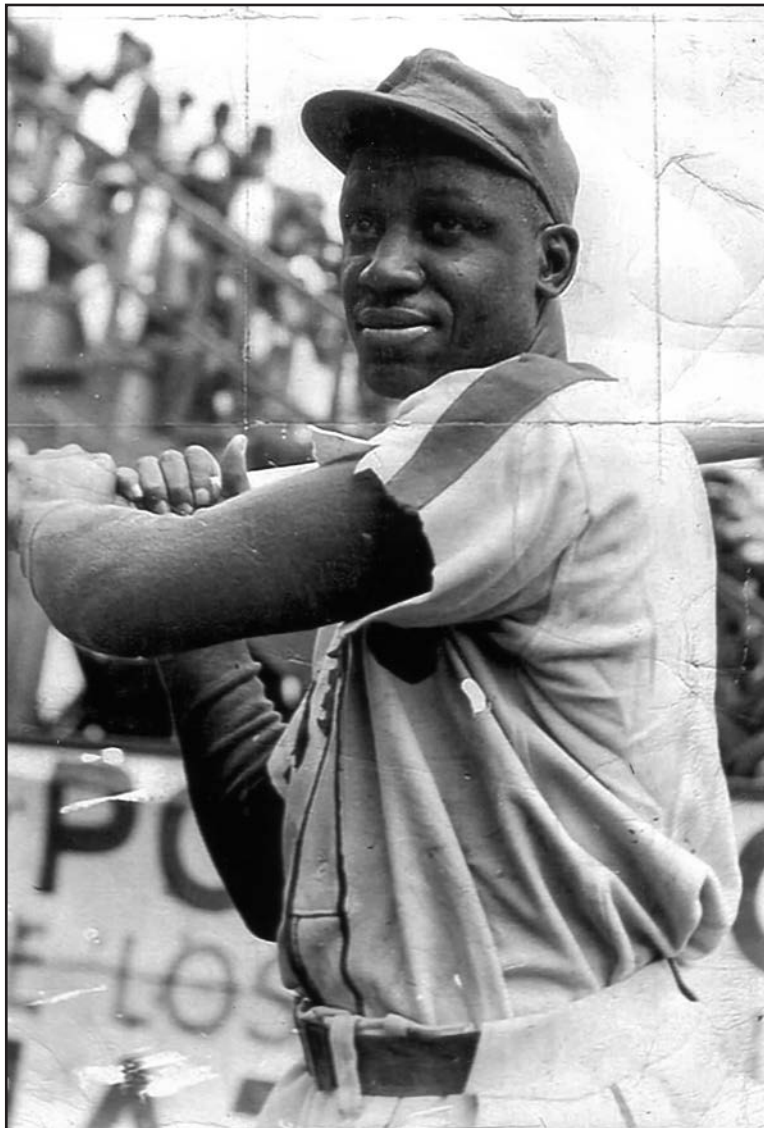


Forgotten Heroes:

Silvio Garcia



by

Center for Negro League Baseball Research

Dr. Layton Revel

and

2014

Luis Munoz



Cuidad Trujillo (1937)
Dominican League Champions

(Back row left to right – **Josh Gibson**, Harry Williams, Tony Castanos, Rodolfo Fernandez, Bob Griffith, **Perucho Cepeda** and Cy Perkins. Middle row left to right – **Lazaro Salazar**, Jose Enrique Aybar, **Leroy “Satchel” Paige**. Front row left to right – Enrique Lantigua, Leroy Matlock, Joseito Vargas, James “Cool Pappa” Bell, Sam Bankhead, **Silvio Garcia** and Francisco “Cho-Cho” Correa.)



Santa Clara Leopards (1940-41)
Cuban Winter League

(**Garcia** – kneeling second from left)

Silvio (Rendon) Garcia was born on October 11, 1913 in Limonar (Matanzas Province), Cuba. It is important to note that some sources have Silvio being born in 1914. In professional baseball outside of Cuba he was often referred to as “Cuba Libre.”

Garcia stood five feet eleven inches tall and weighed approximately 190 to 195 pounds during his playing career. He batted from the right hand side of the plate and threw right handed.

Silvio started his career as an infielder/pitcher but switched solely to the infield when, according to Negro League researcher James Riley, Silvio was struck in his pitching arm while sitting in the dugout. His last season as a starting pitcher was the 1939-40 Puerto Rican Winter League season when he went 10-6 with a “league” leading 1.32 ERA for the Ponce Leones.

Silvio Garcia was an outstanding hitter who could hit for both average and power. Garcia was a good contact hitter and very hard to strike out. During his prime he batted in the middle of the order, often hitting clean-up. He also possessed excellent speed that enabled him to take an extra base and steal a base when the opportunity presented itself. According to Tommy Lasorda (Brooklyn Dodgers pitcher and later Los Angeles Dodgers Hall of Fame manager), who played against him in Cuba, Silvio Garcia was in his opinion one of the best pure hitters who *never* played in the Major Leagues.



Silvio Garcia
Ponce Leones

Defensively Garcia played shortstop and third base the majority of his career. His speed gave him excellent range to get to a ball that would have eluded most other infielders. He had quick hands, a strong-accurate throwing arm and was a superb fielder.

Silvio also had the reputation of being a gentleman both on and off the field. When asked about Silvio Garcia, Negro Leaguer and Hall of Famer Monte Irvin, who played against Silvio in Cuba, provided the following assessment of the Cuban star: “ He was a fine ball player, a gentleman and well-liked by everyone.” He was always got along with management very well and was considered as an excellent teammate both on the field and in the clubhouse. The media loved Garcia and he was a fan favorite everywhere he played.

He was a complete ball player who could do it all. He could hit, throw, run and play defense. He was also an asset in the clubhouse and always represented his team well off the field.

Early Baseball Career

Silvio Garcia started playing baseball at a very young age on the sandlots of Matanzas Province where he was born. As he got older he moved up to play for the stronger teams in the area.

Garcia’s first opportunity to play in the Cuban Winter League came when he was only 18 years old and was signed by Miguel Gonzalez to play for the Habana Leones during their 1931-32 season. Gonzalez was the player-manager of the Leones. Habana was one of three teams (Almendares and Regla being the other two) that played in the Cuban Winter League during the 1931-32 season. The season started on November 24th and concluded play on January 23rd. Habana was an all Latin team that included no American players. Silvio Garcia was a utility player his rookie season. He filled in playing both third base and in the outfield during the season. In his first season at the highest level of professional baseball played in Cuba, Silvio got up to bat

66 times and collected 17 hits for a respectable .258 batting average. The Habana Leones were led during the season by the hitting of Alejandro Oms (.389), Roberto Estalella (.351), Miguel Gonzalez (.319) and Miguel Solis (.300). They were a solid hitting team that unfortunately lacked depth in pitching to be a contender for the “league” title. Oscar Estrada (5-5), Francisco Martinez (2-3) and Leandro Forbes (1-4) were the most effective pitchers for Habana during the season. The Almendares Alacranes won the Cuban Winter League title at the end of the season with a



Silvio Garcia
Marianao Tigers

won-loss record of 21-9 (.700), Regla finished with a 15-15 (.500) record for second place and Habana was a distant third with a losing record of 9-21 (.300).

Silvio did not play in the Cuban Winter League during the 1932-33 season and there was no Cuban baseball season over the winter of 1933-34 because of political problems in the country.

When the 1934-35 Cuban Winter League season opened for play on November 3rd, Silvio Garcia had earned a roster spot on the Marianao Tigres. Marianao was managed by Cuban baseball great Joseito Rodriquez during the season. Unfortunately for Tigres fans, the team spent the entire season in a batting slump. Pedro Diaz (.297), Ruben Garcia (.268) and Ismael Morales (.242) were sadly to say the top three hitters on the team. Five starting players including Silvio Garcia hit under .200 for the season. Silvio hit a mere .187 while splitting his time between third base and pitching.

The starting pitching staff for Marianao during the season was made up of Tomas de la Cruz (6-4), Francisco Martinez (2-4) and Pedro Valiente (1-3). Silvio fared better on the mound pitching than at the plate during the season. He pitched in 6 games and had a 1-2 record with an impressive 2.47 ERA. Almendares led by the hitting and pitching of Lazaro Salazar (.407 batting average and 6-1 won-loss record) won the Cuban Winter League title with a record of 18-9. Salazar was also named the Cuban Winter League Most Valuable Player (MVP). Marianao (12-16) finished in second and Habana (11-16) ended up in last place.

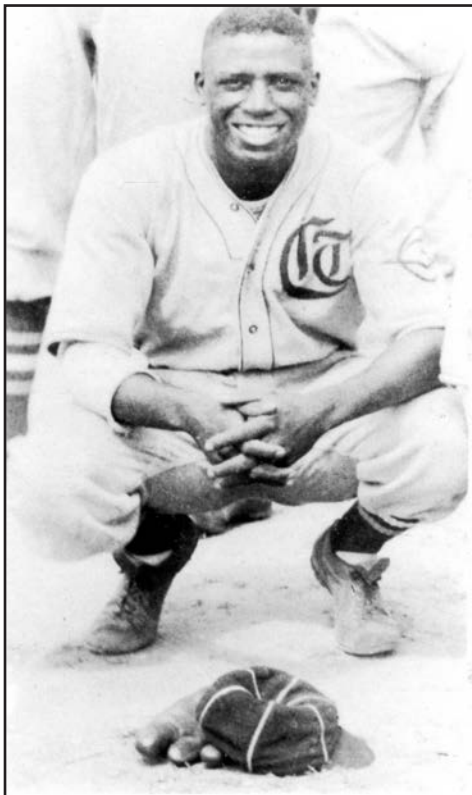
Silvio Garcia was back with Marianao for the 1935-36 Cuban Winter League season. Before the start of the season, the Cuban Winter League expanded to four teams (Almendares, Habana, Marianao and Santa Clara). The season started on November 26th and ended on January 28th. Joseito Rodriquez’s Marianao team was led by the hitting of Aurelio Cortez (.308), Marvin Barker (.277) and Silvio Garcia (.275). The pitching staff for Mariano included Tomas de la Cruz (4-9), Barney Brown (3-4), Silvino Ruiz (3-5) and Francisco Martinez (1-5). Silvio Garcia also pitched in five games. He threw 3 complete games but had a disappointing won-loss record of 1-3 (.250). At the end of the season Santa Clara (34-14) was crowned the “league” champion. They were led by Martin Dihigo who managed the team, was the ace of the pitching staff (“league” leading 11-2 won-loss record) and also led the “league” hitting with a .358 batting average. The Mariano Tigres ended up in last place with a dismal won-loss record of 15-32 (.319). They were 18 ½ games behind Santa Clara in the short winter season.

The 1936-37 Cuban Winter League season proved to be a breakout year for both Silvio Garcia and the Marianao Tigres. Before the start of the season, Joseito Rodriquez was replaced as the manager of the team. With the season expanded to 66 games for each team, Tigres ownership felt a major change was needed and they hired Martin Dihigo who had won the championship the year before with Santa Clara. Dihigo made significant changes to the team and starting line-up. He brought in several new players and elevated Silvio to the role of his number two starting

pitcher. During the season the leading hitters for the team were P. Veitia (.334), Martin Dihigo (.323), Clyde Spearman (.322) and Buck Leonard (.304). Garcia had a tough year at the plate and finished the season batting .234. On the mound the one-two combo of Martin Dihigo (14-10) and Silvio Garcia (10-2 with 13 complete games in 15 outings) won key ball games and kept the team in contention for the “league” lead all season. With three games left to play in the season, Santa Clara had what appeared to be a comfortable three game lead over Marianao. Sparked by Martin Dihigo’s never give up attitude, Marianao beat Santa Clara three straight games to end the season with both teams tied for the “league” lead. A three game play-off series was scheduled to crown a “league” champion. Santa Clara’s Raymond Brown (21-4 record for the season) defeated Martin Dihigo in game one of the play-off series by a score of 6-1. Silvio Garcia came on in game two which was a must win situation to pitch the Tigres to a 4-2 victory. In dramatic fashion Martin Dihigo won game three of the series to give the Marianao Tigres (38-31) the Cuban Winter League title.

Silvio Leaves Cuba for the Dominican Republic

In the Dominican Republic, Rafael Leonidas Trujillo who was the country’s dictator was also a strong baseball supporter. He even owned his own team named the Ciudad Trujillo Dragones that he had formed by merging the two rival teams (Licey and Escogido) from Santiago Domingo. Trujillo’s goal was very simple: win the Dominican League championship for the 1937 season, no matter what it cost. As a baseball fan this would bring him tremendous satisfaction, but in his mind would also help preserve his political power in the country. Unfortunately for Trujillo, his two main political opponents backed the other two teams in the Dominican League. These teams represented the cities of Santiago (Aguilas Cibaenas) and San Pedro de Macoris (Estrellas Orientales).



Silvio Garcia
Ciudad Trujillo

Initially Trujillo’s plan was to hire the best talent in Latin America. The two players he initially targeted for his team were Lazaro Salazar as his player manager and fellow Cuban Silvio Garcia. Trujillo signed Salazar, Garcia and several other Latin players to start the season. When the Dragones got off to a slow start at the beginning of the season, Trujillo sensed that his current roster would not be strong enough to guarantee a championship so he sent an emissary to the United States with a briefcase full of money and orders to return with the best “black” ballplayers money could buy. Trujillo’s agent immediately went to New Orleans where the Pittsburgh Crawfords were conducting spring training. The player at the top of their signing list was Negro League star pitcher Satchel Paige. Money talked with Satchel and he signed with Ciudad Trujillo. With all of Trujillo’s money and Paige’s influence the following Negro League players were also signed to play for Ciudad Trujillo: Sam Bankhead, James “Cool Pappa” Bell, Josh Gibson, Robert Griffith, Leroy Matlock and Bill Perkins. Gus Greenlee, the owner of the Crawfords, was beside himself over losing Paige and his other stars. Greenlee even went to the United States State Department in Washington, D.C. to try and block the players from going to the Dominican Republic. Greenlee’s appeals fell on deaf ears in Washington.



Ciudad Trujillo Stadium
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

CAMPEONATO NACIONAL
DE
Base Ball - 1937
"REELECCION PRESIDENTE TRUJILLO"

SIEMPRE IGUAL - BURO
SIN COMPOSICION

Jugada efectuada en _____
el día _____

Jugadores y posiciones que acostumbran jugar.

AQUILAS CIBAÑAS

-P —Dihigo, Marlin	S-S —Martinez, Horacio
-P —Tant, Luis	O-F —Spearman, Clyde
-P —Hunter, B. (King Kong)	O-F —Rivera, Rivelino (Belito)
-P —Brewer Chester	O-F —López, Cándido
-P —Báez, Andrés Julio (Grillo B)	O-F —Rojas, Ramón (Batting Siki)
-C —Palm, Clarence	O-F —Rodríguez, Juan (Gueba)
-C —Martínez, Rafael (Papin)	O-F —Perdomo, J. B. (Pajanto)
1-B —Thomas, David	1-F —Gómez Santiago (Chaguín)
2-B —García Juan Bellin (Bragañita)	
3-B —Báez, Pedro (Grillo A)	
3-B —Amaro, Santos	

CIUDAD TRUJILLO

-P —Paige S.	1-B —Rodríguez, Francisco (Ninan)
-P —Fernández, Rocelfo	2-B —Cepeda, Perucho
-P —García, Silvio	2-B —Solís, Miguel
-P —Lluyeres, Gustavo	S-S —Correa, Francisco
-P —Sanchez Ernesto (Neslico)	O-F —Alvarado, Amable (Sonlley)
-P —Salazar, Lázaro	O-F —Castaño
-C —Perkins Cy	O-F —Andrews, Herman
-C —Lantigua, Enrique	O-F —Vargas
-C —St. Clair, Luis (Güigüi)	

ESTRELLAS ORIENTALES

-P —Bragaña, Ramón	2-B —Scales, George
-P —García, Manuel A. (Cocaina)	2-B —López, Radamés
-P —Teherán, Rogelio	2-B —Ruiz, Ramón
-P —Díaz, Eleodoro (Yoyo)	3-B —Arango, Pedro
-P —San, Pedro Alejandro	3-B —Acosta, Luis (Piñao)
-C —Rojas, Julio	S-S —Paez, Aladino
-C —Medina, Antonio (Toño)	O-F —Bellán, Jose
1-B —Blanco, Carlos	O-F —Fortunato, Pedro Julio
1-B —Puesan, Rafael (Mellizos)	O-F —Oms, Alejandro
	O-F —Vargas, Juan Esteban (Tetelo)

Pida siempre: RON TAVARES

Ciudad Trujillo (1937)
Dominican League Champions
Scorecard

Estrellas Orientales and Aguilas Cibaenas quickly picked up on Trujillo's plan to sign Negro League players and were not going to be out done by Trujillo. They started signing their own big name Negro League and Latin players. Martin Dihigo headed up the Aguilas team, while Juan "Tetelo" Vargas was the leader of the Estrellas Orientales squad. The final rosters for the three Dominican teams looked more like Negro League all-star squads than the usual Latin winter league rosters. By the end of all the bidding wars and signings, the following players with Negro League experience had committed to play in the 1937 Dominican League.

Roster of Negro League Players in the Dominican Republic in 1937

Cuidad Trujillo	Aguilas Cibaenas	Estrellas Orientales
Herman Andrews	Santos Amaro	Pedro Arango
Sam Bankhead	Chet Brewer	Carlos Blanco
James "Cool Pappa" Bell	Martin Dihigo	Ramon Bragana
Perucho Cepeda	Bert Hunter	Ernest Carter
Francisco "Cho Cho" Correa	Cando Lopez	Edolfo "YoYo" Diaz
Rodolfo Fernandez	Horacio Martinez	Manuel "Cocaina" Garcia
Silvio Garcia	Clarence Palm	Alejandro Oms
Josh Gibson	Roy Parnell	Javier "Blue" Perez
Robert Griffith	Pat Patterson	Julio Rojo
Enrique Lantigua	Clyde Spearman	Pedro Alejandro San
Leroy Matlock	David Thomas	George "Tubby" Scales
Satchel Paige	Luis Tiant, Sr.	Juan "Tetelo" Vargas
Cy Perkins		
Lazaro Salazar		
Miguel Solis		
Harry Williams		

Cuidad Trujillo was led by the hitting of Josh Gibson (.453), James "Cool Pappa" Bell (.318), Sam Bankhead (.309), Silvio Garcia (.297) and Lazaro Salazar (.292). Silvio also led the Dominican League in hits (38) and doubles (14). Satchel Paige (8-2) was the ace of the pitching staff. Leroy Matlock (4-1), Rodolfo Fernandez (4-5) and Bob Griffith (2-1) rounded out the starting rotation for Trujillo's team. Garcia also figured in two games as a pitcher and lost both.



Cuidad Trujillo (1937)
Dominican League Champions

(Standing left to right – Bill Perkins, Enrique Lantigua, **James "Cool Pappa" Bell**, Tony Castano, **Josh Gibson**, Rofolfo "Rudy" Fernandez, Bob Griffith and **Leroy "Satchel" Paige**. Kneeling left to right – **Lazaro Salazar**, Jose "Huesito" Vargas, Sonlley Alvarado, **Silvio Garcia**, **Sam Bankhead**, Harry Williams and **Perucho Cepeda**.)

The 1937 Dominican League was closely contested the entire season. Ciudad Trujillo prevailed at the end of the season and won the league title with a record of 18-13 (.581). Aguilas Cibanaes (13-15) finished in second and Estrellas Orientales (11-14) was in third. The 1937 Dominican season was a huge success for the fans because they got to see some of the best baseball that was ever played in Latin America, but it was also a financial disaster. The tremendous amounts of money that was spent by the owners of the three teams to bring in foreign players bankrupted Dominican professional baseball for the next fourteen years.

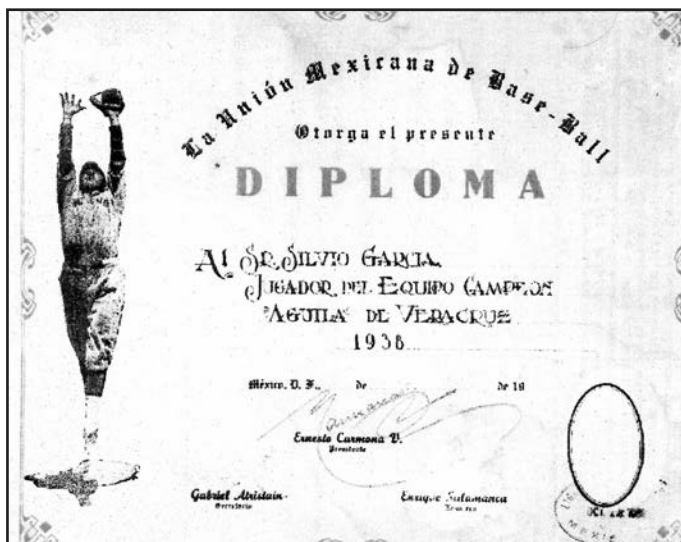
After the conclusion of the Dominican League season, Silvio traveled to Venezuela to play for Pastora in the Serie Nacional (Venezuela). Statistics for Silvio Garcia for his season in Venezuela in 1937 have not yet been uncovered.

Other top teams in Venezuela that were part of the Asociacion Venezolana de Baseball during the 1937 season were Deportivo Caracas, Centauros de Maracaibo, Gavilanes, Santa Marta, Senadores, Vargas, Valencia and Zulia. Venezuelan team owners were able to attract several other Negro League players like Pedro Arango, Grillo Baez, Ramon Bragana, Oscar Estrada, Rodolfo Fernandez, Manuel "Cocaina" Garcia, Bertrum Hunter, Horacio Martinez, Alejandro Oms, Pedro San, Luis Tiant, Sr. and Juan "Tetelo" Vargas to play in Venezuela during 1937. Local Venezuelan stars Luis Aparicio, Alejandro Carrasquel, Vidal Lopez and M.A. "El Pollo" Malpica also played in Venezuela in 1937.

Garcia goes to Mexico

Garcia's outstanding performance for Ciudad Trujillo during the 1937 Dominican season got him noticed by the owners of the Aguila de Vera Cruz franchise of the Mexican League. Prior to the start of the 1938 Mexican League season, Garcia signed a contract to go to Mexico to play for Aguila. The Vera Cruz team was managed by Augustin Verde. The team had an all Latin roster that featured the hitting of Martin Dihigo (.387), Silvio Garcia (.349), Jacinto Roque (.321) and Manuel Salvatierra (.320). Besides playing shortstop, Silvio was also one of the team's starting pitchers. The ace of the pitching staff was Martin Dihigo who put up a league leading record of 18-2 (.900). Dihigo also led the Mexican League in 1938 with a 0.92 ERA and 184 strikeouts. Garcia was the second best pitcher on the team with a 10-2 record and a 1.68 ERA. Garcia's complete pitching statistics for the 1938 Mexican League season were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	Innings	Won	Lost	Hits	Runs	BB	SO	ERA
1938	Vera Cruz	13	112.3	10	2	80	21	28	88	1.68



Silvio Garcia
Aguila de Vera Cruz (1938)
Award for Winning Mexican
League Championship

Tirso de Anda (5-2 w/ 1.85 ERA) and Julian Ramirez (2-3 w/ 1.03 ERA) rounded out the starting rotation. Vera Cruz's starting rotation went 35-9 (.800) for the 1938 season and is considered the most effective starting pitching rotation in Mexican League history. In 400 innings the starting staff allowed only 58 earned runs for an unbelievable 1.35 ERA. Vera Cruz dominated their competition all year long and easily walked away with the "league" title at the end of the season. They finished the season with a record of 40-9 (.816) and were six games ahead of Mexico (33-14) and seven games up on Tampico (32-15) who also had very good seasons. The 1938 Aguila de Vera Cruz team is considered one of the best if not the best team in Mexican League history.

Silvio Returns to South America

Instead of returning to Mexico where he had an outstanding season in 1938, Silvio instead signed with Valdes of the Campeonato de Baseball de Primera Division in Venezuela. Teams and their final standing in the Venezuelan "league" in 1939 were:

Campeonato de Baseball de Primera Division (1939)

Team	Won	Lost	Pct.	Place
Vargas	14	8	.636	1 st
Valdes	13	9	.591	2 nd
Venezuela	9	13	.405	3 rd
Centaurus	8	14	.364	4 th

During his 1939 regular "league" season with Valdes, Silvio pitched and played shortstop and third base when he wasn't pitching. In 22 games for Valdes, Garcia went 27 for 88 for a .307 batting average. Silvio also started 10 games as a pitcher and threw 6 complete games while compiling a 4-2 record with a 2.11 ERA. Also starring for Valdes were Negro Leaguers Carlos Blanco (.348) and Bertrum Hunter (2-3 with 1.76 ERA). The Valdes squad finished the season in second place just behind Vargas team who were led by the hitting of Alejandro Oms (.474) and Ray Dandridge (.310) and the pitching of Negro Leaguer Leroy Matlock. Silvio Garcia also played for Vargas after the conclusion of the regular 1939 Venezuelan season.

Puerto Rican Winter League

After the 1939 regular season had concluded, Silvio Garcia traveled to Puerto Rico to play for the Ponce Kofresi (Pirates) for their 1939-40 Puerto Rican Winter League season. This was only the second season for the Puerto Rican Winter League, but team owners were already attracting the top Negro League and Latin talent to the island to play winter baseball.



Ponce Kofresi (1939-40)



Silvio Garcia, Pancho Coimbre, Parnell Woods, Sammy Cespedes and John Lyles
Ponce Leones (1939-40)

The 1939-40 Puerto Rican Winter League included teams from the following Puerto Rican cities: Caguas, Guayama, Humacao, Mayaguez, Ponce, San Juan and Santurce. Team owners for Ponce got more than their monies worth when they signed Silvio Garcia, as he led his Ponce team in both hitting and pitching. He batted .298 for the season and went 10-6 on the mound with a “league” leading 1.32 ERA. Besides his incredibly low earned run average, the thing that makes Garcia’s pitching even more impressive are the Negro League pitchers he beat out to claim the title. This group of Negro League pitchers included Roy Partlow (1.49 ERA), Satchel Paige (1.93 ERA), Bill Byrd (1.97 ERA) and Leon Day (2.17 ERA)

Liborio Ramirez (.294), Emilio Navarro (.290), Pancho Coimbre (.277) and Parnell Woods (.269) helped bolster Ponce’s relatively anemic hitting attack during the season. Lack of run support plagued the Kofresi for both halves of the season. Ponce only hit six homeruns for the entire winter league season. Outstanding pitching from Garcia (10-6 w/ 1.32 ERA), Roy Welmaker (8-2 w/ 2.86 ERA) and Juan Guilbe (6-5 w/ 2.85 ERA), however, put wins in the record book for Ponce all season.

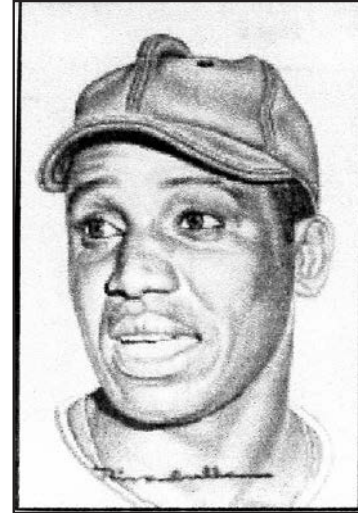
Ponce finished the first half of the split season tied for second place with a 17-11 record. Ponce also had a very good second half of the season with a 16-12 won-loss record. They ended the winter season with a combined record of 33-23 (.585) which put them in third place in the final “league” standings. Guayama (winner of the second half of the season) defeated San Juan (winner of the first half of the season) four games to zero to win the 1939-40 Puerto Rican Winter League title.

Silvio Returns to Venezuela

Silvio Garcia returned to Venezuela to play third base and shortstop for team Venezuela during their 1940 baseball season. Venezuela played in the three team Campeonato de Baseball de Primera Division during the 1940 baseball season. Also competing in the “league” were teams representing Vargas and Cardenales.

Batting from the clean-up spot, Garcia had an excellent season hitting .324 (24 for 74) with 13 RBIs in the 20 games he played for Venezuela. Also competing for Venezuela were Javier “Blue” Perez (.389), Manuel “Cocaina” Garcia (.329) and Juan “Huesito” Vargas (.313). Besides being one of the leading hitters on the team, Manuel “Cocaina” Garcia was also Venezuela’s ace pitcher with a 9-6 record and a 2.90 ERA.

At the end of the 1940 season Vargas won the title with a 16-5 (.762) record. Vargas was led by the hitting of Negro Leaguers Ray Dandridge (.379), Juan “Tetelo” Vargas (.326) and Leon Day (.323). Leon Day was also the “league’s” top pitcher with a 13-2 record and a 1.69 ERA. Venezuela came in second with a 13-8 (.619) record and Cardenales finished in last place with a disappointing record of 6-16 (.273).



Silvio Garcia
Venezuela (1940)

Garcia Plays Briefly in the Negro League

Silvio Garcia also played briefly for the New York Cubans of the Negro National League during September of the 1940 season. Only one game has been found so far documenting Silvio’s rookie season in the Negro Leagues. The game occurred on September 22nd and Garcia played left field against the Memphis Red Sox. He got up to bat four times: walked three times, had a sacrifice hit, hit a double in his other at bat and scored a run.

Some of the star players on the 1940 New York Cubans roster were Alex Crespo, Pancho Coimbre, Jose M. Fernandez, Silvino Ruiz and Johnny Taylor. The New York Cubans posted a losing record of 16-21 (.432) in Negro National League play during the 1940 season.

Garcia Returns to the Mexican League

After a two year absence, Silvio Garcia returned to the Mexican League in 1941. Instead of returning to Vera Cruz, Garcia opted to sign with the Mexico City Diablos Rojos (Red Devils). The “Reds,” as they were most commonly called, were a solid team who were managed by Latin great Ernesto Carmona. The team’s leading hitters were Burnis “Wild Bill” Wright (.390), Silvio Garcia (.366), Pat Patterson (.362), Javier Negrete (.333), Manuel Salvatierra (.333) and Bill Perkins (.308). Garcia’s complete hitting statistics for the 1941 season were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1941	Mexico City	101	434	102	159	29	11	5	68	15	.366	.518

His 159 base hits led the Mexican League for the 1941 season. The pitching staff for Mexico City was anchored by three Negro League pitchers. They were Theo Smith (16-8), Leroy Matlock (15-9) and Andy Porter (11-16). By 1941 Silvio Garcia’s pitching arm was gone and he was

strictly an infielder. The Mexico City Red Devils had a good season and finished in second place in the final Mexican League standings with a record of 52-47 (.525). They were, however, 13 ½ games behind Silvio's old Vera Cruz team (67-35).

Garcia returned to Mexico City to play for Carmon's Red Devils for the 1942 Mexican League season. Silvio Garcia was the top hitter for Mexico City with a .364 batting average in 1942. His complete hitting statistics for the 1942 season were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1942	Mexico City	85	349	75	127	19	4	11	83	21	.364	.536

Silvio Garcia's 83 runs batted in led the Mexican League during the season. Other Mexico City hitters who had a good season at the plate in 1942 were Quincy Troupe (.364), Henry McHenry (.354), Theo Smith (.296) and Raul Mendez (.290). Unfortunately for Carmona the pitching staff pitched poorly all season. Theo Smith (13-11 w/ 4.17), Alberto Romo (12-9 w/ 5.41 ERA), Leroy Matlock (9-13 w/ 5.37) and Henry McHenry (3-3 w/ 4.48 ERA) made up the starting rotation. The 1942 Mexican League season was the most closely contested in "league" history. Six teams finished within 7 ½ games of the "league" lead. Torreon with Martin Dihigo as their manager won the Mexican League title with a record of 48-40 (.545). The Mexico City Red Devils finished the season with a record of 40-47 (.460) and were in fifth place in the final "league" standings.

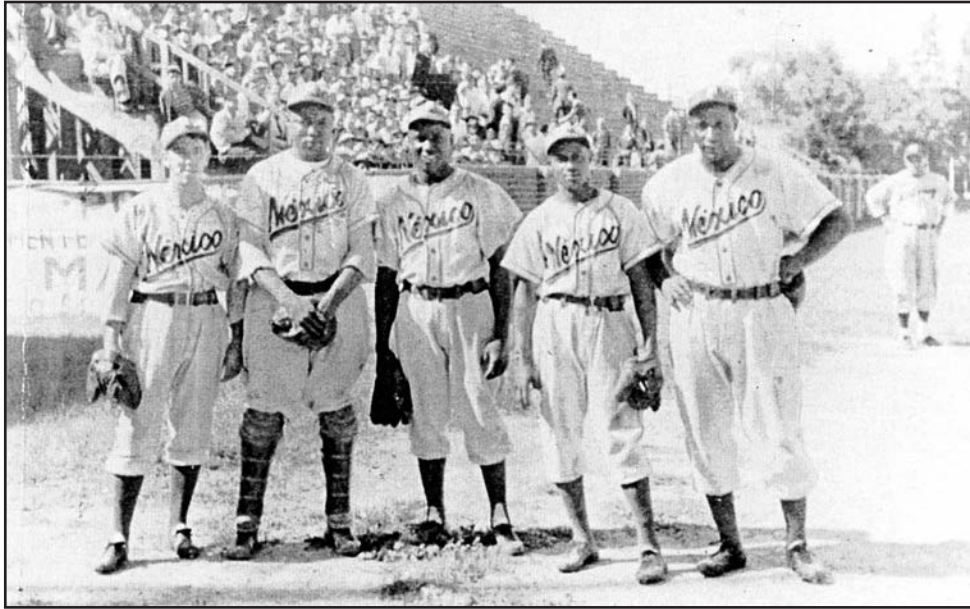


Silvio Garcia
Mexico City Red Devils (1942)

Silvio was back with Mexico City for the start of the 1943 Mexican League season. The Red Devils started the season with a new manager (Jose Luis Gomez) and high hopes of improving on the losing season from the year before. Mexico City had a fairly strong hitting team that included Burnis "Wild Bill" Wright (.366), Eliseo Martinez (.333), Hector Rodriguez (.323), Silvio Garcia (.301) and Quincy Troupe (.301). Unfortunately, Mexico City's pitching staff lacked stability and struggled all season. Armando Torres (13-15 w/ 4.40 ERA) was the only starting pitcher for the team that was on the staff the entire season. Henry McHenry (17-10), Agapito Mayor (16-15) and Santiago Ulrich (14-14) also pitched for other teams in the Mexican League besides Mexico City during the 1943 season. The Mexico City Red Devils could not improve on their losing record from the year before and finished the season with a 38-51 (.427) won-loss record. They ended the season in 6th place and were 14 ½ games behind Lazaro Salazar's

Monterrey Industriales team who were 53-37 (.589)

Garcia started the 1944 season with the last place Mexico City Red Devils before being traded to the first place Azules de Vera Cruz. Mexican millionaire Jorge Pasquel was the richest man in Mexico and the owner of the Azules de Vera Cruz. He had the financial resources to do whatever was necessary to field a championship team and he wanted Silvio Garcia in his line-up. Major League great Roger Hornsby managed Vera Cruz at the start of the season before he was replaced by Ramon Bragana. The leading hitters for the Azules were Pedro Formenthal (.345), Jose M. Castro (.322), Silvio Garcia (.314), Agustin Bejerano (.313) Salvador Hernandez (.305) and Willie Wells (.294). Silvio really showed off his speed during the 1944 season. His 31 stolen bases led the Mexican League for the season. The real success for Vera Cruz during 1944 was the



Agapito Mayor, Quiency Troupepe, Silvio Garcia, Hector Rodriguez and Burnis "Wild Bill" Wright
Mexico City Red Devils (1943)

pitching of Ramon Bragana who posted "league" leading records of 30-8 won-loss record and 144 strikeouts. He was the only starting pitcher to play the entire season for the team. With excellent hitting and the brilliant pitching of Bragana, Vera Cruz won the Mexican League title with a record of 52-37 (.584).

Silvio was back in the starting line-up for Vera Cruz to start the 1945 season. He had an excellent season at the plate hitting .350 for the season. Garcia's complete hitting statistics for the 1945 Mexican League season were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1945	Vera Cruz	91	386	70	135	21	7	15	86	40	.350	.557

The other top hitters for the Azules in 1945 were Pedro Formenthal (.362), Salvador Hernandez (.341), Humberto Favela (.316) and Jose Gomez Rodriguez (.313). For the second straight season, Silvio led the Mexican League in stolen bases with 40 steals. Ramon Bragana also returned to Vera Cruz as the team's manager and ace of the pitching staff. Unfortunately for Bragana, he was the only pitcher on the staff to post an ERA under 5.32 for the season. Ramon went 15-16 with a 4.53 ERA. Vera Cruz suffered through a miserable season and went from the defending Mexican League champion to a fifth place finish with a losing record of 42-48 (.467). They were ten games behind the 1945 Mexican League champion Tampico Alijadores (52-38).

Branch Rickey Considers Selecting Silvio Garcia to Break the Color Barrier

In the early 1940's when Branch Rickey first started contemplating integrating Major League baseball, one of the first players on his radar was Silvio Garcia. The Brooklyn Dodgers of the National League had gotten a good look at Silvio Garcia during the American Series in Cuba in 1942 and they were very impressed with what they saw. During the American Series, he hit Dodger pitching for a .381 (8 for 21) batting average and was flawless in the field. Reports from Brooklyn Dodgers manager Leo Durocher put Silvio Garcia right at the top or very near the top of Branch Rickey's list of possible candidates for the Dodgers to sign. Besides being an excellent ball player and very popular everywhere he played, Garcia was not from the United States and some thought this might make it easier for the general public to accept when baseball was



Branch Rickey
Brooklyn Dodgers

integrated. In addition with Silvio Garcia playing in Mexico, Rickey would not have to deal with the problems of raiding the Negro Leagues.

In the spring of 1943 Brooklyn Dodgers scout Tom Greenwade was dispatched to Mexico in an attempt to scout Silvio Garcia and, if the situation was right, sign the Cuban star. The Dodgers set up a bank account in Mexico and retained an attorney should a deal be struck. To help hide the fact that the Dodgers were interested in signing Garcia, Greenwade also set up meetings with Theo Smith, Quincy Troupe and Burnis “Wild Bill” Wright. When Jorge Pasquel, owner of the Vera Cruz team and President of the Mexican League, got wind of what was going on, he would have none of it and did everything possible to hinder Greenwade’s attempt to talk to the players. Greenwade was apparently not overly impressed with Silvio’s performance on the field and returned empty handed. Greenwade’s assessment of Garcia was that “He couldn’t pull the ball. He was a right handed hitter – everything went to right field.” Greenwade reportedly never spoke to the other three (Smith, Troupe and Wright) before he left Mexico. One positive note, however, came from the scouting trip to Mexico. Greenwade saw a young African American catcher by the name of Roy Campanella playing for Monterrey and recommended the Dodgers keep an eye on him.

The next attempt to sign Garcia came over the winter of 1944 when Walter O’Malley, minority owner of the Brooklyn Dodgers, went to Cuba with a letter of credit for \$ 25,000 to sign Silvio. When he got to Cuba, O’Malley found that Garcia had been supposedly drafted into the Cuban Army and was not able to sign a contract.

Having failed to sign Garcia on two occasions, Branch Rickey, President and General Manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers, went to Cuba in 1945 to get a first-hand look at their prospect. Rickey was supposedly so impressed with what he saw on the field of Silvio’s performance that he scheduled a formal meeting with the Cuban star. Branch Rickey was looking for the “perfect man.” Besides exceptional playing skills, Rickey needed someone with a competitive spirit and yet patient enough and with enough self-control to deal with all the abuse that would come with being the

first black player to play in the Major Leagues. When Rickey asked Silvio how he would handle racial taunts or being abused by another player because of the color of his skin, Garcia's response was sincere, short and simple: "I kill him." Garcia's response supposedly ended any consideration by the Dodgers of signing Silvio.

Other players besides Silvio Garcia that Brooklyn Dodgers scouts compiled reports on for Branch Rickey in 1945 reportedly included: Roy Campanella, Lorenzo "Piper" Davis, Josh Gibson, Sam Jethroe, Walter "Buck" Leonard, Orestes Minoso, Satchel Paige and Jackie Robinson. When the final decision was made it was Jackie Robinson whom Branch Rickey selected to integrate Major League baseball.

There is also evidence that while Branch Rickey was trying to sign Silvio Garcia, the New York Giants were also interested in signing the Cuban super star. In an interview with Martin Gross (New York Post sports editor), Horace Stoneham (owner of the New York Giants) told Gross that he had also been interested in signing Garcia at the same time the Dodgers were scouting him.

Silvio Garcia Returns to the Negro Leagues

The 1945 Negro National League season had been disastrous for the New York Cubans. They finished the season in next to last place in the final "league" standings. As he was making preparations for the 1946 season Alex Pompey, owner of the New York Cubans, was determined not to have a recurrence of his team's dismal performance from the year before. One of the keys in turning his team around was to sign Silvio Garcia to help solidify his infield. Silvio Garcia did not disappoint Pompey and posted a .326 batting average for the season. Along with Alex Crespo (.336) they were the top two hitters on the team. Garcia's complete statistics for the 1946 Negro National League season were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1946	New York	46	172	25	56	-	-	4	-	10	.326	-

The statistics above do not include "non-league" games. For his outstanding play during the 1946 season, Silvio Garcia was elected to the East-West All Star team.

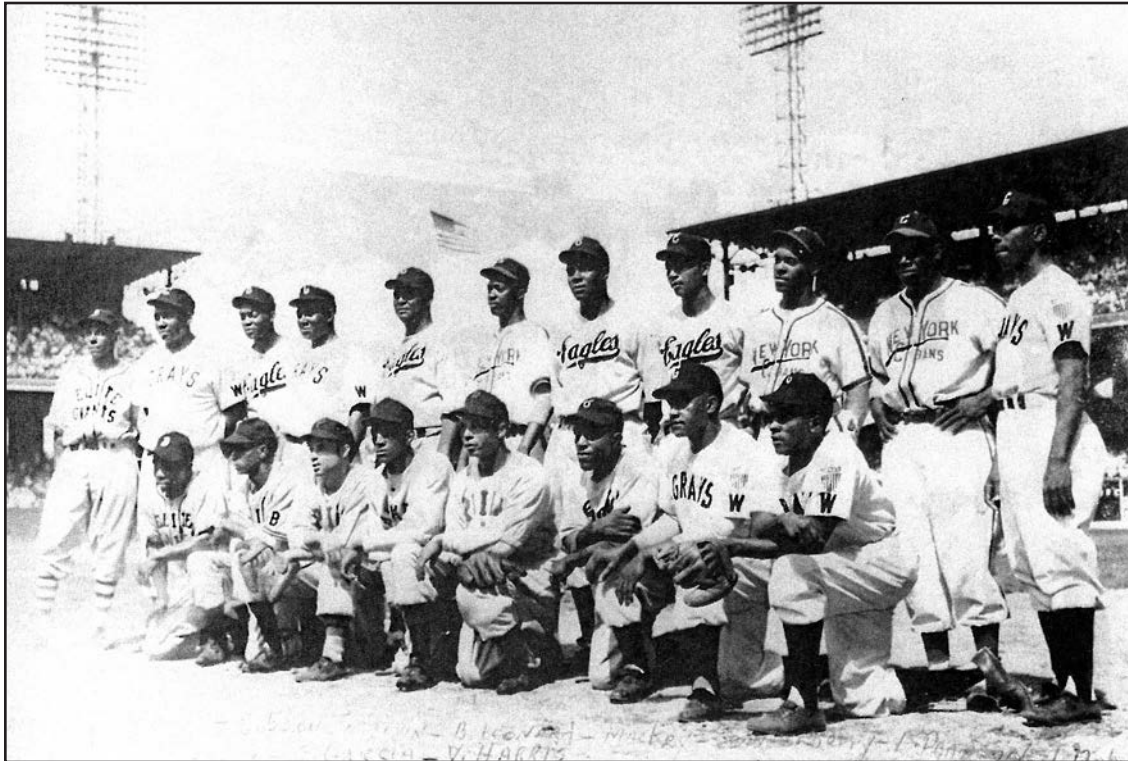


New York Cubans
Negro National League
(Garcia – first on right)

During the 1946 season Jose M. Fernandez, manager of the Cubans, also got solid hitting from Rogelio Linares (.287), Dave “Showboat” Thomas (.277), Orestes Minoso (.260) and Lou Louden (.250).

The New York Cubans had a good pitching staff in 1946 that included Dave Barnhill (9-3), Barney Morris (5-4), Pat Scantlebury (4-3) and Luis Tiant, Sr. (4-3).

A combination of playing excellent team baseball, timely hitting, flawless defensive play and solid pitching, the New York Cubans went from next to last place in the Negro National League in 1945 to second place in the final 1946 “league” standings. They finished the season with a record of 28-21 (.571). The Newark Eagles won the Negro National League crown with a record of 47-16 (.746).

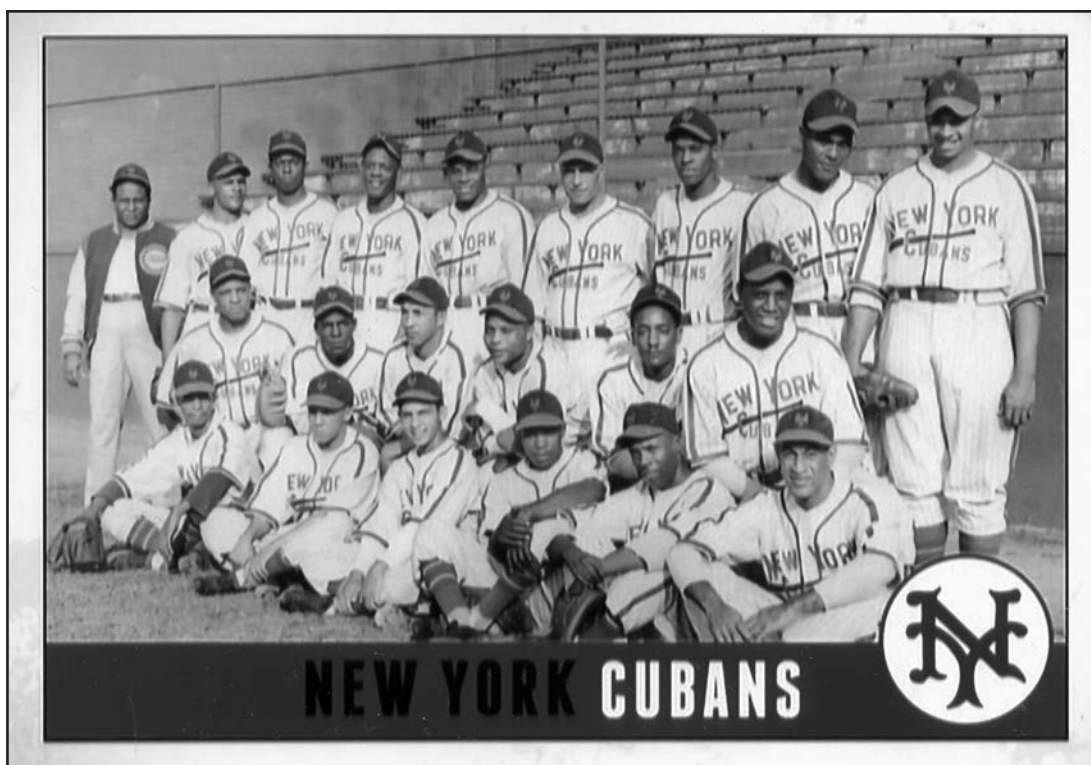


East All Star Team (1946)

(Standing left to right – Felton Snow, **Josh Gibson**, Monte Irvin, **Buck Leonard**, Biz Mackey, Pat Scantlebury, Lennie Pearson, Larry Doby, Fernando Pedroso, **Silvio Garcia** and Vic Harris. Kneeling left to right – Henry Kimbro, Jonas Gaines, Murray Watkins, Bill Ricks, Gene Benson, **Leon Day**, Sam Bankhead and Howard Easterling.)

Cubans Championship Season

Expectations were extremely high for the New York Cubans going into the 1947 season. Pompey was pleased with his team’s play during the 1946 season and was ready to make a run at the Negro National League champion Newark Eagles. Newark had proven to be virtually invincible during the 1946 season, but with the integration of Major League baseball things were about to change dramatically in Negro League baseball. The season started with both the Cubans and Newark Eagles playing excellent baseball. The Newark Eagles won the first half of the season, but took a nose dive during the second half of the year when Larry Doby was signed by the Cleveland Indians of the American League. The New York Cubans won the second half of the season and were awarded the Negro National League pennant because they were believed to have had the best overall record for the entire season. The New York Cubans experienced the best season in their history and finished the regular season with an impressive record of 42-18 (.700).



New York Cubans (1947)
Negro National League Champions

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

The New York Cubans fielded an impressive line-up during the 1947 season that included the following players.

New York Cubans (1947)

Position	Player	Batting Average	Position	Player	Batting Average
1B	Louis Cabrera	.352	OF	Cleveland Clark	.338
2B	Horacio Martinez	.208	OF	Claro Duany	.297
SS	Silvio Garcia	.324	OF	Pedro Pages	.237
3B	Minnie Minoso	.294			
C	Ray Noble	.325	P	Luis Tiant, Sr.	10-0
C	Lou Louden	.290	P	Pat Scantlebury	10-5

Besides Tiant and Scantlebury, the pitching staff for New York also included Lino Donoso (8-2), Dave Barnhill (4-0), Martin Crue (4-1), Barney Morris (4-6) and James Jenkins (2-2).

Silvio Garcia was selected to the East-West All Star game for the second straight season.

At the end of the Negro National League season, the New York Cubans were the best hitting team in the “league” with a .292 team batting average, the second best fielding team in the “league,” exhibited team speed to burn all season long and the Cubans boasted the number one pitching staff in the Negro National League. Sam Lacy, Afro-American sportswriter, provided the following assessment of the 1947 New York Cubans: “From top to bottom, theyv’e got power, speed, hustle and brains. They should win in a walk.”

By winning the Negro National League title, the New York Cubans faced the Cleveland Buckeyes (Negro American League champions) in the Negro League World Series. The New York Cubans made short work of the Cleveland Buckeyes, taking the series four games to one (game one ended in a six inning 5-5 tie due to rain) to claim the Negro League World Series title. The victory was a total team effort. New York got both excellent hitting and outstanding pitching to dominate their Negro American League opponent. Four different New York pitchers (Dave Barnhill, Lino Dinoso, Barney Morris and Pat Scantlebury) each won one game in the series. The Cubans were paced by the hitting of Minnie Minoso (.423), Claro Duany (.421), Rafael Noble (.400) and Silvio Garcia (.389). A summary for the 1947 Negro League World Series is as follows:

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

The Negro League World Series was a huge success on the field for New York, but was a complete bust at the box office. Game one only drew 5,500 fans at the Polo Grounds in New York City and a paltry crowd of 2,048 attended game five which was played at Comiskey Park in Chicago.

In October after the Negro League World Series, the New York Cubans were scheduled to travel to Havana (Cuba) to play a five game series against the Havana Cubans who were the champions of the Florida International League (FIL). Cuban newspapers estimated that over 150,000 fans would attend the exhibition games which were to be played at Estadio de la Habana in Havana. For some unknown reason the series was never held.

With No Major League Offer in Sight Silvio Returns to Mexico

Before the start of the 1948 season, Silvio Garcia signed with the Mexico City Red Devils. The 1948 season would be Silvio Garcia's last in the Mexican League. The Red Devils had a good starting line-up that featured the hitting of Roberto Ortiz (.358), Marvin Williams (.328), Sergio Correa (.319), Rene Gonzalez (.310), Silvio Garcia (.295), Felix McLaurin (.294) and Lonnie Summers (.290). Unfortunately for team manager Manuel Arroyo, he only got mediocre pitching all season. Alfonso Ramirez (14-9), Theo Smith (9-11) and Leon Day (8-9) were the nucleus of the starting rotation. The Mexico City Red Devils finished the season with a record of 44-44 (.500) which was good enough for fourth place in the final 1948 Mexican League standings. Monterrey under Lazaro Salazar won the "league" title with a record of 50-35 (.588).

Silvio Garcia Goes North to Canada

By 1949 Silvio Garcia was thirty-six (36) years of age and too old to be considered a Major League prospect. Instead of returning to Mexico where he was an established star, Silvio Garcia signed with the Sherbrooke Athletiques of the Canadian Provincial League for the 1949 baseball season. The Canadian Provincial League operated as an independent league during the 1949 season.

The 1949 Sherbrooke Athletiques were led by player-manager Roland Gladu. The top hitters for the team were former Negro Leaguers Silvio Garcia (.315 w/ 126 base hits) and Claro Duany (99 RBIs). Garcia's 126 hits led the Canadian Provincial League for the 1949 season. Silvio also

had 30 doubles, 76 RBIs and 20 stolen bases during the season. During the season Silvio played shortstop, third base and second base. Adrian Zabala also from Cuba anchored the team's pitching staff. The Sherbrooke Athletics finished the season in third place with a record of 53-47 (.530). They were 11 ½ games behind the "league" champion Drummondville Cubs (63-34).

A Brief Detour to Nicaragua

During the 1949 post season, Silvio Garcia and several other Cubans (Carlos Blanco, Herberto Blanco, Claro Duany and Agapito Mayor) were hired to play for team Nicaragua in their series against Panama. Details of the series are not known at this time.



Nicaragua (1949)

(Standing left to right – **Claro Duany**, **Agapito Mayor**, Unknown, Unknown, Unknown, Unknown, **Silvio Garcia** and Team Manager. Kneeling left to right – **Carlos Blanco**, Unknown, Unknown, Unknown and **Herberto Blanco**.)

Garcia Goes Back to Canada

Before the start of the 1950 season, the Canadian Provincial League joined "Organized Baseball" and from 1950-1955 they were considered as a class C "league." Silvio Garcia returned to Sherbrooke for the 1950 Canadian Provincial League season. During the 1950 Canadian season, Garcia had the best season of his career as a hitter. At the end of the year, Silvio won the Canadian Provincial League Triple Crown with 21 homeruns, 116 RBI's and a .365 batting average. He also led the "league" in hits (150), total bases (250), doubles (29) and slugging percentage (.608). His complete hitting statistics for the season are as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1950	Sherbrooke	106	411	78	150	29	4	21	116	19	.365	.608

He also drew 50 walks and only struck out 12 times in his 411 official at bats.

Other hitters who had good seasons for Sherbrooke in 1950 were Roland Gladu (.340), Norm Dussault (.329), Nick Malfara (.311), Paul Martin (.308) and Avelino Caizares (.294).

L'EDITION 1949

DES ATHLETIQUES

1949. Photo d'équipe des Athlétiques de Sherbrooke, de la Ligue provinciale indépendante. Dans le sens horaire: Fred Martin, Tony Ross, Roland Gladu, Adrian Zabala, Harry Feldman, Normand Dussault, Silvio Garcia, Raymond Perron, Claro Duany, Jacques Tarte, Bill Brandt, Eddie Thomas, Paul Dyke, Huberto Blanco, Gilles Dubé. Collection Christian Trudeau.

Sherbrooke Athletiques (1949)
Canadian Provincial League

(Herberto Blanco – far left second from the bottom, Claro Duany – bottom row second from right and Silvio Garcia – far right second from bottom)



Sherbrooke Athletiques (1950)
 Canadian Provincial League Champions
 (Silvio Garcia – seated first on left and Raymond Brown – seated third on left)

Defensively as the team's starting shortstop, Silvio led the Canadian Provincial League at his position with a fielding percentage of .945.

Louis Shapiro (18-4) and Armando Roche (13-9) anchored the Athletiques pitching staff. The Sherbrooke Athletiques had a good season in 1950 and finished the year with a record of 57-51 (.528). Sherbrooke was only 1 ½ games behind the St. Jean Braves (58-49) at the end of the regular season and then lost to St. Jean four games to three in the "league" play-off series.

Roland Gladu, manager of the Sherbrooke Athletiques, returned an excellent squad for the 1951 Canadian Provincial League season that included Silvio Garcia at third base. Sherbrooke played excellent team baseball the entire season. The team was comprised mainly of former Negro League and Latin players. Silvio Garcia (.346 w/ 12 HR), Claro Duany (.337 w/ 23 HR), Roland Gladu (.330), Hiram Gonzalez (.319 w/ 12 HR) and Miguel Ballester (.282 w/ 23 HR) led the team in hitting. The pitching staff for the Athletiques included ace pitcher Louis Shapiro (14-9), 43 year old former Negro League great Raymond Brown (11-10), Norm Gosselin (9-1), Armando Roche (9-10) and 41 year old Terris McDuffie (6-1).

The Sherbrooke Athletiques had an excellent season in 1951 and won the regular season title with a won-loss record of 73-50 (.593). Sherbrooke then beat the Quebec Braves four games to one in the finals of the Canadian Provincial League Play-Off Series.

Garcia Signs with the Havana Cubans

After three seasons in Canada, Silvio Garcia was on the move again. This time he ended up with the Havana Cubans of the Florida International League. The Havana Cubans were a Class B level team affiliated with the Washington Senators of the American League. When Garcia signed with the Cubans, he immediately became the team's starting third baseman. The Havana Cubans were an all Latin team that was based in Havana, Cuba.

Silvio Garcia Returns to the Dominican Republic



Licey vs Escogido (1952)
Dominican League

(Silvio Garcia tags out Willard "Homerun" Brown)

The eight teams that comprised the “league” and their final “league” standings for the 1952 season were as follows:

Florida International League (1952)

Team	Won	Lost	Pct.	Place
Miami Sun Sox	104	48	.684	1 st
Miami Beach Flamingos	103	49	.678	2 nd
Tampa Smokers	85	68	.556	3 rd
St. Petersburg Saints	84	70	.545	4 th
Havana Cubans	76	77	.497	5 th
West Palm Beach Indians	68	85	.444	6 th
Lakeland Pilots	51	103	.331	7 th
Fort Lauderdale Braves/ Key West Conchs	40	111	.265	8 th

Silvio Garcia signing with Havana proved to be historic in Florida International League baseball history. On April 9, 1952 which was the opening day of the season, Silvio Garcia and teammate Angel Scull along with George Handy of the Miami Beach Flamingos broke the color barrier in the Florida International League.

Havana was managed by legendary Cuban player Fermin Guerra. The Havana Cubans’ number one problem during the season was their hitting; they simply struggled all season. The Cubans finished the season with a .228 batting average which was next to last of all the “league” teams. They only averaged scoring three runs a game and were shut out 27 times during the season. Silvio Garcia was the team’s leading hitter with a .283 batting average. His .283 batting average was significantly better at second glance when you take into consideration the Florida International League average was only .235. Silvio also led his team in doubles with 22 and runs batted in with 40. Napoleon Reyes (.277), Angel Scull (.274) and Fermin Guerra (.261) were Havana’s next three best hitters for the 1952 season.

The salvation to the season for Havana was their pitching staff. The starting rotation for the Cubans included Mike Fornieles (14-12 w/ 2.66 ERA), Raul Sanchez (10-9 w/ 2.02 ERA), Carlos Pasquel (9-5 w/ 1.64 ERA), Santiago Ulrich (8-4 w/ 1.45 ERA) and Eusebio Perez (8-14 w/ 3.12 ERA). The pitching staff also included 18 year old Camilo Pasquel (8-6) who would go on to a long successful career in the Major Leagues.

The 1952 Florida International League season turned out to be a two team race between the Miami Sun Sox (104-48) and the Miami Beach Flamingos (103-49). The Havana Cubans were never in the pennant race and finished the season with a mediocre record of 76-77 (.497). They were 28 ½ games behind the “league” champion Miami Sun Sox.

Silvio Garcia Returns to the Dominican Republic

In 1952 Silvio Garcia traveled to the Dominican Republic to play baseball for the Licey Tigres. He collected 10 hits in 35 at bats for a .286 batting average. Silvio also returned to the Dominican Republic in 1953. He had an excellent season playing for Cibaenas in 1953, hitting .393 (42 for 107) to lead the Dominican League in hitting. Unfortunately, Silvio did not have enough at bats to qualify him for the batting title. Juan “Tetelo” Vargas was awarded the batting championship with a .355 batting average.

It is unclear at this time where Silvio Garcia played ball during the regular 1954 and 1955 seasons. He may have played at least part of the 1955 season in Nicaragua because it has been reported that San Fernando and a couple of the other professional teams in Nicaragua signed several Cuban players during the season to bolster their rosters.

Garcia Ends His Career in Nicaragua

When La Liga Nicaraguense de Beisbol Profesional (LNBP) was formed in March of 1956, one of the key players who was recruited to play in the newly formed league was Silvio Garcia. Teams that played in the inaugural season of the “league” were the Indios de Boer, Cinco Estrellas, Flor de Cana, Leones de Leon and San Fernando. The Cinco Estrellas team was supported directly by Anastasio Somoza Garcia, the President of Nicaragua. Garcia signed to play for the Cinco Estrellas team. Also playing for the Cinco Estrellas with Silvio were fellow Cuban and former Negro Leaguers Claro Duany and Hiram Gonzalez. The Cinco Estrellas squad was managed by Emilio Cabrera. Silvio had a very good season for the Cinco Estrellas team and led the “league” in runs batted in with 54 RBIs.



Some of the other former Negro Leaguers who played in the Nicaraguan League during 1956 were Pedro Ballester (Boer), Carlos Colas (Boer), Pedro Naranjo (Boer), Orlando O’Farril (Boer), Jose Piloto (Flor de Cana) and Orlando Varona (Boer).

The 1956 season came to an abrupt end on September 2nd when Anastasio Somoza Garcia, the President of Nicaragua, was assassinated. The Nicaraguan League resumed operation in February of 1957. Silvio Garcia returned to Nicaragua to play for the Cinco Estrellas team for the 1957 season.

The 1957 Nicaraguan League season was loaded with Cuban and former Negro League players. Some of these Latin stars who played and/or managed in Nicaragua in 1957 were Emilio Cabrera, Lorenzo Cabrera, Rodolfo Fernandez, Rene Gonzalez, Fermin Guerra, Armando Ibanez, Vicente Lopez, Enrique Maroto, Manuel Montejo, Conrado Marrero, Pedro Naranjo, Roberto Ortiz, Juan Soler and Gilberto Torres

Cuban Winter League Career

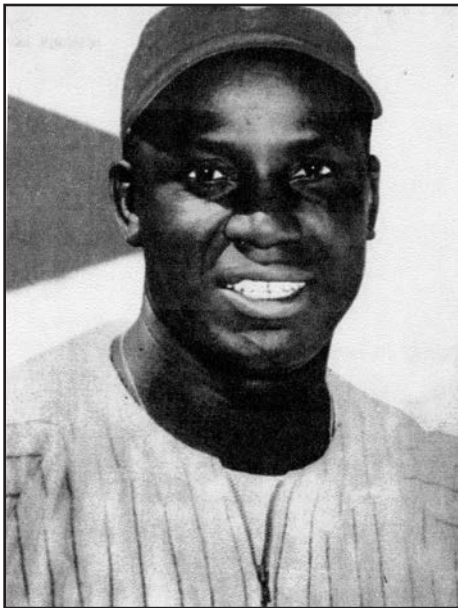
Silvio Garcia started playing in the Cuban Winter League in 1931. He played every season from 1934-35 through the 1936-37 season when he left Cuba to play in the Dominican Republic. Once he left Cuba, Silvio Garcia would play the regular baseball season in the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Mexico, United States or Canada, but always returned to play winter ball in his home country of Cuba.

In 1937 Garcia played in the Dominican Republic and Venezuela. When the regular season was over, Silvio returned to Cuba to help Marianao defend their Cuban Winter League title. The 1937-38 season in Cuba started on November 23rd and ended on February 12th. Martin Dihigo returned as the team manager for the Marianao Tigres, but the dynamics that led his team to a

championship the season before was gone. Martin Dihigo (.303), Silvio Garcia (.295), Clyde Spearman (.286) and Fermin Guerra (.286) were the team's leading hitters during the season. Silvio Garcia was the Tigres' starting shortstop during the season. Unlike the season before when he was the number two pitcher on the team with a 10-2 record and 13 complete games, Garcia only appeared in one game as a pitcher during the 1937-38 season and he took the loss in that game. Martin Dihigo (11-5), Barney Brown (7-9) and Hilton Smith (6-3) were the Tigres' top pitchers during the season.

The 1937-38 season was dealt a devastating blow on January 25th when the Habana Leones dropped out of the "league." At the end of the season, Santa Clara under manager Lazaro Salazar won the Cuban Winter League title with a record of 44-18 (.712). Martin Dihigo's Marianao Tigres finished in third place of the three teams that were left in the "league." Mariano had a record of 35-28 (.556). It is important to note that the records of Santa Clara included forfeit wins from when Habana dropped out of the "league."

Marianao did not field a team for the 1938-39 Cuban Winter League season. When "league" play started on November 22nd there were four teams (Almendares, Cuba, Habana and Santa Clara) in the "league." With no Tigres team competing, Silvio Garcia signed with the Almendares Alacranes. Almendares was managed by Adolfo Luque. Unfortunately for Luque, he didn't get exceptional hitting or pitching from his team during the season. The team's best hitters during the winter of 1938-39 were Harry Williams (.318), Silvio Garcia (.293) and Willie Wells (.278). The pitching staff for the Alacranes included Theo Smith (5-9), Agapito Mayor (5-4), Rene Monteagudo (4-5) and Silvino Ruiz (3-7). Silvio did appear in seven games as a pitcher, but was ineffective. He had a won-loss record of 1-4 (.250) for the season.



Silvio Garcia
Cienfuegos

Almendares finished the season in last place with a disappointing record of 20-34 (.370). Santa Clara won their second straight championship with a 34-20 (.630) won-loss record.

There was no winter league season played in Cuba during the winter of 1939-40.

Before the start of the 1940-41 Cuban Winter League season, Silvio Garcia signed with the Santa Clara Leopards. During the season both Pelayo Chacon and Julio Rojo managed Santa Clara. Silvio Garcia was the leading hitter for Santa Clara with a .314 batting average. For his outstanding play during the season, Garcia was named as the starting second baseman for the Cuban Winter League All Star team at the end of the season. Armando Torres (8-7), Rene Monteagudo (6-4), Manuel "Cocaina" Garcia (4-5) and Bud Barbee (3-6) comprised the starting pitching rotation for Santa Clara.

During the 1940-41 season the Habana Leones (31-18) dominated play the entire season. None of the other three teams in the Cuban Winter League: Santa Clara (25-26), Cienfuegos (25-26) and Almendares (20-31) could post a winning record for the season.

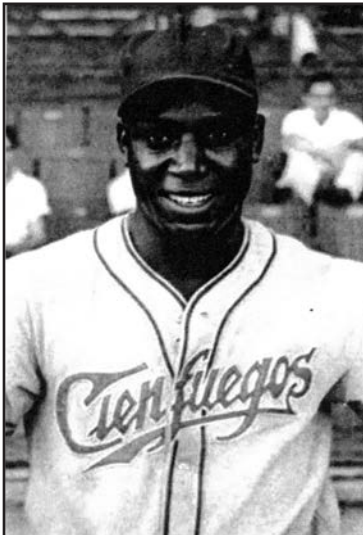
Santa Clara did not field a team for the 1941-42 season, so Garcia signed with the Cienfuegos Elefantes. During the 1941-42 season Silvio Garcia had one of the best seasons in Cuba of his career. The highlight of the season for Silvio was winning the Cuban Winter League batting title

with a .351 batting average. Garcia also led the Cuban Winter League in hits (60), runs scored (24) and homeruns (4). At the end of the season, Silvio also was selected to the Cuban All Star team for the second straight year. Silvio's complete hitting statistics for the 1941-42 Cuban Winter League season were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1941-42	Cienfuegos	-	171	24	60	5	0	4	19	6	.351	.450

Most of the rest of the team hit poorly during the 1941-42 winter season. Ramon Heredia (.298) and Carlos Colas (.283) had decent years but the next best hitter on the squad was Alejandro Crespo at .232. The pitching staff was marginal at best. Max Macia went 6-2, Julian Acosta went 6-4 and Steve Rachunock was 3-9.

Of the three team league, Cienfuegos was by far the weakest. When the season ended, Almendares (25-19) won the title, Habana (23-21) came in second and Cienfuegos (18-26) finished the season 7 games back in last place.



Silvio Garcia
Cienfuegos

After the 1941-42 Cuban Winter League season had concluded the American Series was held in Cuba from March 3rd through March 8th. The American Series pitted a Cuban all-star team against the reigning National League champion Brooklyn Dodgers of the National League who were conducting spring training at the La Tropical stadium. Brooklyn's team was managed by Leo Durocher and included Dolph Camilli, Billy Herman, Mickey Owen, Pee Wee Reese and Arky Vaughn. The Dodgers' pitching staff included Whit Wyatt, Kirby Higbe and Larry French. Silvio Garcia was selected to play for the Cuban squad. Garcia had an excellent series against the Dodgers. He went 8 for 21 for a .381 batting average against Major League pitching. Some of the other prominent Cuban players on the all-star team were Santos Amaro (RF), Alejandro Crespo (LF), Tomas de la Cruz (P), Rodolfo Fernandez (P), Agapito Mayor (P), Regino Otero (1B), Pedro Pages (OF) and Gilberto Torres (P). The Cuban All Stars won the American Series taking three games to two for the Brooklyn team.

Silvio Garcia returned to Cienfuegos to play for the Elefantes for their 1942-43 Cuban Winter League season. Teams competing in the 1942-43 season fielded all Latin rosters because no American players traveled to Cuba for the winter season due to the United States involvement in World War II. Cienfuegos had a good hitting roster that included Alejandro Crespo (.337), Silvio Garcia (.303), Antonio Castano (.299), Regino Otero (.295) and Rene Monteagudo (.289). Like the previous two seasons, Garcia was selected to the Cuban All Star team. Even with good hitting and run production, the pitching staff for the Elefantes was inconsistent most of the season. Adrian Zabala (9-8), Julian Acosta (5-8), Jorge Comellas (3-4) and Jean Ray (1-5) pitched for Cienfuegos during the season.

The 1942-43 season was closely contested between the three teams that competed during the winter campaign. Almendares (28-20) finished the season in first place, Habana (24-24) was second and Cienfuegos (20-28) was third.

Determined to improve Cienfuegos' standing in Cuban baseball, team owners decided to make changes to the team before the start of the 1943-44 season. The major change was replacing Joseito Rodriquez with Adolfo Luque as the team's manager. Carlos Cola (.335), Silvio Garcia

(.329) and Pedro Pages (.286) paced the team in hitting during the season. For his outstanding play in the infield, Silvio was selected to the Cuban All Star team at the end of the season. This was his fourth straight all-star team selection. From the very start of the season, Ramon Roger was the ace of the pitching staff and he responded with an 11-5 (.688) won-loss record. Julian Acosta (7-5) and Adrian Zabala (5-5) rounded out the pitching staff. Cienfuegos improved their record to 25-23 (.521) and finished the season in third place. The Habana Leones (32-16) won the 1943-44 Cuban Winter League championship.

Garcia was back in the starting line-up for the Cienfuegos Elefantes for the 1944-45 season. The start of the season was delayed because of a major hurricane that hit the island. The hurricane damaged the grandstand and score board at La Tropical Stadium where the teams played their "league" games. The season opener finally occurred on November 28th and "league" play concluded on February 11th.

The Elefantes only had a mediocre hitting team during the 1944-45 season. Cienfuegos only hit six homeruns during the year. Pedro Pages paced Cienfuegos with a .309 batting average and was selected as the Cuban Winter League's Most Valuable Player (MVP). Silvio like most of his teammates had an off season. He only hit .254 with a .353 slugging percentage. To make matters worse the pitching staff was depleted before the midpoint of the season. Juan Montero (8-8), Terris McDuffie (7-6), Ramon Roger (6-3) and Adrian Zabala (2-5) comprised the starting rotation for the Elefantes.

The records and final standings for the 1944-45 Cuban Winter League season were first place - Almendares (32-16), second place - Habana (25-23), third place - Cienfuegos (24-24) and fourth place - Marianao (15-33).



Cienfuegos Elefantes (1945-46)

(**Silvio Garcia** – back row seventh from left and **Martin Dihigo** – back row eighth from left)

Going into the 1945-46 Cuban Winter League season, Adolfo Luque (team manager) felt strongly the off-season signing of several new key ball players to his roster would give them a good shot at the "league" title. All season long Luque got timely hitting from Conrado Perez (.300), Alejandro Crespo (.298), Silvio Garcia (.288) and Roland Gladu (.288). Crespo's hitting awarded him with

the Most Valuable Player (MVP) award for the season and Silvio Garcia was once again named to the Cuban Winter League All Star team at the end of the season. In addition Luque got solid consistent pitching. Adrian Zabala (9-3) and Sal Maglie (9-6) led the pitching staff. Ramon Roger (5-1), Martin Dihigo (5-4), Jean Roy (5-5) and Luis Tiant (Sr.) also contributed to the Elefantes run at a championship.

From the very start of the season which began on November 20, 1945 Cienfuegos played good team baseball. When the season ended on February 24, 1946 they had won the Cuban Winter League championship by six games over the Habana Leones. The Cienfuegos Elefantes finished the regular season with a record of 37-23 (.617).

An American Series had not been held in Cuba in four years because of the United States involvement in World War II. In October of 1946 the tradition of the American Series was once again held when both the Washington Senators and a team of National League All Stars visited the island. Some of the players representing the Cuban All Stars were Santos Amaro, Carlos Blanco, Jorge Comellas, Alejandro Crespo, Claro Duany, Manuel "Cocaina" Garcia, Silvio Garcia, Julio Moreno and Gilberto Torres. The Cuban All Stars lost both of their series to their American opponents. The Washington Senators took all five games from their Cuban opponents and the National League All Stars won their series by one game.

In 1946 an all-star team of Cuban players was put together to travel to Puerto Rico for a series of exhibition games against the best teams on the island. The team was managed by Jose Maria Fernandez and was appropriately named the "All Cubans." Silvio Garcia was selected to play on the team.



All Cubans (1946)

Exhibition Series in Puerto Rico

(Standing left to right – Raul Diaz, **Santos Amaro**, **Silvio Garcia**, Virgilio Arteaga, Chiflan Clark, **Jose M. Fernandez**, **Luis Tiant**, Isidro Leon and **Pedro Formenthal**. Kneeling left to right – **Orestes Minoso**, Fernando Pedroso, Rogelio Linares, Euclides Cabrera, Felix Castaneda and Raul Alenagro.)

Before the start of the 1946-47 winter baseball season in Cuba, a new league was formed by the Cuban Sports Authority to compete with the regularly scheduled Cuban Winter League. This new league was called the "Federacion Nacional." The three teams that comprised the new league were the Habana Reds, Matanzas Panthers and Oriente. Games for the Federacion Nacional were played at La Tropical Stadium in Habana. The owners of the Matanzas team signed Silvio Garcia to a \$ 1,200 a month contract as the player-manager for the team. The 1946-47 season was played in two rounds, both of which were closely contested. The Habana Reds won the first half of the season with a record of 14-12. Oriente was in second place with a record of 13-12 and Matanzas



Silvio Garcia
Matanzas Panthers

was third with an 11-14 record. In the second half of the season a new team, Camaguey, was added to the "league." Matanzas caught fire in the second half of the season and won round two with a record of 8-4 (.667). A one game play-off series was held between Habana and Matanzas to crown a champion. Matanzas won the game and was awarded the Federacion Nacional title.

Silvio Garcia had an excellent Federacion Nacional season in the dugout as the team's manager, winning the championship for Matanzas. On the field Silvio led the team in hitting with a .344 batting average. At the end of the season Silvio was selected as the Most Valuable Player (MVP) of the Federacion Nacional League. Barney Serrell (.325) and Cleveland Clark (.300) also contributed heavily to Matanzas' hitting attack during the season. Eddie Chandler (6-1) was the ace of the pitching staff. Julian Acosta (4-3), Manuel Godinez (3-4) and John Williams were also starting pitchers on the team.

During the winter of 1946-47 Silvio Garcia along with Manuel "Cocaina" Garcia also played for the Navegantes del Magallanes in the Venezuelan League. Other teams that competed in the "league" during the season were Cervecerria Caracas, Vargas and Venezuela. Magallanes had a good season and finished the season with a record of 20-16 (.556). Statistical records for the season are yet to be found.

The Federacion Nacional lasted only one season. There was, however, another "new" league (Players Federacion) that was formed for the 1947-48 season, but Silvio Garcia decided to return to the Cienfuegos Elefantes instead of signing with one of the teams in the new league. The 1947-48 Cienfuegos team was managed by New York Yankees pitcher Vernon "Lefty" Gomez. Cienfuegos was led during the season by the hitting of Lomax Davis (.303), Silvio Garcia (.292) and Rafael Noble (.292). At the end of the season Silvio Garcia was selected to the Cuban All Star team for the sixth time in his Cuban baseball career. The pitching staff for the Elefantes was anchored by Max Manning (10-8), Carl Erskine (9-7) and Luis Aloma (7-6).

Like some many seasons in the past, the 1947-48 Cuban Winter League season was very closely contested. Habana won the championship with a record of 39-33 (.542). Cienfuegos finished just four games back in third with a losing record of 35-37 (.486).

When the 1948-49 season opened for play on November 8th, Silvio Garcia returned to the starting line-up for the Cienfuegos Elefantes. Silvio got off to a rough start at the beginning of the season when he broke his hand and was out for four weeks. The 1948-49 season was also a tough year for the Elefantes as a team. Only Alejandro Crespo (.326) hit over .300 for the season for Cienfuegos. After returning from his injury, Silvio Garcia struggled at the plate. Garcia (.250) like most of the rest of the starters hit well below everyone's expectation during the season. As disappointing as the hitting was, the pitching staff fared even worse. All the members of the



Cienfuegos Elefantes (1947-48)
(Garcia – center row third from right)

starting rotation had losing records for the season. These pitchers included Luis Aloma (8-9), Herman Besse (6-7), Max Manning (5-12) and Matt Surkont (4-6).

Weak hitting and mediocre pitching resulted in Cienfuegos finishing the 1948-49 season in last place with a dismal record of 28-43 (.394). They were 18 ½ games behind Almendares who won the championship with a won-loss record of 47-25 (.653).

Like many seasons before, the 1949-50 Cuban Winter League season was very closely played. Cienfuegos played good team baseball all season. Their hitting wasn't especially good, but their pitching staff performed better than expected. Bob Addis (.306) and Jack Cassini (.302) were the team's top two hitters. Silvio Garcia who started at third base for the Elefantes struggled through another disappointing season at the plate with a .260 batting average. Thomas Fine (16-6 w/ 3.55 ERA) was the ace of the pitching staff. Cienfuegos also got good pitching from Adrian Zabala (7-7 w/ 3.75 ERA) and Paul Epperly (5-6 w/ 3.05)



Cienfuegos Elefantes (1949-50)
(Garcia – seated second from left)

Cienfuegos finished in second place with a 36-36 (.500) record for the 1949-50 Cuban Winter League season. Only three games separated first place from last place. Almendares (38-34) won the “league” title for the second year in a row. Habana and Marianao tied for last place each posting a record 35-37 (.486).

Cienfuegos got off to an extremely slow start when the 1950-51 season started on November 13th. They lost 22 of their first 30 games. Things got so bad for the Elefantes that Salvador Hernandez was replaced by Billy Herman less than half way through the season. Herman fared significantly better than Hernandez and went 20-22 (.476) for the remainder of the 1950-51 season.

The only bright spot for team owners Bobby Maduro and Emilio de Armas during the 1950-51 season was Silvio Garcia. Silvio led the “league” in hitting with a .347 batting average, led the “league” in stolen bases with 17 steals, was selected to the Cuban All Star team and was named the “league’s” Most Valuable Player (MVP) at the end of the season. His complete hitting statistics for the season were:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1950-51	Cienfuegos	-	239	40	83	13	1	5	36	17	.347	.473

The team’s next best hitter after Garcia was Rafael Noble with a .269 batting average. The entire pitching staff struggled all season. They gave up over four runs a game for the season. The starting rotation for Cienfuegos included Luis Aloma (6-5), Raul Lopez (5-7), Joe Black (5-7) and Paul Epperly (4-4).

The Elefantes (28-44) ended the 1950-51 season as the only team in the “league” to finish the season with a losing record. Habana won a one game play-off game over Almendares for the Cuban Winter League title.

After Silvio Garcia’s career best Cuban Winter League season in 1950-51 when he was the best player in the “league,” there was nowhere for him to go but down. Silvio struggled the entire 1950-51 season at the plate for Cienfuegos. His .232 batting average was his lowest since his second year in the “league” (1934-35) when he batted only .187.

On a positive note for Elefantes fans, Billy Herman who took over as manager the year before at mid-season got his team to come on strong towards the end of the season and almost caught the “league” leading Habana Leones. Cienfuegos (39-32) finished in second place only two games behind the Leones (41-30). Billy Herman was voted as the Manager of the Year in Cuba for his team’s performance. Cienfuegos was led by the hitting of Rafael Noble (.321) and the pitching of Joe Black (15-6) during the season.

Before the start of the 1952-53 season, Silvio Garcia was traded to the Marianao Tigres. Marianao was managed first by Adolfo Luque and then by Fermin Guerra during the season. The Tigres were paced by the hitting of Orestes Minoso (.327, 13 HR and 42 RBI) and Lorenzo Cabrera (.314). Silvio was the starting third baseman for Marianao and bounced back at the plate with a .270 batting average. The team got solid hitting all season, but their pitching is what put them in contention for the “league” title. Mike Fornieles (12-5 w/ 2.33 ERA), Clarence Iott (9-6 w/ 2.99 ERA) and Terris McDuffie (5-8) w/ 2.91 ERA) led the Tigres in pitching.



Silvio Garcia
Cienfuegos Elefantes



Silvio Garcia and Ray Dandridge
Marianao Tigres (1952)

Marianao played good baseball during the 1952-53 season, but it was not enough to catch the Habana Leones (43-29) who won their third straight title. The Tigres finished the season in second place with a record of 37-35 (.514). They ended up 6 games behind Habana.

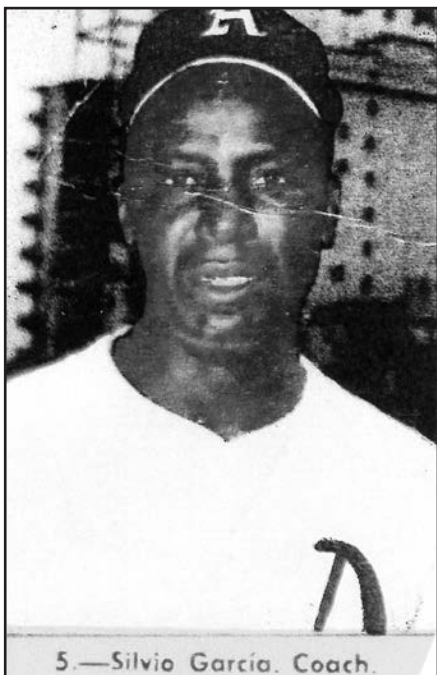
In March of 1953 an American Series was held between a team of Cuban All Stars and the Pittsburgh Pirates of the National League who were holding their spring training in Cuba. The Cuban All Stars were managed by Rodolfo Fernandez. Some of the key players for the Cubans were Lorenzo Cabrera, Alejandro Crespo, Pedro Formenthal, Silvio Garcia and Hector Rodriguez. Agapito Mayor, Gonzalo Naranjo, Carlos Pasquel and Gilberto Torres were the Cubans top pitchers. The ten game exhibition series ended with the Pittsburgh Pirates taking six of the games to four for the Cubans.

The 1953-54 Cuban Winter League season was Silvio Garcia's last as a player. He started the season with the Marianao Tigres, but was traded to the Almendares Alacranes for Roberto Ortiz during the first week of December. Almendares was looking to strengthen their roster to help in their run for the pennant.

Almendares fielded an outstanding hitting team that featured six starters batting over .300 for the season. They were Rocky Nelson (.353), Earl Rapp (.340), Angel Scull (.321), Spook Jacobs (.319), Sam Chapman (.313) and Guillermo Miranda (.304). Hector Rodriguez at .290 was not far behind. Silvio played a utility role as a substitute for the Alacranes. He was a good player to have on the bench and in the clubhouse, but he proved to be very little help on the field. Garcia went 11 for 64 for the season for a .172 batting average which was the lowest of his career.

Besides having an outstanding hitting team, the Alacranes also had an excellent pitching staff. Cliff Fannin (13-4 w/ 1.45 ERA) was the ace of the staff. Almendares also got great pitching from Jim Walsh (8-3 w/ 2.32 ERA), Conrado "Connie" Marrero (7-5 w/ 3.27 ERA), Joe Hatten (7-5 w/ 3.63 ERA) and Guillermo Luna (4-3 w/ 2.55 ERA).

Almendares easily won the 1953-54 Cuban Winter League title with a record of 44-28 (.611). Marianao, the team that had traded Silvio Garcia to Almendares, finished in last place with a record of 29-43 (.403).



Garcia's last season in the Cuban Winter League as a player was very bittersweet. He played on a championship team, but he didn't contribute like he would have liked.

Silvio Garcia continued to coach in Cuba after his playing career had ended. One coaching job he held was serving on the coaching staff of the 1956-57 Almendares Alacranes. The team played in the Cuban Winter League. Almendares was managed by Emilio Cabrera and they finished the season in last place with a record of 27-42 (.261).

Silvio Garcia
Cienfuegos Elefantes (1956-57)
Coach

Chicle - Cuban Baseball Card

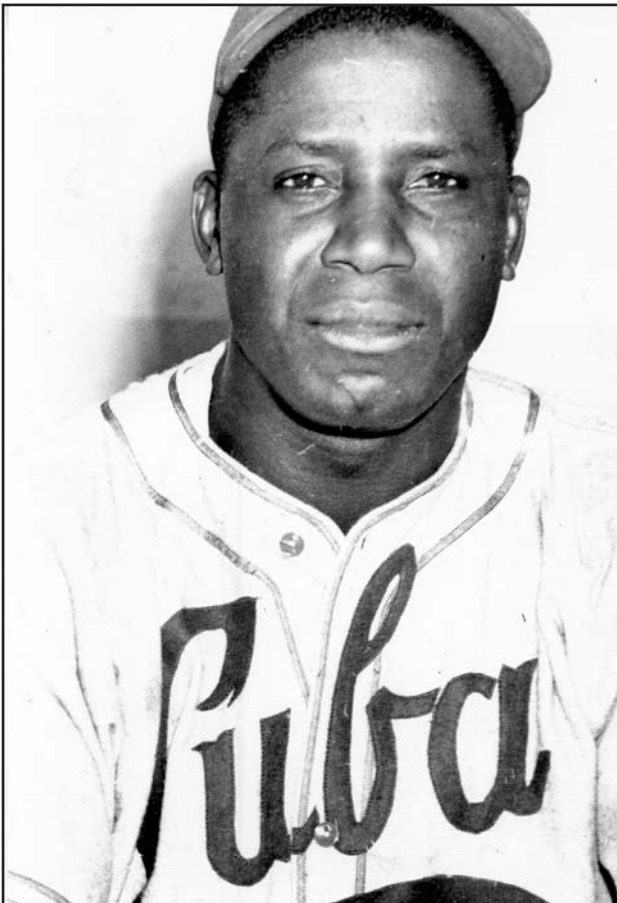
Summary of Silvio's Cuban Career

Silvio Garcia played twenty (20) seasons of professional baseball in Cuba. He ranks as one of the best Cuban baseball players of all-time. Some of the highlights of his Cuban Winter League career are:

- Teamed with Martin Dihigo to pitch the Marianao Tigres to a Cuban Winter League championship for the 1936-37 season.
- Selected as the Most Valuable Player for the 1946-47 Federacion Nacional (Cuba).
- Named the Cuban Winter League Most Valuable Player for the 1950-51 season.
- Won two batting titles while playing in the Cuban Winter League (1941-42 - .351 and 1950-51 - .347)
- Selected to seven Cuban Winter League All Star teams (1940-41, 1941-42, 1942-43, 1943-44, 1945-46, 1947-48 and 1950-51).
- Managed Matanzas to the Federacion Nacional championship during the 1946-47 season.
- Selected to the Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame in 1983.

When he completed his Cuban baseball career, Silvio Garcia ranked among the top all time hitters in Cuban baseball history.

	Seasons	At Bats	Runs	Hits	Doubles	Triples	RBI's	Stolen Bases
Category	20	3328	439	946	128	44	376	82
Rank	6 th	2 nd	3 rd	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	6 th	5 th



Passing of a Latin Legend

Silvio (Rendon) Garcia passed away on August 28, 1977 in the Matanzas Province of Cuba. He was only 63 years old.

He was laid to rest in a local cemetery in the city of Habana, Cuba where his family resided.

After his passing, Silvio Garcia was selected to the Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame in 1983 and the Latin Baseball Hall of Fame in the Dominican Republic in 2013.

Silvio was an outstanding player and fan favorite everywhere he played. From our perspective as researchers he was one of the best ball players in Latin American baseball history

Silvio (Rendon) Garcia
Cuba

Assessing Silvio Garcia's Career

- Silvio Garcia was an **excellent hitter during his entire career**. During his Negro League career Silvio compiled a career batting average of .327 while playing for the New York Cubans of the Negro National League. When “league” and “non-league” games are added together, he had a career batting average of .330 for his Negro League career. In games against all levels of completion, he posted a career batting average of .312.

All Negro League researchers agree that Silvio Garcia was a solid .320 plus hitter during his Negro League career. The following chart presents Garcia's Negro League batting averages as compiled by five (5) leading research groups.

	Baseball Reference	Center for Negro League BB Research	Larry Lester and Dick Clark	John Holway	James Riley
1946	.318	.326	.325	.350	.319
1947	.333	.324	.326	.324	.324
Career Total	.325	.327	.329	-	.322

Note: The differences in batting averages between researchers results from the fact that not all researchers analyzed the same box scores. In addition John Holway includes both “league” and “non-league” games in his totals. The Center for Negro League Baseball Research and the research team of Larry Lester and Dick Clark only include “league” games in their totals. Lester and Clark also have statistics for Garcia's 1940 Negro League season factored into his career batting average.

- During his career he **hit for both power and average**. He won four batting titles, led his league in homeruns twice and always got more than his share of extra base hits. Silvio also was consistently among the leaders on his team in driving in runs. Our research has identified 1245 career RBIs for Garcia up to this point. Continued research will undoubtedly drive his runs batted in total up significantly.
- There is a **significant problem of missing statistics** when analyzing the hitting and pitching career of Silvio Garcia. Some examples of these missing statistics are:
 - Silvio Garcia played for the New York Cubans in 1940 and we are missing all but one game of his statistics for this season with the Cubans.
 - For his 1946 and 1947 seasons with the New York Cubans, we are missing his number of triples, runs batted in and slugging percentage. For the 1947 season we are also missing the number of games played for New York.
 - Missing virtually all the “non-league” games he played for the New York Cubans in 1946 and 1947.
 - Missing Silvio's statistics for his 1937 season in Venezuela. Also missing are his extra base hits, stolen bases and slugging percentage for his 1939 and 1940 seasons in Venezuela.
 - Garcia played twenty (20) seasons of winter baseball in Cuba and we are missing the number of games played in each of the seasons.
 - He played in at least three American Series in Cuba and we only have partial statistics for the 1942 American Series.
 - Silvio played in the Dominican Republic in 1950 and we are missing all of his statistics for this season.
 - Silvio Garcia played at least two and possibly as many as four seasons in Nicaragua in the mid 1950's. Other than his runs batted in total (54) for the 1956 season when he led the Nicaraguan League, we are missing all of his other batting statistics for his career in Nicaragua.
 - From 1936 to 1940 Silvio Garcia was very active as a starting pitcher. We have a pretty good idea of his won-loss record, but are missing most of his other pitching statistics for these seasons.
 - Silvio also pitched sporadically other seasons and we are missing most of these records.

- Silvio Garcia had **exceptional speed** that he took advantage of on both offense and defense. Offensively his speed enabled him to take the extra base and steal a base when the opportunity presented itself. Over his career he led his “league” on four different occasions in stolen bases. Defensively his speed gave him significantly more range than the average infielder.
- Garcia was a **winner**. During his professional baseball career, Silvio Garcia played on the following eleven (11) championship teams:

Year	Team	League	Record	Pct.
1936-37	Marianao Tigres	Cuban Winter League	38-31	.551
1937	Cuidad Trujillo	Dominican League	18-13	.581
1938	Aguila de Vera Cruz	Mexican League	40-9	.816
1942	Cuban All Stars	American Series (Cuba)	3-2	.600
1944	Vera Cruz	Mexican League	52-37	.584
1945-46	Cienfuegos Elefantes	Cuban Winter League	37-23	.617
1946-47	Matanzas	Federacion Nacional (Cuba)	20-18	.526
1947	New York Cubans	Negro National League	42-18	.700
1947	New York Cubans	Negro League World Series	4-1	.800
1951	Sherbrooke Athletiques	Canadian Provincial League	73-50	.593
1953-54	Almendares Alacranes	Cuban Winter League	44-28	.611

- Silvio Garcia was **extremely versatile as a player**, especially early in his career when he was both an outstanding infielder and starting pitcher. Early in his career, Silvio was often compared with Cuban great and National Baseball Hall of Fame member Martin Dihigo. Had Silvio not hurt his pitching arm, there is no predicting how effective he may have been as both an infielder and pitcher.
- Defensively Silvio was an **outstanding middle infielder**. According to Leo Durocher, who managed the Brooklyn Dodgers when they played the Cuban All Stars in 1942, Silvio Garcia was in his words “a great fielder and the best I ever saw.” Durocher went on to say that “Marty Marion (star shortstop for the St. Louis Cardinals) couldn’t carry Garcia’s glove.”
- The **longevity of his career and his productivity** at the plate is extremely impressive. Silvio played professional baseball from 1931 through 1957. All throughout his career he produced everywhere he played. Even in the later years of his career, he put up good numbers everywhere he played. A good example of this is that in 1953 at the age of 40 he won the Dominican Summer League batting title with a .393 batting average.
- During his career Silvio Garcia **played professional baseball all over the Western Hemisphere**. He played in Canada, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, Venezuela and the United States. Everywhere Silvio Garcia played he was always very successful as a player and was a fan favorite.
- Silvio Garcia was a **complete ball player**. He could do it all. He could hit, throw, run and play defense. He was also an asset in the clubhouse and always represented his team well off the field. In closing Silvio Garcia was an excellent ball player with all the skills to have been an outstanding Major League player. Only racism kept him from playing in the Majors.

Playing Career

Regular Season:

Year	Team	League
1937	Cuidad Trujillo Dragones	Dominican League
1937	Pastora	Serie Nacional (Venezuela)
1938	Aguila de Vera Cruz	Mexican League
1939	Vargas	Venezuelan League
1939	Valdes	Venezuelan League
1940	Venezuela	Campeonato de Baseball de Premier Division
1940	New York Cubans	Negro National League
1941-1944	Mexico City Diablos Rojos	Mexican League
1944-1945	Azules de Vera Cruz	Mexican League
1946-1947	New York Cubans	Negro National League
1948	Mexico City Diablos Rojos	Mexican League
1949-1951	Sherbrooke Athletiques	Canadian Provincial League
1952	Havana Cubans	Florida International League
1952	Licey Tigres	Dominican Summer League
1953	Cibaenas	Dominican Summer League
1956	Cinco Estrellas	Nicaraguan League
1957	Cinco Estrellas	Nicaraguan League



Cuidad Trujillo (1937)
Dominican League Champions
(Garcia – kneeling front row first on left)

Winter Leagues:

Year	Team	League
1931-32	Habana Leones	Cuban Winter League
1934-35	Marianao Tigres	Cuban Winter League
1935-36	Marianao Tigres	Cuban Winter League
1936-37	Marianao Tigres	Cuban Winter League
1937-38	Marianao Tigres	Cuban Winter League
1938-39	Almendares Alacranes	Cuban Winter League
1939-40	Ponce Kofresi	Puerto Rican Winter League
1940-41	Santa Clara Leopards	Cuban Winter League
1941-42	Cienfuegos Elefantes	Cuban Winter League
1942	Cuban All Stars	American Series vs Brooklyn Dodgers
1942-43	Cienfuegos Elefantes	Cuban Winter League
1943-44	Cienfuegos Elefantes	Cuban Winter League
1944-45	Cienfuegos Elefantes	Cuban Winter League
1945-46	Cienfuegos Elefantes	Cuban Winter League
1946	All Cubans	Exhibition Series in Puerto Rico
1946	Cuban All Stars	American Series vs Washington Senators and the Major League All Stars (Cuba)
1946-47	Matanzas Panthers	Federacion Nacional (Cuba)
1946-47	Navegantes del Magallanes	Venezuelan League
1947	New York Cubans	Negro League World Series vs Cleveland Buckeyes
1947-48	Cienfuegos Elefantes	Cuban Winter League
1948-49	Cienfuegos Elefantes	Cuban Winter League
1949-50	Cienfuegos Elefantes	Cuban Winter League
1950-51	Cienfuegos Elefantes	Cuban Winter League
1951-52	Cienfuegos Elefantes	Cuban Winter League
1952-53	Marianao Tigres	Cuban Winter League
1953	Cuban All Stars	American Series vs Pittsburgh Pirates
1953-54	Marianao Tigres	Cuban Winter League
1953-54	Almendares Alacranes	Cuban Winter League
1956-57	Almendares Alacranes (Coach)	Cuban Winter League



East All Star Team (1946)

(Back row left to right- Felton Snow, **Josh Gibson**, **Monte Irvin**, **Buck Leonard**, **Biz Mackey**, Pat Scantlebury, Lennie Pearson, **Larry Doby**, Fernando Pedrosos, **Silvio Garcia** and Vic Harris. Kneeling left to right - Henry Kimbro, Jonas Gaines, Murray Watkins, Bill Ricks, Gene Benson, **Leon Day**, Sam Bankhead and Howard Easterling.)

Career Statistics – Hitting (Regular Season – Negro Leagues)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1940	New York	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1.000	2.000
1946	New York	46	172	25	56	-	-	4	-	10	.326	-
1947	New York	-	219	37	71	11	-	3	-	10	.324	-
	Total	-	392	63	128	12	-	7	-	20	.327	-

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

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1946	East	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000	.000
1947	East	2	7	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	.143	.286
	Total	4	10	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	.100	.200

Career Statistics – Hitting (Negro League World Series)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1947	New York	5	18	6	7	0	1	0	4	1	.389	.500

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

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1946	New York	2	8	1	3	1	-	-	-	-	.375	-
1947	New York	2	11	-	6	-	-	-	-	2	.545	-
	Total	4	19	1	9	1	-	-	-	2	.474	-

Career Statistics – Hitting (Dominican Republic)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1937	Cuidad Trujillo	31	128	26	38	14	1	0	20	-	.297	.422
1952	Licey	9	35	9	10	3	0	1	4	-	.286	.457
1953	Cibaenas	29	107	15	42	6	1	3	20	2	.393	.551
	Total	69	270	50	90	23	2	4	44	2	.333	.478

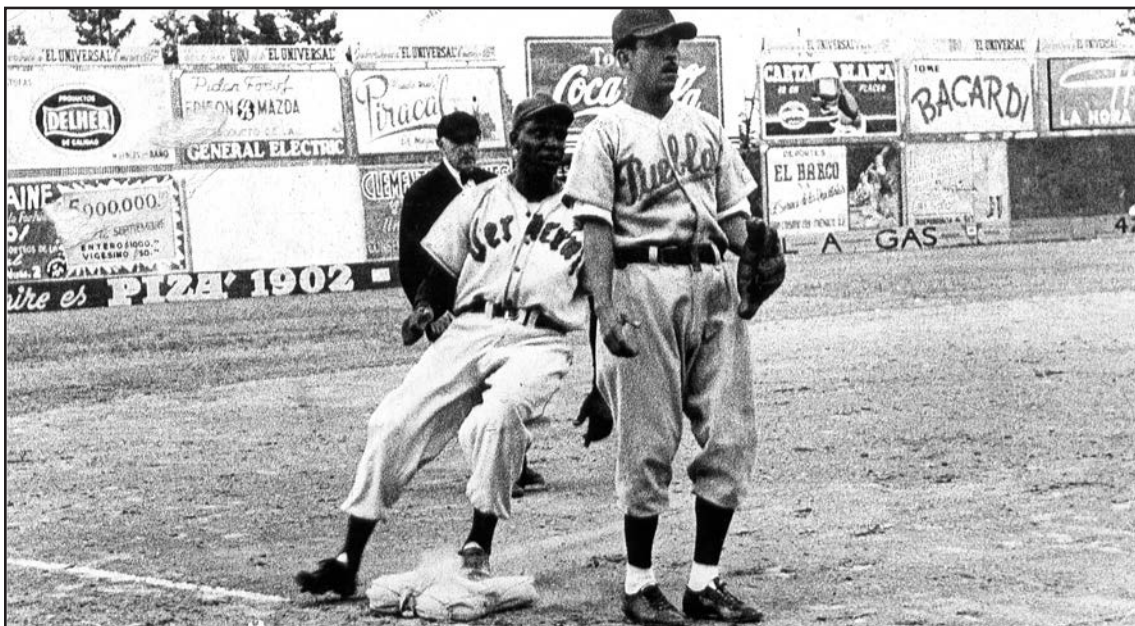
Career Statistics – Hitting (Mexico)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1938	Vera Cruz	45	175	38	61	9	2	4	27	10	.349	.491
1941	Mexico City	101	434	102	159	29	11	5	68	15	.366	.518
1942	Mexico City	85	349	75	127	19	4	11	83	21	.364	.536
1943	Mexico City	86	356	49	107	16	2	5	61	7	.301	.399
1944	Mexico City	89	373	73	117	25	3	11	83	31	.314	.485
	Vera Cruz											
1945	Vera Cruz	91	386	70	135	21	7	15	86	40	.350	.557
1948	Mexico City	66	271	42	80	13	1	1	32	6	.295	.362
	Total	563	2344	449	786	132	30	52	440	130	.335	.484

Career Statistics – Hitting (Venezuela)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1937	Pastora	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1939	Valdes	22	88	17	27	-	-	-	-	-	.307	-
1940	Venezuela	20	74	18	24	-	-	2	13	-	.324	-
	Total	42	162	35	51	-	-	2	13	-	.315	-

Game Action in Vera Cruz (Mexico)



Silvio Legs Out a Triple



Silvio Steals Second

Career Statistics – Hitting (Canada)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1949	Sherbrooke	100	400	59	126	30	-	4	76	20	.315	-
1950	Sherbrooke	106	411	78	150	29	4	21	116	19	.365	.608
1951	Sherbrooke	123	485	101	168	34	1	12	82	14	.346	.495
	Total	329	1296	238	444	93	5	37	274	53	.343	.508

Career Statistics – Hitting (Minor Leagues)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1952	Havana	114	428	45	121	22	0	3	40	9	.283	.355

Career Statistics – Hitting (Nicaragua)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1956	Cinco Estrellas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	54	-	-	-

Career Statistics – Hitting (Puerto Rico)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1939-40	Ponce	-	124	16	37	8	3	1	25	7	.298	.435

Career Statistics – Hitting (Cuban Winter League)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1931-32	Habana	-	66	13	17	2	2	0	5	0	.258	.348
1934-35	Marianao	-	96	5	18	1	1	1	7	1	.187	.250
1935-36	Marianao	-	131	13	36	7	1	0	16	0	.275	.344
1936-37	Marianao	-	188	33	44	2	4	3	23	3	.234	.335
1937-38	Marianao	-	156	25	46	2	1	0	19	10	.295	.321
1938-39	Almendares	-	140	17	41	3	3	0	16	2	.293	.357
1940-41	Santa Clara	-	175	24	55	5	5	1	20	9	.314	.417
1941-42	Cienfuegos	-	171	24	60	5	0	4	19	6	.351	.450
1942-43	Cienfuegos	-	175	26	53	7	1	1	24	7	.303	.371
1943-44	Cienfuegos	-	170	28	56	6	1	1	14	3	.329	.394
1944-45	Cienfuegos	-	173	24	44	7	2	2	21	3	.254	.353
1945-46	Cienfuegos	-	215	24	62	13	4	2	23	4	.288	.414
1946-47	Matanzas	-	160	22	55	-	-	-	-	-	.344	-
1947-48	Cienfuegos	-	216	33	63	10	6	1	23	2	.292	.407
1948-49	Cienfuegos	-	132	9	33	4	2	1	18	0	.250	.333
1949-50	Cienfuegos	-	173	25	45	8	1	1	7	6	.260	.335
1950-51	Cienfuegos	-	239	40	83	13	1	5	36	17	.347	.473
1951-52	Cienfuegos	-	207	21	48	11	3	1	21	4	.232	.329
1952-53	Marianao	-	281	29	76	12	4	1	30	4	.270	.352
1953-54	Marianao Almendares	-	64	4	11	0	0	0	9	1	.172	.172
	Total	-	3328	439	946	128	44	25	351	82	.284	.372

Career Statistics – Hitting (American Series - Cuba)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1942	Cuban All Stars	-	21	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	.381	-

Career Hitting Statistics (Totals)

	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
Negro League	-	392	63	128	12	-	7	-	20	.327	-
Non-League	4	19	1	9	1	-	-	-	2	.474	-
East-West All Star	4	10	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	.100	.200
NL World Series	5	18	6	7	0	1	0	4	1	.389	.500
Santo Domingo	69	270	50	90	23	2	4	44	2	.333	.478
Mexico	563	2344	449	786	132	30	52	440	130	.335	.484
Venezuela	42	162	35	51	-	-	2	13	-	.315	-
Canada	329	1296	238	444	93	5	37	274	53	.343	.508
Minor League	114	428	45	121	22	0	3	40	9	.283	.355
Nicaragua	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	54	-	-	-
Puerto Rico	-	124	16	37	8	3	1	25	7	.298	.435
Cuba	-	3328	439	946	128	44	25	351	82	.284	.372
American Series	-	21	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	.381	-
Total	-	8412	1342	2628	420	85	127	1245	306	.312	-



All Cubans (1946)
Exhibition Tour of Puerto Rico
(Garcia – standing fourth from right)

Career Statistics – Pitching (Dominican Republic)

Year	Team	Games	Innings	Won	Lost	Hits	Runs	BB	S0	ERA
1937	Cuidad Trujillo	-	-	0	2	-	-	-	-	-

Career Statistics – Pitching (Cuba)

Year	Team	Games	Innings	Won	Lost	Hits	Runs	BB	S0	ERA
1934-35	Marianao	6	30.1	1	2	-	-	-	-	2.47
1935-36	Marianao	5	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	-
1936-37	Marianao	15	-	10	2	-	-	-	-	-
1937-38	Marianao	1	-	0	1	-	-	-	-	-
1938-39	Almendares	7	-	1	4	-	-	-	-	-
1944-45	Cienfuegos	2	-	0	0	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	36	-	13	12	-	-	-	-	-

- Silvio Garcia pitched 20 complete games in the 36 games he pitched in Cuba

Career Statistics – Pitching (Mexico)

Year	Team	Games	Innings	Won	Lost	Hits	Runs	BB	S0	ERA
1938	Vera Cruz	13	112.3	10	2	80	21	28	88	1.68
1941	Mexico City	1	0.0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0.00
1944	Vera Cruz	1	1.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
1945	Vera Cruz	1	0.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
	Total	16	114.5	10	2	81	21	0	88	1.64

Career Statistics – Pitching (Venezuela)

Year	Team	Games	Innings	Won	Lost	Hits	Runs	BB	S0	ERA
1939	Valdes	10	64	4	2	52	15	-	-	2.11

Career Statistics – Pitching (Puerto Rico)

Year	Team	Games	Innings	Won	Lost	Hits	Runs	BB	S0	ERA
1939-40	Ponce	16	150	10	6	-	22	48	96	1.32

Career Statistics – Pitching (Totals)

	Games	Innings	Won	Lost	Hits	Runs	BB	S0	ERA
Dominican Republic	-	-	0	2	-	-	-	-	-
Mexico	16	115	10	2	81	21	0	88	1.64
Cuba	36	-	13	12	-	-	-	-	-
Venezuela	10	64	4	2	52	15	-	-	2.11
Puerto Rico	16	150	10	6	-	22	48	96	1.32
Total	78	329	37	24	-	-	48	184	-

Managerial Career Record

Year	Team	League	Won	Lost	Pct	Place
1946-47	Matanzas Panthers	Federacion Nacional	20	18	.526	1 st

Game Action in Licey - Dominican Republic (1952)



Batting and League Leader Hitting Titles

Category	Year	League	Number
Batting Average 1941-42		Cuban Winter League	.351
	1950	Canadian Provincial League	.365
	1950-51	Cuban Winter League	.347
Slugging Percentage	1950	Canadian Provincial League	.608
At Bats	1937	Dominican League	128
Base Hits	1937	Dominican League	38
	1941	Mexican League	159
	1941-42	Cuban Winter League	60
	1946-47	Federacion Nacional (Cuba)	55
	1949	Canadian Provincial League	126
	1950	Canadian Provincial League	150
Total Bases	1950	Canadian Provincial League	250
Runs Scored	1941-42	Cuban Winter League	24
Doubles	1937	Dominican League	14
	1950	Canadian Provincial League	29
Triples	1940-41	Cuban Winter League	5
Homeruns	1941-42	Cuban Winter League	4
	1950	Canadian Provincial League	21
Runs Batted In	1942	Mexican League	83
	1950	Canadian Provincial League	116
	1956	Nicaraguan League	54
Stolen Bases	1944	Mexican League	31
	1945	Mexican League	40
	1946-47	Federacion Nacional (Cuba)	23
	1950-51	Cuban Winter League	17
Fielding Percentage	1950	Canadian Provincial League	.945 (shortstop)
	1952	Florida International League	.962 (third base)

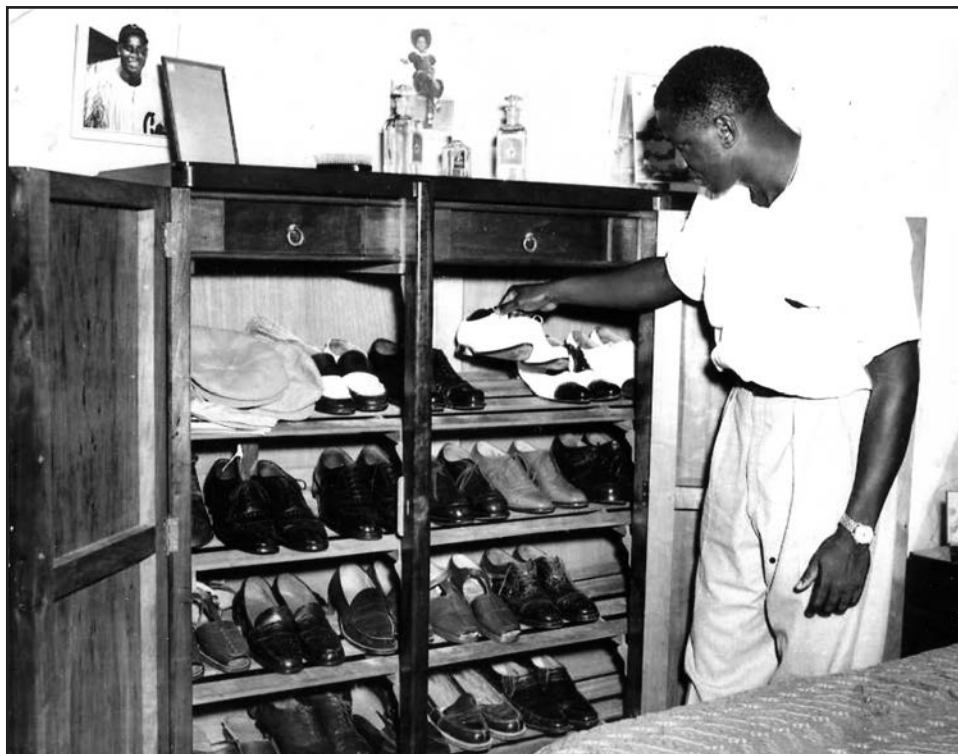
Pitching Titles

Category	Year	League	Number
Earned Run Average	1939-40	Puerto Rican Winter League	1.32



Silvio Garcia at the Ball Park

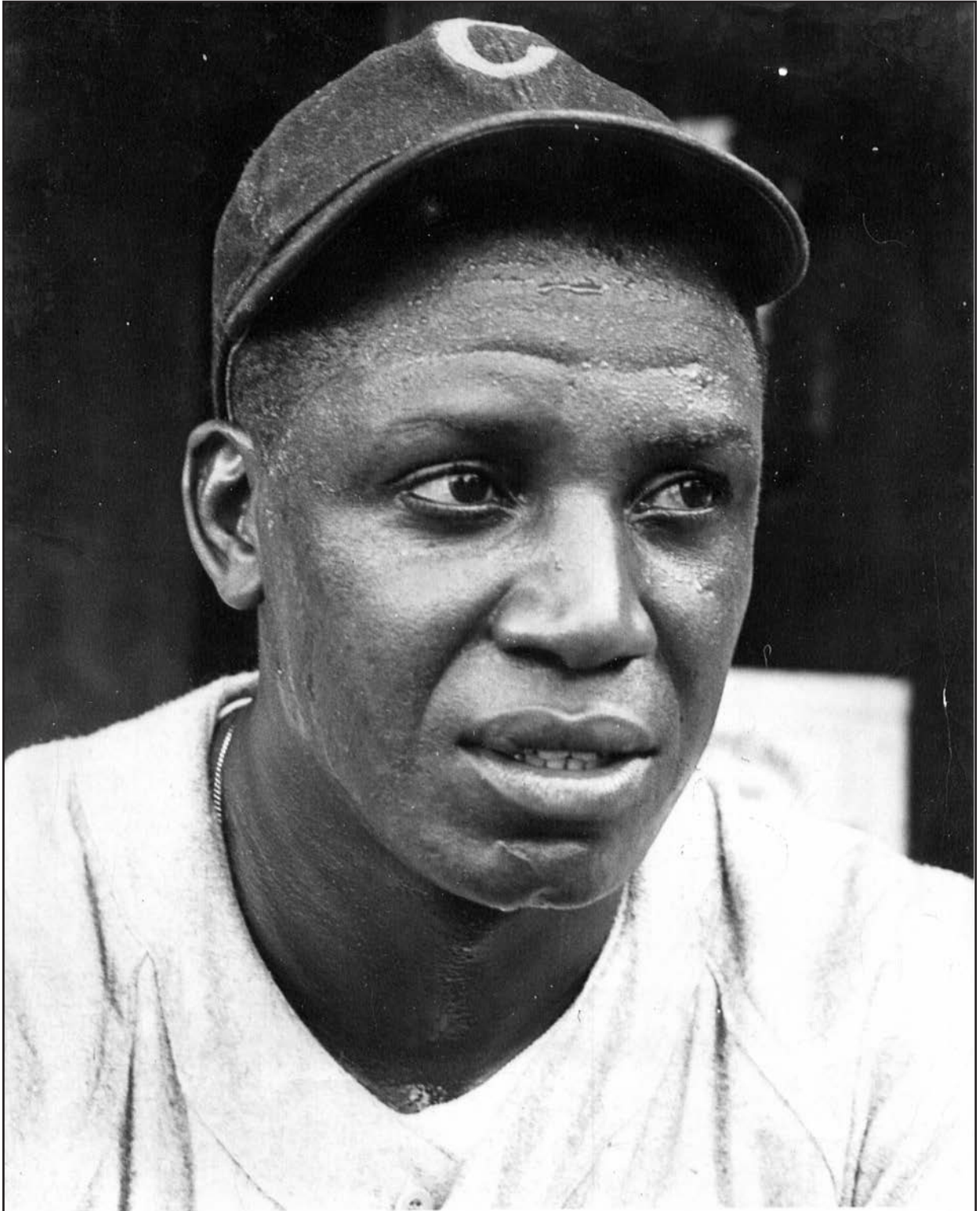
(Garcia – standing wearing hat far left)



Silvio Garcia a Classy Dresser

Selected Career Highlights

- Silvio Garcia compiled a career batting average of .330 in Negro League play when “league” and “non-league” games are added together. Compiled a career batting average of .312 in games against all levels of competition.
- Went 10-2 as a pitcher with the Marianao Tigres during the 1936-37 season and teamed up with Martin Dihigo (14-10) to lead the Tigres to the Cuban Winter League title.
- Member of the 1937 Ciudad Trujillo team that won the Dominican League title. The Ciudad Trujillo Dragones are considered one of the best Latin teams of all time.
- Along with Martin Dihigo helped lead Aguila de Vera Cruz to a Mexican League championship in 1938. Silvio hit .349 and went 10-2 on the mound. This team was considered one of the most dominant in Mexican baseball history. Their starting rotation was the most successful in Mexican League history.
- Played seven seasons in Mexico and hit over .300 during six of those seasons. Silvio compiled a career batting average of .335 with a .484 slugging percentage for his Mexican League career.
- Led the Puerto Rican Winter League with a 1.32 ERA for the 1939-40 season.
- Won the Cuban Winter League batting title with a .351 average for the 1941-42 season.
- Helped lead the 1944 Azules de Vera Cruz to a Mexican League championship.
- Selected to seven Cuban Winter League All Star teams (1940-41, 1941-42, 1942-43, 1943-44, 1945-46, 1947-48 and 1950-51).
- Selected as the Most Valuable Player for the 1946-47 Federacion Nacional (Cuba).
- Managed Matanzas to the Federacion Nacional championship during the 1946-47 season.
- Selected to the East-West All Star team (Negro National League) in 1946 and 1947.
- Helped lead the New York Cubans to Negro National League and Negro League World Series titles in 1947. Garcia batted .389 in the Negro League World Series.
- Won the Triple Crown (21 HR, 116 RBI and .365BA) for the 1950 Canadian Provincial League. Compiled a slugging percentage of .608 for the season.
- Played three seasons of professional baseball in Canada and posted a career batting average of .343 for his Canadian career.
- Selected as the Most Valuable Player (MVP) for the 1950-51 Cuban Winter League.
- Won the 1950-51 Cuban Winter League batting title with a .347 batting average.
- During the 1953 Dominican Summer League, Silvio compiled a .393 batting average.
- Elected to the Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame in 1983.
- Selected to the Latin American Baseball Hall of Fame in 2013.



Silvio (Rendon) Garcia