 1916 an upstart young baseball club owner by the name of Alex Pompez from the New York City area fielded his own “Cuban Stars” baseball team. When Abel Linares heard of this he was outraged. Linares felt that Pompez not only infringed upon his territory right of the United States but also should not be able to use the same name of his team the “Cuban Stars.”

When Pompez formed his Cuban Stars team he contacted Jose Ezequiel Rosario who was a Puerto Rican sports writer and promoter about booking an exhibition tour for his team in Puerto Rico. Upon hearing this news, Abel Linares immediately sent a cable to Rosario protesting Pompez’s Puerto Rican tour. Rosario’s response was to invite Linares and his team to Puerto Rico to play Pompez to settle the issue of which team had the rights to use the name “Cuban Stars.” Abel was eager to accept the challenge.

Abel Linares arrived in Puerto Rico with a star studded team of veteran ball players that included: Tatica Campos, Pelayo Chacon, “Strike” Gonzalez, Jose Junco, Adolfo Luque, Jose Mendez, Luis “Mulo” Padron, Eustaquio “Bombin” Pedroso and Cristobal Torriente.

Alex Pompez’s team was far less established. Pompez’s line-up was composed of young up and coming ball players like Bernardo Baro, Jose Maria Fernandez, Bartolo Portuando and Julio Rojo. Alex Pompez’s team of young upstarts prevailed by a score of 3-2. Linares immediately demanded a rematch. Alex Pompez with nothing to gain refused.



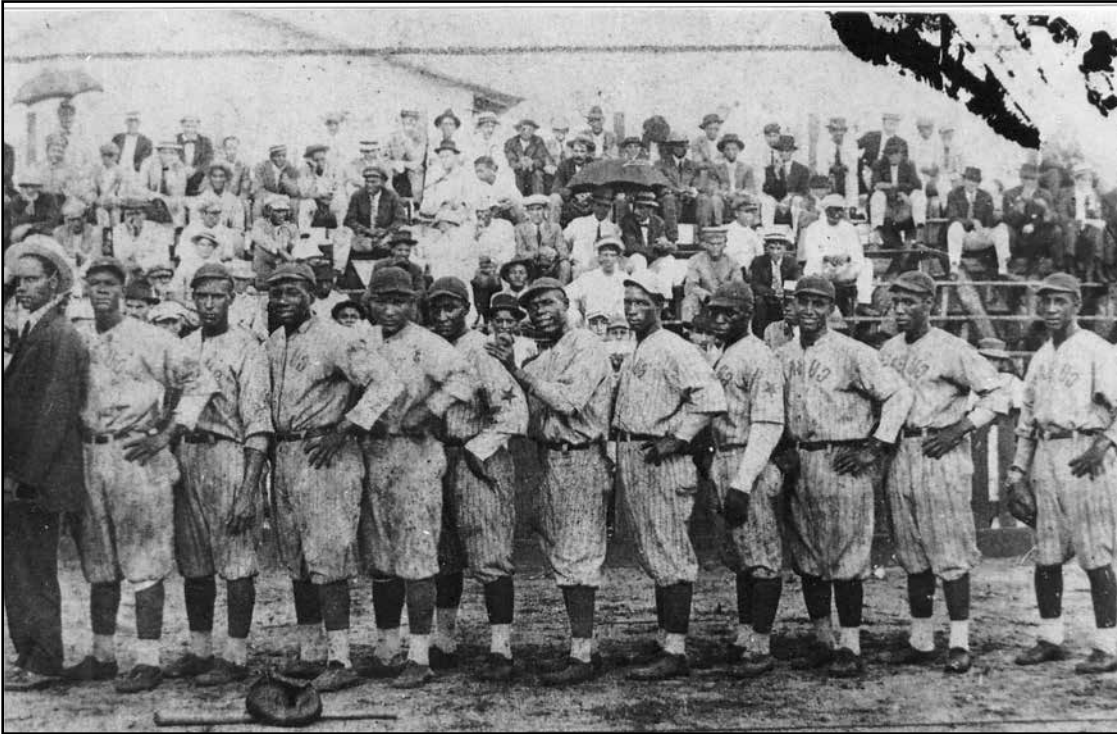
Jose Mendez
Cuban Stars

The winning of one single game made several things very obvious. Alex Pompez had fielded a very competitive team and he wasn’t going away. In addition Pompez was a force to be reckoned with for the foreseeable future. This immediately created a rivalry between Abel Linares and Alex Pompez that would exist until the day Linares died. Abel Linares had the experience of touring the United States since 1899 and that by owning both the Almendares and Habana franchises in the Cuban League, he controlled professional baseball on the island of Cuba. According to Dr. Adrian Burgos in his book Cuban Star which was a biography about the life of Alex Pompez, that even with all of Linares’ experience and control of baseball in Cuba; Alex Pompez had several advantages over Abel Linares when it came to competing in baseball in the United States. These advantages were as follows:

- Alex Pompez lived in Manhattan (NY) year round and this gave him a better understanding of life in America and how to conduct business in the United States.
- With New York City as his base of operations he was located in a city with a large Cuban and Latin population. This enabled Pompez to build a loyal fan base.
- Alex was able to secure several ball parks like Dexter Park in Brooklyn, Catholic Protectory in the Bronx and Dyckman Oval in Manhattan for his

team to call their home field. This provided stability for his team and fan base.

- According to Dr. Burgos, Alex Pompez also had a better understanding of racial discrimination in the United States and its impact on Latin ball players.
- Lastly Dr. Burgos states in his book that he felt that Pompez had a better understanding of the needs of Latin ball players and this enabled him to do a better job recruiting ball players.



Alex Pompez's Cuban Stars
1916

Linares Continues to Barnstorm in the Midwest

As he had done for years, "Tinti" Molina managed the Cuban Stars for their 1916 American tour. Offensively the Cuban Stars struggled during the 1916 season. In the 62 games for which complete box scores have been found, the Stars had a disappointing team batting average of .221. Cristobal Torriente batted .328 and was the only starter to bat over .265 for the season. Jose Junco and Juan Padron led Molina's pitching staff in 1916.

Gary Ashwill and his research team have found 71 box scores and line scores for the 1916 season. The Cuban Stars went 35-34-2 (.507) in these games. They were considered the third best team in the West in 1916. The Chicago American Giants and the Indianapolis ABCs were the best teams in the West for the season.

As they had done for the past several seasons, the Cuban Stars left Habana under manager Tinti Molina to barnstorm in the Midwestern part of the United States during the regular baseball season of 1917. From newspaper accounts that have been found it appears the Cuban Stars struggled significantly in 1917. For the 41 complete box scores that have been found, the Cuban Stars only managed an anemic .215 batting average. Left fielder Marcelino Guerra led the team in hitting with a .250 batting average. The pitching staff for Linares included Bombin Pedroso, Jose Junco and Juan Padron. The trio of starters were very good pitchers but didn't get any run support.

From box scores and line scores that have been found the Cuban Stars were 19-29 (.396). Negro League researcher Gary Ashwill considers them the fourth best team in the West for the 1917 season. The Chicago American Giants, All Nations and Indianapolis ABCs all out played the Stars during the season.

When Tinti Molina and the Cuban Stars returned to the United States for their 1918 barnstorming season, Linares and Molina had not upgraded the team's roster to the point where they would be able to compete with the Chicago American Giants, Indianapolis ABCs and other top clubs in the West. Only two hitters produced during the season. They were Cristobal Torriente (.359) and Bienvendio "Hooks" Jimenez (.283). In the 35 box scores that have been found for the Cuban Stars 1918 season, no hitter other than Torriente and Jimenez hit above .229. One of the highlights of the season for the Cuban Stars was a game in which Hooks Jimenez stole eight (8) bases. Jose Junco, Prudencio Martinez and Cristobal Torriente handled the pitching load for the Stars in 1918.

In the thirty-nine (39) games that have been found for the 1918 season, the Cuban Stars went 15-22-1 (.405).

Bombin Pedroso (.310) and Bartolo Portuondo (.267) were the leading hitters for the Cuban Stars on their 1919 Midwest barnstorming tour. Pedroso who was normally a pitcher was also the team's starting first baseman during the season. Bombin was also called upon to pitch occasionally. Julio Le Blanc, Jose Junco and Abraham Tolosa were the Stars' top three pitchers during the season. The Cuban Stars roster was so thin that in 1919 three position players (Tatica Campos, Hooks Jimenez and Cristobal Torriente) were called on to pitch during the season. The trio did a fairly good job, going 5-1 (.833)

One of the highlights of the 1919 season for the Cuban Stars was their short trip to Mexico. On May 23rd Tinti Molina and 12 Cuban Stars players entered Mexico at the Laredo (TX) border crossing to play the local Laredo (Mexico) ball club at Caliche Park in Laredo. The Cuban Stars behind the pitching of Jose Le Blanc easily dominated their Mexican opponent and won the game by a score of 22-2.

BASEBALL
CALICHE PARK Laredo, Texas

SATURDAY 6 P. M.
SUNDAY 10:30 A. M. AND 4:30 P. M.

CUBAN STARS
VS.
LAREDO.

Admission	25 cents.
Grand Stand	50 cents.
Box Seats	75 cents.

This team has toured through the Northern United States for the past fourteen years, and are now on their way to St. Louis, Chicago, New York and other large Cities where they have games booked for the next four months.

Cubans Stars
vs
Laredo

Laredo Times
Laredo, TX
05-25-19

The Chicago American Giants, Detroit Stars and Cuban Stars are considered the three best teams in the West in 1919. Researchers disagree which team was the best in the West for the 1919 season. Some researchers assert that the Cuban Stars were the “Colored Champions of the West” for the 1919 season.

Founding of the Negro National League

Prior to the start of the 1920 baseball season Rube Foster, owner of the Chicago American Giants, held a meeting of the owners of the top black teams in the West. These meetings were held on February 13th and 14th of 1920 at the YMCA in Kansas City (Missouri) for the purpose of organizing the Negro National League. Some of the owners who attended the meeting were: Andrew “Rube” Foster (Chicago American Giants), John “Tenny” Blount (Detroit Stars), Joe Green (Chicago Giants), C.I. Taylor (Indianapolis ABC’s) and J.L. Wilkinson (Kansas City Monarchs). Lorenzo Cobb represented Charles Mills who was the owner of the St. Louis Giants. It appeared that neither Abel Linares or Agustin “Tinti” Molina had significant interest in Rube Foster’s proposed league because neither attended the organizational meetings.

At the end of the meetings a “league” constitution was ratified and Rube Foster was elected as the President.

Organize Base Ball League

**Best Colored Players in the
Country Included in Five
Team League**

Kansas City, Feb. 25—The National Negro Baseball League has been organized here, with Rube Foster, of Chicago as president. The constitution and by-laws of the league were written by Dave Wyatt, Indianapolis Ledger; Attorney Elisha Scott, Topeka, Kan.; Cary B. Lewis, Chicago Defender and Elwood C. Knox, Indianapolis Freeman. The teams and players include:

Detroit Stars—Pete Hill, Bruce Petway, Frank Warfield, Edgar Wesley, Joe Hewitt, Mac Eggerson, Leroy Roberts, Henderson E. Boyd, Holland Richard Whitworth, Jimmy Lyons, Johnson Hill, Letty Hill.

Kansas City—John Donaldson, Joe Mendez, Frank Blukol, Jackson Walmsur, Rube Currie, Rodrigue, Portorduna, Sam Crawford, Wilbur Rogan, W. Harris, Baro.

St. Louis Giants—Tillie McAdoo, Dan Kenard, Charles Brooks, Charles Scott, Wm. Drake, Danridge Felix Wallace, Charles Blackwell, Eddie Holt, John Tinner, Hill.

American Giants—George Dixon, Jas. Brown, Leroy Grant, Elwood DeGloss, Robert Williams, David Malacher, J. E. Reese, Thomas Johnson, Thomas William, Richard Lundy, Christopher Torrenti, Edw. Gans.

Chicago Giants—Lawrence Simpson, Walter Ball, Lemuel McDugal, Edward Jones, John Beckwith, William Green, Thurman Jennings Frank Jefferies, Horace Jenkins, Joe Green, Clarence Winston, Tom Clark.

Taylor’s A. B. C’s—James Jefferies, J. Taylor, Marten Clark, Russell Powell, England, William Webster, Oscar Charleston, Ed Rile, Murray, William Dismukes, Decatur Johnson.



Andrew “Rube” Foster

In an effort to deal with the issue of player contracts and in an attempt to make the new “league” as competitive as possible, Rube Foster made the following edicts:

1. Oscar Charleston was sent from the Chicago American Giants to the Indianapolis ABCs.
2. Sam Crawford went to the Kansas City Monarchs.
3. Dick Whitworth was sent to the Detroit Stars.
4. The Detroit Stars returned John Donaldson and Jose Mendez to the Kansas City Monarchs.
5. Jimmie Lyons was assigned to the Detroit Stars. The only rationale for this move was that Tenney Blount was a close personal friend of Rube Foster and Lyons would be a valuable addition to the Detroit Stars.

The formation of the Negro National League did not happen over night. In December of 1907 a meeting had been held at the offices of the Freeman newspaper in Indianapolis to discuss the formation of the “National Colored Baseball League.” Among those attending this meeting were Frank Leland, Rube Foster and other owners of some of the top black teams in the West.

In addition according to a letter by C.I. Taylor that was printed in the Indianapolis Freeman on May 5th of 1915, he and Rube Foster had been corresponding and planning for a national black league since at least the fall of 1914.

A League Team with No Home Field

The establishment of the Negro National League created new opportunities for Cuban and other Latin ball players to play in an organized “league” in the United States. It didn’t take Abel Linares and Agustin “Tinti” Molina long to make the decision and pay their franchise fee to join Rube Foster’s Negro National League.

One of the major challenges that confronted Linares and Molina was that they did not have a home ball park for their Cuban Stars team. With no home field Abel Linares never had the chance to develop a loyal fan base. A secondary problem was that Chicago lacked a large Cuban population.

During the 1920 Negro National League season, Abel Linares would lease South Side Park from owner John Schorling when it was available. Unfortunately for the Cuban Stars, Rube Foster’s Chicago American Giants were given first priority for booking dates.



Southside Park
Chicago, IL

Linares and Molina Field a Competitive Team

With Abel Linares as the owner of the team and Agustin “Tinti” Molina as the manager, the 1920 Cuban Stars (West) were very competitive during the inaugural season of the Negro National League. They got both solid hitting and pitching during the season. As a team the Cuban Stars had a .249 team batting average in 1920.

The starting line-up for the 1920 Cuban Stars was as follows:

Cuban Stars (1920)

Position	Player	Batting Average	Position	Player	Batting Average
1B	Eustaquio Pedroso	.233	OF	Valentin Dreke	.317
2B	Bienvenido Jimenez	.236		Bernardo Baro	.336
SS	Matias Rios	.211		Marcelino Guerra	.245
3B	Paito Herrera	.267			
C	Eufemio Abreu	.185	P	Jose Hernandez	9-8

During the 1920 Negro National League season, Cheo Hernandez (9-8), Jose Le Blanc (8-10), Faustino “Tony” Valdes (5-6), Bernardo Baro (0-1) and Prudencio Martinez all pitched for the Cuban Stars.



Cuban Stars (West)
1920

Researchers differ on the “league” won-loss records of the eight teams that played in the inaugural season of the Negro National League season in 1920. Presented here is the research of two of the top Negro League researchers (Larry Lester/Dick Clark and Gary Ashwill – Seamheads) for the 1920 Negro National League season. Both research groups agree in the final order of standings, but Ashwill’s group appears to have found significantly more “official” Negro National League box scores for games for the 1920 season.

Negro National League (1920)

Research by Larry Lester and Dick Clark				Research by Gary Ashwill (Seamheads)			
1920	Games	Record	Pct.	1920	Games	Record	Pct.
Chicago American Giants	45	32-13	.711	Chicago American Giants	62	43-17-2	.710
Detroit Stars	58	35-23	.603	Detroit Stars	64	37-27	.578
Kansas City Monarchs	70	41-29	.586	Kansas City Monarchs	79	44-33-2	.570
Indianapolis ABCs	74	39-35	.527	Indianapolis ABC’s	86	44-38-4	.535
Cuban Stars	45	21-24	.467	Cuban Stars (West)	69	35-34	.507
St. Louis Giants	57	25-32	.439	St. Louis Giants	72	32-40	.444
Dayton Marcos	26	8-18	.308	Dayton Marcos	52	16-36	.308
Chicago Giants	28	4-24	.143	Chicago Giants	36	5-31	.139

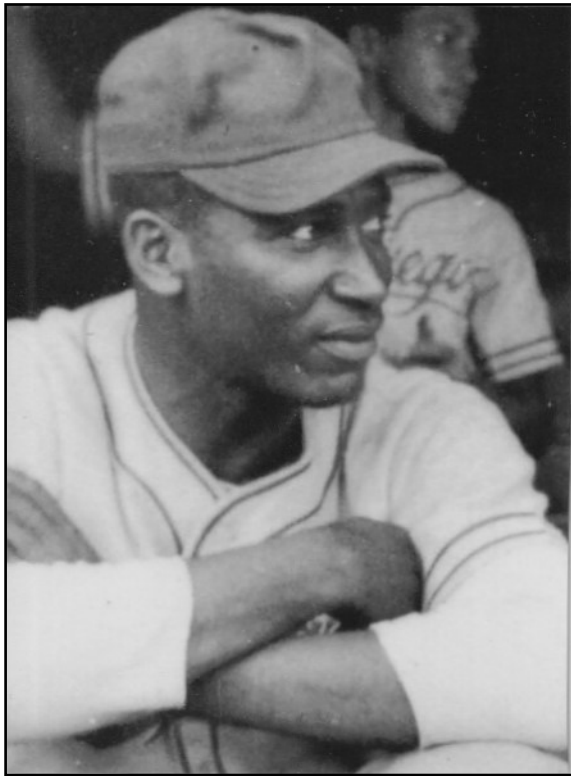
(Note – The Bacharach Giants were an Associate Member of the “league” in 1920.)

The Negro National League proved to be the first successful baseball league featuring black baseball players.

Even though researchers disagree with the Cuban Stars' won-loss record, most agree that the Cuban Stars finished in fifth place in the final Negro National League standings.

Linares Loses His Advantage in America

When Rube Foster first formed the Negro National League, Abel Linares initially had two distinct advantages. First, he had the experience of barnstorming in the United States. Linares started sending his teams to the United States in 1899 and his team, the Cuban Stars (West), had barnstormed in the Midwest on a regular basis for several years. Second, Abel Linares owned the Almendares and Habana franchises in the Cuban League. In addition he had and would own several other teams that played in the "league." Ownership of these teams helped Abel control professional baseball in Cuba and gave him some measure of control over Cuban players coming to the United States.



Martin Dihigo

Unfortunately, this would all change. First, Abel Linares had to deal with competition from Alex Pompez, owner of the Cuban Stars (East), in signing the best Cuban and other Latin ball players. Pompez had formed his team in 1916, had become very successful and was a real force with which Linares had to deal. Some of the top players that Alex Pompez was able to sign for the Cuban Stars (East) were Bernardo Baro, Pelayo Chacon, Martin Dihigo, Valentin Dreke, Isidro Fabre, Jose Maria Fernandez, Oscar Levis, Champion Mesa, Alejandro Oms, Agustin Parpetti, Bombin Pedroso, Bartolo Portuando and Julio Rojo. In the "old" days all of these individuals would have played for Linares. Abel Linares had gone from having all the best Cuban players to having to settle for only a portion of them. The second issue for Abel was players defecting from his team to play for another team in the Negro National League. Two of the key players that Linares lost over the years were Jose Mendez to the Kansas City Monarchs and Cristobal Torriente to the Chicago American Giants.

While all of the issues just discussed had a significant negative impact on the quality of baseball team Abel was able to field and how financially successful his baseball venture in America would be, this did have benefits for the Cuban players. With first two owners (Linares and Pompez) and then other American teams vying for their services it meant that more players would be able to come to the United States and players could demand more money. Whether a player signed with Linares, Pompez or one of the other owners of Negro National League and then Eastern Colored League teams, it meant that the Latin ball players were guaranteed almost year round employment. Baseball in the United States went from May until about September-October and baseball in Cuba generally was played from about October-November until early February of the next year.

Both Abel Linares and Alex Pompez had a very important impact on baseball in the United States. Between Linares and Pompez they were responsible for bringing the vast majority of the best Latin ball players to this country.

In the end, the loss of being able to sign the best up and coming young players and the defection of players to other teams would reduce the Cuban Stars (West) to a second division team for the rest of Abel Linares' baseball career.

Cuban Stars Move to Cincinnati

Before the start of the 1921 season the Cuban Stars (West) moved to Cincinnati (OH) and called Northside Park and Redland Field as their home ball parks. The team was referred to as both the Cincinnati Cubans and the Cincinnati Cuban Stars in 1921. As he had been for years, Agustin "Tinti" Molina returned to the United States as the field manager for the Cuban Stars. Tinti Molina is sometimes referred to as the owner of the team but Abel Linares was always the owner of the team. Most often Linares was more of the "money man" behind the scenes

The Cuban Stars starting line-up was fairly productive during the 1921 Negro National League season and compiled a .254 team batting average. Bernardo Baro (.343), Valentin Dreke (.296), Bienvendio "Hooks" Jimenez (.292) and Marcelino Guerra (.260) paced the team in hitting. Julio Le Blanc (14-8), Lucas Boada (7-5) and Jose "Cheche" Suarez (6-11) comprised the starting rotation for the Cuban Stars. Claudio Manela also pitched for the Stars during the season.

The Cincinnati Cuban Stars went 30-39-1 (.435) in Negro National League play and are credited with a record of 36-44-2 (.450) in games against all levels of competition. The Cincinnati Cuban Stars finished in sixth place at the end of the 1921 season.

The Cuban Stars were gone from Cincinnati when the 1922 Negro National League season began. The Molina led Cuban Stars started the season slow and never caught fire. According to Gary Ashwill and his research team, the Stars ended the season with a record of 18-43 (.295) and were in last place in the final Negro National League standings. Negro League researchers Larry Lester and Dick Clark credit the Cuban Stars with a record of 19-31 (.380).

Eustaquio "Bombin" Pedroso (.313) and Valentin Dreke (.298) were the team's best hitters. As a team the Cuban Stars had a .243 team batting average. Lucas Boada (6-12), Jose Agustin Rodriguez (4-6), Pedro Silva (3-9), Bombin Pedroso (1-11), Pastor Pareda (1-0), Julio Le Blanc (0-1) and Agapito Lazaga all pitched for the Stars in 1922. The biggest disappointments on the pitching staff were Julio Le Blac who went from winning 14 games in 1921 to not even winning one game in 1922 and Bombin Pedroso who the worst had season of his 18 year pitching career.

With such a bad season in 1922, Abel Linares and Tinti Molina made several changes before the start of the 1923 Negro National League season.



Valentin Dreke

Key additions to the team were Efemio Abreu (C), Roberto Campos (OF), Pedro Dibut (P), Esteban Montalvo (OF) and Juan Padrone (P). The shake up in the roster worked. The Cuban Stars went from 18-43 (.295) in 1922 to 27-35 (.435) in 1923. The Stars moved up four places in the final "league" standings from last place to fifth place.

The Cuban Stars were led by the hitting of Valentin Dreke (.345), Eufemio Abreu (.320), Esteban Montalvo (.305), Marcelino Guerra (.291) and Roberto Campos (.284). Cuban Stars pitchers Juan Padrone (.350) and Lucas Boada (.288) also contributed at the plate. The Cuban Stars team batting average also increased significantly from .243 in 1922 to .278 in 1923.

Pedro Dibut (7-8), Juan Padron (6-7), Lucas Boada (4-10) Estban Montalvo (2-0), Pablo Fernandez and Eustaquio "Bombin" Pedroso all pitched for the Cuban Stars in 1923.

The Cuban Stars revival was short lived as they faltered from the start of the 1924 Negro National League season. Tinti Molina, the team's manager, got good hitting all season. The Stars finished the season with the exact same .278 team batting average they had the year before. The leading hitters for the season were Valentin Dreke (.378), Esteban Montalvo (.313) and Jose Perez (.293). Starting pitcher, Lucas Boada aided his pitching cause with a .385 batting average.

Unfortunately, the pitching staff struggled all season. The pitching staff for the 1924 Cuban included: Bombin Pedroso (5-8), Lucas Boada (4-6), Candido Salazar (3-8), Pasqual Martinez (3-8), Raul Alvarez (1-2), Pedro Pastor (1-1) and Esteban Montalvo (0-2).

The Cuban Stars finished the 1924 Negro National League season with a losing record of 16-33 (.327).

**Millionaire Sportsman
Wants to Enter Cuban
Team in State League**

Abel Linares, President and Owner of Championship Havana Team Wants to Represent Ybor City with All-Cuban Team

Tampa Tribune
Tampa, FL
04-06-25

Linares Attempts to Enter the Florida State League

Before the start of the 1925 baseball season, Abel Linares hatched a plan that would have him own a team in the Florida State League. Linares' proposal was to enter a team of Cuban ball players in the "league" who would play out of Ybor City. The team would call Plant Field their home field. Linares had already made arrangements with Cuban great Rafael Almeida to manage the team.

Abel Linares was represented in this effort by A. Montoda, editor of the La Prensa newspaper, who traveled to the United States to work with Florida State League President Al Lang. According to Montoda Linares was prepared to have a fully organized team in place by the time the season opened on April 23rd. Nothing ever came out of Linares' plans.

Cuban Stars are Back in the Negro National League

When the 1925 Negro National League season started, the Cuban Stars were back in the United States to play their "league" schedule without a home field.

Valetin Dreke (.340) and Esteban Montalvo (.319) led the team in hitting. Before the start of the 1925 season Abel Linares and Tinti Molina signed an entire new pitching staff. Pitching for the Stars in 1925 were Raul Alvarez (2-6), Felipe Armas (1-1), Justo Dominquez (2-6), Juan Eckelson (0-8), David Gomez (9-6) and Esteban Montalvo (3-4).

With better pitching and timely hitting, the Cuban Stars improved on their record from the previous season to a won-loss record of 20-30 (.400) for the 1925 Negro National League season. They ended the season in fifth place.



Cuban Stars

Things Go from Bad to Worse for the Cuban Stars

The Cuban Stars had a disastrous season in 1926. Negro League researcher John Holway credits the Stars with a record of 16-47 (.254). According to research by Larry Lester and Dick Clark the Cuban Stars were 19-47 (.288) and finished in sixth place in the final Negro National League standings.

Top players on the 1926 team were Pedro Arango (3B), Valentin Dreke (OF) and Cando Lopez (OF). The pitching staff for manager Tinti Molina included YoYo Diaz (7-14), David Gomez (5-11), Basilio Roselle (3-11) and Mario Pedemonte (1-10).

Things didn't get much better for the Cuban Stars during the 1927 Negro National League season. Abel Linares sent basically the same starting line-up back to the United States that finished the 1926 season so poorly. Only Manuel Garcia who hit .395 as a utility player/pitcher and the always reliable Valentin Dreke (.327) performed offensively for the Cuban Stars.

David Gomez (6-7), YoYo Diaz (4-11), Basilio Roselle (4-11), Manuel Garcia (3-7) and Rogelio Alonso (1-4) comprised the pitching staff for the Cuban Stars 1927.

The 1927 Cuban Stars went 18-43 (.295) and were in next to last place. Only the Memphis Red Sox had a worse record (27-73 - .270).



Cando Lopez

The 1928 season didn't get any better for the Cuban Stars. The Tinti Molina squad finished the season in last place in the Negro National League with a record of 13-41 (.241). During the season Molina didn't get any hitting or pitching. Cando Lopez was the team's leading hitter with a .296 batting average. The always reliable Esteban Montalvo who for many years paced the team in hitting had the worst season of his career at the plate. Montalvo hit a miserable .136 for the year. If they had one positive, Basilio Roselle had the team's best won-loss record with 7 wins against 9 losses. Other pitchers on the team were Heliodoro "YoYo" Diaz (4-16), Manuel "Cocaina" Garcia (1-10), Rogelio Alonso (1-5), Jose Martini (1-4) and Pablo Martinez.

Researchers disagree with the Cuban Stars record for the 1929 season. Negro League researcher John Holway has the Stars with a 15-34 (.306). Research by Larry Lester and Dick Clark credit the Cuban Stars with a won-loss record of 18-26 (.409).

Offensively the 1929 Cuban Stars didn't have any stars other than possibly Hooks Jimenez (2B) and Cando Lopez (OF). The pitching staff for the Cubans included Heliodoro "YoYo" Diaz (6-9), Jesus Lorenzo (4-6), Cuneo Galvez (4-9) and Vidal Lopez (0-4). Tinti Molina also pitched in several games during the season and compiled a record of 1-4 (.250).

Linares' Final Season with the Cuban Stars

When the 1930 season started, Abel Linares did not realize that it would be his last. As he had done for many years, Linares sent Tinti Molina to the United States with the team as their manager.

Other than Cando Lopez (OF), Linares and Molina sent virtually a new starting line-up to the United States for the 1930 Negro National League season. Unfortunately for Linares and Molina, their new roster didn't produce any better than teams from the past several years. Heliodoro "YoYo" Diaz was by far the team's best pitcher with a record of 11-7 (.611). Luis Tiant (4-14), and Jesus Lorenzo (3-8) rounded out the starting line-up. Tinti Molina (2-4) also took the mound on a regular basis.

According to research by Larry Lester and Dick Clark, the Cuban Stars went 23-37 (.383) for the season and finished the year in next to last place in the final Negro National League standings.

Cuban League Career

The first documented appearance of Abel Linares in a high level position in Cuban baseball occurs in 1900 when he promoted the American Series which was held from November 5th to November 25th of 1900. The American Series pitted a teams or teams from the United States who travelled to Cuba over the off season to play the top Cuban teams or Cuban all-star teams.

After the regular 1900 National League season, Abel Linares contracted for a group of Major League ball players primarily from the Brooklyn Superbras and New York Giants to come to Cuba to play a four game series against a team of Cuban professional ball players who played under the name of the "Cubanos." Besides promoting the series it appears that Abel Linares may have also managed the Cubanos.

The Brooklyn Superbras players came to Cuba as the reigning National League champions. Fortunately for the Cubanos, Brooklyn did not bring their best hitter (Willie Keller - .362) or their top two pitchers (Joe McGinnity - 28-8 and Brickyard Kennedy - 20-13). Representing the Brooklyn Superbras in Cuba were Bill Dahlen (SS), Bill Donovan (P), Harry Howell (P), Hughie Jennings (1B) and Jimmy Sheppard (LF). The New York Giants sent Jack Doyle (C), Kid Gleason (2B) and "Win" Mercer (RF/P). Shad Berry (3B) from the Boston Beaneaters and Jimmy Callahan (CF) from the Chicago White Sox rounded out the starting line-up.

BASEBALL IN CUBA.
Worcester, Nov. 28.—Jim Callahan of Fitchburg, pitcher of the Chicago National League baseball team, reached Worcester last night, direct from Cuba. He accompanied the New York-Brooklyn combination that went to Cuba about a month ago to play the national game.
Callahan said the combination cleared expenses all right, but was neatly done by Abel Linares, the Cuban manager, who originated the plan. The players pooled \$4000 on the start, and were to play under the co-operative plan to divide 50 per cent of the receipts. The contract with Linares was written in English, and on the island no contract is recognized except it is written in Spanish. When things went wrong and the players tried to hold Linares to the contract, they could do nothing.
Callahan says Havana is baseball mad. The condition of baseball in that city is exactly as it was in this country about a dozen years ago. Every evening men and boys fill the streets with bat and ball playing the national game. The players on the American teams were well known by reputation.

Boston Daily Advertiser

Boston, MA
11-29-00



Brooklyn Superbras (1900)

Only four (4) games were played in the 1900 American Series and the Brooklyn team won all four outings by lopsided margins. The scores in the four games were 12-2, 13-1, 10-2 and 14-6. Bill Donovan picked up two wins. Harry Howell and Win Mercer won the other two games for the Superbras. Abel Linares had four different starting pitchers (Fernandez, Carlos Royer, Jose Romero and Salvador Rosado) for the Cubanos, but no one could get the Major Leaguers out.

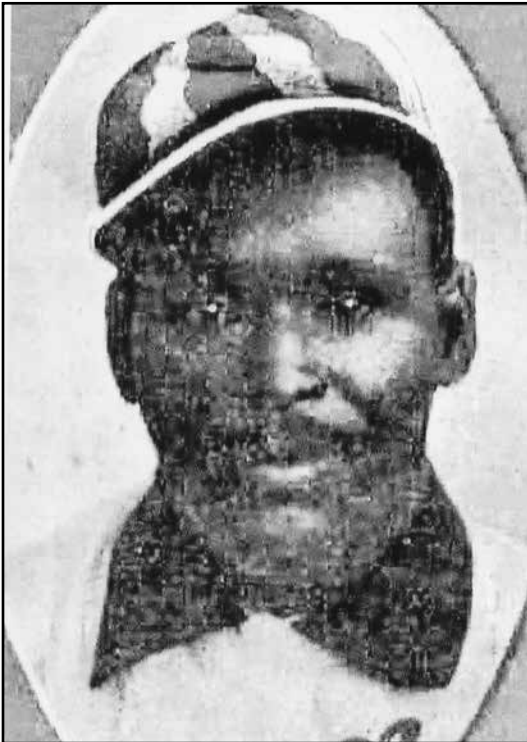
Abel Linares Buys Almendares

It is unclear exactly when Abel Linares took over control of the Almendares Blues. What we do know is that sometime right after the Cuban War of Independence (1895-1898) and the Spanish American War (1898), Abel Linares became the owner of the Almendares franchise and started controlling professional baseball in Cuba. This time in Cuban baseball history is very important because the 1900 Cuban League season is when the “league” became racially integrated.

Primary source documentation has been found that lists Abel Linares as the owner/manager of Almendares for the 1903 season. When Linares became the owner of the Almendares franchise, he bought a team that had played in the very first Cuban League season in 1878-79.

The 1903 Cuban League season started on January 1st and ended on June 28th. The “league” schedule called for each team of the three teams (Almendares, Fe and Habana) to play 35 games during the season.

Habana was the best team in the “league” with Carlos “Bebe” Royer who had played for Abel Linares on his 1899 and 1900 All Cubans team.



Regino Garcia

Almendares fielded a very weak hitting team with only two starters batting over .200 for the season. Regino Garcia (.267) and Luis Bustamante (.236) were the team’s best hitters. As a team, Almendares compiled a meager .159 (122 for 769) batting average for the season. Jose Munoz (3-7), Bernardo Carrillo (1-4), Angel D’Meza (1-4) Juan Viola (0-4), A. Perez (0-2) and Gonzalo Sanchez (0-0) all pitched for Almendares in 1903.

Linares’ Almendares squad got off to a slow start at the beginning of the season and never gained any momentum. After winning only six games (including one forfeit), Abel Linares withdrew his team from the “league” on May 28, 1903. Habana beat Fe in a play-off series to win the Cuban League title.

Even though Almendares had a horrible season in 1903, Abel Linares had his Almendares team back in the Cuban League for the 1904 season. The season started on February 7th and ended on June 2nd. Playing in the 1904 Cuban League were Almendares, Habana and San Francisco.

The “league” schedule called for each team to play 21 games during the season.

Esteban Prats (.291), Manuel Alfonso (.258), Miguel Prats (.257) and Juan Viola (.250) led Almendares in hitting in 1904. The starting pitching rotation for the team in 1904 were Juan Viola (4-8), Salvador Rosado (1-2), Jose Romero (1-1) and Jose Munoz (0-4).

The final Cuban League standings for the 1904 season were Habana (16-4), San Francisco (9-12) and Almendares (6-15). Even though they finished in last place, Almendares had a better won-loss record than they had in 1903 and they actually finished the season.

Linares Manages Azul in the American Series

When the 1904 American Series opened for play on October 13, 1904, Abel Linares was in charge of managing the Azul (Blues) team. Azul had played in the Cuban Summer League and had won the championship for the 1904 regular season. Five different teams (Cuban X-Giants, Lynn (MA), All Nationals, All Americans and Tampa) all visited Cuba for the American Series which ended on January 5, 1905. All of the games were played at Almendares Park.

Linares' Azul team played two games against the Cuban X-Giants and lost both games by the scores of 8-1 and 11-7. Angel D'Meza lost the first game and Emilio Palomino lost the second game. Azul fared much better against the Minor League team from Lynn (MA). Jose Borges pitched all three games against Lynn and won all three by the scores of 3-0, 3-2 and 4-1.

Azul then played two games against the All Nationals. Jose Borges continued his winning streak and took both games by the scores of 9-4 and 4-1. In their series against Tampa, Azul played four games. They won two and lost two. Borges went 2-1 in the Tampa series. The All Americans were an all star team made up primarily of Major League players. Azul played six games against the All Americans and lost all six games.

Almendares Wins Cuban League Championship

The 1905 Cuban League season started on January 29th and concluded play on May 14th. There were only three teams (Almendares, Fe and Habana) in the "league" in 1905. Each team played 30 games during the season. After losing four straight titles to Habana, Abel Linares fielded a group of young ball players who were ready to challenge Habana for the championship. Besides owning the team, Abel Linares also served as the team's field manager.

Leading Almendares in hitting for the 1905 season were Regino Garcia (.305), Alfredo Cabrera (.271), Emilio Palomino (.270) and Armando Cabanas (.268). Regino Garcia won the Cuban League batting title with his .305 batting average. Also in Linares' starting line-up were future Major Leaguers Rafael Almeida (3B) and Armando Marsans (OF). The Blues featured a three man pitching staff that included Angel D'Meza (10-4), Pedro Medina (7-4) and Incencio Perez (2-2). Angel D'Meza was considered the top pitcher in the "league" for the 1905 season.



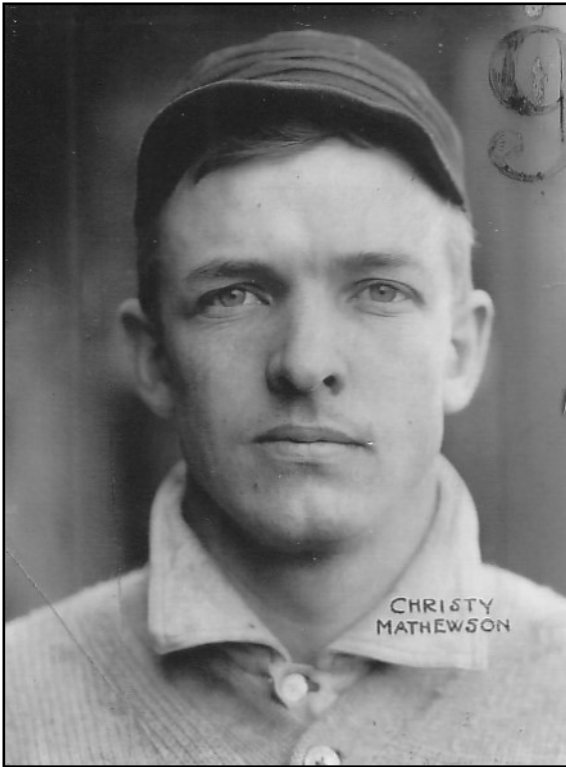
(Back row left to right – Esteban Prats, Heliodoro Hidalgo, Emilio Palomino, Alfredo Cabrera and Inocencio Perez.
Middle row left to right – **Armando Marsans, Rafael Almeida, Abel Linares, Tinti Molina**, Evaristo Pla and Armando Cabanas. Front row left to right – Angel D'Meza, Regino Garcia and Pedro Medina.)

With a roster of only twelve (12) players, the Almendares Blues disposed of their arch rival the Habana Reds. Almendares finished the season with a record of 19-11 (.633), Habana was 15-15 (.500) and Fe was a distant third with a record of 11-19 (.367)

Abel Linares Attempts to Sign Christy Mathewson

After the conclusion of the 1905 Major League World Series, Abel Linares attempted to sign New York Giants (National League) pitcher Christy Mathewson to play in Cuba. Mathewson was considered the best pitcher in Major League baseball and had just led his team to a World Series championship over the Philadelphia Athletics of the American League. Mathewson's regular 1905 season record was as follows:

Year	Team	Games	Innings	Won	Lost	Pct.	Shutouts	Hits	BB	S0	ERA
1905	New York	43	339	32	8	.800	8	252	64	206	1.27



Christy Mathewson
New York Giants
1905

In addition during the 1905 season Mathewson had 32 complete games in 37 starts and in the World Series he pitched 27 scoreless innings for three shutouts while posting three straight wins.

During his seventeen (17) year Major League career, Christy posted a won-loss record of 373-188 with an earned run average of 2.13. In the 552 games he started he had 435 complete games with 79 shutouts.

In 1936 Christy Mathewson along with Babe Ruth, Ty Cobb, Walter Johnson and Honus Wagner were in the first class of players inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown.

Christy Mathewson would have been a huge drawing card in Cuba but when Mathewson demanded a reportedly \$ 500 per week plus expenses and refused to pitch on Sunday, negotiations came to a halt. Sunday games were important for Linares because Sunday games regularly drew 10,000 to 15,000 fans per game.

Philadelphia Inquirer
Philadelphia, PA
12-05-05

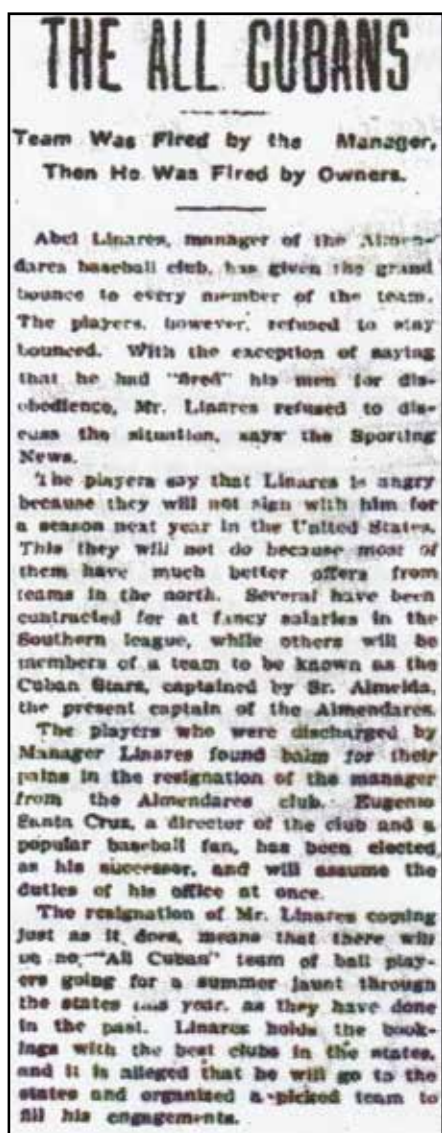


All Cubans Win the American Series

In the 1905 American Series which ran from October 22nd to December 3rd, Abel Linares managed the All Cubans in their series against the Cuban X-Giants, Lynn (MA) and Poughkeepsie.

The All Cubans faced the Cuban X-Giants in three games and won two of the outings. With their 2-1 (.667) record, they captured the American Series championship title. Emilio Palomino was the hitting star of the American Series. He went 6 for 11 for a .545 batting average, drove in 5 runs and scored 4 runs. Also contributing at the plate for the All Cubans were Armando Cabanas (.375), Armando Marsans (.333) and Regino Garcia (.300). Jose Munoz handled the pitching chores for the All Cubans.

In their two game series against the Minor League team from Lynn (MA), the All Cubans won one game and lost one game. Poughkeepsie only played one game in Cuba and they lost that game by a score of 7-4 to the All Cubans.



Augusta Chronicle

Augusta, GA

04-08-06

Fe Dominates the 1906 Cuban League Season

The 1906 Cuban League season started on January 4th and ended on April 29th. Each team in the "league" played 24 games during the season.

Abel Linares fielded basically the same team he had in 1905. Linares did add Jose Munoz who led the team in pitching with an 8-1 (.889) record. Regino Garcia led the team in hitting with a .304 batting average.

Club Fe under their "new" manager, Alberto Azoy, won the Cuban League title with a record of 15-9 (.625). They ended the season one game ahead of Almendares who finished the season with a 14-10 (.583) record. Habana was a distant third with a 7-17 (.292) won-loss record.

In April of 1906, Abel Linares "fired" all the players from his Almendares team. In an interview with the Sporting News, Linares was quoted as saying the reason for the dismissals were for disobedience. The players told the media that they were fired because many of them did not want to sign with Linares for his annual barnstorming tour to the United States.

The Cuban X-Giants came to Cuba to play in the American Series against Almendares and Habana. Almendares went 4-2 against the X-Giants. After the Cuban X-Giants left the island, a team of Major Leaguers who billed themselves as the "All Americans" came to Cuba to play Almendares, Fe and Habana. Almendares man handled the Major Leaguers by winning six of the seven games they played.

Almendares Rebounds to Win Its Second Title

After losing the Cuban League championship in 1906 to Club Fe by just one game, Abel Linares was determined to regain the title for Almendares. Prior to the start of the 1907 season Abel Linares hired Eugenio Santacruz to manage the Almendares Blues.

The 1907 Cuban League season started on January 1st and ended on April 14th. Games were played at Almendares Park with each team playing 30 games during the season.

Gervasio “Strike” Gonzalez (.273), Emilio Palomino (.254) and Alfredo Cabrera (.243) were Almendares’ leading hitters for the 1907 season. Jose Munoz (9-5) was the ace of the pitching staff. Andres Ortega (4-3), Emilio Palomino (2-0), Harry Buckner (1-2) and Inocencio Perez (1-2) also pitched for the Blues in 1907. Jose Munoz was considered the best pitcher in the “league” for the 1907 season. The Almendares Blues combined outstanding pitching, defense, excellent base running, timely hitting and the team concept to dominate their opponents.



Almendares

(back row left to right – Angel D’Meza, Esteban Prats, Rogelio Valdes, Evaristo Pla, Pajaro Cabrera and **Tinti Molina**,
Seated left to right – Andres Ortega, **Emilio Palomino**, Joseito Munoz, **Gervasio “Strike” Gonzalez**
and **Armando Marsans**.)

Almendares and Fe battled each other up until the end of the season. To defend his Cuban League title Fe team owner and manager, Alberto Azoy, loaded his starting line-up with several star black players from the United States. Azoy’s 1907 Fe team included Grant “Homerun” Johnson (.348), Bill Monroe (.346), Pete Hill (.264), Charles Grant (.186) and the team’s ace pitcher Andrew “Rube” Foster (10-5). Going into the final few games of the season, Andres Ortega shut out Fe twice. Then in the game that clinched the title for the Blues, Andres Ortega beat black super star Rube Foster.

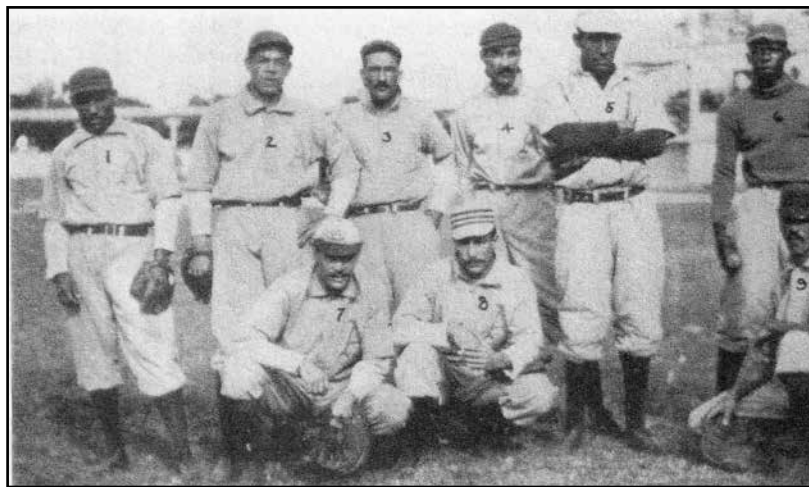
When the season ended the Almendares Blues (17-13) won the Cuban League title by one game over Club Fe (16-14). The Habana Reds (12-18) were the third team in the “league.”

Philadelphia Giants Visit Cuba

Before the start of the 1908 regular Cuban League season, the American Series was held from October 10th through December 29th of 1907. Almendares, Habana and the Philadelphia Giants played two series before Almendares and Habana took on an all-star team from the United States who called themselves the “All-Leaguers.” The American Series was played at Almendares Park.

The Philadelphia Giants were considered the “Colored World’s Champions.” The American Series started with Jose Munoz of Almendares pitching a shut out against the Giants. Almendares won their series with the Philadelphia Giants by taking 4 games to three for Philadelphia with one game ending in a tie. The Habana and Philadelphia series ended in a tie with each team winning three games. A second series between the three teams was played because the Detroit Tigers cancelled their trip to the island. In the second series Habana beat Philadelphia by winning three of the five games they played against each other. Almendares was not so fortunate. They only won two of the five games they played against the Giants.

In their series against the All-Leaguers, Almendares had a record of 4-1 and Habana went 2-4.



Almendares (1907)

Spaulding Guide

(Back row left to right – Heliodoro Hidalgo, Unknown, Unknown, **Carlos “Bebe” Royer**, Unknown and **Gervasio “Strike” Gonzalez**. Kneeling left to right – **Armando Marsans**, **Rafael Almeida** and **Alfredo Cabrera**.)

Almendares Produces Back to Back Titles

During the 1908 Cuban League season the Almendares Blues had not only one of the best seasons in their team’s history but also one of the best in “league” history. The 1908 Cuban League season began on January 1st and went through March 16th. Fifteen (15) games were added to each team’s schedule bringing the total games to be played by each team to forty-five (45) games.

One of the keys to the Almendares Blues success for the season was the signing of a 20 year old rookie by the name of Jose de la Caridad Mendez. Veteran pitcher Carlos “Bebe” Royer had discovered Mendez when Bebe was playing for the Remedios team during the late winter of 1907. Royer recognized Jose’s talent and convinced Abel Linares to sign the young rookie.

The 1908 Almendares Blues were led by an unbelievable pitching rotation that included: Jose Munoz (13-1 with 5 shut outs), Jose Mendez (9-0), Carlos Royer (8-2) and Andres Ortega (6-4). The trio of Munoz, Mendez and Royer proved to be one of the best in Cuban League history. The Blues pitching staff led the team to establish a new record for wins (37) in a season.

The Blues were led by the hitting of Emilio Palomino who also won the Cuban League batting title with a .350 batting average for the season. Rafael Almeida (.297), Alfredo Cabrera (.268) Armando Marsans (.266) and Rogelio Valdes (.258) also provided timely hitting during the season.



**Almendares
Cuban League Champions
1908**

From the very beginning of the season, it was a two team race between Almendares with unbelievable pitching and Habana who posted a team batting average of .302 for the season with 164 stolen bases.

The final Cuban League standings for the 1908 season were as follows:

Cuban League (1908)				
Team	Won	Lost	Pct.	Games Behind
Almendares	37	8	.822	-
Habana	32	13	.711	5
Fe	11	32	.256	25
Matanzas	8	35	.186	28

Jose Mendez Dominates the American Series

The 1908 American Series was played from October 10th to December 18th. The Brooklyn Royal Giants, Cincinnati Reds and Key West all came to Cuba to play the two best teams (Almendares and Habana) on the island.

The highlight of the American Series was the pitching performance of Jose Mendez of Almendares. Jose faced the Major Leaguers twice and threw a shut out on both occasions. He beat the beat 1-0 and then came back with a 3-0 win. Abel Linares was so impressed with how Jose Mendez performed against the Cincinnati Reds that he signed Jose to a contract to come to the United States when the Cuban Stars regular season started. Jose Mendez also pitched a no-hitter during the 1908 American Series against Key West.

Almendares went 3-4 (.429) against the Brooklyn Royal Giants, 4-1 (.800) against the Cincinnati Reds and 3-1 (.750) against Key West in the 1908 American Series.

During the 1908-09 season Abel Linares owned the Almendares Blues and also represented (whatever that meant) Club Fe in the Cuban League. The season started on December 20, 1908 and ended on April 22, 1909. Each team played a 43 games schedule. Cuban League games during the 1908-09 season were played at Almendares Park.



Almendares Park

As always Almendares fielded a strong team. The Almendares Blues were led by their superstar pitcher Jose Mendez (15-6). Andres Oretaga (6-4), Jose Munoz (5-3), Carlos Royer (1-0) and Juan Viola (1-0) also pitched for the Blues during the 1908-09 season.

The top hitters for Almendares were Regino Garcia (.269), Juan Viola (.255) and Gervasio "Strike" Gonzalez (.235).

In an attempt to put together a strong starting line-up for Club Fe, Linares recruited the following black ball players from the United States: Walter Ball (P), Ashby Dunbar (OF), Nate Harris (2B), Sam Mongin (SS) and Bruce Petway (C). Fe had a weak hitting team with a .196 team batting average. Six starting players hit under .200 for the season. Only Julian Castillo (.315) and Ashby Dunbar (.311) had decent seasons at the plate. Walter Ball (7-7) was the ace of the pitching staff. J. Marlotica (3-3), Pastor Pareda (1-8), Jose Borges (0-6) and Harry Buckner (0-5) also pitched for Club Fe during the season.

The 1908-09 season was dominated by the pitchers and Club Fe had the worst earned run average (ERA) of all the teams in the "league." Team earned run averages (ERA) for the 1908-09 Cuban League season were as follows: Almendares (1.12 ERA), Habana (2.08 ERA), Matanzas (3.03 ERA) and Fe (3.40 ERA).

The 1908-09 Cuban League season was virtually a two team pennant race between Almendares and Habana. At the end of the season Habana (29-13-1) prevailed by one game over Almendares (28-14-1). Fe (12-30) finished in third place and Matanzas (4-15) dropped out of the "league" on February 2, 1909.

Almendares Takes Down the Detroit Tigers

The first team to come to Cuba for the 1909 American Series was the Indianapolis Indians. Almendares, behind the pitching of Jose Munoz, Jose Mendez and Bombin Pedroso beat Indianapolis 4 games to 3.

After Indianapolis left Cuba the Detroit Tigers arrived to play Almendares and Habana. Almendares beat the Major Leaguers with outstanding pitching and timely hitting. Even though Jose Mendez and Bombin Pedroso seemed to get all of the press, Jose Munoz won four games during the series.



Detroit Tigers (1909)

Abel Linares Signs “Bombin” Pedroso

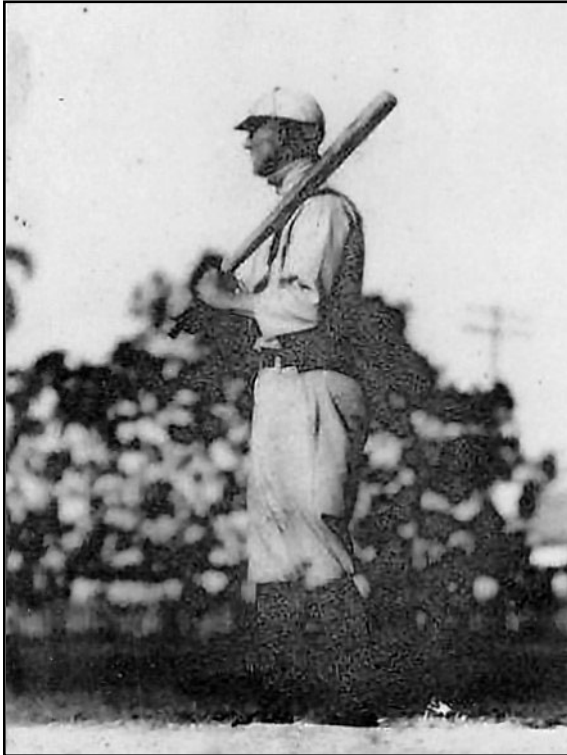
In 1908 Abel Linares had discovered Jose Mendez. Lightning struck again for Linares when he signed Eustaquí “Bombin” Pedroso to his Almendares squad to play in the 1909 American Series against the Detroit Tigers. Pedroso had played for Club Fe in 1907 and for Matanzas during the 1908-09 season. Abel felt Bombin was something special and he was not wrong. On November 18, 1909 Eustaquí “Bombin” Pedroso of Almendares pitched an 11 inning no-hitter against the Detroit Tigers who were the American League champions during the regular season. For winning the 2-1 no-hitter against Detroit, Linares reportedly gave Pedroso a \$ 300 bonus which was a tremendous amount of money at the time. Behind the pitching of Jose Munoz, Jose Mendez and Bombin Pedrodo, Almendares won the American Series title over the Detroit Tigers by winning four of the six games they played.

Abel Linares was so impressed with Pedroso that he signed him to accompany the Cuban Stars on their 1910 United States barnstorming tour.

The 1910 Cuban League (Liga General de Base Ball de la Republica de Cuba) played a very short season schedule of sixteen (16) games per team. The season started on February 6th and finished on April 3rd. The season was supposed to have started in early January but Habana refused to play

because they disagreed with the “league’s” position on importing foreign players. A compromise was reached to allow three imports per team and the season was ready to move forward. All the games were played at Almendares Park. Almendares, Fe and Habana fielded teams in the “league.”

Besides owning the Almendares franchise, Abel Linares was the treasurer of the Cuban League. Juan Sanchez managed the Blues for Linares during the 1910 season. Jose Mendez was the ace of the pitching staff with a perfect record of 7-0 (1.000). Bombin Pedroso (4-3) and Carlos Royer (2-0) also pitched for the Blues. Julian Castillo (.408) led Almendares and the Cuban League in hitting. Julian Viola (.295) and Alfredo Cabrera (.281) also had good seasons at the plate.



Ty Cobb in Cuba
1910

Almendares started the season hot and never let up. Mendez beat Habana five times during the season to virtually assure the Blues the title. They won the Cuban League title with a record of 13-3 (.813) and were four games ahead of Habana (9-7) in the final “league” standings. Fe finished the season in third place with a disappointing record of 2-14 (.125).

Ty Cobb Plays in the American Series

The Leland Giants, Detroit Tigers and Philadelphia Athletics all came to Cuba to play in the 1910 American Series which lasted from October 9th thru December 19th. Abel Linares’ Almendares team went 4-0 versus the Cuban X-Giants and 3-2 versus the Philadelphia Athletics.

Behind the hitting of Ty Cobb who went 7 for 19 for a .368 batting average, the Detroit Tigers dominated their Cuban opponents. Detroit won seven of the nine games played in Cuba.

Leading Almendares in the 1910 American Series were pitchers Jose Mendez (4-2), Bombin Pedroso (3-3) and Jose Munoz (1-1).

Almendares Wins another Title

The 1910-11 Cuban League season was basically a two team race between Almendares and Habana. The third team in the “league” was Club Fe who finished the season with a pitiful record of 2-26 (.071). Almendares won the Cuban League title with a 21-6 (.778) record. They were three games ahead of second place Habana who had a won-loss record of 18-9 (.667). The season started on December 25, 1910 and ended on April 2, 1911.

Almendares was managed by Juan L. Sanchez. Jose Mendez (11-2) was the ace of the pitching staff. Four of Jose’s victories were also shut outs. Jose Munoz (4-1), Eustaquio “Bombin” Pedroso (5-3) and Conrado Rodriquez (0-0) also pitched for Abel Linares during the 1910-11 season. Sanchez had great pitching but lacked hitting. No hitting statistics are available for the pitchers but the rest of the position players hit a meager .216 (181 for 838). The starters had very few extra base hits and only three homeruns for the season. Armando Marsans (.313) and Heliodoro Hidalgo (.245 w/ 2 HR) led the team in hitting.

One Minor League team (New Britain) and two Major League teams (Philadelphia Phillies and New York Giants) came to the island for the 1911 American Series. The series was played from November 1st thru December 12th. All the games were played at Almendares Park. Almendares dominated their Minor League opponents from New Britain (CT). Linares' championship team won all six games against New Britain and broke even (each team won 2 games) against the Philadelphia Phillies. In the final series against the New York Giants, Almendares only won two of the six games played.

The 1912 Cuban League (Liga General de Base Ball de la Republica de Cuba) season started on January 14th and concluded on April 29th. The "league" was governed by Dr. Frederico Mora (President) and Abel Linares (Treasurer). Each team played 34 games during the season.



Adolfo Luque

Both Armando Marsans and Jose Mendez managed Almendares for Abel Linares during the 1912 season. Emilio Palomino (.440), Regino Garcia (.333), Armando Marsans (.317) and Matty McIntyre (.282) led the team in hitting. McIntyre made Cuban baseball history by becoming the first "real" Major Leaguer to play in the Cuban League. Jose Mendez (9-5), Eustaquio "Bombin" Pedroso (4-10), Jose Munoz (1-0) and Lico Mederos (0-2) all pitched for the Blues in 1912.

The 1912 season was particularly important because it marked the first Cuban League appearance of Adolfo Luque and Mike Gonzalez. Adolfo and Miguel both played for Club Fe. Luque and Gonzalez would be fixtures in Cuban baseball for the next 50 years.

The Habana Reds started the season red hot by winning their first seven games and never looked back. Behind the hitting of black American players Grant "Home Run" Johnson (.410) and John Henry "Pop" Lloyd (.388), the Habana Reds easily won the Cuban League title with a record of 22-12 (.647). Almendares finished in second place with a record of 17-17 (.500) and Fe ended up in third place with a losing record of 14-24 (.368).

During the winter of 1912, the Lincoln Giants, New Orleans Pelicans and Philadelphia Athletics all traveled to Cuba to play in the American Series which was played from October 18th to December 29th. The Lincoln Giants arrived in Cuba with Smokey Joe Williams and Dick "Cannonball" Redding who were probably the two best black pitchers in baseball. Williams and Redding didn't intimidate Almendares hitters. Abel Linares' Almendares team took four out of the six games the two teams played. Almendares also went 4-2 (.667) against the New Orleans Pelicans. Connie Mack's Philadelphia Athletics found real success on the island. Philadelphia took all six games they played versus the Habana Reds and went 4-2 (.667) against Almendares.

The 1913 Cuban League featured three teams (Almendares, Fe and Habana). The season started on January 1st and ended on March 23rd. Each team played 32 games during the season.

Abel Linares hired Cuban great and Major Leaguer Armando Marsans to manage Almendares. The Blues were led by the hitting of Armando Marsans (.400), Jacinto Calvo (.356), Julian Castillo (.319), Alfredo Cabrera (.304) and Helioldiro Hidalgo (.282). Bombin Pedroso (11-4), Jose Munoz (4-6) and Jose Mendez (1-4) comprised the starting rotation for Almendares.

The final standings for the 1913 Cuban League season were as follows: Fe (21-11), Almendares (16-16) and Habana (11-21). Fe was managed by Agustin "Tinti" Molina (Abel Linares' old friend). Tinti got his team on a hot streak at the end of the season to take the title. Fe won 12 of its last 13 games. Fe featured several black American players that included Spottswood Poles (.364), Jude Gans (.346), John Henry "Pop" Lloyd (.341), Dick "Cannonball" Redding (7-2) and Smokey Joe Williams (9-5).

In October of 1913 Abel Linares sent his Cuban Stars team to Santiago de Cuba to play an extended series. Speculation was that the Cuban Stars were going to play in the American Series against the Brooklyn Superbas but this did not occur because Linares' team stayed in the Santiago de Cuba area for about two months.

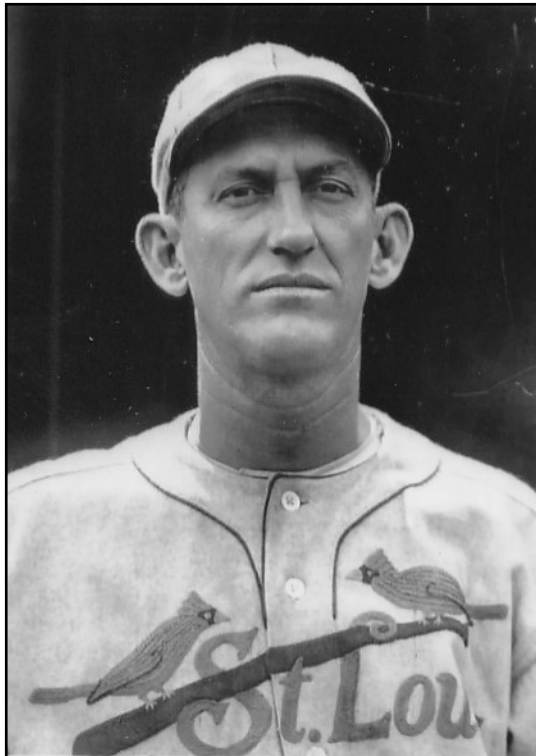
On October 22nd Abel Linares announced from Havana that he would send two teams to the United States for the 1914 baseball season. As usual the Cuban Stars would play a barnstorming schedule. Also headed to the United States would be an "all-white" team from the University of Havana. In addition Abel Linares announced that he would accompany the teams to the U.S. in May of 1914.

Mendez and Pedroso Destroy the Competition

The regular 1913-14 season began on December 16, 1913 and ended on March 3, 1914. Only three teams (Almendares, Fe and Habana) competed in the "league."

Abel Linares' Almendares Blues were led by the pitching of Jose Mendez (10-0) and Bombin Pedroso (9-3). The Blues were paced by the hitting of Armando Marsans (.343) and Cristobal Torriente (.337). Some of the other key players on Almendares 1913-14 team were Alfredo Cabrera (1B), Manuel Cueto (3B), Gervasio "Strike" Gonzalez (C) and Heliodoro Hidalgo (OF). Eugenio Santacruz managed the Almendares Blues for Linares during the 1913-14 season.

The final 1913-14 Cuban League standings were Almendares (22-11), Club Fe (19-14) and Habana (8-24).



Miguel Gonzalez

Linares Buys Habana

In 1914 Abel Linares purchased the Habana franchise from Manuel Azoy. Habana had just come off a very poor showing in the 1913-14 season and were ripe for the picking. Linares' first order of business as the "new" owner of Habana was to hire Mike Gonzalez as the team's manager. Gonzalez was only 24 years old at the time.

Miguel Gonzalez's career in Cuban baseball would span forty-three (43) years from 1910-1953. Gonzalez also played, coached and managed in the Major Leagues in the United States from 1912-1946. He was the member of four World Series Championship teams.

With the purchase of Habana, Abel Linares now owned the two top teams (Almendares and Habana) in the Cuban League and solidified his control of Cuban professional baseball.

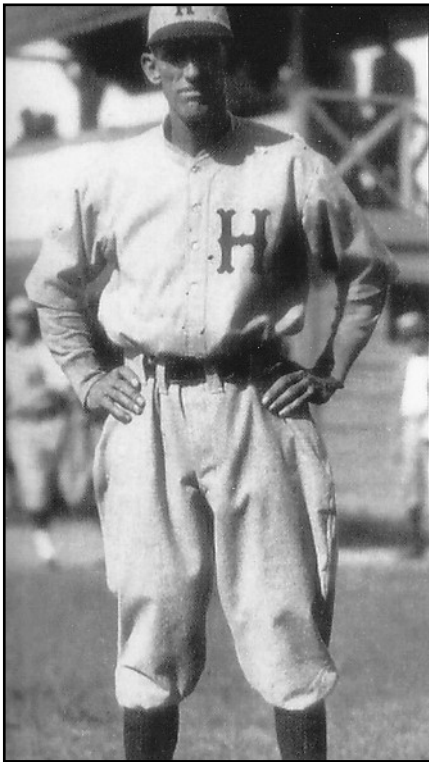
Lincoln Stars Travel to Cuba

The Lincoln Stars and Birmingham Barons came to Cuba to play in the American Series for the 1914 season. The series was played from October 10th to November 29th. All the games were played at Almendares Park.

Almendares destroyed the Lincoln Stars by winning six of the seven games they played. The Blues, however, struggled against the Birmingham Barons. Birmingham won four of the six games they played against Almendares.

Miguel Gonzalez Turns Habana into a Champion

The 1914-15 season started on December 13, 1914 and concluded play on March 2, 1915. When the season started Abel Linares owned two (Almendares and Habana) of the three teams in the "league." Club Fe was the third team. Each team was scheduled to play 34 games over the winter league season.



Miguel Gonzalez
Habana

With Abel Linares as the owner and Miguel Gonzalez as team's manager, the duo turned the Habana Reds from a team that finished in last place the season before with a record of 8-24 (.250) to winning the Cuban League title with a won-loss record of 23-11 (.676). The Habana Reds started the season "red hot" by winning 16 of their first 20 games. Baldomero Acosta (.339), Jacinto Calvo (.330), Tomas Calvo (.330), Miguel Gonzalez (.284) and Armando Marsans (.278) led the Reds in hitting. The pitching staff for Habana included Pastor Pareda (8-3), Emilio Palmero (7-5), Jose Acosta (5-1) and Gerardo Ballesteros (3-2). One of the highlights of the season for Habana was Emilio Palmero's no-hitter against Fe.

Even though Almendares didn't win the Cuban League title they only lost the championship by a half game. Almendares ended the season with a won-loss record of 22-11 (.667). Almendares kept in the hunt for the title with solid pitching from Eustaquio "Bombin" Pedroso (10-5) and Adolfo Luque (7-4). Cristobal Torriente led the team and Cuban League in hitting with an amazing .387 batting average and a .508 slugging percentage. Other top hitters for the Blues during the season were Bombin Pedroso (.382), Rafael Almeida (.321) and Gervasio "Strike" Gonzalez (.267).

Club Fe wasn't competitive and was never really in the hunt for the "league" title. They posted a miserable record of 5-28 (.152).

The 1915 American Series featured the St. Louis Terriers of the Federal League, the Indianapolis ABCs and a Chinese team. The 1915 American Series was split into two series (March 15th to April 3rd and October 1st to November 29th). St. Louis played the first series. Indianapolis and the Chinese played in the second series.

Dick "Cannonball" Redding of the Indianapolis ABCs kept the series close by winning six of the games in which he pitched. Almendares went 5-4 against Indianapolis, Habana went 5-3 and San Francisco went 1-1.

Almendares Wins Another Championship

The 1915-16 Cuban League started the season with only three teams (Almendares, Habana and San Francisco). The "league" was run by Juan Sanchez (President), Victor Munoz (Secretary) and Abel Linares (Treasurer). The forty-three (43) game season started on December 4, 1915 and ended on March 26, 1916.

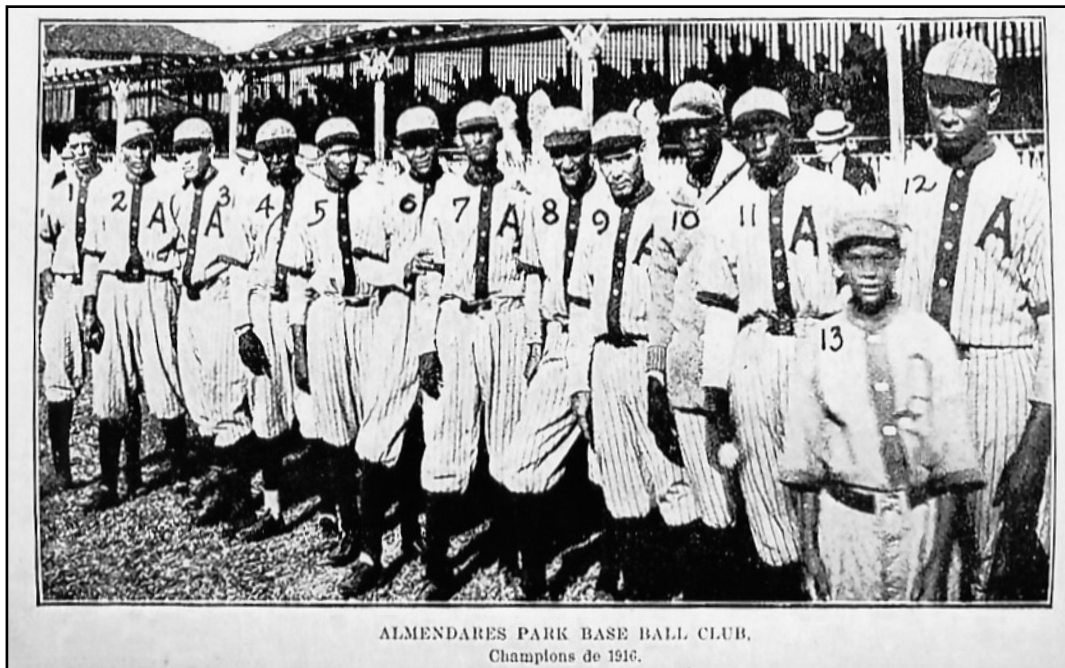


Alfredo Cabrera
Almendares

Abel Linares hired former player Alfredo Cabrera to manage the Almendares Blues for the 1915-16 season. The Blues had an excellent pitching staff and outstanding hitters. Adolfo Luque (12-5) was the ace on the pitching staff. Eustaquio "Bombin" Pedroso (9-2) and J. Padron (4-2) rounded out the starting rotation. Leading Almendares in hitting were Bombin Pedroso (.413), Manuel Cueto (.406), Cristobal Torriente (.403), Gervasio "Strike" Gonzalez (.331), Ramon Herrera (.305) and Jose Rodriquez (.286).

Having only three teams in the "league" was bad enough but when one of them was not at all competitive it didn't make for a very exciting season for the fans. When San Francisco started with a record of 1-21 (.045), the entire team was replaced by members of the Chicago American Giants. Things went from bad to worse for San Francisco and they dropped out of the "league" on March 23, 1906. Three days later "league" officials cancelled the remainder of the season. Two teams didn't qualify as a "league."

At the end of the season the Almendares Blues were declared the Cuban League champion with a record of 30-12 (.714). The Habana Reds finished 2 ½ games back with a record of 28-15 (.651). San Francisco was credited with a dismal record of 6-37 (.140)



Almendares (1916)

Abel Linares, former president of the Cuban National Baseball league, is building a new park in the center of Havana. Games will start in March. An effort will be made to have some of the major league teams go to Havana this spring from Florida for practice games.

Jackson Citizen Patriot

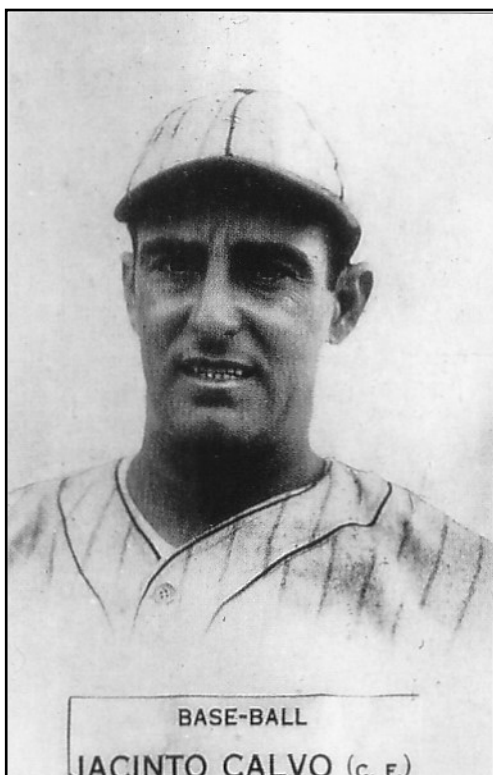
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Abel Linares did not field a team for the 1917 season. A disagreement between players and team owners resulted in the formation of a short season that lasted from January 29th to February 26th. The three teams that played in the "league" in 1917 included the Orientals, Red Sox and White Sox. Each team was scheduled to play 14 games. With Almendares Park not being available, games were played at Habana's race track which was less than desirable.

In February of 1918 it was announced that Abel Linares was building a new stadium in the center of Habana.

Habana Wins the Cuban League Title

Abel Linares hired Mike Gonzalez as the Habana Reds player-manager for the 1918 season. Besides owning Almendares and Habana, Abel was also the treasurer of the Cuban League (Liga General de Base Ball de Republica de Cuba) for the 1918-19 season.



Jacinto Calvo

The season started on November 10, 1918 and ended on March 23, 1919. The "league" schedule called for each of the three "league" teams (Almendares, Cuban Stars and Habana) to play 48 games. All the games were played at the "new" Almendares Park.

Linares and Gonzalez fielded an all Latin team for the Reds season. Jacinto Calvo (.336), Mike Gonzalez (.313) and Baldomero Acosta (.300) were the team's top hitters. Jose Acosta was the workhorse of the pitching staff. He appeared in 34 of the 48 games the Habana Reds played. Acosta went 16-10 for the 1918-19 season. E. Valdes Perez (6-1) and A. Tolosa (2-3) rounded out the starting pitching rotation.

Abel Linares' other team, the Almendares Blues, struggled during the season. The Blues were managed by former player Alfredo Cabrera. Isidro Fabre (10-9) and Benito Marrero (6-4) were the team's top two pitchers. Almendares was led by the hitting of Bernardo Baro (.382), Manuel Cueto (.344), Jose Rodriguez (.312) and Luis Padron (.297).

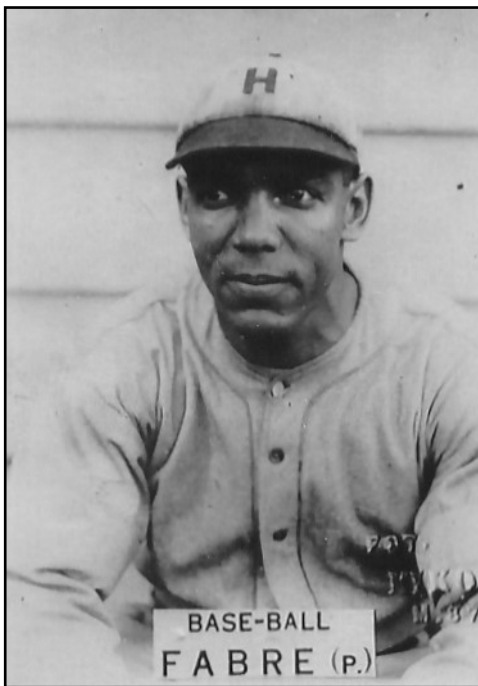
Habana won the Cuban League title with a record 29-19 (.604) but they had to work for it. The Cuban Stars were 21-25 (.457) and Almendares went 20-26 (.435). The 1918-19 season was divided into two halves. Habana won the first half of the season with a won-loss record of 15-7 (.682). The second half of the season was unbelievable in that all three teams finished the second half with identical 11-11 records. A play-off was held and Habana went 3-1 (.750) to claim the championship.

Linares brings the Pittsburgh Pirates to Cuba

The American Series had not been played in Cuba for four years because of World War I. After the 1919 Major League season, the Pittsburgh Pirates of the National League and an all-star team made up of primarily young Major League players called the “All-Americans” traveled to Cuba to play in the American Series. The series was played from October 19th through December 2nd at Almendares Park. Representing Cuba in the series were Almendares and Habana. The Pirates dominated Almendares winning six of the eight games they played. Habana fared much better against Pittsburgh. Habana broke even with the Major Leaguers with each team winning four games. The All-Americans didn’t fare as well. Almendares won four and lost two games. Habana won three and only lost one against the All-Americans.

Another Cuban Team Bites the Dust

When the 1919-20 Cuban League season started on December 20th Almendares and Habana had a new competitor by the name of “America.” Speculation was that Abel Linares was behind the formation of the new team because he couldn’t field a Cuban League season with only two teams. The schedule of the Cuban League called for each team to play 22 games with the season ending on February 22nd. Unfortunately for Cuban fans, Team America under manager Agustin Molina withdrew from the “league” in February. They had only won two of the twenty-one games they had played.



Isidro Fabre

Before the start of the 1919-20 season, Abel Linares hired Adolfo Luque who was the best pitcher in Cuba as the manager of Almendares. Even though he was a great pitcher, there was a question as to whether or not Luque could manage. Adolfo rewarded Linares with his confidence in him by dominating league competition and winning the Cuban League championship with an amazing won-loss record of 21-5 (.808). Almendares led the “league” in hitting with an impressive .278 team batting average for the season. Cristobal Torriente (.360) and Bernardo Baro (.352) were the Blues leading hitters. Adolfo Luque was the ace of the pitching staff with a 10-4 record. Emilio Palmero (5-1) and Isidore Fabre (3-0) were the team’s other two pitchers.

Habana was managed by Miguel Gonzalez. The Reds had a very good pitching staff in Jose Acosta (8-3) and Oscar Tuero (5-5). Manuel Cueto (.293) led the team in hitting. Habana finished the season in second place. They were four games behind Almendares with a 17-9 (.654) record.

Babe Ruth Comes to Cuba

After the 1920 American League season, Abel Linares signed a contract with Babe Ruth to bring him to Cuba to play with John McGraw’s Cuban touring team of Major League all stars. Most of the players on McGraw’s team were from the New York Giants. Babe Ruth was coming off a great season with the New York Yankees when he hit 54 homeruns, drove in 135 runs and had a .376 batting average. Babe was a huge gate attraction because besides being the star player of the Yankees, he had just become the first player in Major League baseball history to hit more than



Babe Ruth in Cuba

1920

50 homeruns in a season. Reportedly, Abel Linares paid Ruth an extravagant \$ 1,000.00 per game which was unheard of at the time.

When Babe Ruth and his wife arrived in Cuba, Linares and a large group of fans were at the boat dock to greet the American super star. Ruth didn't arrive in Cuba until about two weeks after McGraw's team started their exhibition tour. Babe drew huge crowds but didn't really produce at the plate with the power that Cuban fans expected. Ruth reportedly hit .345 for the exhibition series and did have one home run at Almendares Park that traveled reportedly 550 feet and was considered to most likely the longest ever hit at the ball park. Linares expected Ruth to dominate every ball game and wasn't ready for Cristobal Torriente to upstage the American superstar. Torriente hit three homeruns in one game.

Ruth didn't play in the last game of his contract because he demanded more money and Abel Linares refused to pay "The Babe" more money especially when from Linares' perspective Ruth hadn't produced what Abel wanted him to on the field. Reportedly, Ruth had spent his free time at the gambling tables and had lost all the money Linares had paid him.

The New York Giants won their exhibition series 9-4. Ruth's appearance in Cuba during the winter of 1920 occurred in November and was not considered a financial success for Linares because of the tremendous amount of money he spent.

The Bacharach Giants also visited Cuba during the winter of 1920. The Negro Leaguers struggled against their Cuban opponents. Four games were played in the series. Habana won two, Almendares won one game and the Bacharach Giants only won one game.

After the end of the 1920 American Series, the Bacharach Giants stayed in Cuba to play in the regular 1920-21 Cuban League. The season lasted from December 20, 1920 through February 14, 1921. Twenty-six (26) games were scheduled for each of the three teams (Almendares, Habana and the Bacharach Giants) that played in the "league." Like had become so common in Cuban League play not all three teams made it to the end of the season. The Bacharach Giants dropped out of the "league" on January 13, 1921.

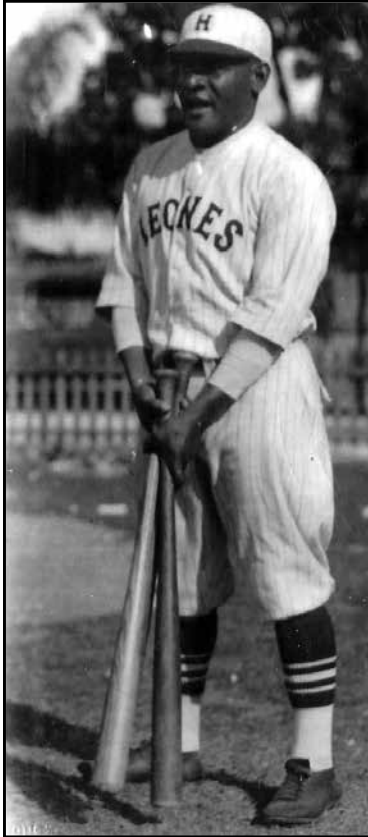
Habana was managed by Miguel Gonzalez and led by the hitting of Bienvendio Jimenez (.291). Gonzalez's pitching staff included Jose Acosta (6-3), W.C. Stewart (5-3), Oscar Tuero (3-4) and Julio LeBlanc (2-0).

Adolfo Luque opened the season in defense of his Cuban League championship from the season before for the Almendares Blues. Luque, Jose Hernandez and Emilio Palmero each won four games for Almendares. Pelayo Chacon (.344) led the team and Cuban League in hitting.

The final 1920 Cuban League standings were as follows: Habana (23-10), Almendares (21-12) and Bacharach Giants (4-26).

From the first part of October through the early part of December of 1921, the American Series was played at Almendares Park. The Brooklyn Dodgers (National League) and Memphis (Southern Association champions) faced off against Almendares and Habana. Newspaper reports identify that Abel Linares had also negotiated with the Baltimore Orioles of the International League and had even guaranteed a \$ 300 bonus to each Oriole player. Unfortunately for both Linares and Baltimore a deal could not be worked out. Both Brooklyn and Memphis went home with losing records. Brooklyn was 2-3 (.400) and Memphis went 7-11 (.389).

A Two Team League



Cristobal Torriente
Habana

The 1921 Cuban League season was one of the strangest in baseball history. There were only two teams (Almendares and Habana) in the “league” and Abel Linares owned both of them. Going into the season Linares was faced with two major problems. First was the Cuban economy was in a disastrous state and many fans didn’t have money for food let alone admission to the ball park. Secondly, many of the best Cuban players had left the island to play in Mexico.

The season started on December 15th and ended on December 22nd. Originally there were going to be only nine (9) games scheduled for the season. The reason the season only lasted several days was because Habana won four of the first five games. At this point Almendares’ manager, Adolfo Luque, requested the rest of the season be cancelled.

Miguel Gonzalez managed Habana and Adolfo Luque managed Almendares.

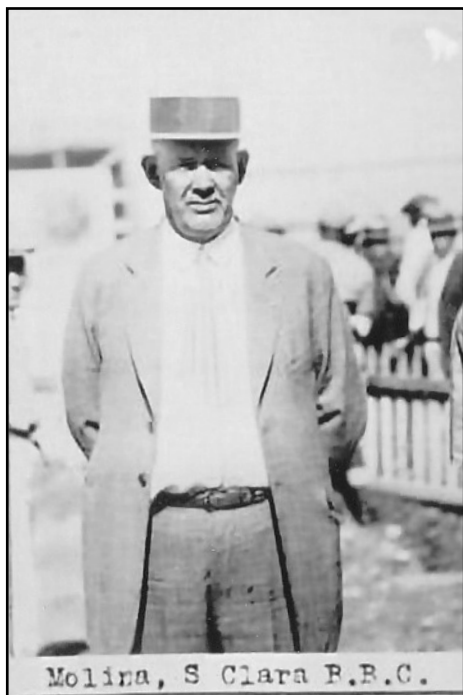
The top players for Habana in 1921 were Jose Rodriquez (1B), Bienvendio “Hooks” Jimenez (2B) Manuel Cueto (3B), Cristobal Torriente (OF) and Rafael Almeida (OF). Julio Le Blanc (2-0), Oscar Tuero (1-1) and Jose Acosta (1-0) pitched for Habana during the short season.

Almendares was offensively led by Ramon Herrera (2B), Pelayo Chacon (SS), Valentin Dreke (OF), Jacinto Calvo (OF) and Bernardo Baro (OF). Emilio Palmero (1-1), Pilar Alonso (0-2), C. Manela (0-1) and Ramon Herrera all pitched for Almendares.

Linares and Molina Establish a Team in Santa Clara

In an attempt to establish a base for professional baseball in central Cuba and expand his control over baseball in Cuba, Abel Linares sent his right hand man, Agustin “Tinti” Molina, to Santa Clara to establish a Cuban League team. Santa Clara was the capital of the Las Villas province and on the surface was a potentially good site for a “new” professional baseball franchise. Linares had the support of local governmental officials and Santa Clara had been successful in fielding a strong provincial ball club in the past. It is still unclear who really owned the team.

Games for Santa Clara during the Cuban League season were played at La Boulanger Park.



Molina, S Clara P.R.C.

Agustin "Tinti" Molina

The 1922-23 Cuban baseball season started on November 25th and play ended on February 4th of 1923. When the season started there were four (4) teams (Almendares, Habana, Marianao and Santa Clara) in the Cuban League.

Agustin "Tinti" Molina not only organized the Santa Clara team but also served as the team's field manager during the season. Molina's plan was to sign top flight black players from the United States. Tinti recruited the following Negro League players to fill out the team's roster: Dave Brown (P), Oscar Charleston (OF), Bill Holland (P), Oliver "The Ghost" Marcell (3B), Jack Marshall (P), Pablo "Champion" Mesa (OF), Alejandro Oms (OF), Julio Rojo (C) and Frank Warfield (2B).

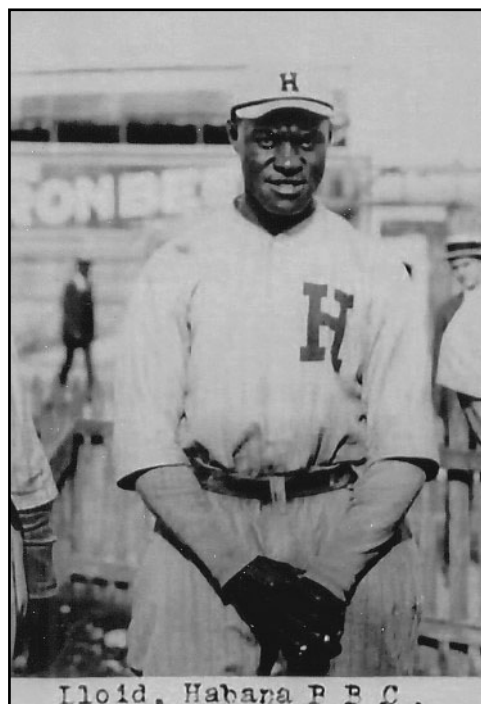
Even with his attempt to establish a team in Santa Clara, Abel Linares still owned the Almendares and Habana franchises. Almendares was managed by Jose Rodriguez during the 1922-23 season. Bernardo Baro (.401), Valentin Dreke (.308) and Jose Rodriguez (.303) were the team's top hitters. Oscar Levis (8-9), Eddie LePard (7-9) and Isidro Fabre (4-7) comprised Almendares' starting pitching rotation.

Habana was managed during the season by Miguel Gonzalez. Adolfo Luque (11-9) was the ace of Habana's pitching staff. Negro Leaguer Dick "Cannonball" Redding (3-1) also pitched for Habana during the season. Cristobal Torriente (.351), John Henry "Pop" Lloyd (.344) and Bienvendio Jimenez (.300) were Habana's leading hitters during the season

Marianao surprised Cuban baseball fans and the other three Cuban League teams when they won the "league" title with a record of 35-19 (.648). They were led by the pitching of Lucas Boada (10-4) and the hitting of Pelayo Chacon (.316).

Habana (32-22) came in second and Almendares (27-27) ended the season in third place.

Santa Clara faced significant issues all season like fan attendance, financial concerns and travel. Faced with all of these problems, Santa Clara withdrew from the Cuban League on January 14, 1923. Oscar Charleston (.446) and Alejandro Oms (.436) were both having outstanding seasons when Santa Clara called it quits. Santa Clara was credited with a record of 14-40 (.259).



Lloyd, Habana P R C.

**John Henry "Pop" Lloyd
Habana**

Abel Linares and Emilio de Armas Reorganize the Santa Clara Leopards

Before the 1923-24 Cuban Winter League season began, Emilio de Armas and Abel Linares partnered together to reorganize the Santa Clara Leopards. Their plan was to build a fan base in central Cuba that was based on provincial pride. With the support of Santa Clara dignitaries, Abel and Emilio went about putting together a championship roster.

The two team owners of the Santa Clara Leopards traveled to the United States to assemble a team of Negro League players to bring to Cuba to help them win a Cuban League championship. De Armas and Linares were successful in signing some of the best Negro League players of the day. Their Leopards team included: Oscar Charleston (OF), Alejandro Oms (OF), Dobie Moore (SS), Oliver Marcelle (3B), Oscar "Heavy" Johnson (1B), Rube Currie (P), Dave Brown (P) and several other standout players. Latin great and Abel Linares' right hand man, Agustin "Tinti" Molina, was named as the manager of the team. The starting line-up for the 1923-24 Santa Clara Leopards was as follows:

Santa Clara Leopards (1923-24)

Position	Player	Batting Average	Position	Player	Batting Average
1B	Eddie Douglas	.322	OF	Oscar Charleston	.375
1B	Oscar "Heavy" Johnson	.345		Alejandro Oms	.381
2B	Frank Warfield	.296		Pablo "Champion" Mesa	.328
SS	Walter "Dobie" Moore	.386			
3B	Oliver "Ghost" Marcelle	.393	P	Bill Holland	10-2
C	Frank Duncan	.336		Rube Currie	8-2
C	Julio Rojo	.320		Dave Brown	7-3
				Merven "Red" Ryan	5-0
				Jose Mendez	3-1



Santa Clara Leopards
Cuban League Champions (1923-24)

(Back row left to right - **Jose Mendez**, **Oscar Charleston**, Oliver Marcelle, Esteban Montalvo, **Frank Warfield** and Julio Rojo. Middle row left to right - Frank Duncan, **Alejandro Oms** and Pablo Mesa. Seated left to right - Rube Currie, **Dave Brown**, **Walter "Dobie" Moore**, Pedro Dibut, Matias Rios and Bombin Pedroso.)

This group of Negro League players combined for a team batting average of .349 for the entire season. Five of these players – Oscar Charleston (.534), Alejandro Oms (.532), Dobie Moore (.516), Oliver Marcelle (.511) and Oscar “Heavy” Johnson (.509) – had season slugging averages above .500. The 1923-24 Santa Clara Leopards set the all-time Cuban League team batting record for a single season with a .331 team batting average.

For some unknown reason, “Heavy” Johnson left the team and returned to the United States before the end of the season.

Behind the hitting and pitching of these Negro League stars, the Leopards easily won the 1923-24 Cuban League season championship with a 36-11 (.766) record. The Leopards finished 11 ½ games ahead of the Habana Leones who finished in second place. This feat is even more remarkable when you take into consideration that the Cuban Winter League season was only 48 games (Santa Clara tied one game). Even with all of their success on the field and winning a championship, Linares and de Armas still took a lot of criticism for basically fielding a Negro League all-star team with only two Cuban players (Mesa and Oms) in the starting line-up.

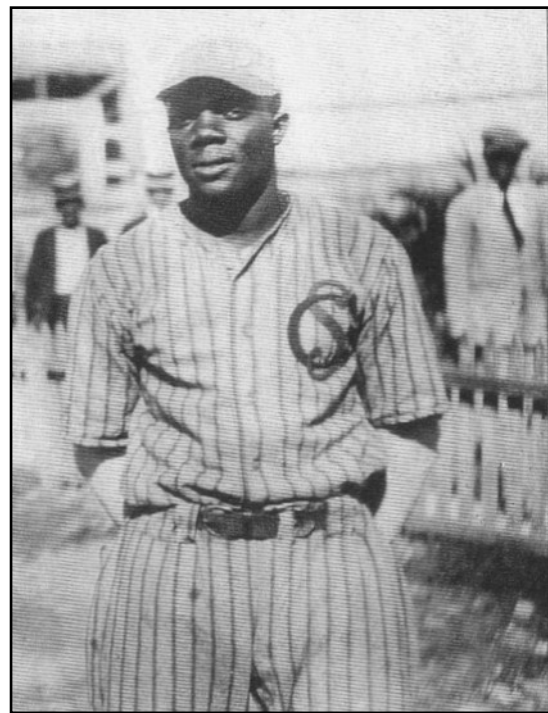
The 1923-24 Santa Clara Leopards are generally considered the best team to ever play in the Cuban League and one of the best teams in professional baseball history



Oscar Charleston
Santa Clara



Oliver “Ghost” Marcelle
Santa Clara



Walter “Dobie” Moore
Santa Clara

The Special Season – Gran Premio

The 1923-24 season was a financial success for Linares. Fan attendance was at an all time high and Cuban fans demanded more baseball. Even though the 1923-24 season ended on January 16th, “league” officials under the leadership of Abel Linares quickly organized a “new” season that was played from January 19th to March 6th of 1924. Almendares, Habana and Santa Clara all played in the “special season.” No team dominated play. Santa Clara won the title with a record of 13-12 (.520), Habana was second with a 13-13 (.500) record and Almendares was in third place just one game back from the championship with a record of 12-13 (.480).

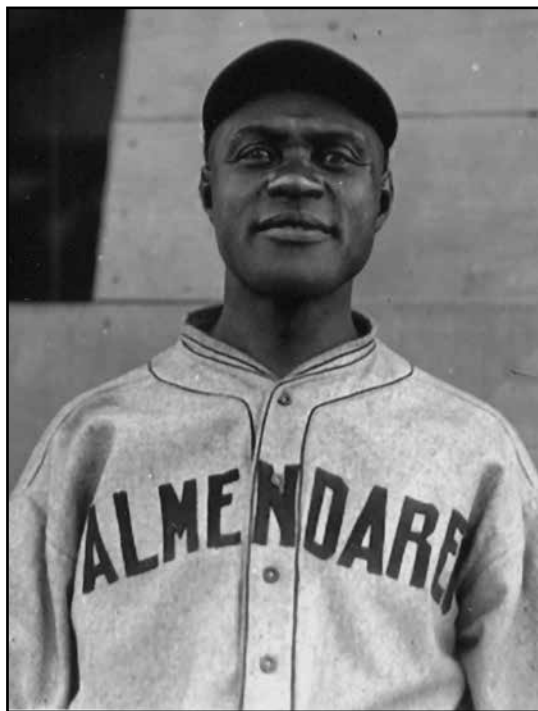
Cristobal Torriente (Almendares) won the batting title with a .377 batting average and Emilio Palmero (Almendares) was the top pitcher with a 5-1 (.833) won-loss record.

Santa Clara was managed by Tinti Molina who had led the Leopards to a championship for the regular 1923-24 season. Dave Brown (4-2), Bill Holland (4-3), Rube Currie (2-3), Pedro Dibut (2-2) and Jose Mendez (1-2) comprised Molina’s pitching staff. Dobie Moore (.299) and Alejandro Oms (.290) led Santa Clara in hitting.

Linares Goes Through a Difficult Cuban League Season

After achieving significant success during the 1923-24 Cuban Winter League, Abel Linares’ “league” faced a difficult season over the winter of 1924-25. Challenges that Linares was faced with during the 1924-25 Cuban Winter League season were as follows:

1. Almendares behind the outstanding pitching of Adolfo Luque had built up an 8 ½ games lead going into January.
2. The lack of competition affected the attendance at the ball park.
3. Santa Clara suffered low attendance and financial problems. This forced Abel Linares to move the team to Matanzas.
4. On January 11th Almendares was declared the “league” champion and the rest of the season was cancelled.



**John Henry “Pop” Lloyd
Almendares**

The 1924-25 Cuban League season started October 25, 1924 and was supposed to go through March 1, 1925. Fifty (50) games were originally scheduled for the season.

Under the management of Jose Rodriguez, Almendares recaptured the Cuban League title with a record of 33-16 (.673). Wilbur “Bullet” Rogan was the ace of the pitching staff with a 9-4 (.692) record. Prior to the start of the season, Abel Linares’ looked to the United States and filled his roster with many of the top black ball players of their day. Hitting was one of the real strengths during the season. John Henry “Pop” Lloyd (.372), Clint Thomas (.371), Valentin Dreke (.354), Dick Lundy (.353), Newt Allen (.313) and Raleigh “Biz” Mackey (.309) led the team in hitting.

As usual Miguel Gonzalez managed Abel Linares’ Habana club. Gonzalez also got excellent hitting from Cristobal Torriente (.380), Manuel Cueto (.364), Jack Sheelam (.346) and Jacinto Calvo (.342). Oscar Levis (9-7) and Arthur Henderson (8-5) were the team’s top two pitchers.

Linares' Santa Clara team was managed by his right hand man, Agustin "Tinti" Molina. Just two short seasons ago they were the top team in the "league." Before the 1924-25 season concluded play they were forced to move to a different city. Alejandro Oms (.393) led the team and Cuban league in hitting with a .393 batting average for the season. Linares also stocked his team with several Negro League players like Dave Brown (2-4), Larry Brown (.250), Bill Holland (7-8), Oliver Marcelle (.310), Esteban Montalvo (.314), Sam Streeter (4-2) and Frank Warfield (.323).

The final "league" standings for the 1924-25 season were as follows:

Cuban League (1924-25)

Team	Won	Lost	Pct.	Games Behind
Almendares	33	16	.673	-
Habana	25	25	.500	8 ½
Santa Clara/Matanzas	20	28	.417	12 ½
Marianao	18	27	.400	13

When the 1925-26 Cuban League season started on November 31, 1925 there were only three teams in the "league" and Abel Linares owned two of them (Almendares and Habana). The third team in the "league" was a new franchise by the name of San Jose. Cuban great Jose "Joseito" Rodriquez managed San Jose. The original schedule for the season called for each team to play forty-seven (47) games. The season was supposed to end on January 31, 1926.

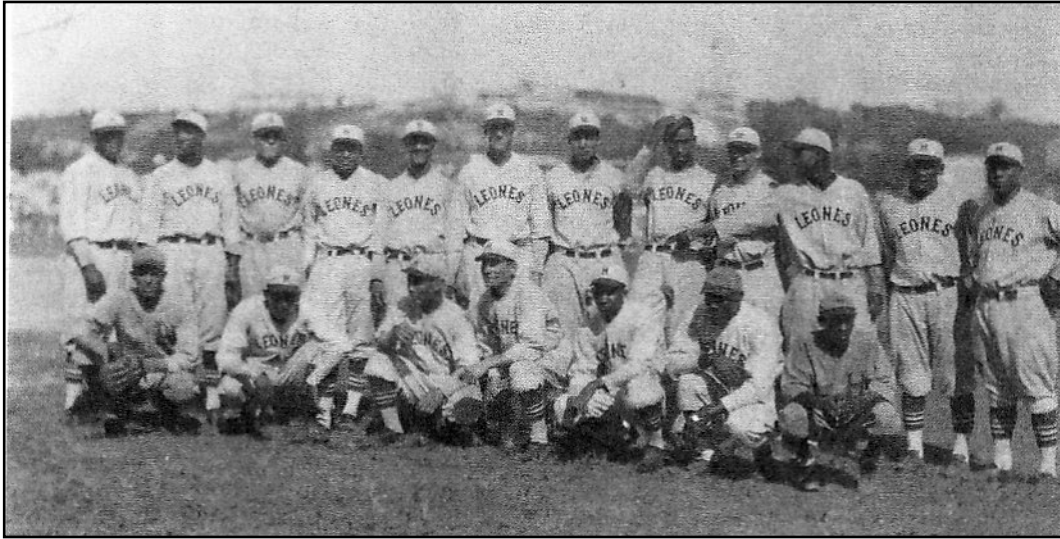


Jud Wilson

Almendares was managed by Alfredo "Pajaro" Cabrera. The Blues had six players in their starting line-up that hit over .300 for the season. They were Valentin Dreke (.387), John Henry "Pop" Lloyd (.373), Bartolo Portuondo (.363), Dick Lundy (.324), Bernardo Baro (.309) and Jose Guterrez (.301). Cesar Alvarez (10-2) was the ace of the pitching staff. Other top pitchers for the team were Isidro Fabre (4-1), Emilio Palmero (3-0) and Jose Acosta (2-1).

Habana was Abel Linares' second team in the Cuban League and they were managed by Miguel Gonzalez. Like Almendares, the Habana Reds had an excellent team. The starting rotation for Habana was Oscar Levis (8-4), Juan Eckelson (4-2) and Oscar Tuero (4-1). The top hitters for Habana were Jud Wilson (.430), Miguel Gonzalez (.407), Oscar Charleston (.350), Martin Dihigo (.344), Cristobal Torriente (.344), Ramon Gonzalez (.317) and Ramon Herrera (.309).

Both Almendares and Habana battled back and forth from the very start of the season. San Jose struggled and only managed to win three games and lost sixteen before they dropped out of the "league" on December 22nd. With only two teams left in the "league" the season was terminated early for the second straight year. The final Cuban League standings for the 1925-26 season were Almendares (34-13), Habana (32-15) and San Jose (3-41). Almendares won the Cuban League championship by two games over Habana.



Habana (1926)

(Standing left to right – **Alejandro Oms**, **Pablo “Champion” Mesa**, Eugenio Morin, **Pelayo Chacon**, Paito Herrers, **Miguel Gonzalez**, Luther Farrell, **Martin Dihigo**, Ramon Gonzalez, Julio Rojo, **Cristobal Torriente** and **Oscar Levis**. Kneeling left to right – Ricardo Torres, **Oliver Marcelle**, **Jesse “Nip” Winters**, Rafael Quintana, Juanelo Mirabal, **Jud Wilson** and David Gomez.)

Abel Linares Faces Stiff Competition

The 1926-27 season was a virtual nightmare for Abel Linares. First, in October before the start of the season a hurricane struck the island of Cuba and virtually destroyed Almendares Park. Repairs were made but the stadium was never the same. The second major problem facing Linares was the formation of a second competing “league.” For the first time in the history of the “league” Abel Linares faced stiff competition from another formidable “league.” The Campeonato Triangular League was led by Adolfo Luque and was made up of three teams (Alacranes, Havana Reds and Marianao). Stars like Bernardo Baro, Oscar Charleston, Judy Johnson, Dick Lundy, Adolfo Luque, Jose Mendez, Oliver Marcelle, Pablo Mesa, Esteban Montalvo and Alejandro Oms left the Cuban League to play in the Triangular League and took a huge fan base with them. The Triangular League played their games at the University of Habana baseball stadium.

Almendares, Cienfuegos, Cuba and Habana comprised the 1925-26 Cuban League. The season started on October 9, 1926 and play concluded on January 3, 1927. The “league” schedule called for each team to play 45 games. All games were played at the “newly” repaired Almendares Park.

Almendares was managed by Alfredo Cabrera and when the team struggled he was replaced by Armando Marsans. Justo Lopez (.393), Cristobal Torriente (.375), and Armando Marsans (.301) were the Blues leading hitters. The pitching rotation for Almendares included Mario Pedemonte (3-1), Jose Hernandez (2-2), Rogelio Alonso (2-2), Manual Garcia (2-2) and Lucas Boada (1-4).

Habana was managed by Miguel Gonzalez. Martin Dihigo (.413), Ramon Herrera (.383), Julio Rojo (.351), Jud Wilson (.333) and Roberto Campos (.322) were the leading hitters for Habana. The starting rotation for Habana was Pedro Dibut (5-3), Raul Alvarez (4-3), Juan Olmo (3-0) and Martin Dihigo (2-0).

Habana dominated Cuban League play from the beginning of the season. The season took a turn for the worse when Cienfuegos dropped out of the “league” on November 13, 1926. The final Cuban League standings for the 1926-27 season were Habana (19-11), Cuba (9-13), Almendares (11-15) and Cienfuegos (6-6).

A Tough Season for Linares

The 1927-28 winter season in Cuba proved to be very frustrating for Linares. He owned the best team (Habana) in the Cuban League and his other team (Almendares) dropped out before the end of the season. The season started on November 2, 1927 with only three teams (Almendares, Cuba and Habana).

With Miguel Gonzalez at the helm of Habana, they had an excellent season and won the “league” championship with a record of 24-13 (.649). Jud Wilson (.424), Charles “Chino” Smith (.342) and Alejandro Oms (.324) led the team in hitting. Habana ended the season with an impressive .310 team batting average. The Reds starting pitching rotation included Oscar Levis (7-2), Cliff Bell (6-2) and Martin Dihigo (4-2).

Linares’ other team in the “league” was the Almendares Blues who was managed by Adolfo Luque. The Blues got excellent hitters from Negro League players Chaney White (.363), John Henry “Pop” Lloyd (.353), Oliver “The Ghost” Marcelle (.336) and Dick Lundy (.321). Adolfo Luque (6-4), Emilio Palmero (5-6) and Isidro Fabre (4-2) comprised the team’s starting rotation.

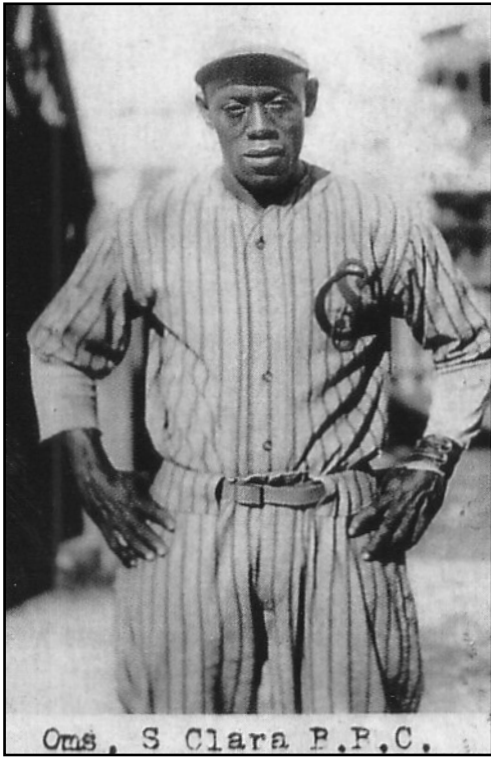
Even though Abel Linares owned both the Almendares and Habana franchises, the competition between the two teams was fierce. In late January after a humiliating 18-4 loss to Habana, Almendares dropped out of the “league.” Almendares was 16-13 at the time and challenging Habana for the title. Habana’s next game was against Cuba and after they defeated them, the season was terminated.

Habana Devastates the Competition

When the 1928-29 season started on October 20th there were four teams (Almendares, Cienfuegos, Cuba and Habana) in the Cuban League. Before the end of the season Cienfuegos and Cuba would drop out of the “league.” With only two teams left in the “league,” the season ended play on January 6, 1929.



Habana (1928-29)



Alejandro Oms

After winning the Cuban League championship for the 1927-28 season, Habana turned in an even better performance over the winter of 1928-29. The Reds ended the season with a remarkable record of 43-12 (.782) and won the “league” title by 10 ½ games over second place Almendares. Habana got devastating hitting during the season from Alejandro Oms (.432), Jud Wilson (.397), Agustin Bejerano (.378), Charles “Chino” Smith (.333) and Martin Dihigo (.303). Their pitching staff included Cliff Bell (9-3), Oscar Estrada (7-4), Jose Acosta (6-2), Oscar Levis (5-2) and Martin Dihigo (2-1).

Almendares had a good season and went 31-21 (.596). They got good hitting from George Scales (.321), Jose Maria Fernandez (.318), Jose Rodriguez (.313) and Clint Thomas (.290). Andy Cooper (6-6) and Cesar Alvarez (6-5) were the team’s two best pitchers during the season. Manuel “Cocaina” Garcia who was usually one of the best pitchers in the “league” turned in a very disappointing performance during the season and finished the season with a 2-5 record.

Linares’ Final Season in Professional Baseball

The 1929-30 season was Abel Linares’ last in professional baseball. Unfortunately, both of his teams had very poor seasons. In the four team (Almendares, Cienfuegos, Habana and Santa Clara) Cuban League, both of his teams had losing records and finished in the last two places in the final “league” standings. Almendares was 23-26 (.469) and Habana was 20-30 (.400). Cienfuegos won the Cuban League title with a record of 32-19 (.627). They finished 6 ½ games ahead of runner up Santa Clara (21-21)



Almendares (1929-30)

Challenges of the Cuban League During Abel Linares's Era

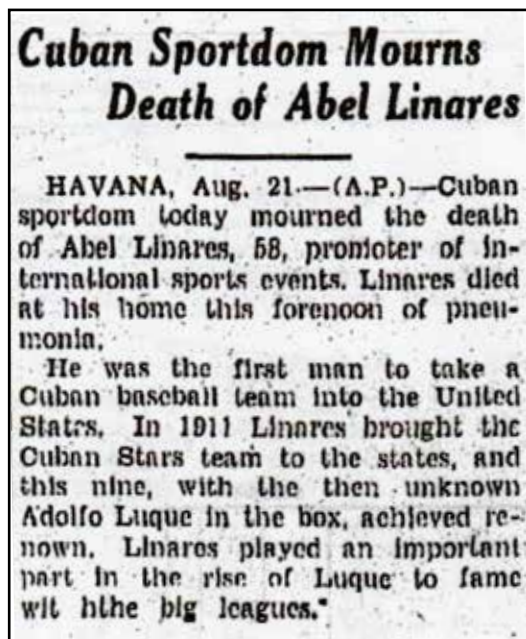
The Cuban League faced several major challenges during the time (1903-1930) which Abel Linares was the owner of a team in the Cuban League. These were as follows:

1. During the majority of the winter league seasons more often than not the season would start with only three teams in the "league." During the 1921 season there were only two teams (Almendares and Habana) in the Cuban League and Abel Linares owned both of them.
2. It was not uncommon for teams to drop out of the "league" before the end of the season. From 1903 to 1930 this happened 11 times. Eight of these eleven dropouts occurred from 1920 to 1930. Often when a team dropped out it would leave only two teams left to finish the season and in most cases this led to ending the season early.
3. The Cuban League didn't really represent the island of Cuba. Both the Almendares and Habana franchises were in the greater Habana area. It proved very difficult to nearly impossible to develop a fan base in any other large city outside Habana that could financially support a professional team on a consistent basis. Numerous attempts were made but all of them failed. Even the great Santa Clara team that won the 1923-24 Cuban League championship was short lived.

On a positive note, the fan base in the greater Habana area was extremely loyal and passionate about their team. Fans didn't come to the ball park just to see a good baseball game. They came to see their team destroy the competition. If you were a baseball fan in Habana you were either for the Blues (Almendares) or the Reds (Habana). From 1914 to 1930 when he died Abel Linares owned both teams and he never saw cross over loyalty in the fans.

Passing of a Cuban Baseball Pioneer

Abel Linares passed away in August 21, 1930. He was only 58 years old. His death ended an era in which he controlled Cuban professional baseball. When Linares died, Julio Blanco Herrera assumed the role of controlling professional baseball in Cuba and Alex Pompey became the driving force of Cuban baseball in the United States. Julio Herrera ran his baseball empire with his reliance on "old" Cuban money and strong relationships with the Negro Leagues and Mexican League. Agustin "Tinti" Molina, Abel Linares' right hand man, also remained very active in professional baseball in both Cuba and the United States.



Abel Linares

Obituary

Tampa Tribune

Tampa, FL
08-22-30

Disposition of the Almendares and Habana Franchises

After his death Abel Linares' widow took control of his baseball and business empire. Mrs. Linares initially leased out both the Almendares and Habana franchises to whoever was willing to take the financial risk.

Almendares Park was closed. It was left unattended and the park was reclaimed by brush and weeds. In the 1950's Almendares Park was demolished and a bus terminal was built on the site.

In an interview with Dr. Roberto Echevarria, Cuban baseball historian and Yale University professor, for his book The Pride of Havana: A History of Cuban Baseball, Emilio de Armas shared with Dr. Echevarria that he and Luis Paraga had approached Mrs. Linares about buying the Almendares franchise. Luis Parga was the owner of Casa Tarin which was a large sporting goods store in Habana. The proposed sale came to an immediate halt when Mrs. Linares found out that Parga was part of the deal. Reportedly, Luis Parga had sent Mrs. Linares a past due bill for sporting equipment that had been purchased by her late husband. This offended Mrs. Linares to the point that she did not want anything to do with Luis Para or any of his associates.

Mrs. Linares eventually sold the Almendares franchise to a group of investors from the Vedado Tennis Club in 1940 for the paltry sum of \$ 26,500.00. The investor group was made up of individuals that came from "old" Cuban money. The Vedado investor group included the following individuals: Luis Arzcorbe, Gene Castro, Raul de Monte, Mario G. Mendoza, Jose Gomez Mena, Martin Menocal, Neno Pertierra, Raul Pirera, Juan Portela and July Sanguily. The sale of the Almendares team would start the revival of professional baseball in Cuba.

In the mid 1940's Abel's widow sold the Habana team to a group of Cuban investors headed up by Mike Gonzalez. The sale price for the powerful franchise was reportedly a mere \$ 25,000.00. By 1947 Mike Gonzalez was the principle owner of the Habana Leones and the franchise was worth an estimated \$ 500,000.00.



Almendares (1931-32)

(Martin Dihigo - kneeling second from left and Lazaro Salazar – bending over second from right)

Abel Linares Owned and Operated Teams in the United States

Year	Team	League
1899-1905	All Cubans	Independent
1908-1919	Cuban Stars	Independent
1914	University of Havana	United States Tour
1920	Cuban Stars	Negro National League
1921	Cincinnati Cuban Stars	Negro National League
1922-1930	Cuban Stars	Negro National League

Abel Linares Owned and Operated Teams in Cuba

Year	Team	League
1900	Cubanos	American Series vs Brooklyn
1903	Almendares	Cuban League
1904	Almendares	Cuban League
1904	Azul	American Series vs Cuban X-Giants
1905	Almendares	Cuban League
1905	All Cubans	American Series vs Cuban X-Giants
1906	Almendares	Cuban League
1907	Almendares	Cuban League
1908	Almendares	Cuban League
1908-09	Almendares	Cuban League
1908-09	Fe	Cuban League
1910	Almendares Blues	Cuban League
1910-11	Almendares	Cuban League
1912	Almendares Blues	Cuban League
1913	Almendares	Cuban League
1913-14	Almendares	Cuban League
1914-15	Almendares	Cuban League
1914-15	Habana	Cuban League
1915-16	Almendares Blues	Cuban League
1915-16	Habana Reds	Cuban League
1918-19	Almendares	Cuban League
1918-19	Habana Reds	Cuban League
1919-20	Almendares	Cuban League
1919-20	Habana	Cuban League
1920-21	Almendares	Cuban League
1920-21	Habana	Cuban League
1921	Almendares	Cuban League
1921	Habana	Cuban League
1922-23	Almendares	Cuban League
1922-23	Habana	Cuban League
1923-24	Almendares	Cuban League
1923-24	Habana	Cuban League
1923-24	Santa Clara Leopards	Cuban League
1924	Almendares	Special Season – Gran Premio
1924	Habana	Special Season – Gran Premio
1924	Santa Clara	Special Season – Gran Premio
1924-25	Almendares	Cuban League
1924-25	Habana	Cuban League
1924-25	Santa Clara/Matanzas	Cuban League
1925-26	Almendares	Cuban League
1925-26	Habana	Cuban League
1926-27	Almendares	Cuban League
1926-27	Habana	Cuban League
1927-28	Almendares	Cuban League
1927-28	Habana	Cuban League
1928-29	Almendares	Cuban League
1928-29	Habana	Cuban League
1929-30	Almendares	Cuban League
1929-30	Habana	Cuban League

Assessing the Career of Abel Linares

- Abel Linares was the **premier Cuban baseball executive** during his career. He was often referred to as the “Impresario of Cuban Baseball.” Linares was also **very influential in baseball in the United States.**
- He is **credited with bringing Negro League, Minor League and Major League teams and players** to Cuba to play winter baseball. Some examples of these teams and players are as follows:
 1. In February of 1900 he brought the Cuban X-Giants to Cuba for an exhibition tour.
 2. The first Major League team that Linares brought to Cuba was the Brooklyn Superbas in 1900.
 3. During the winters of 1904-05 and 1905 Abel Linares brought the Cuban X-Giants from the United States to play in the American Series.
 4. Brought the Philadelphia Giants who were the “Colored World’s Champions” to Cuba for the 1908 American Series.
 5. The Cincinnati Reds of the National League visited Cuba in 1908.
 6. The Detroit Tigers came to Cuba in 1909 and 1910 to play the island’s best teams. The 1909 Detroit Tigers were the American League champions in 1909. Ty Cobb did not join his Tiger team mates for tour.
 7. Connie Mack’s Philadelphia Athletics also visited Cuba in 1910.
 8. Brought John McGraw’s New York Giants team featuring Christy Mathewson to Cuba in 1911. The Philadelphia Phillies also played in Cuba in 1911.
 9. In October of 1913 the Birmingham Barons of the Southern Association came to the island. Birmingham had a successful tour with an 8-5-2 (.533) record.
 10. The Brooklyn Dodgers (Superbas) visited Cuba in November of 1913 and went 10-5.
 11. In 1915 the St. Louis Terriers of the Federal League visited the island.
 12. Linares brought the Pittsburgh Pirates to Cuba in 1919.
 13. Abel brought Babe Ruth to Cuba in 1920 to play with John McGraw’s team of Major League All-Stars most of whom were from his New York Giants squad.
 14. The Brooklyn Dodgers came to Cuba in 1921.
 15. The 1923-24 Santa Clara Leopards team which he owned with Emilio de Armas was a virtual Negro League all-star “dream” team. Santa Clara only had two Cuban players on the roster.
- As a promoter, Abel Linares was always faced with significant challenges. Linares faced these challenges with **tremendous organizational skills and was considered a very successful promoter.** Some of these issues were as follows:
 1. Scheduling games
 2. Working with team owners and base ball park managers.
 3. Making travel arrangements
 4. Arranging for sleeping accommodations and meals
 5. Obtaining visas for players to enter both Cuba and the United States
 6. Posting bonds for Cuban ball players with the United States immigration service to ensure Cuban players would return to Cuba.
- When Abel Linares sent teams to the United States he always **lacked a home field.** Abel addressed this problem by making his team a traveling ball club and barnstormed across the country. Linares unlike many of his competitors made a traveling baseball club work.
- In Cuba Abel Linares controlled baseball, but when he was in the United States he had to work with Nat Strong in the East and Rube Foster in the West for booking arrangements. Both Strong and Foster were difficult to work with but Linares was **able to successfully deal with both promoters.**

- Abel Linares owned and operated the All Cubans and Cuban Stars. However, Linares teams were not the only “Cuban” teams playing in the United States. There were at least forty (40) other “Cuban” teams playing in the United States during Linares career. Manuel Camps, J.W. Bright, E.B. Lamar, Jr. and Alejandro Pompey were four of his main competitors. **Abel Linares took on all competitors and prevailed.**
- Linares had the unique **ability to scout, recruit and sign some of the best players** in the history of Cuban baseball. Some examples of this are:
 1. Abel’s 1899 All Cubans squad had five players (Alfredo Arcano, Antonio Maria Garcia, Julio Lopez, Moises Quintero and Carlos Royer) who would be elected to the Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame.
 2. His 1903 All Cubans team had six players (Luis Bustamante, Alfredo Cabrera, Julio Lopez, Agustin “Tinti” Molina, Jose Munoz and Luis Padron) who would also be elected to the Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame.
 3. Abel Linares’ 1904 All Cubans team featured six players (Rafael Almeida, Luis Bustamante, Antonio Maria Garcia, Emilio Palomino, Gonzalo Sanchez and Jose Munoz) who would be elected into the Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame.
 4. In 1905 the All Cubans team included seven players who were inducted into the Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame. These players are Rafael Almeida (3B), Luis Bustamante (SS), Alfredo Cabrera (1B), Antonio Maria Garcia (1B), Regino Garcia (C), Armando Marsans (OF) and Emilio Palomino (OF).

Seventeen (17) members of the Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame played for Abel Linares’ All Cubans. They were Rafael Almeida, Alfredo Arcano, Luis Bustamante, Alfredo Cabrera, Antonio Maria Garcia, Regino Garcia, Heliodoro Hidalgo, Julio Lopez, Armando Marsans, Agustin Molina, Carlos Moran, Jose Munoz, Luis Padron, Emilio Palomino, Moises Quintero, Carlos Royer and Gonzalo Sanchez.

5. Future Major League players Rafael Almeida (1904-1905) and Armando Marsans (1905) started their professional baseball careers playing for Abel Linares’ All Cubans. Rafael Almeida played from 1911-1913 with the Cincinnati Reds. Armando played in the Major Leagues from 1911-1918 with the Cincinnati Reds, St. Louis Terriers (Federal League), St. Louis Browns and New York Yankees.

In terms of Major League baseball, Abel Linares’ greatest discovery was Adolfo Luque. Adolfo had played baseball in the Cuban military and for the prestigious Vedado Tennis Club’s baseball team. Luque would go on to play in the Major Leagues in the United States from 1913 through 1935. He compiled a won-loss record of 194-179 with a .24 ERA in Major League play and an overall record of 377-297 (.559) in games against all levels of competition.

6. Abel Linares signed future National Baseball Hall of Fame members Martin Dihigo, (1923-24 and 1929-30), Jose Mendez (1908-1912) and Cristobal Torriente (1913-1918) to play for his one of his teams.
7. Other Cuban greats like Baldomero “Merito” Acosta (OF), Jose Acosta (P), Angel Aragon (OF), Bernardo Baro (OF), Jacinto Calvo (OF), Pelayo Chacon (SS), Manuel Cueto (3B), Isidro Fabre (P), Eusebio Gonzalez (3B/SS), Jose Junco (P), Pablo “Champion” Mesa (OF), Carlos Moran (3B), Luis Padron (OF/P), Agustin Parpetti (1B), Pastor Pareda (P), Eustaquio “Bombin” Pedrosa (P), Jose Rodriguez (SS) and Oscar Tuero (P) also played for Abel Linares.

Baldomero Acosta, Jose Acosta, Angel Aragon, Jacinto Calvo, Manuel Cueto, Eusebio Gonzalez and Jose Rodriguez also played in the Major Leagues in the United

Abel Linares – Cuban Teams



Habana (1922-23)



Almendares (1923-24)

States. Baldomero Acosta played for the Washington Senators (1913-1916) and the Philadelphia Athletics (1918), Jose Acosta played with the Washington Senators (1920-1921) and the Chicago White Sox (1922). Angel Aragon played for the New York Yankees (1914 and 1916-1917), Jacinto Calvo played for the Washington Senators (1913 and 1920). Manuel Cueto played for the St. Louis Terriers of the Federal League and the Cincinnati Reds (1917-1919). Esubio Gonzalez played for the Boston Red Sox (1918). Jose Rodriguez played for the New York Giants (1916-1918). Oscar Tuero played for the St. Louis Cardinals (1918-1920). Tuero also played in the Minor Leagues in the United States for 25 seasons.

- Abel Linares **fielded at least twenty-five (25) championship teams** during his career.

Year	Team	League	Record
1905	Almendares	Cuban League	19-11 (.633)
1905	All Cubans	American Series (Cuba)	4-2 (.667)
1906	Almendares	American Series (Cuba)	9-3 (.750)
1907	Almendares	Cuban League	17-13-1 (.567)
1907	Almendares	American Series (Cuba)	8-4-1 (.667)
1908	Almendares	Cuban League	37-8-1 (.822)
1908	Almendares	American Series (Cuba)	10-6 (.625)
1909	Almendares	American Series (Cuba)	4-2 (.667)
1910	Almendares	Cuban League	13-3-1 (.813)
1910-11	Almendares	Cuban League	21-6-3 (.714)
1911	Cuban Stars	Colored Champions of East	18-11-1 (.621)
1911	Cuban Stars	World's Semi-Professional Champions	4-1 (.800)
1913-14	Almendares	Cuban League	22-11-1 (.667)
1914-15	Habana	Cuban League	23-11 (.676)
1915-16	Almendares	Cuban League	30-12-3 (.714)
1918-19	Habana	Cuban League	29-19 (.604)
1919-20	Almendares	Cuban League	22-5-2 (.815)
1920-21	Habana	Cuban League	21-9-5 (.700)
1921	Habana	Cuban League	4-1 (.800)
1923-24	Santa Clara Leopards	Cuban League	36-11-1 (.766)
1924-25	Almendares	Cuban League	33-16-1 (.660)
1925-26	Almendares	Cuban League	34-13-2 (.723)
1926-27	Habana	Cuban League	20-11 (.645)
1927-28	Habana	Cuban League	24-13 (.649)
1928-29	Habana	Cuban League	43-12-1 (.782)

- During Abel Linares' career in the Cuban Winter League he was **continually faced with significant problems and always stepped up to meet the challenge**. The biggest problem Abel was faced with was his **inability to find a third and fourth team to round out the Cuban League**. Almendares and Habana were always the constant. Linares tried locating teams in other areas of Cuba but not could sustain. The inability to solve this problem on a long range basis resulted in the following challenges:
 1. Seasons with only three teams and in some years he owned two of them.
 2. Lopsided pennant races.
 3. Shortened seasons.
 4. Teams dropping out of the "league" before the end of the season.
 5. Changes in the "league" schedule especially when teams dropped out.
 6. Reshuffling rosters when teams disbanded.
 7. Financial issues with his teams and the "league" in general.
- Abel Linares was **very influential in the early development of black baseball in the United States and was the driving force of professional baseball in Cuba** during his career.

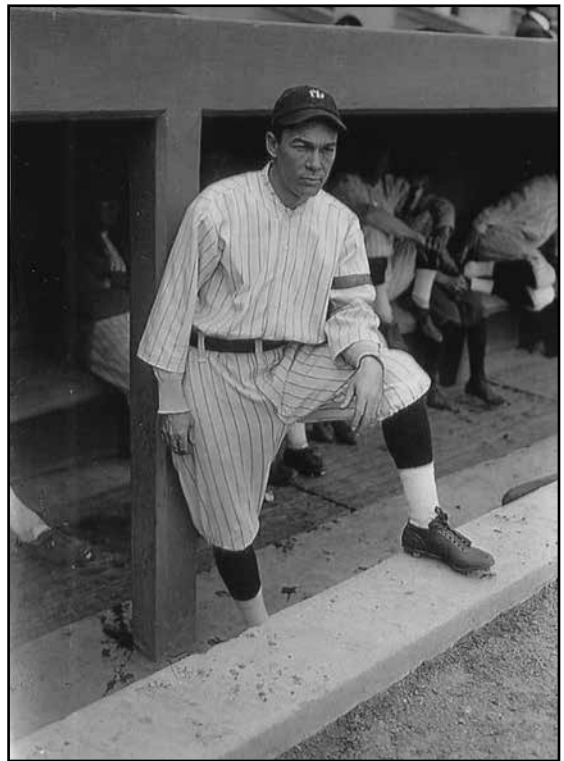
Abel Linares Sends First Two Cubans to Major Leagues



Rafael Almeida (Habana) and Armando Marsans (Almendares)



**Rafael Almeida
Cincinnati Reds**

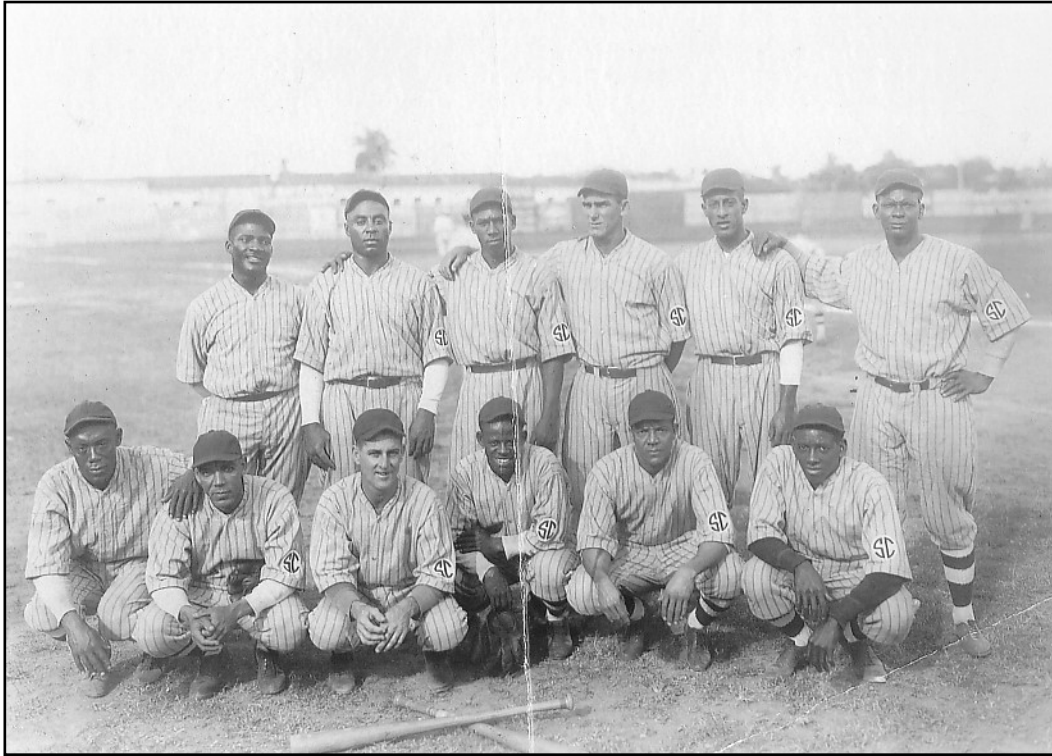


**Armando Marsans
New York Yankees**

Selected Career Highlights

- Abel Linares is recognized as bringing the first Latin baseball team to the United States. His team, the “All Cubans,” barnstormed through the northeast from July to early September of 1899.
- Linares’ All Cubans 1903 team posted an impressive won-loss record of 77-22-1 (.770) and the 1904 squad went 98-32 (.754) during their United States barnstorming tours.
- He led Almendares to the 1905 Cuban League title with a 19-11 (.633) record.
- He managed the All Cubans to American Series championships against the Cuban X-Giants for the 1905 and 1906 seasons. Both series were held at Almendares Park in Cuba.
- Linares’ Almendares Blues won the Cuban League title in 1907 with a record of 17-13.
- The 1908 Almendares played one of the best seasons in Cuban League history. They finished with record of 37-8 (.822) and won the “league” title.
- Prior to the start of the 1909 season, Abel Linares signed Jose Mendez. On their United States tour the Cuban Stars went 43-27-2 (.597).
- Behind the pitching of Jose Mendez, the Almendares Blues won the 1910 Cuban League championship with a 13-3 (.813) record.
- On their Midwest barnstorming tour in 1910 the Cuban Stars went 23-14 (.622).
- In 1911 the Cuban Stars (Cuban Stars of Havana) were considered the top team in the East.
- The Cuban Stars beat the Philadelphia Giants four out of five games to lay claim to the title of “World’s Semi-Professional Champions.” The series was played in Detroit.
- Linares’ Almendares Blues team won the 1915-16 Cuban League title. They had a record of 30-12 (.714).
- Mike Gonzalez led Abel Linares’ 1918-19 Habana Reds team to a Cuban League title with a won-loss record of 29-19 (.604).
- Some researchers credit the 1919 Cuban Stars as the “Colored Champions of the West” during the 1919 season.
- The Cuban Stars under the ownership of Abel Linares and management of Agustin “Tinti” Molina were an inaugural member of the Negro National League in 1920.
- Abel Linares and Emilio de Armas led the 1923-24 Santa Clara Leopards to a Cuban League title with a record of 36-11 (.766).
- During his career in professional baseball, Abel Linares’ teams won at least twenty-three (23) championships.
- Abel Linares is one of the true early pioneers of Cuban and Negro League baseball

Abel Linares' Cuban League Teams



Santa Clara (1922-23)



Habana (1923-24)