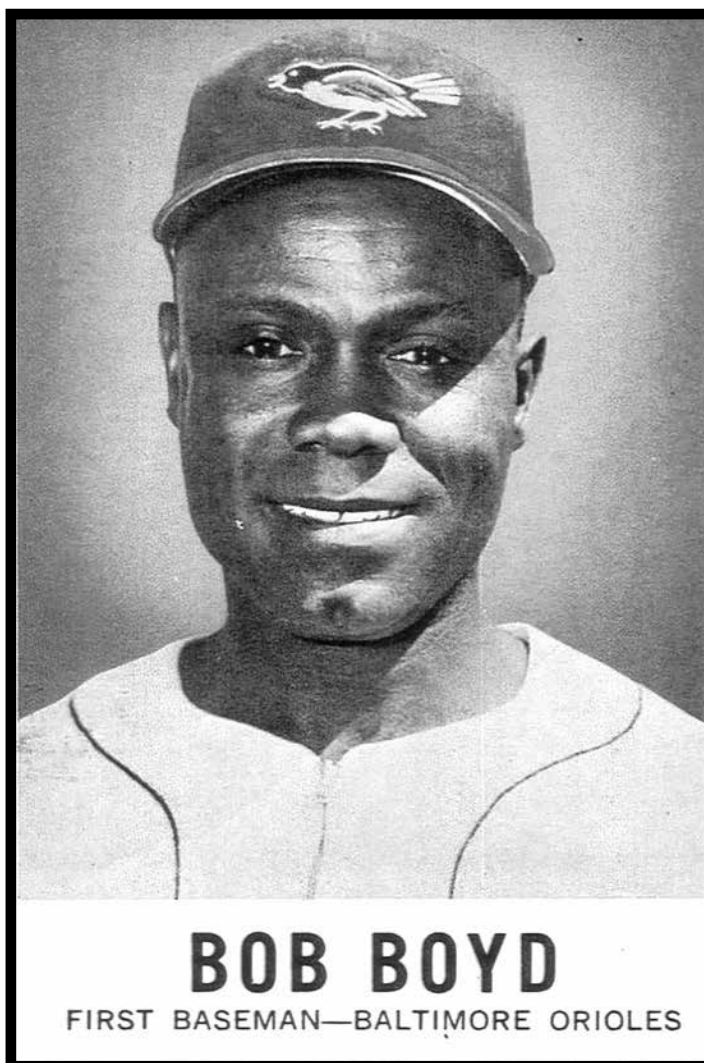


# **Forgotten Heroes:**

## **Bob “The Rope” Boyd**



**by**

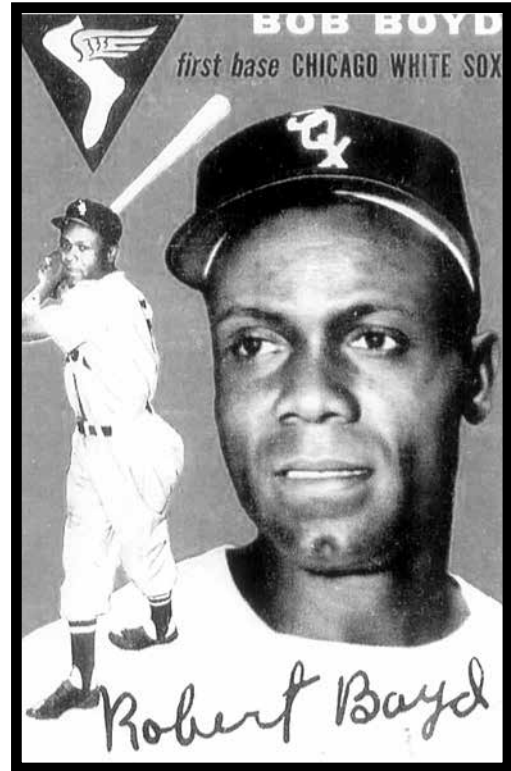
**Center for Negro League Baseball Research**

**Dr. Layton Revel**

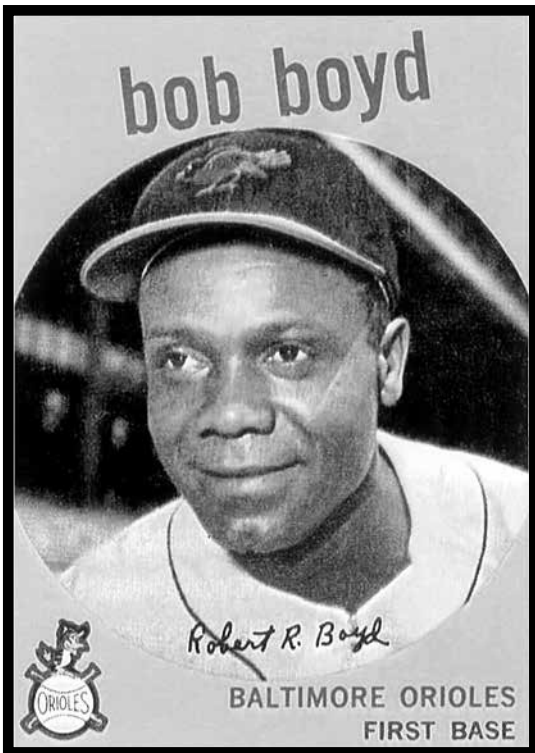
Bob Boyd – Major Leaguer



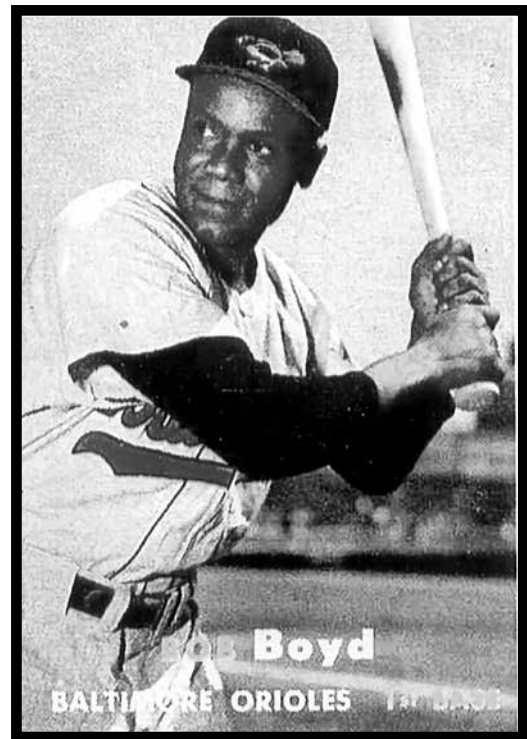
Chicago White Sox (1953)



Chicago White Sox (1954)



Baltimore Orioles (1957)



Baltimore Orioles (1959)

Robert Richard “Bob” Boyd was born on October 1, 1919 in Potts Camp, Marshall County, Mississippi to Willie and Bertha Boyd. Bob grew up in and attended high school in New Albany, Mississippi. Bob’s father Willie and Willie’s brother were reportedly very good baseball players themselves and Bob remembers watching his father and uncle play ball when he was younger. While he was still in high school, Bob’s mother passed away and he moved to Memphis, Tennessee to live with his father.

Bob Boyd stood five feet ten inches tall and weighed approximately 170 pounds during his playing career. He batted from the left hand side of the plate and threw left handed.

He was a pure contact hitter who was difficult to strike out. Bob’s hard line-drive hitting that to some resembled the trajectory of a rifle bullet earned him the nickname “The Rope” or “El Ropo” when he played in Latin America. This moniker was given to him by Luman Harris when Luman was the pitching coach for the Chicago White Sox. Even though he didn’t hit for a lot of power, Bob consistently hit for average. Throughout his career Bob Boyd always delivered for a batting average that was well above the .300 mark. During his Negro League career which lasted from 1946 to 1950, he compiled an exemplary .363 career batting average in “league” games.



**Bob Boyd**  
Chicago White Sox

In the Negro Leagues he never hit below .300 (1946 - .419, 1947 - .339, 1948 - .376, 1949 - .369 and 1950 - .356). In the Minor Leagues he had a career batting average of .321, while playing in Latin America he had a career batting average of .314 and he posted a career batting average of .293 in the Major Leagues. In all games played at all levels of play, Bob Boyd compiled a career batting average of .319. For a career that lasted nineteen (19) years from 1946 to 1964, his hitting was very impressive.

Bob was also very proficient at being able to bunt and beat it out for a base hit. As demonstrated repeatedly during his career, Bob had very good speed.

His outstanding play in the Negro Leagues got him selected to play in four East-West All Star games (1947, 1948 - two games and 1949).

Bob’s Minor League career started in 1950 and he responded with hitting .373 for his partial season with the Colorado Springs Sky Sox. In 1952 he won the Pacific Coast League batting title with a .320 batting average. During his Minor League career, he posted a .321 career batting average.

His success at the Minor Leagues got him called up to the Major Leagues with the Chicago White Sox in 1951. Bob found a real home in the Major Leagues when he was acquired by the Baltimore Orioles. In four of his five seasons in Baltimore he hit over .300 for each season (1956 - .311, 1957 - .318, 1958 - .309 and 1960 - .317). Boyd posted a very respectable .293 batting average for his Major League career.

Defensively he was a first baseman throughout his career. During his Negro League career newspapers referred to Bob’s play at first base as “graceful.” At every level he played, Bob was known for his outstanding defensive skills at first base. Bob also played in the outfield during his baseball career.

During his illustrious baseball career he spent five (5) years in the Negro Leagues, nine (9) years in the Minor Leagues and nine (9) seasons in the Major Leagues. After his professional baseball career he went to work for the Rapid Transit Bus Company of Wichita (KS) as a bus driver and played on their baseball team, the "Dreamliners." In 1965 he led them to a National Baseball Congress championship and was named the tournament Most Valuable Player.

Bob Boyd also played in Latin America during seven winter league seasons (Cuba - 4 years and Puerto Rico - 3 seasons). He had a career batting average of .301 in Cuba and .328 in Puerto Rico.

In short Bob "The Rope" Boyd was a pure hitter who consistently delivered at the plate.

### **Early Years**

Bob grew up in northern Mississippi and attended New Albany High School in New Albany, Mississippi. He was a standout athlete in high school who reportedly ran a 10 flat hundred yard dash. In 1944 Bob went into the United States Army and was assigned to the Quartermaster Corps. Bob was discharged in 1946. When he got out of the military he returned to Memphis and got a job working in a warehouse.

### **Boyd Joins the Negro Southern League**

Shortly after returning to Memphis, Bob and his brother Jimmy got a try-out with the Memphis Red Sox of the Negro American League. Memphis management was so impressed with Bob that they signed him to a \$ 175 per month contract and assigned him to the Knoxville Giants of the Negro Southern League. Jimmy Boyd was sent home. Bob's impressive line-drive hitting got him a contract as the team's starting first baseman. As a side note Jimmy tried out, was signed and pitched for the Newark Eagles of the Negro National League in 1946.

The Knoxville Giants reportedly had a working relationship with the Memphis Red Sox of the Negro American League. The following eight (8) teams played in the Negro Southern League during the 1946 season: Asheville Blues, Charlotte Black Hornets, Chattanooga Choo Chos, Jacksonville Eagles, Knoxville Giants, Mobile Black Bears, Montgomery Dodgers (Red Sox) and the Nashville Cubs (Black Vols). The "league" also included four associate members (Atlanta Black Crackers, Louisville Black Colonels, Pine Bluff Black Cats and Winston-Salem Grays). Knoxville had played as the "Grays" in 1945 before returning to be known as the "Giants" for the 1946 season. The Giants were managed by Nat Rogers and played their home games at Caswell Park in Knoxville during the season.



**Caswell Park**  
**Home of the**  
**Knoxville Giants**

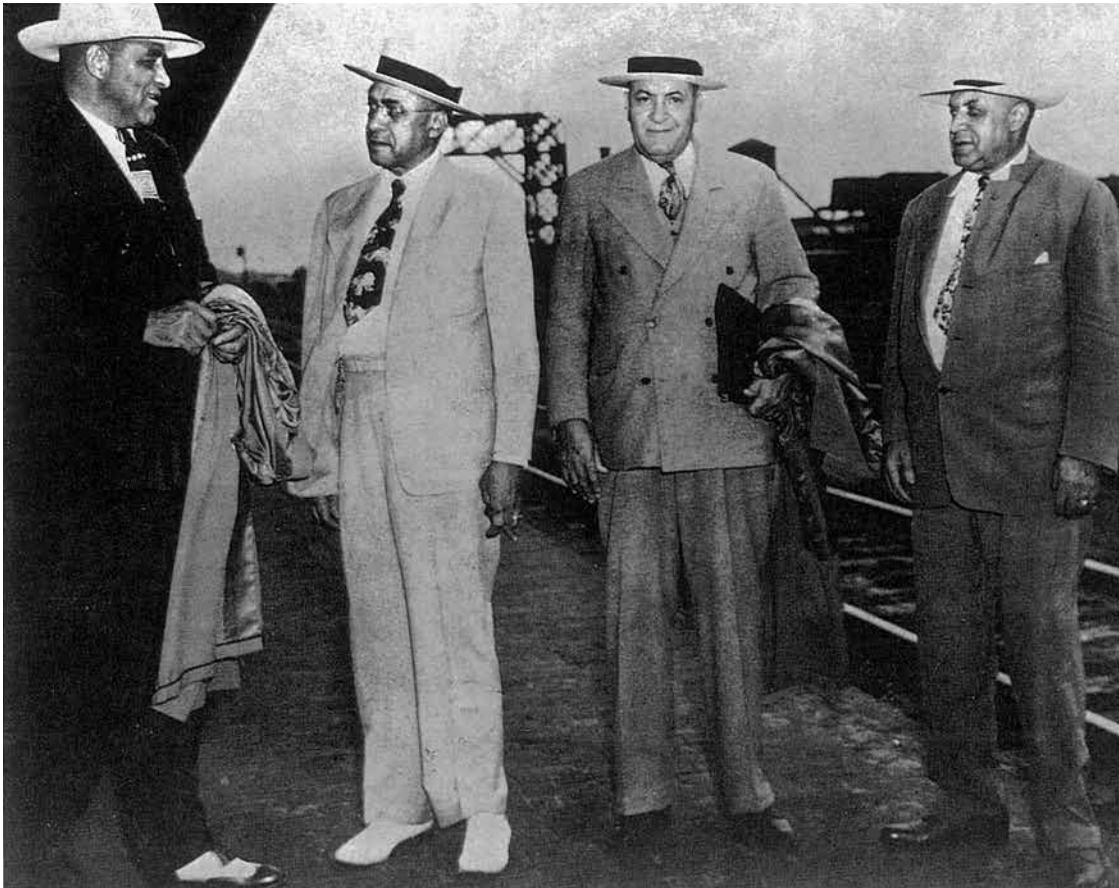
The top players for the Knoxville Giants during the 1946 season were Bob Boyd (1B), Nat Rogers (OF), John Armstrong (OF), George “Red” Handy (3B), Harry Millon (SS), Roy “Babe” Fine (C), David Harper (OF) and Cecil Jordan (OF). The pitching staff for Knoxville in 1946 included Walter Bester, George “Fireball” Franklin, James Horton, H.A. Jefferson and Willie “School Boy” Rowe.

Eleven (11) box scores have been found for Bob Boyd playing for Knoxville in 1946. In these games Bob went 18 for 43 for a .419 batting average. In his review of the Negro Southern League season, Joel W. Smith of the Birmingham World considered Bob Boyd as one of the top players in the “league” during the 1946 season.

Final standings and won-loss records are not available for the 1946 Negro Southern League season. It is known that the Asheville Blues won both halves of the season and were considered the “league” champions. Asheville went 23-5 (.821) for the first half and then went 25-7 (.781) including winning their final sixteen (16) games for the second half of the season. Asheville finished the season with an overall record of 48-12 (.800).

### **Negro League Career**

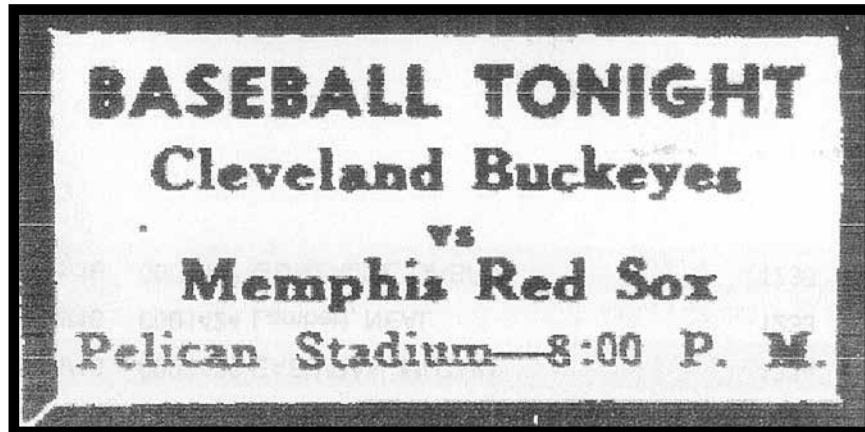
Early in the 1946 season the Memphis Red Sox of the Negro American League started having problems with their infield. When this occurred both Bob Boyd (1B) and George “Red” Handy (3B/2B) were called up. The Memphis Red Sox were owned by Dr. B.B. Martin and Dr. William S. Martin. It is important to note that there were four Martin brothers all of whom were doctors and were also actively involved in Negro League baseball. The team was managed by Olan “Jelly” Taylor. The Red Sox played their home games at Martin Stadium in Memphis.



**Martin Brothers**  
(left to right – Dr. B.B. Martin, Dr. A.T. Martin, Dr. J.B. Martin and Dr. W.S. Martin)

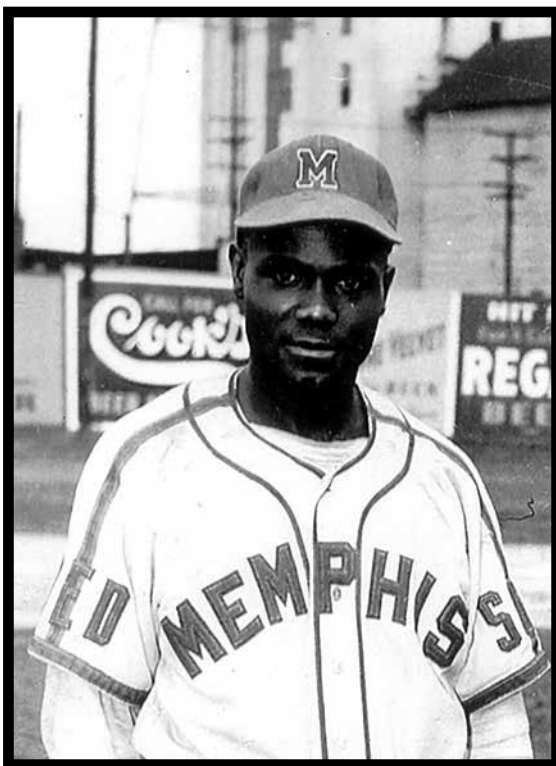
Bob Boyd (1B), Fred Bankhead (2B), Marlin Carter (3B), Cowan Hyde (OF), Clinton "Casey" Jones (C), Fred Mc Daniels (OF), Alec Radcliffe (3B), Neil Robinson (OF) and Willie Wells (SS) were the top offensive players for the Memphis Red Sox in 1946. The pitching staff for the Red Sox included Dan Bankhead, Felix "Chin" Evans, Rufus Ligon, Frank Pearson, Verdell "Lefty" Mathis and Riley Stewart. Felix Evans went 15-1 (.938) during the season and was the ace of the pitching staff.

Complete batting statistics for the 1946 Red Sox team are currently not available.



Times-Picayune  
New Orleans, LA

The Memphis Red Sox finished the season in next to last place in the Negro American League final standings with a record of 24-36 (.400). The Kansas City Monarchs won the "league" championship with a record of 43-14 (.754).



**Bob Boyd**  
Memphis Red Sox

Bob Boyd returned to the Memphis Red Sox as the team's starting first baseman for the 1947 season. After the team's disappointing performance during the 1946 season the Martin brothers decided to make some changes. Before the start of the season Larry Brown replaced Olan Taylor as the team's manager.

According to Bob the highlight of his 1947 season in Memphis was the day he jammed his foot sliding into second base and was taken to the hospital owned by the same Dr. Martin who also had an ownership position in the Memphis Red Sox. While lying on the exam table, Bob saw a pretty young student nurse by the name of Valca pass by. Bob demanded to meet her. Bob and Valca were married for over 50 years.

Bob Boyd got off to a fast start in 1947 and was batting .361 on June 29<sup>th</sup>. The Memphis Red Sox were leading the hitting at that point in the season. According to newspaper reports, they had seven (7) players in their starting line-up batting over .300 at the end of June. Memphis hitters faltered significantly the second half of the season. Boyd finished the season as the team's leading hitter with a .339 batting average (96 for 283 in 73 games).

# Memphis Red Sox Win From Clowns, 15 to 14.

The Memphis Red Sox defeated the Cincinnati Clowns, 15 to 14, in a Negro American League game here last night. Boyd, Memphis, first baseman, hit an inside-the-park homer in the seventh.

Memphis .....	15	15	1
Cincinnati .....	14	17	4

**Boyd Hits Inside Park  
Homerun**

Arkansas Gazette  
Little Rock, AR  
06-03-47

George Handy who hit .326 was the only other Memphis player to bat over .300 for the season. Some of the other top players on the team were Larry Brown (C), Marlin Carter (3B), Jose Luis Colas (OF), Cowan Hyde (OF), Clinton "Casey" Jones (C), Neil Robinson (OF) and Willie Wells (SS). As a team the Red Sox went 746 for 2630 for a .284 team batting average which was fourth best in the Negro American League. The Cleveland Buckeyes led the "league" with a .301 team batting average. Complete hitting statistics for individual players are not currently available for the 1947 season.

Robert "Pepper" Sharpe (8-3) was the ace of the pitching staff in 1947. Verdell "Lefty" Mathis (5-5), Dan Bankhead (4-4) Frank Pearson (1-2) and John Huber (0-4) rounded out the starting rotation for Memphis.

For his outstanding play during the 1947 season, Bob Boyd was named to the West squad for the East-West All Star game. Bob appeared in the second game which was played on July 29<sup>th</sup> at the Polo Grounds in New York City. He was the West's starting first baseman and batted cleanup. Boyd went one for two with a double. Sam Jethroe of the Cleveland Buckeyes was the hero of the game with three hits and four runs batted in. The 38,402 fans in attendance saw the West come away with an 8-2 victory. John Ford Smith (Kansas City Monarchs) got the win and Rufus Lewis (Newark Eagles) took the loss.



According to newspaper accounts, Major League scouts were already showing a definite interest in two Memphis Red Sox players. They were Bob Boyd and pitcher Dan Bankhead. In less than two seasons in the Negro Leagues, Bob Boyd had proven himself as one of the best hitters in the "league." Dan Bankhead was a hard throwing right handed pitcher with exceptional talent.

The Memphis Red Sox compiled a disappointing won-loss record of 33-45 (.423) and ended the season in fourth place behind the Cleveland Buckeyes (54-23), Kansas City Monarchs (38-22) and the Birmingham Black Barons (34-26).

When the 1948 Negro American League season got underway, Bob Boyd was back in the line-up as the Memphis Red Sox's starting first baseman and was their best player.

Milwaukee Sentinel  
Milwaukee, WI  
07-03-47

Like he had been since he joined the team two years earlier, Bob was the Red Sox's leading hitter. His complete hitting statistics according to the Howe News Bureau for 1948 were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1948	Memphis	77	303	52	114	18	9	5	51	4	.376	.545

One of Bob's best games of the season was against the Cleveland Buckeyes in early June when he collected four hits in a 9-6 loss to Cleveland.

Neil Robinson (.333), Willie Wells (.328), Jose Colas (.310), Cowan Hyde (.274) and Casey Jones (.265) also contributed offensively for the team during the season. The Memphis Red Sox compiled a .274 team batting average which was fourth best in the Negro American League.

Verdell "Lefty" Mathis (7-11 w/ 4.75 ERA), Felix "Chin" Evans (7-9 w/ 4.28 ERA), Ernest "Spoon" Carter (6-2 w/ 3.15 ERA), Dan Bankhead (4-4), Sam Woods (4-6 w/ 3.80) and Robert "Pepper" Sharpe (3-7 w/ 5.40) were the team's leading pitchers.

Bob was selected to play in both East-West All Star games that were played in 1948. Game one was played on August 22<sup>nd</sup> at Comiskey Park in Chicago with 42,099 fans in attendance. Boyd was the team's starting first baseman and batted fifth. Bob had an excellent game. He went two for four with one run batted in. The West won the game by a score of 3-0. Game two was played just two days later on August 24<sup>th</sup>. The game was played in New York City at Yankee Stadium. Bob was the West's starting first baseman and batted fifth behind Willard "Homerun" Brown. Boyd went hitless in three "official" at bats. The East avenged their earlier defeat with a 6-1 win over the West.



East-West All Star Game (1948)

(front row left to right – Nate Rogers, Leon Kellman, Sam Hairston, **Bob Boyd**, Ray Neil, Jim Cohen, Verdell Mathis, Herb Souell, **Artie Wilson**, Roberto Vargas and trainer. Back row left to right – Neil Robinson, **Willard "Homerun" Brown**, Ernest Carter, Willie Grace, Gentry Jessup, Sam Hill, Bill Powell, Jim "Lefty" LaMarque, **Chet Brewer**, **Lorenzo "Piper" Davis** and Quincy Troupe.

The Memphis Red Sox suffered through another mediocre season in 1948. They concluded their Negro American League season with a dismal record of 33-44 (.429) and were in fourth place in the final "league" standings. The Birmingham Black Barons (57-21) defeated the Kansas City Monarchs (43-25) in a play-off series for the Negro American League title.

After the regular season Bob Boyd signed with the Robinson-Campanella All Stars to play for them on their post season barnstorming team. The all-stars were led by former Negro League players Jackie Robinson and Roy Campanella who were both with the Brooklyn Dodgers organization. The team fielded a very impressive roster that included the following:

**Robinson-Campanella All Stars (1948)**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Player</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Player</b>
1B	Bob Boyd	OF	Buddy Armour
2B	Jackie Robinson	OF	Lyman Bostock
SS	Sam Bankhead	OF	Lou Louden
3B	John Britton		
C	Roy Campanella		



**Arkansas Democrat**

Little Rock, AR  
10-10-48

Harry Alexander, Eugene Bremer, Napoleon Gully, Verdell "Lefty" Mathis, W.M. Ricks and Pat Scantlebury comprised the pitching staff for the team. The team was managed by Winfield S. Welch. According to newspaper reports the team had a very success post season barnstorming tour.

In early October of 1948 Bob Boyd played for the Memphis Red Sox in a game against the Jackie Robinson All Stars. The game was played at Travelers Field in Little Rock (AR). The outcome of the game is currently unknown.

**Boyd Returns to Memphis**

Bob Boyd was back with the Memphis Red Sox for the 1949 season. Not only was he the leading hitter for the Red Sox but he was one of the best hitters in the Negro American League. Bob started the season off on a hot streak. In a game played against the Cleveland Buckeyes in late April Boyd went five for five (three singles, triple and homerun). Memphis beat Cleveland by a score of 18-5. A crowd of 3,500 fans were in attendance at Martin Stadium to witness their home team's victory.

Boyd hit .369 with a .550 slugging percentage for Memphis during the 1949 season. His complete hitting statistics for the season were as follows:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Team</b>	<b>Games</b>	<b>AB</b>	<b>Runs</b>	<b>Hits</b>	<b>2B</b>	<b>3B</b>	<b>HR</b>	<b>RBI</b>	<b>SB</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>SLG</b>
1949	Memphis	80	309	59	114	24	4	8	55	11	.369	.550

**Martin Stadium – Home of the Memphis Red Sox**



**Martin Stadium**



**Bob Boyd at Home Plate in Martin Stadium**



#### **Memphis Red Sox (1949)**

**(Bob Boyd – kneeling third from right)**

Other top hitters for Memphis in 1949 were Pedro Formenthal (.341), Willie Wells (.296), Joe B. Scott (.288) and Neil Robinson (.277).

The pitching staff for the Red Sox included Verdell “Lefty” Mathis (9-11 w/ 2.61 ERA), Isiah Harris (8-3 w/ 2.93 ERA), Jose Piloto (5-5 w/ 3.34 ERA), Frank “Groundhog” Thompson (9-12 w/ 3.57), Willie Hutchinson (8-8 w/ 3.81 ERA) and Sam Woods (1-8 w/ 5.93 ERA).

For the third straight season, Bob Boyd was named to the East-West All Star game. The game was played on August 14<sup>th</sup> at Comiskey Park in Chicago (IL) with 31,097 fans in attendance. Bob went hitless in his four plate appearances during the game. The East won the game by a score of 4-0.

Both Larry Brown and Homer “Goose” Curry managed the Memphis Red Sox during the season.

When the Negro National League folded after the 1948 season, several former Negro National League teams joined the Negro American League. With ten (10) teams in the “league” the Negro American League was divided into two divisions (Eastern and Western) for the 1949 season. The Memphis Red Sox played in the Western Division along with the Birmingham Black Barons, Chicago American Giants, Houston Eagles and Kansas City Monarchs.

Even with a significantly improved pitching staff, the Memphis Red Sox could only manage a won-loss record of 39-50 (.438) and they finished in last place in the Western Division of the Negro American League.

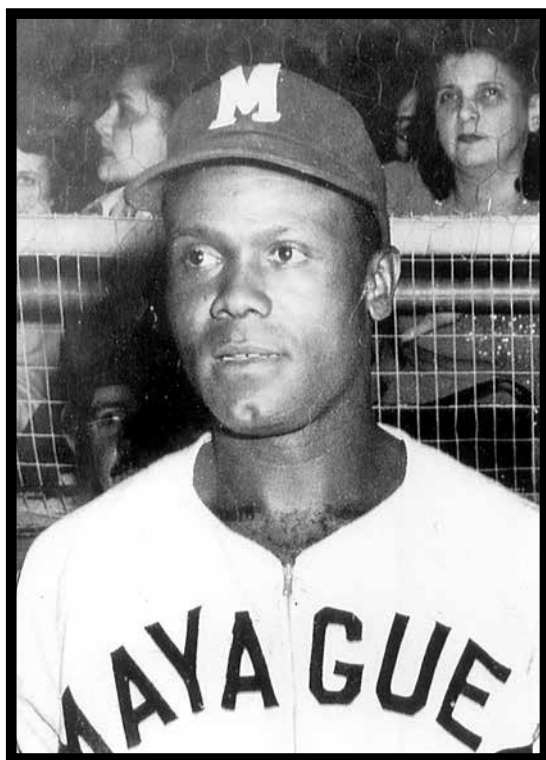
**Bob Boyd – Memphis Red Sox**



(left to right – Dr. Martin, Homer “Goose” Curry and **Bob Boyd**)



(left to right – Larry Brown, Mrs. Bob Boyd, **Bob Boyd**, Rufus Thomas and Homer “Goose” Curry)



**Bob Boyd**  
 Mayaguez Indios  
 (1949-50)

### **Bob Boyd Makes His First Trip to the Caribbean**

After the conclusion of the 1949 Negro American League season, Bob Boyd played winter baseball briefly for the Habana Leones of the Cuban Winter League. In a reserve role Bob Boyd only appeared in nine games and had nine (9) hits in thirty-six (36) at bats for a .250 batting average. Bob also played for the Mayaguez Indios of the 1949-50 Puerto Rico Winter League. Other Negro Leaguers on Mayaguez's roster during the 1949-50 season were Johnny Davis, Lomax Davis, Wilmer Fields, Artie Wilson and Robert Wilson.

### **Bob Returns to Memphis**

The 1950 Negro American League season would be Bob Boyd's last in Negro baseball and would mark the beginning of his journey through Minor and Major League baseball. According to Bob his contract with the Red Sox called for a salary of \$ 500 per month. As usual Bob was the Red Sox's leading hitter.

Boyd hit .356 with an impressive .612 slugging percentage in sixty-three (63) Negro League games. His complete hitting statistics were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1950	Memphis	63	250	54	89	27	8	7	66	9	.356	.612

Leon Kellman (.329), Vibert Clarke (.310), Joe Henry (.284), Neil Robinson (.283), Orlando Varona (.273) and Clinton "Casey" Jones (.267 w/ 11 homeruns) were the other top hitters for Memphis. As a team the Memphis Red Sox hitters compiled a .275 (709 for 2574) team batting average which was sixth best in the "league."

The Memphis Red Sox performance on the field improved dramatically during the 1950 season. The primary reason for this was the pitching staff who quite simply gave up far less runs than their team scored. Vibert Clarke was the ace of the pitching staff with a 13-10 (.565) won-loss record and a 2.98 ERA. The starting rotation was rounded out with Isiah Harris (9-4 w/ 3.13 ERA), Ollie Brantley (2-1 w/ 3.29 ERA), Frank Thompson (7-7 w/ 3.88 ERA) and Sam Woods (10-6 w/ 4.06 ERA).

With timely hitting and outstanding pitching, the Memphis Red Sox improved their won-loss record to 42-32-2 (.568) and went from last place the season before to third place in the final standings of the Western Division of the Negro American League. The Kansas City Monarchs (52-21) and the Birmingham Black Barons (52-25-1) finished one-two in the West.

## Sox Farm Signs Second Negro Player

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo.—(Special)—The signing of a second Negro prospect was announced here today by the Colorado Springs club, Western League affiliate of the Chicago White Sox.

Richard Boyd, 24-year-old first baseman, has been acquired from the Memphis Red Sox. Boyd, who bats and throws left-handed, brings along a .357 batting average and has 24 doubles, seven triples, five home runs and 66 runs batted in to his credit.

Yesterday the club signed Catcher Sam Hairston, first Negro to enter the Sox farm system.

Chicago Daily News

Chicago, IL  
08-02-50

## Negro Team Sues White Sox for Luring' Player

CHICAGO, Sept. 15 (UP)—The Memphis Red Sox, a Negro baseball team, filed suit for \$35,000 today charging that the Chicago White Sox "lured" one of their players away.

The suit was filed in Federal court on behalf of the Red Sox and the team's president, W. S. Martin, Memphis, Tenn. It named as defendants the White Sox, Vice President Charles Comiskey and General Manager Frank Lane.

The suit charged that the White Sox induced First Baseman Bob Boyd to leave the Negro team August 8 for "the lure and attraction of the big leagues."

Boyd subsequently was farmed out to the Colorado Springs Skysox, where he finished the season.

San Francisco Chronicle

San Francisco, CA  
09-16-50

## Chisox To Recall First Negro Player

Chicago, Sept. 5 (INS)—The Chicago Herald-American said today that the Chicago White Sox will recall Bob Boyd, young Negro first baseman, from the Colorado Springs club before the end of the season.

Boyd, a lefthanded batter and thrower, was recently purchased by the American leaguers from the Memphis Red Sox and will become the first Negro to play with the Comiskey team when and if he reports.

Springfield Illinois State Journal

Springfield, IL  
09-06-50

## Bob Boyd Signs with the Chicago White Sox

Bob Boyd's hitting with the Memphis Red Sox did not go unnoticed by Major League baseball scouts. After weighing all of his options, Boyd signed with the Chicago White Sox of the American League as an amateur free agent. Negro League legend John Wesley Donaldson, who was the first African American to scout for a Major League organization, scouted Bob for the Chicago White Sox. Donaldson felt Bob Boyd would be an excellent player to sign. John Donaldson also recommended that the White Sox sign Sam Hairston of the Indianapolis Clowns. Chicago management took Donaldson's recommendation and signed both Boyd and Hairston.

When Chicago White Sox general manager, Frank Lane, signed Bob Boyd, he knew he had signed a quality ball player who would be a real asset to the organization. The one thing that Lane did not know about Bob Boyd was his real age. John Donaldson had told his boss that Bob was only 25 years old when they signed him while in fact Boyd was actually 31 years old. Age wouldn't be factor for Bob because he could play.

Bob Boyd playing for the White Sox organization almost never happened. When the signing was announced, Dr. W.S. Martin and his brother Dr. B.B. Martin disagreed about the details of the purchase and a threat was made to sue the Chicago White Sox for \$ 35,000. When Frank Lane, general manager of the White Sox, agreed to pay Memphis \$ 15,000 for Bob Boyd's contract the matter was resolved.

Immediately upon their signing both Bob Boyd and Sam Hairston, they were assigned to the Colorado Springs Sky Sox of the Western League. The Colorado Springs Sky Sox were the Class A farm team of the Chicago White Sox. The team was managed by Buddy Hassett and called Memorial Field their home ball park. Boyd and Hairston became starters as soon as they joined the team and played the remainder of the 1950 season at Colorado Springs. Boyd made an instant impact in his first game for Colorado Springs by hitting a homerun in his very first at bat. Bob Boyd appeared in 42 games for the Sky Sox. Bob put up super star numbers with a .373 batting average and a .646 slugging percentage. Sam Hairston also made a very respectable showing. The duo's numbers for their 1950 season with Chicago's Minor League team were as follows:

	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
Bob Boyd	42	158	-	59	6	5	9	-	-	.373	.646
Sam Hairston	38	133	-	38	5	1	1	-	-	.286	.361

Pete Grammas (.311), Pat Seerey (.300w/ 44 HR) and Buddy Phillips (.281) were the other top hitters on the team. The Sky Sox compiled a mediocre .268 team batting average.

The pitching staff for Colorado Springs included Ted Shandor (13-12), Jerry Dahike (12-13), Jim Kamis (12-17), Earl Beesley (10-13) and Walter Smola (7-1) as their primary pitchers.

On September 5, 1950, the Chicago Herald-American and the Daily Illinois State Journal (Springfield , IL) published articles that the Chicago White Sox had announced that they would recall Bob Boyd from Colorado Springs before the end of the season. Three days after the announcement, Bob was still in the line-up for the Sky Sox and went 3 for 5 with 2 runs scored in their 10-9 loss to Denver. Bob never got the call. Boyd finished out the season in Colorado Springs and continued his torrid hitting streak.

Even with Bob Boyd's amazing hitting, the Colorado Springs Sky Sox suffered through a disappointing season. They ended the regular season with a won-loss record of 72-82 (.468) and were in sixth place in the final "league" standings. The Omaha Cardinals were the Western League regular season champions with a record of 96-58 (.623). The Sioux City Soos (89-65) won the Western League play-off series.

After the conclusion of the 1950 regular season, Bob Boyd played with the Negro American League All Stars on their barnstorming tour. Boyd played mainly in the outfield during their post season tour. Some of the other top players on the team were Lloyd “Pepper” Bassett (C), Jesse Douglas (3B), Willie Grace (C), George Handy (2B), Bob Harvey (OF), Neil Robinson (OF), Johnny Washington (1B) and Willie “Curley” Williams (SS). The pitching staff for the Negro Leaguers included Alvin Gipson, Jehosie Heard, Verdell “Lefty” Mathis, Roy Partlow, Bill Powell and Frank “Groundhog” Thompson. The Negro Leaguers were managed by Leon Ruffin of the Houston Eagles during the tour. The Negro American League All Stars played both the Jackie Robinson All Stars and Luke Easter’s Major League All Stars. They also played a wide range of lesser opponents. They played town teams, company teams, local all star teams, semi-professional squads and other barnstorming teams.

In November of 1950, Bob Boyd joined his old team the Memphis Red Sox to play the Jackson Cubs at Brown’s Stadium in Jackson, MS.

### Boyd is Promoted to the Pacific Coast League

Bob Boyd’s exemplary season for the Class A Colorado Springs Sky Sox in 1950 earned him a promotion to the Chicago White Sox’s Triple A farm team in Sacramento for the 1951 season. During spring training Bob won the job as the Sacramento Solon’s starting first baseman and hit clean-up in the batting order.

The Sacramento Solons were one of eight (8) teams who played in the Pacific Coast League. They played their home games at Edmonds Field and averaged 3,424 fans per game during the 1951 season. Former Major Leaguer Joe Gordon managed the team and also was their starting second baseman.



**Edmonds Field**

Home of the Sacramento Solons

From the very start of the season, Bob was the team’s leading hitter. Bob made an immediate impact in his first game with the Solons by hitting a 370 foot homerun over the right field wall to clinch a 5-4 win for Sacramento over the Hollywood Stars. By May Boyd was leading the Pacific Coast League in hitting with a .384 batting average and was still leading the “league” in mid-July with a .349 batting average. Bob finished second to Jim Rivera (.352) for the Pacific Coast League batting title.

During the season Bob also exhibited his speed. He stole 41 bases which led the Pacific Coast League. His complete 1951 batting statistics for Sacramento were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1951	Sacramento	145	555	82	190	32	11	5	64	41	.342	.467



**Sacramento Solons (1951)**  
Pacific Coast League

(Bob Boyd - seated fourth from right)

Joe Gordon (.299 w/ 43 HR, 136 RBI and a .627 slugging percentage), Ralph Hodgin (.294), Joe Marty (.286) and Sam Hairston (.253) were the team's other leading hitters. The Sacramento Solons compiled a mediocre .257 (1437 for 5595) team batting average which was next to last in the "league."

The starting pitching rotation for Gordon's Solons included Glenn Elliott (15-14 w/ 3.10 ERA), Walt Clough (11-11 w/ 3.82 ERA), Ken Gables (11-13 w/ 3.53 ERA), Bob Gillespie (9-11 w/ 4.24 ERA) and Orval Grove (8-9 w/ 4.42 ERA). Former Birmingham Black Barons star pitcher Bill Powell also played briefly for the Solons in 1951. Sacramento's pitching staff compiled a mediocre 4.66 team ERA for the season which was only fifth best in the Pacific Coast League.

As a team the Sacramento Solons suffered through a disappointing season. Their won-loss record of 75-92 (.449) put them in seventh place in the final Pacific Coast League standings. The Solons were twenty-four (24) games behind the "league" leading Seattle Rainiers (99-68).

### **Bob Boyd is Called Up to the Chicago White Sox**

In early September of 1951, Bob Boyd was rewarded for his outstanding play in Sacramento when he was called up to the Chicago White Sox Major League team. Bob made his Major League debut on September 8<sup>th</sup>. Boyd was only the second African American to play for Chicago's Major League club. Sam Hairston had been called up on July 21, 1951 and had the honor of being the first. It is important to note that Minnie Minoso who was Cuban was the first person of color to play for the Chicago White Sox. Minoso made his Major League debut on April 19, 1949.



**Bob Boyd**  
Chicago White Sox

Boyd's biggest problem when he got to Chicago was that the White Sox already had a proven and solid first baseman in Eddie Robinson. During the 1951 season Eddie batted .282 with a .495 slugging percentage. Robinson also had power (29 HR with 117 RBI) which Boyd did not.

Bob only appeared in 12 games in his short stay with the White Sox. In eighteen (18) "official" at bats he collected only three (3) hits for a very disappointing .167 batting average. He did, however, get one triple and drove in four runs.

The leading hitters for the Chicago White Sox in 1951 were Minnie Minoso (.324), Nellie Fox (.313), Bob Dillinger (.301), Jim Busby (.283) and Eddie Robinson (.282). The White Sox compiled a team batting average of .270 (1453 for 5378) which was the best in the American League.

The starting pitchers for the White Sox were Billy Pierce (15-14 w/ 3.03 ERA), Saul Rogovin (11-7 w/ 2.48 ERA), Ken Holcombe (11-12 w/ 3.78 ERA), Joe Dobson (7-6 w/ 3.62 ERA), Lou Kretlow (6-9 w/ 4.20 ERA) and Howie Judson (5-6 w/ 3.77 ERA). Randy Gumpert (9-8) was the team's top relief pitcher.

Chicago had a very effective pitching staff. They posted a 3.50 team ERA for the season which was second best in the "league."

Unfortunately even with both outstanding hitting and pitching, that didn't translate into a pennant winning team. The problem was that Chicago had trouble scoring runs. They averaged 4.61 runs per game which was only fourth best in the American League. The Chicago White Sox finished the 1951 American League season with a record of 81-73 (.526) and were in fourth place in the final "league" standings. They were seventeen (17) games behind the pennant winning New York Yankees (98-56).

### Boyd Travels to Puerto Rico

After the conclusion of the regular season, Bob Boyd was signed by the Ponce Leones to play baseball for their team in the Puerto Rican Winter League. During the winter season of 1951-52 five teams (Caguas, Mayaguez, Ponce, Santurce and San Juan) played in the "league."

Bob had a tremendous season in his first season on the island. He won the Puerto Rican Winter League batting title with a .374 batting average. His complete hitting statistics for the season were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1951-52	Ponce	72	305	55	114	18	5	2	43	13	.374	.485

Former Negro Leaguer Al Smith (.294), Pedro Rodriguez (.288) and Les Peden (.281) were the other top hitters for the Leones. Ponce's pitching staff included Jose Santiago (10-9 w/ 3.32 ERA), Luis Arroyo (10-10 w/ 3.09 ERA), Jack Harshman (5-7 w/ 3.02 ERA) and Jim Davis (4-4 w/ 4.10 ERA).

On December 10, 1951 the annual Puerto Rican all star game was played at Parque Sixto Escobar. The game was played between a team of imported players (Importados) against a team of Puerto Rican players (Nativos). Bob Boyd was selected to play first base for the Importados. Some of the other players on the Importados squad were Stan Beard, Willard "Homerun" Brown, Buster Clarkson, George Crowe, Johnny Davis, Jack Dittimer, Junior Gilliam, Sam Jones, Billy Klaus, Bob Thurman and Artie Wilson. Starring for the Nativos were Jamie Almendro, Luis Arroyo, Carlos Bernier, Jose Burgos, Nino Escalera, Rueben Gomez, Luis Olmo, Vic Power, Jim Rivera and Valmy Thomas.

The Importados won the game by a score of 2-0.

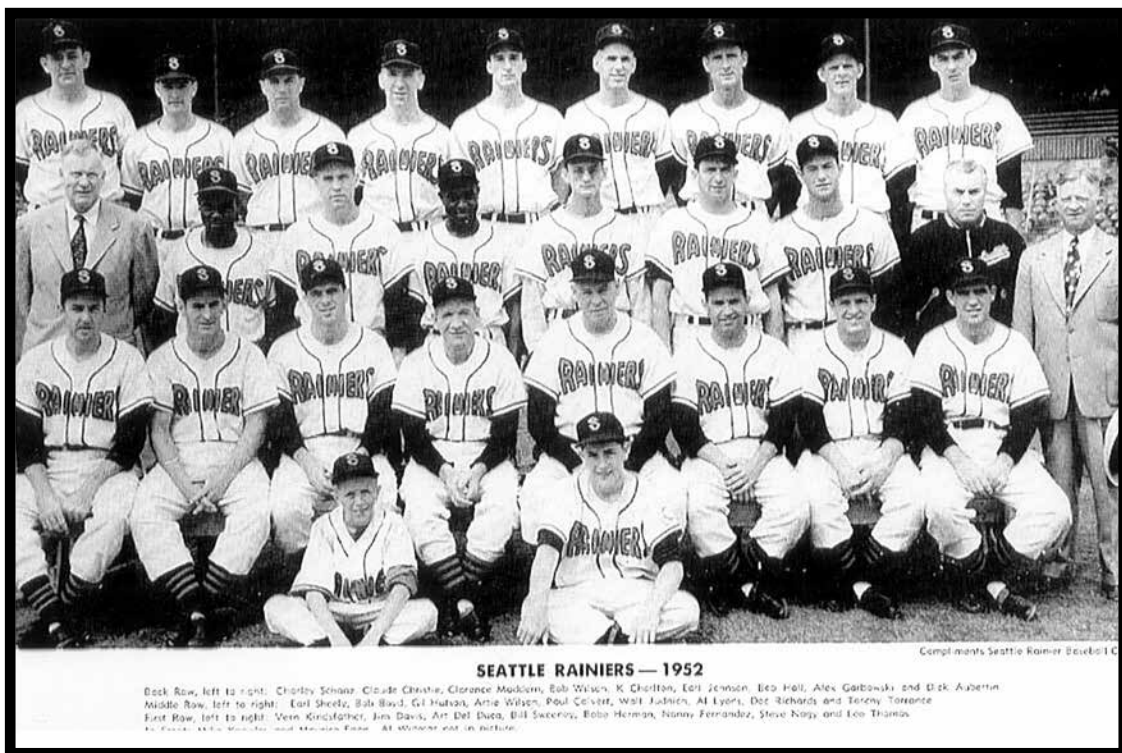
The Ponce Leones ended the season in fourth place in the "league" with a record of 34-36 (.486). The San Juan Senadores won the regular season Puerto Rican title with a record of 43-29 (.597).

### Bob Plays in Seattle

Before the 1952 season started, the Chicago White Sox loaned out Bob Boyd to the Seattle Rainiers of the Pacific Coast League. Seattle was an independent team and not affiliated with a Major League organization. Bill Sweeney managed the team and the team called Sick Stadium their home field.

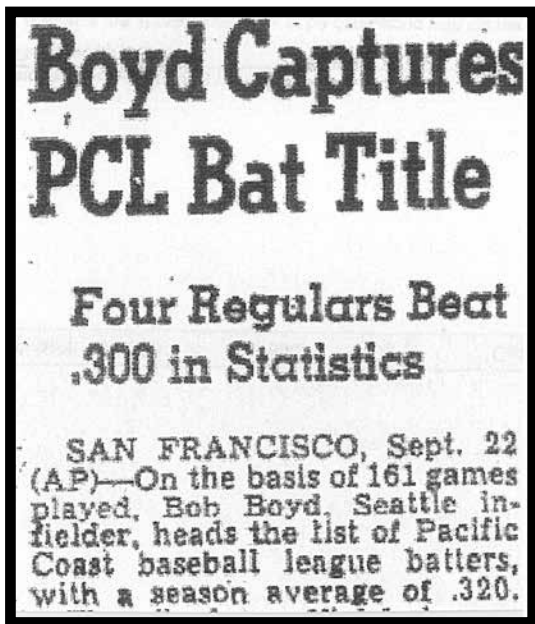
Immediately upon joining the Rainiers, Bob became the starting first baseman for the team. Bob had a very good season in 1952 with a .320 batting average which enabled him to win the Pacific Coast League batting title. Teammate and former Negro League star Artie Wilson came in second with a .316 batting average. Bob Boyd's complete hitting statistics for his 1952 season with the Seattle Rainiers were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1952	Seattle	161	641	100	205	29	18	3	75	33	.320	.435



Seattle Rainiers (1952)

(Bob Boyd - seated middle row second from left and Artie Wilson seated middle row fourth from left)



Oregonian  
Portland, OR  
09-23-52

Artie Wilson (.316), Red Wilson (.297), Rocky Krsnich (.295), Clarence Maddem (.294), Wally Judnich (.287 w/ 15 HR and 105 RBI) and Leo Thomas (.280) were the other top hitters on the team. In addition to Bob Boyd winning the Pacific Coast League batting title, team mate Artie Wilson finished the season in second place just four points behind Boyd. The Seattle Rainiers compiled a .269 (1656 for 6145) team batting average which was second best in the "league."

Vern Kindsfather (21-11 w/ 2.40 ERA) and Al Widmar (20-12 w/ 2.30 ERA) anchored Seattle's pitching staff. Steve Nagy (16-16), Bob Hall (13-8), Art DelDuca (9-11), Jim Davis (7-10) and Charley Schanz (5-7) rounded out the team's starting rotation.

Seattle had a good season. They posted a won-loss record of 96-84 (.533) and were in third place in the final "league" standings. The Rainiers were thirteen (13) games behind the Hollywood Stars (109-71) who won the title. The Seattle Rainiers averaged 3,193 fans per game during the season.

### **Bob Boyd Returns to Ponce**

After his extremely successful season in Puerto Rico the year before, Ponce management were eager to sign Bob Boyd for the 1952-53 Puerto Rican Winter League. The same five teams (Caguas, Mayaguez, Ponce, Santurce and San Juan) that played in the previous season all fielded teams for the 1952-53 season.

Pedro Rodriguez (.314), Gilberto Valentino (.301), Don Boring (.300), Bob Boyd (.280) and Al Smith (.275) were the top hitters for the Ponce Leones during the season. Hank Behrman (9-8), Jose Santiago (7-5), Rogelio Perez (5-2), Bob Ludwich (4-6), Luis Arroyo (4-8) and Israel Ten (4-2) comprised the pitching staff for Ponce.

On December 23, 1952 the Puerto Rican All Star game was played at Parque Sixto Escobar. Bob Boyd was selected to play first base for the Importados. Other all stars on the Importados squad were Frank Barnes, Gene Baker, Stan Beard, Willard Brown, Bill Bruton, Cot Deal and George Fresse. The Nativos squad included Jamie Almendro, Luis Arroyo, Carlos Bernier, Jose Burgos, Nino Escalera, Rueben Gomez, Felix Mantilla and Pita Marti. The Importados won the game by a score of 3-1.

The Ponce Leones ended the season in third place during the regular season with a won-loss record of 36-36 (.500). The San Juan Senadores led the best regular season with 45-27 (.625) won-loss record. In the post season play-offs the Leones lost three straight games to Santurce to be eliminated from the series.

### **Boyd Returns to the Chicago White Sox**

In 1953 Bob Boyd returned to the Major Leagues with the Chicago White Sox. Like in 1951 when he first joined the White Sox, the team already had a first baseman who was an exceptional player. On January 27, 1953 Frank Lane who was the general manager of Chicago traded Joe DeMaestri, Ed McGhee and Eddie Robinson (1B) to the Philadelphia Athletics for Ferris Fain (1B) and Bob Wilson. Ferris Fain had just won back to back American League batting titles (1951 and 1952) and was considered an excellent fielding first baseman. Like Eddie Robinson

had been in 1951, Ferris Fain would be a major obstacle for Boyd to overcome if he was going to stay in the Major Leagues with the Chicago White Sox. Team manager Paul Richards' solution to the problem was to have Bob Boyd play backup at first base, in the outfield and pinch hit.

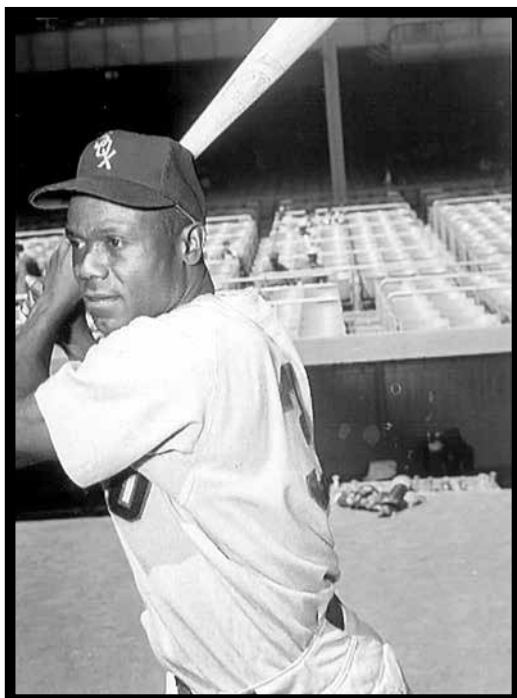
The need for Boyd did arise during the season when Ferris Fain broke a bone in his left hand and Bob Boyd was recalled from the Minor leagues. Bob responded extremely well.



**Register Mail**  
Galesburg, IL  
08-25-53

During the 1953 season Boyd appeared in fifty-five (55) games for the White Sox (29 games at first base, 16 games in the outfield and 10 games as a pinch hitter). His games at first base were when he was filling in for an injured Ferris Fain. Bob's complete batting statistics for his stay in the Major Leagues with the 1953 Chicago White Sox were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1953	Chicago	55	165	20	49	6	2	3	23	1	.297	.412



**Bob Boyd**  
Chicago White Sox

Bob Boyd went 4 for 8 as a pinch hitter. In his two other games as a pinch hitter he drew a walk both times. During a double header against the Detroit Tigers in late August, Bob went 5 for 9 to lead the Chicago White Sox to wins in both games. Newspaper coverage speculated that Bob Boyd had played more than well enough to take Ferris Fain's position when he was on the injured reserved list. While filling in for Fain, Bob batted .322 with two homeruns. Even though he had limited playing time, Bob Boyd performed extremely well.

Boyd's 1953 season with Chicago was cut short when he broke his elbow sliding into second base.

The leading hitters for the White Sox in 1953 were Minnie Minoso (.313), Bob Boyd (.297), Sherm Lollar (.287) and Nellie Fox (.285). Billy Pierce (18-12 w/ 2.72 ERA), Virgil Trucks (15-6 w/ 2.86 ERA), Fritz Dorish (10-6), Mike Fornieles (8-7), Sandy Consuegra (7-5 w/ 2.54 ERA) and Saul Rogovin (7-12) anchored the pitching staff for Chicago. The pitching staff compiled a solid 3.41 team ERA for the season.

## Leafs Give Three For Bob Boyd

Charleston, W. Va., July 3. — The Charleston Senators of the American Association traded their leading hitter to Toronto today for an outfielder and two infielders in a move to strengthen Charleston's defense.

President Danny Menendez of the Senators said Bob Boyd was traded to Toronto of the International League for outfielder Frank Campos, third baseman Luis Garcia and shortstop Bill Jennings.

Actually, the deal was a swap of options with no ownership changes involved. The Chicago White Sox own Boyd, who was last year's Pacific Coast League batting champion, and Campos is Washington Senators property. He played 53 games with Washington last season.

The Chicago White Sox finished the regular season with a won-loss record of 89-65 (.578). They were in third place in the final standings and were eleven and a half games behind the New York Yankees (99-52) who were the American League champions.

Unfortunately for Bob, Chicago optioned him to the Minor Leagues for most of the 1953 season. First to the Charleston Senators of the American Association and then Boyd was traded to the Toronto Maple Leafs of the International League.

The Charleston Senators were the Chicago White Sox Triple A farm team. They struggled the entire season and ended the year with a record of 60-94 (.390) and were in eighth place in the final American Association standings.

When he was with the Senators, Bob Boyd was by far their best hitter with a .323 batting average and a .455 slugging percentage. Donald Griffin (.290) and Angel Scull (.286) also produced offensively for Charleston during the season. Former Negro Leaguer Bill Powell (14-9) was the ace of the team's pitching staff.

### Springfield Union

Springfield, MA  
07-04-53

During the first week of July of 1953 the Charleston Senators traded Bob Boyd to the Toronto Maple Leafs. In an attempt to strengthen their over all roster Charleston sent Boyd to Toronto for Frank Campos (OF), Luis Garcia (Infielder) and Bill Jennings (SS). The Toronto Maple Leafs were an independent team who had an informal working relationship with the Chicago White Sox.

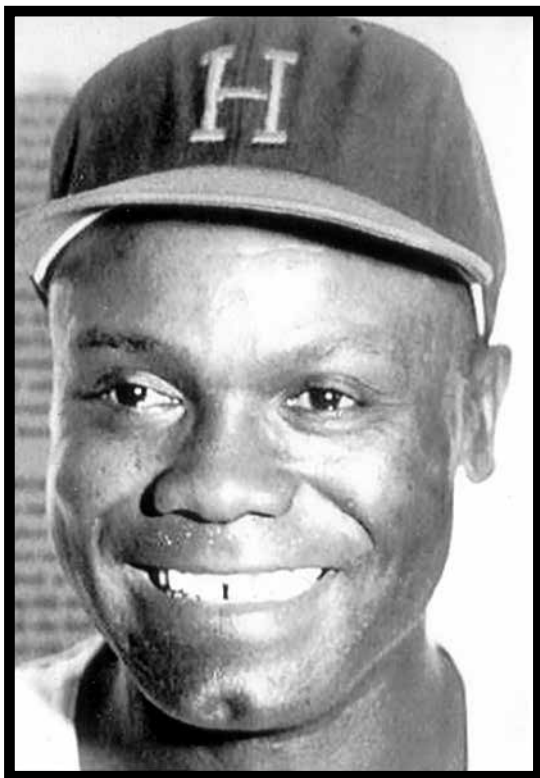
Bob Boyd played in thirty-one (31) games for the Maple Leafs in 1953 and hit .308 with a .483 slugging percentage. He was the team's leading hitter when he played in Toronto. The only other regular player to hit over .300 for the season with Toronto was Lew Morton (.307). Don Johnson (15-12 w/ 2.67 ERA) was the ace of the pitching staff.

The Toronto Maple Leafs finished the regular season with a record of 78-76 (.506). They were in fifth place in the final International League standings.

Bob Boyd's complete hitting statistics for the 1953 season with Charleston and Toronto were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1953	Charleston	49	198	33	64	8	6	2	22	12	.323	.455
1953	Toronto	31	120	16	37	4	4	3	12	1	.308	.483

Reportedly, Bob Boyd was going back to Puerto Rico to play for Ponce, but he never showed up. Instead he chose to stay in the United States and play for the Roy Campanella All Stars for their post season barnstorming tour. Boyd played in the outfield during the tour. Some of the other stars on the team were Billy Bruton (OF), Roy Campanella (C), George Crowe (1B), Junior Gilliam (2B), Minnie Minoso (SS), Jim Pendleton (OF/SS) and Harry Simpson (OF). Joe Black, Dave Hoskins, Connie Johnson, Don Newcombe, Pat Scantlebury and James Tugerson all pitched for the all-stars during the tour.



**Bob Boyd**  
Houston Buffaloes

During the Chicago White Sox spring training, Bob Boyd was the team's hottest hitter. Unfortunately when the regular season started, he got off to a very slow start. In the 29 games in which he played for Chicago, Bob only got ten (10) hits in fifty-six (56) "official" at bats for a disappointing .179 batting average.

### **Bob Boyd is Sold to St. Louis**

In late May of 1954 Bob Boyd's contract was purchased by the St. Louis Cardinals of the National League from the Chicago White Sox. Immediately upon joining the Cardinals organization, Bob Boyd was assigned to the Cardinals Double A farm club the Houston Buffaloes of the Texas League. Bob became the first black player to play in Houston. According to Bob no one really made much of a big deal about it.

The team was managed by former Major Leaguer Dixie Walker and they called Busch Stadium (formerly known as Buff Stadium) in south Houston as their home field. The Houston Buffaloes had a very strong fan base and posted an average game attendance of 3,858 for the season. The Buffaloes already had a solid team and Bob Boyd was a welcomed addition to the roster.

When he made his debut on Thursday, May 27, 1954 Bob Boyd broke the color barrier to become the first black player to play for the Houston Buffaloes. In his first at bat for the Buffaloes, he lined a triple off the right field wall to announce his presence in Houston. Bob also stroked a double and drove in two runs in his first game in Houston. The next day the headline in the sports section of the Houston Post read:

"Bob Boyd Sparkles in Debut as Buffs Wallop Sports 11-4"

The game drew 5,006 fans of which 2,297 were Negroes.

Like in so many years past, Bob Boyd had the highest batting average of any player in the starting line-up. His complete hitting statistics for the 1954 Texas League season were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1954	Houston	94	358	59	115	22	2	7	63	3	.321	.453

Bob Boyd also had an excellent season defensively at first base. He only committed three errors the entire season for a .996 fielding percentage.

Future St. Louis Cardinal great, Ken Boyer, also had an excellent season with Houston in 1954. He had 42 doubles, 21 homeruns, 116 runs batted in, .319 batting average and .506 slugging percentage. Other Buffalo hitters who contributed offensively during the season were Don Blasingame (.315), Howie Phillips (.306) and Fred McAllister (.275). The Houston Buffaloes led the Texas League in hitting with a .275 (1516 for 5515) team batting average.

The starting rotation for Houston included Willard Schmidt (18-5), Hugh Sooter (14-13), Hisel Patrick (10-3), Luis Arroyo (8-3) and George Condrick (8-10). Future Major Leaguer Bob Tiefenauer (10-5) was the team's best relief pitcher. Houston's pitching staff posted a 3.89 team ERA which was third best in the "league."



**Houston Buffaloes (1954)**  
Texas League

(Bob Boyd – seated front row fourth from left)

The Houston Buffaloes finished the season with a record of 89-72 (.553) and were in second place in the final Texas League standings. They were just one game behind the Shreveport Sports (90-71) who were the “league” leader for the regular season. In the play-offs, Houston defeated the Oklahoma City Indians four games to one and then defeated the Fort Worth Cats four games to one to claim the Texas League championship.

**Boyd Returns to Cuba**

Over the winter of 1954-55 Bob Boyd traveled to Cuba to play for the Cienfuegos Elephants of the Cuban Winter League. The schedule started on October 14, 1954 and ended on February 7, 1955. Four teams (Almendares, Cienfuegos, Habana and Marianao) played in the “league.”

Bob was the team’s starting first baseman and also played several games in the outfield. The team was managed by Cuban great Regino Otero. The top hitters for the team were Roberto Tapanes (.310), Bob Boyd (.308), Humberto Fernandez (.302), Harry Elliott (.298) and Lorenzo Cabrera (.296). Boyd’s complete hitting statistics for the 1954-55 Cuban Winter League season were:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1954-55	Cienfuegos	70	292	38	90	8	4	5	31	3	.308	.414

One of the highlights of the season for Boyd occurred on October 14<sup>th</sup> when he hit two homeruns in one game. Bob Boyd led the Cuban Winter League in at bats (288) and hits (88).

The pitching staff for Cienfuegos included Al Sima (5-3), Bob Habenricht (5-6), Floyd Lewis Woolridge (4-7 w/ 3.06 ERA), Adrian Zabala (3-3), Armando Suarez (3-4) and Jim Mellon (3-9).

Cienfuegos struggled throughout the entire season. They finished the season in last place with a miserable record of 27-42 (.391). They were seventeen (17) games behind the “league” leading Almendares Alacranes who were 44-25 (.638).

## Bob Returns to Houston

When the 1955 baseball season started, Bob Boyd was back in Houston as the Buffaloes starting first baseman. He turned in another stellar performance during the 1955 season. His complete batting statistics for the season were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1955	Houston	163	635	96	197	39	6	15	94	13	.310	.461

Also playing for Houston in 1955 was forty (40) year old former Kansas City Monarch super star Willard “Homerun” Brown. He also had an excellent season. Willard Brown’s batting statistics for the Buffaloes were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1955	Houston	149	544	73	164	34	4	19	104	3	.301	.483

Other top hitters on the team were Russ Rac (.312), Hal Smith (.299), Herb Adams (.297) and Whitey Ries (.275). Houston hitters led the Texas League with a .266 team batting average.

William Greason (former Birmingham Black Barons star) (17-11), Bob Mabe (16-10), Harry Holtsma (13-3), Hugh Sooter (11-14), Ralph Beard (7-6), Barney Schultz (5-7) and John Romonosky (4-6) all pitched for Houston in 1955. The Buffaloes pitching staff turned in a successful season effort. They compiled the second best team earned run average in the “league” with a 3.93 ERA.

The Houston Buffaloes were also the best fielding team in the Texas League with a team .976 fielding percentage.



**Busch/Buff Stadium**

Home of the  
Houston Buffaloes

The Houston Buffaloes finished the regular 1955 season with a record of 86-75-2 (.534) and were in fourth place in the final Texas League standings. The Buffaloes were seven and a half games behind the “league” leading Dallas Eagles. In the first round of the play-offs, Houston defeated the Dallas Eagles (93-67) four games to two. In the championship round the Houston Buffaloes were defeated by the Shreveport Sports (87-74-1) four games to three.

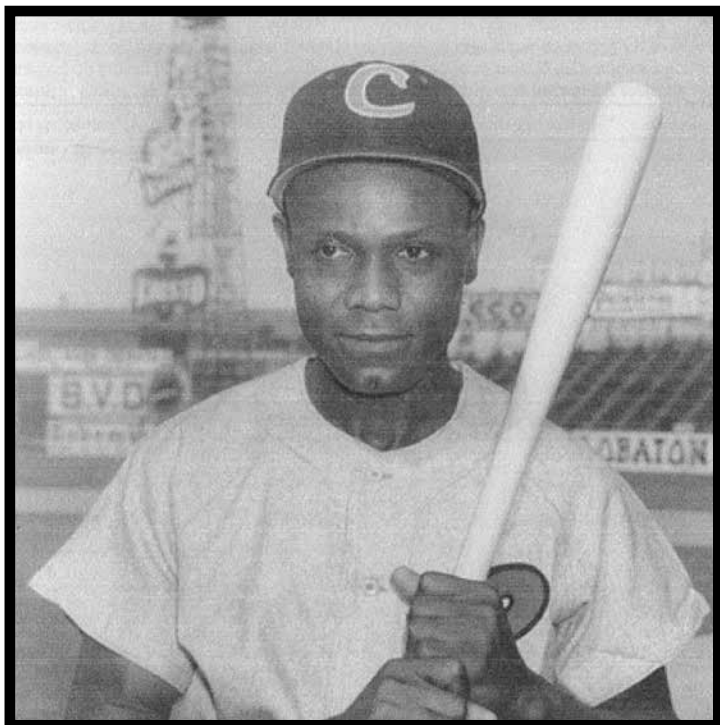
At the end of the season Bob Boyd was named to the Texas League All Star team.

## Cienfuegos Lures Boyd Back to Cuba

After a disastrous season over the winter of 1954-55, Cienfuegos management decided to totally revamp the team and make a legitimate run at the Cuban Winter League title. The first change the team made was to hire a new manager. Oscar Rodriguez replaced Regino Otero at the helm of the team. The same four teams from the previous season all played in the 1955-56 season which started on November 7, 1955 and play concluded on February 7, 1956.

Bob Boyd was the team's leading hitter with a .312 batting average. His complete hitting statistics for the 1955-56 season were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1955-56	Cienfuegos	-	285	43	89	11	2	5	42	5	.312	.418



**Bob Boyd**  
Cienfuegos  
1954-55

The next two best hitters for Cienfuegos were Archie Wilson (.311) and Humberto Fernandez (.301). Former Negro Leaguers Ray Noble (.267), Curt Roberts (.265) and Milton Smith (.249) also played for Cienfuegos. The Elephants were not a strong hitting team but they played great team baseball and delivered in clutch situations.

The strength of the team was their pitching staff. The starting rotation was anchored by Pedro Ramos (13-5 w/ 3.11 ERA) and Camilio Pascual (12-5 w/ 1.91 ERA). Marino Pieretti (5-5 w/ 3.18 ERA), Sandy Consuegra (5-5 w/ 2.83 ERA) and Rene Gutierrez (3-4 w/ 3.17 ERA) also pitched for Cienfuegos during the season.

Led by the "league's" best pitching staff Cienfuegos won the Cuban Winter League title by six games over Marianao (34-35). Cienfuegos was the only team in the "league" to finish over .500 for the season. They recorded a won-loss record of 40-29 (.580).

## Caribbean World Series Title

By winning the 1955-56 Cuban Winter League title, that qualified them to represent Cuba in the VIII Caribbean World Series. The other teams that competed in the tournament were Caguas (Puerto Rico), Chesterfield (Panama) and Valencia (Venezuela).

Bob Boyd led Cienfuegos in hitting with a .304 batting average, one homerun, 10 RBIs and a .521 slugging percentage in the Caribbean World Series. The Elephants compiled a strong .276 team batting average in the tournament.

Boyd's hitting coupled with outstanding pitching by Pedro Ramos (2-0 w/ 10 strikeouts) and Camilio Pascual (2-0 w/ 13 strikeouts), Cuba dominated the tournament with a record of 5-1 (.833). They easily won the Caribbean World Series championship.



**Cienfuegos Elephants (1954-55)**

Cuban Winter League and Caribbean World Series Champions

(**Bob Boyd** – middle row second from left)

**Bob Boyd Flourishes as a Baltimore Oriole**

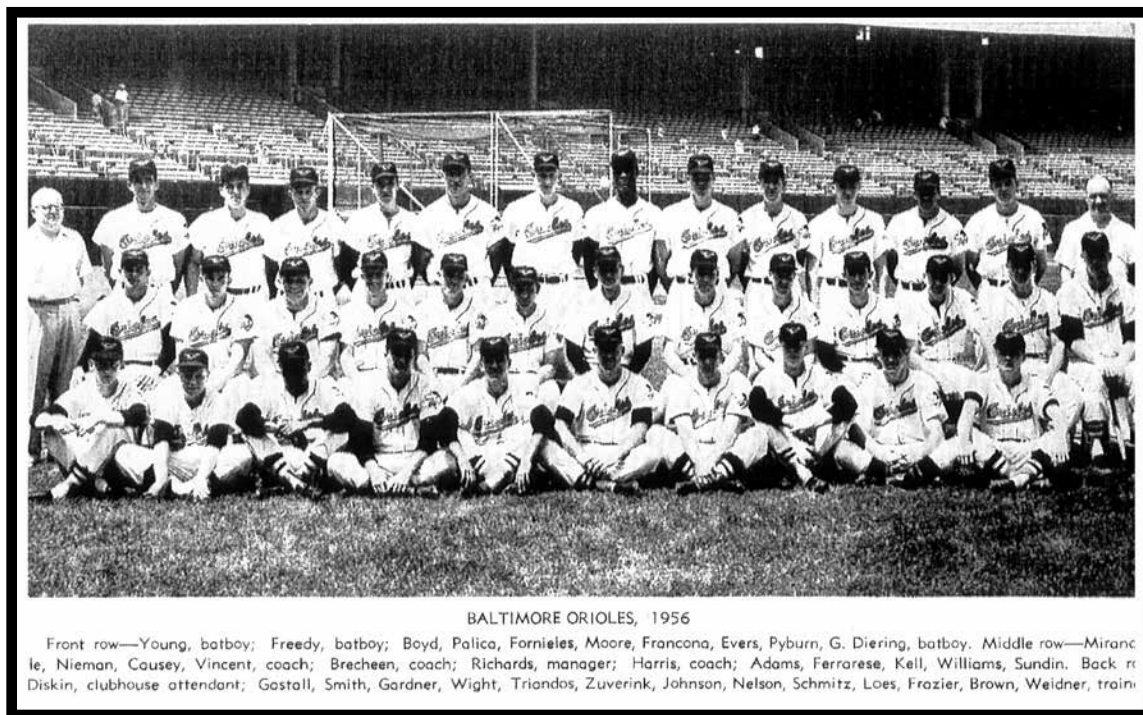
In November of 1953 a group of businessmen from Baltimore (MD) purchased the franchise of the St. Louis Browns and moved the team to Baltimore. After suffering through a losing season under Jimmy Dykes in 1954, Baltimore Orioles’ management hired Paul Richards away from the Chicago White Sox. Richards became the Orioles’ General Manager and Field Manager.

In 1955 Richards, who was Bob Boyd’s old manager with the Chicago White Sox, recognized that Bob’s talents were being wasted in Double A ball with Houston. When the opportunity presented itself Richards acquired Bob Boyd for the Baltimore Orioles with the intent of Bob being their starting first baseman for the 1956 season. This occurred on November 27, 1955 when the Baltimore Orioles of the American League drafted Bob Boyd from the St. Louis Cardinals in the Rule 5 Draft. Bob, who had resigned himself that he would probably never make it back to the Big Leagues, was given a “real” opportunity. Boyd found out he was drafted by Baltimore when he was in Cuba playing winter league ball and his wife read the announcement in the Havana Post.

Bob Boyd went to spring training with the Baltimore Orioles with the goal of just making the team. According to Boyd he saw this as his last shot for a legitimate Major League career. When spring training ended, Boyd had not only made the Orioles Major League roster but he was slated to share the first baseman’s position with Bob Hale. With Boyd making the team, Baltimore now had two black players (outfielder Dave Pope was the second player) on their opening day roster.

Boyd took advantage of this opportunity. He was one of only two Baltimore players to hit over .300 for the season. In 70 games, Boyd collected 70 hits in 225 at bats for a solid .311 batting average. His complete hitting statistics for the 1956 season with Baltimore were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1956	Baltimore	70	225	28	70	8	3	2	11	0	.311	.400



**Baltimore Orioles (1956)**  
American League

(Bob Boyd – front row third from left)

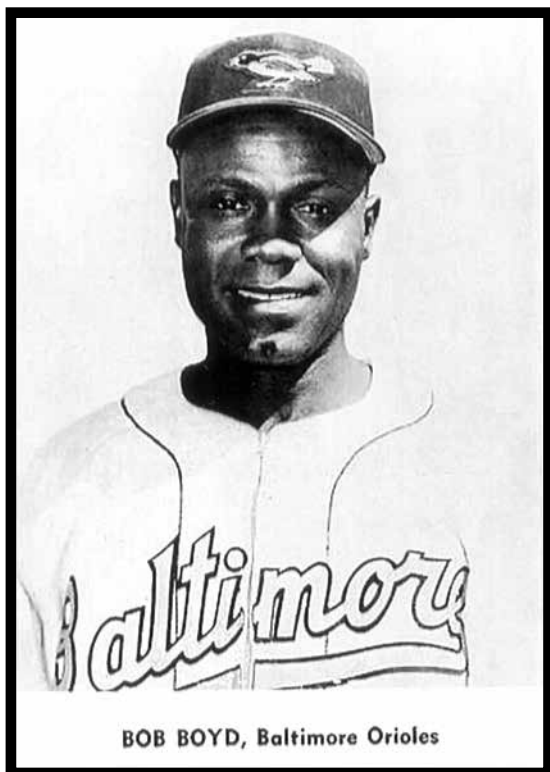
In a tribute to Bob's perseverance he took advantage of the opportunity Paul Richards had given him. Bob hit well all season and by the end of the year he was the Baltimore Orioles' starting first baseman. As a side note Bob Hale only hit .237 with a meager .309 slugging percentage which was no comparison to Bob's numbers.

The Baltimore Orioles were led by the hitting of Bob Neiman (.322), Bob Boyd (.311), Dick Williams (.286), Billy Gardner (.281) and Gus Triandos (.279 w/ 21 HR and 88 RBI).

The starting pitching rotation for Baltimore included Ray Moore (12-7), Hal Brown (9-7), former Negro Leaguer Connie Johnson (9-10 w/ 3.43 ERA), Bill Wight (9-12), Mike Fornieles (4-7), Ery Palica (4-11) and Don Ferrarese (4-10). The pitching staff compiled a disappointing 4.20 team ERA for the season.

On May 20<sup>th</sup> of 1956 tragedy struck Bob during the season. On one of the few occasions that he was playing in the outfield, Bob was attempting to throw out Jim Hegan of the Cleveland Indians. He was off balance when he made the throw and threw the ball so hard that it put so much pressure on his arm and elbow that he suffered a chip fracture in his elbow. He was placed on the disabled list on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. The fractured elbow required two surgeries and a long recovery process. At the time he was injured, Bob was the fourth leading hitter in the American League with a .357 batting average. He rejoined the team on August 11<sup>th</sup> for a four game series against the New York Yankees.

Under Paul Richards' leadership, the Baltimore Orioles improved by winning 12 more games than they had in 1955. The Orioles posted a won-loss record of 69-85 (.448) for the 1956 season. They ended the season in sixth place and were twenty-eight (28) games behind the American League champion New York Yankees (97-57). They had finished thirty-nine (39) games back in 1955.



**Bob Boyd**  
Baltimore Orioles

After the conclusion of the regular American League season, Bob Boyd joined a group of predominately Negro League players for a barnstorming tour. The team was called the “Negro American League All Stars.” They were also billed as the “Negro Minor League All Stars.” Bob Boyd served as the manager of the team and also played first base.

Some of the top players on Boyd’s team were Leroy Hancock (2B), Lonnie Harris (OF), John Kennedy (SS), Jessie Mitchell (OF) and Jim Robinson (utility). The pitching staff for the Negro American League All Stars included Frank Barnes, Ollie Brantley, Marshall Bridges, Jehosie Heard, country music legend Charlie Pride and Kelly Searcy.

### **Bob Boyd’s Last Season in Cuba**

After having led Cienfuegos to a “league” championship and Caribbean World Series title in the 1955-56 season, Bob returned to Cuba with the intentions of playing for Cienfuegos and rehabilitating his arm after his surgery.

The Cuban Winter League season started on November 10, 1956 and ended on February 6, 1957. Following his surgery Bob was not at his peak level of performance when he arrived in Cuba.

He saw limited duty before re-injuring his arm and having to return to the United States for another surgery. His arm had wires holding the bones together and during the course of playing, the wires broke. This ended his winter league season and he was immediately sent home where he had to have another surgery.

Bob was hitting a mere .211 when his season abruptly ended. Lorenzo Cabrera (.310) and Archie Wilson (.285) led the team in hitting. Camilio Psacual (15-5 w/ 2.04 ERA), Pedro Ramos (8-6 w/ 2.88 ERA) and Bud Daley (7-5 w/ 2.81 ERA) carried the majority of the pitching load.

Without Bob in the line-up and no one to pick up the slack, Cienfuegos struggled to a 36-33 (.522) finish and were in second place in the final “league” standings. They were four and a half games behind the Marianao Tigres (40-28) who won the championship.

### **Boyd Returns as a Starter in the Big Leagues**

For the first time in his Major League career, Bob Boyd went into the season as a starter for a Major League club. Bob had an excellent spring training and led the team in hitting with a .344 batting average in spring training. He had won the starting job in the second half of the 1956 season and had no intention of giving it up. Bob did not disappoint Baltimore Orioles management. He led the team in hitting with a .318 batting average and was the only starter to bat over .300 for the season. His complete hitting statistics for the 1957 season were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1957	Baltimore	141	485	73	154	16	8	4	34	2	.318	.408

## Bob Boyd Has a Career Day at the Plate

On June 29, 1958 Bob Boyd had the best hitting performance of his professional career. While playing for the Baltimore Orioles in a double header against the Cleveland Indians, Bob collected seven (7) straight hits. He went 5 for 5 in game one and 2 for 4 in game two. Included in his seven (7) hits were two (2) doubles. He also scored five (5) runs in the double header.

# Boyd's 7 Hits Spur Barrage

Bell and Constable Are  
Routed; 10 Hurlers  
Give 23 Blows

**Plain Dealer**  
Cleveland, OH  
06-30-58

**Bob Boyd Collects Seven  
Straight Hits**

**Boyd Goes 7 for 9  
in Double Header**

## Baltimore Gets Even

FIRST GAME						SECOND GAME					
ALTYMCRE	AB	R	H	BI	E	BALTIMORE	AB	R	H	BI	E
Boyd, 1b	5	4	5	2	0	Gardner, 2b	4	1	1	0	0
Pilarcik, rf	4	1	1	2	0	Boyd, 1b	4	1	2	1	0
Woodling, lf	2	3	1	2	0	Williams, lf	4	0	2	0	0
Zaverink, p	1	0	0	0	0	Triandos, c	3	0	1	1	0
Williams, 3b-1f	3	0	2	2	0	Robinson, 3b	4	0	1	0	0
Ginsberg, c	0	0	0	1	0	Busby, cf	4	2	1	0	0
Triandos, c	3	0	1	1	0	Pilarcik, rf	3	0	1	1	0
Green, cf	2	0	0	0	0	Castlemar, ss	3	1	1	0	0
Castlemar, ss	5	0	0	0	0	Portocarrero, p	4	0	0	2	0
Gardner, 2b	4	2	2	0	0	<b>Totals</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>
Pappas, p	3	0	0	0	0	<b>LEVELAND</b>	<b>AB</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>BI</b>	<b>E</b>
Marshall	1	1	1	0	0	Avila, 2b	3	1	0	0	0
Robinson, 3b	1	0	0	0	0	Vernon, 1b	4	0	1	0	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	Power, 3b	4	0	2	2	0
<b>LEVELAND</b>	<b>AB</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>BI</b>	<b>E</b>	Colavito, rf	4	0	0	0	0
Avila, 2b	3	0	1	0	0	Mingo, lf	3	0	0	0	0
Vernon, 1b	4	2	3	2	0	Porter, c	3	0	0	0	0
Power, 3b	4	0	0	0	0	Field, cf	3	0	0	0	0
Colavito, rf	4	1	2	1	0	Hunter, ss	1	0	0	0	0
Mingo, lf	4	1	2	2	0	a-Nixon	1	0	0	0	0
Porter, c	4	0	1	0	0	Ferrarese, p	0	0	0	0	0
Field, cf	4	0	0	0	0	d-Geiger	1	0	0	0	0
Hunter, ss	2	0	0	0	0	Moss, p	0	0	0	0	0
a-Nixon	1	0	1	0	0	Constable, p	0	0	0	0	0
Field, cf	0	0	0	0	0	Wilhelm, p	1	0	0	0	0
Hunter, ss	1	0	0	0	0	b-Lemon	1	0	1	0	0
a-Nixon	0	0	0	0	0	c-Moran	0	1	0	0	0
Ferrarese, p	1	0	0	0	0	d-Doby	1	0	1	0	0
d-Geiger	1	0	0	0	0	Harrell, ss	0	0	0	0	0
Moss, p	0	0	0	0	0	<b>Totals</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>
Constable, p	0	0	0	0	0	a—Popped up for Hunter in 4th					
Wilhelm, p	1	0	0	0	0	b—Singled for Wilhelm in 5th					
b-Lemon	1	0	1	0	0	c—Ran for Lemon in 4th					
c-Moran	0	1	0	0	0	d—Grounded out for Ferrarese in 3th					
d-Doby	1	0	1	0	0	e—Singled for Moran in 8th					
Harrell, ss	0	0	0	0	0						

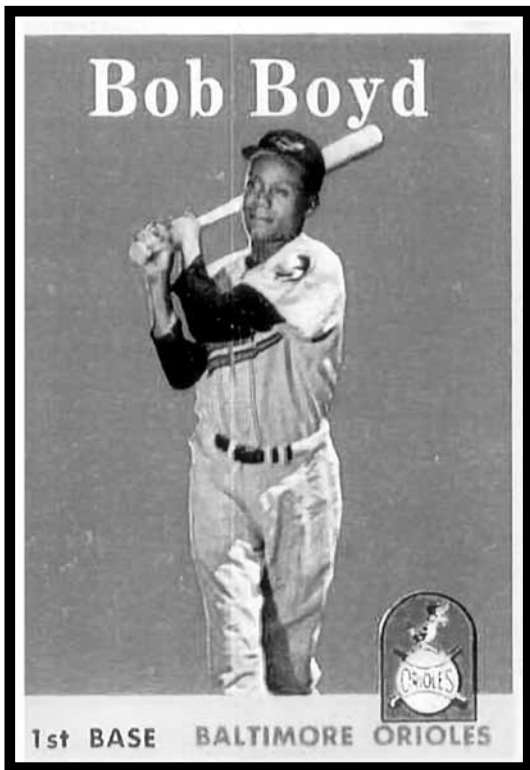
--Fled out for Ginsberg in 3rd  
 --Struck out for Ferrarese in 2th  
 --Singled for Pappas in 7th  
 --Singled for Hunter in 7th  
 --Hit into force play for Wilhelm in 7th  
 --Popped up for Moran in 5th  
 --Fled out for Narkleski in 5th  
 Baltimore ..... 214 003 300-11  
 LEVELAND .. 002 003 100-8  
 PO-A—Baltimore 27-5; Cleveland 7-2. DP—Castlemar, Gardner to Boyd. LOB—Baltimore 11; Cleveland 5. PB—Pilarcik, Gardner, Boyd 2, Power. HR—Woodling, Power, Porter. S—Pilarcik. SF—Green, Pilarcik, Triandos.

PITCHERS' RECORDS					
IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
Pappas (W, 3-2)	6	8	5	5	0
Zaverink	3	4	1	1	0
ell (L, 2-2)	2	3	3	3	4
Ferrarese	3	2	3	0	1
Lemon	1	4	3	3	2
Grant	1	2	3	3	2
Wilhelm	1	1	0	0	0
Narkleski	2	1	0	0	0

WP—Lemon, Zaverink 1. Ste-  
 cenz, Napp, Rice, Rommel, T—  
 Rice, Rommel, Strick. T—200  
 7-00.

PITCHERS' RECORDS					
IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
Portocarrero (W, 5-3)	3	5	2	2	2
Constable (L, 0-1)	2	7	4	4	1
Wilhelm	1	2	1	1	0
Ferrarese	2	1	0	0	1
Moss	0	0	0	0	1

Baik—Portocarrero. V—Napp,  
 1-4-7-1104.



**Bob Boyd**  
Baltimore Orioles

In 1957 Bob Boyd finished fourth among the American League batting leaders (Ted Williams - .388, Mickey Mantle - .365, Gene Woodling - .321 and Bob Boyd - .318) for the season.

Other top hitters in Baltimore's starting line-up during the season were George Kell (.297), Al Pilarcik (.278), Bob Neiman (.276) and Gus Triandos (.254 w/ 19 HR and 72 RBI). Billy Goodman (.308) was the team's top utility player off the bench. As a team the Orioles compiled a .252 team batting average which was tied for sixth in the American League with the Cleveland Indians.

Paul Richards who was the manager of the team had a solid pitching staff in 1957. They were led by former Kansas City Monarchs star Connie Johnson (14-11 w/ 3.20 ERA), Billy Loes (12-7 w/ 3.24 ERA), Ray Moore (11-13 w/ 3.72 ERA), Hal Brown (7-8 w/ 3.90 ERA) and Bill Wight (6-6 w/ 3.64 ERA). George Zuberink (10-6 w/ 2.48 ERA) was their best relief pitcher. Baltimore posted a 3.46 team earned run average which was third best in the entire American League. Only the New York Yankees (3.00 ERA) and the Chicago White Sox (3.35 ERA) did a better job.

Defensively, Bob led the American League in put outs by a first baseman with 1,073 and had the third best fielding percentage behind Earl Torgeson of the Chicago White Sox (.999) and Bill Skowron of the New York Yankees (.992). Torgeson was the tallest first baseman in the "league" and Boyd was the shortest.

The 1957 season would see a record five (5) black players on the Baltimore Orioles roster. They were Charlie Beamon (P), Bob Boyd (1B), Joe Durham (OF), Lenny Green (OF) and Connie Johnson (P).

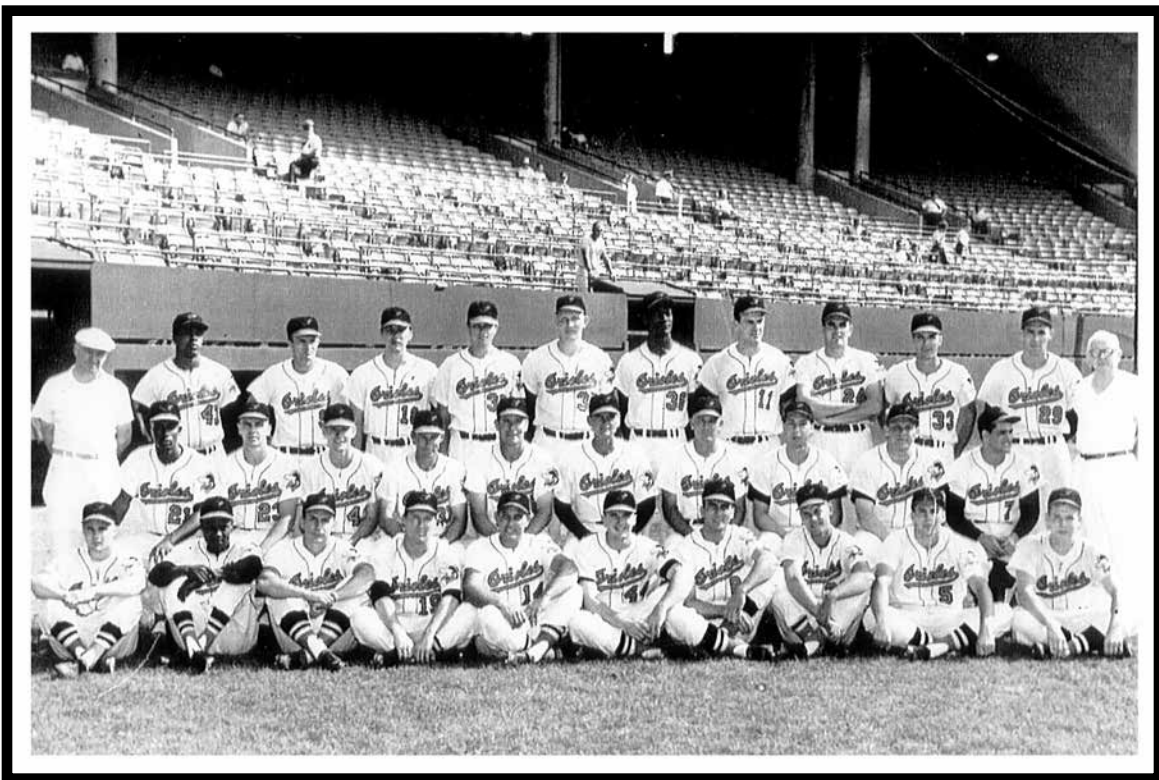
The Baltimore Orioles significantly improved their performance from the year before when they were sixteen (16) games under five hundred. They ended the regular 1957 American League season with a record of 76-76 (.500). Baltimore was in fifth place in the final "league" standings which put them twenty-one (21) games behind the American League champion New York Yankees (98-56).

Bob Boyd returned to the Baltimore Orioles for the 1958 season as their starting first baseman and one of their two best hitters. For the third season in a row since joining Baltimore, Bob Boyd hit over .300 for the season. During his 1958 American League season, Bob's complete hitting statistics were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1958	Baltimore	125	401	58	124	21	5	7	36	1	.309	.439

Bob Boyd had the best day of his hitting career in a double header against the Cleveland Indians on June 29<sup>th</sup>. Boyd connected for seven (7) straight hits against the Indians pitching staff. He went 5 for 5 with two doubles in the first game and 2 for 4 in the second game.

Bob Neiman (.325), Bob Boyd (.309), Gene Woodling (.276), Dick Williams (.276) and Gus Triandos (.245 w/ 30 HR and 79 RBI) were Baltimore's leading hitters during the season.



**Baltimore Orioles (1958)**

**(Bob Boyd – front row second from left)**

Unfortunately, the majority of Orioles' hitters struggled the better part of the season. The Orioles ended the year with a very disappointing .241 team batting average which was next to last in the "league" just ahead of the lowly Washington Senators (.240).

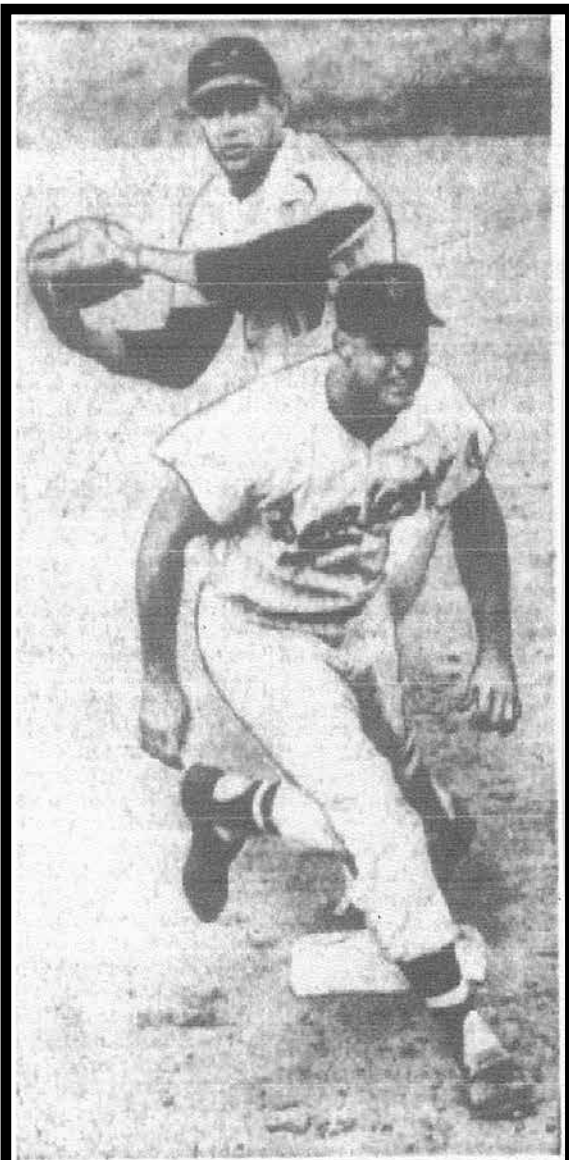
The starting pitching rotation for Baltimore saw several new faces emerge in 1958. Arnie Portocarrero (15-11 w/ 3.25 ERA), Billy O'Dell (14-11 w/ 2.97 ERA), Jack Harshman (12-15 w/ 2.89 ERA), Milt Pappas (10-10 w/ 4.06 ERA), Hal Brown (7-5 w/ 3.07 ERA) and Connie Johnson (6-9 w/ 3.88 ERA) comprised Baltimore's starting rotation. Manager Paul Richard's pitching staff posted a very impressive 3.40 team ERA for the season which was second best just behind the American League champion New York Yankees (3.22 ERA).

The Baltimore Orioles dropped from a fifth place finish in 1957 to a sixth place finish in 1958. The Orioles compiled a won-loss record of 74-79 (.484) which was a whopping thirty-five (35) games behind the American League champion New York Yankees (92-62).

Bob turned thirty-nine (39) years old during the 1959 season and appeared to be on the downhill side of his career. His batting average for the season dropped forty-four (44) points from .309 in 1958 to .265 for the 1959 season. Even with his drop in offensive production, he still retained his starting job at first base.

Most of his other teammates struggled more than Boyd at the plate during the 1959 season. As a team the Baltimore Orioles posted a dismal .238 (1240 for 5208) team batting average for their 1959 American League season. They were only one point better than the Washington Senators who were the worst hitting team in the "league" with a .237 team batting average.

Gene Woodling (.300), Bob Neiman (.292), Billy Gardner (.284), Brooks Robinson (.284) and Al Pilarcik (.282) led the team in hitting during the season.



—Associated Press Wirephoto.

### **STRATEGIC RETREAT**

Washington Outfielder Bob Allison frantically retreats toward first base as Baltimore pulls off the first opening-day triple play in baseball history Thursday. It all started when Ed FitzGerald slammed a line drive in the fifth inning. Oriole First Baseman Bob Boyd grabbed the liner and Senator Baserunners Roy Sievers and Allison were sitting ducks. But Washington won, 9-2.

#### **Orioles Pull-Off Triple Play**

**Dallas Morning News**

Dallas, TX

04-10-59

Fortunately for manager Paul Richards his pitching staff fared significantly better than his hitters. Milt Pappas (15-9 w/ 3.27 ERA), Hoyt Wilhelm (15-11 w/ 2.19 ERA), Hal Brown (11-9 w/ 3.79 ERA), Jerry Walker (11-10 w/ 2.92 ERA) and Billy O'Dell (10-12 w/ 2.93 ERA) were the team's top pitchers. The Baltimore Orioles team earned run average of 4.01 was second best in the "league" right behind the Chicago White Sox who posted a 3.77 team ERA.

The highlight of the 1959 season for Bob Boyd and the Baltimore Orioles was turning the first opening day triple play in baseball history. Bob grabbed a line drive off the bat of Ed Fitzgerald for the first out. He then threw to Chico Carrasquel to catch Roy Sievers off of second base for the second out. Then Chico threw back to Boyd to get Bob Allison for out number three.

The Baltimore Orioles finished the 1959 season in sixth place with a record of 74-80 (.480). They were twenty (20) games behind the Chicago White Sox (94-60) who won the American League title.

After the regular season Bob Boyd joined the Hank Aaron All Stars for their 1959 post season barnstorming tour. The team was led by Hank Aaron who had started his career in the Negro Leagues with the Indianapolis Clowns and was now a super star with the Milwaukee Braves. Some of the other stars on the team were Earl Battey (C), George Crowe (1B), Willie Mc Covey (1B), John Roseboro (C), Al Smith (3B) and Bill White (1B). Bob Boyd played in the outfield for the All Stars. The pitching staff for Aaron's team included Frank Barnes, Marshall Bridges, Bennie Daniels, Bob Gibson, Connie Johnson and Don Newcombe.

#### **Bob Boyd Loses His Starting Position**

After several years of mediocre play, Baltimore Orioles management decided that major changes needed to take place. Going into the 1960 season gone from the starting lineup were Bob Boyd (1B), Billy Gardner (2B), Chico Carrasquel (SS) and Bob Neiman (OF). They were replaced by Jim Gentile (1B), Marv Breeding (2B), Ron Hansen (SS) and Jackie Brandt (OF). In addition Chuck Estrada, Jack Fisher and Steve Barber were added to the starting pitching rotation.

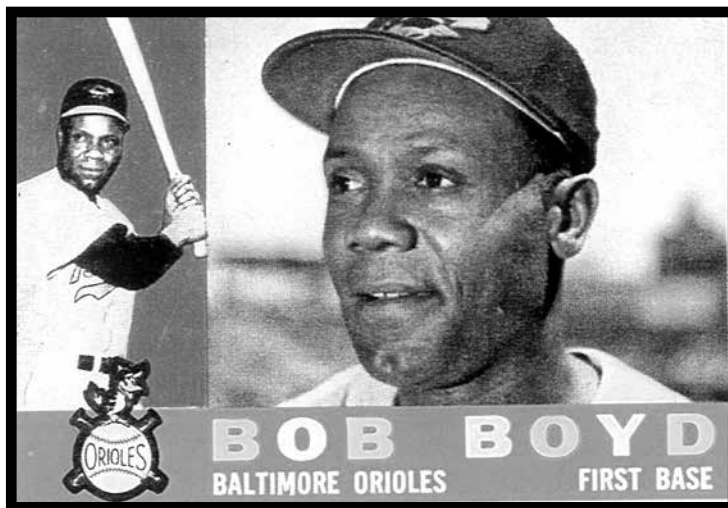
At forty (40) years of age Bob Boyd knew he was nearing the end of his Major League career. Before the start of the season Baltimore acquired first baseman Jim Gentile from the Los Angeles Dodgers of the National League. Gentile was a big power hitting first baseman with a lot of promise. When spring training had concluded, Gentile was named Baltimore's starting first baseman and Bob Boyd was on the bench.



**Baltimore Orioles (1960)**

(Bob Boyd - third row down and third from left)

Bob accepted the loss of his position with dignity and an attitude that he would do whatever he could to help the team. Boyd appeared in 71 games for the Orioles during the season. He played first base and in the outfield in 17 games and pinch hit in the majority of the remaining games. In the field he did not make one error during the season. At the plate he went 26 for 82 for a very impressive .317 batting average.



**Bob Boyd**  
Baltimore Orioles

During the season the Orioles were led by the hitting of Brooks Robinson (.294), Jim Gentile (.292 batting average w/ 21 HR, 98 RBI and .500 slugging percentage), Gene Woodling (.283) and Gus Triandos (.269). The Orioles' hitters compiled a .253 team batting average in 1960.

Chuck Estrada (18-11), Milt Pappas (15-11), Hal Brown (12-5), Jack Fisher (12-11), Steve Barber (10-7) and Jerry Walker (3-4) were the primary starters for manager Paul Richards. Hoyt

Wilhelm (11-8 w/ 3.31 ERA) was the team's best relief pitcher. The pitching staff for the Orioles compiled a 3.52 team ERA for the season which was tied with the New York Yankees for being the most effective pitching staff in the American League.

All the changes to the starting line-up paid dividends to the Baltimore Orioles. Timely hitting and one of the two best pitching staffs in the "league" resulted in the Baltimore Orioles having a very successful season. They vaulted from a sixth place finish with a 74-80 record in 1959 to a record of 89-65 (.578) in 1960. The Orioles won fifteen (15) more games in 1960 than they had the season before. Baltimore ended the 1960 season in second place in the final American League standings. They were eight (8) games behind the New York Yankees (97-57) who won the "league" title.

### **Boyd Joins the Willie Mays All Stars**

Bob Boyd's solid hitting during his 1960 American League season with the Baltimore Orioles got him a contract to play for the Willie Mays All Stars during their legendary 1960 post season barnstorming tour. The twenty-eight (28) game barnstorming tour started on October 14<sup>th</sup> in Durham (NC) and ended on November 7<sup>th</sup> in Texas.

Team management signed and promoted having all the top black ball players in the Major League baseball on their team. Some of the top players on their roster were Hank Aaron (OF), Earl Battey (C), Wes Covington (OF), Pumpsie Green (3B), Willie Mays (OF), Charlie Neal (2B), Vada Pinson (OF), Bill White (1B) and Maury Wills (SS). Their pitching staff included Jim "Mudcat" Grant, Don Newcombe and Earl Wilson.

The tour was plagued with problems. One of the problems that the team ran into was that several headline players like Hank Aaron failed to show. Boyd joined the team after the Willie Mays All Stars played in Jersey City and Syracuse. The second problem the team encountered was poor attendance. For the tour they averaged less than 1,000 fans per game and in their last game which was played in Texas had only 453 fans in the stands.

### **Baltimore Trades Bob Boyd**

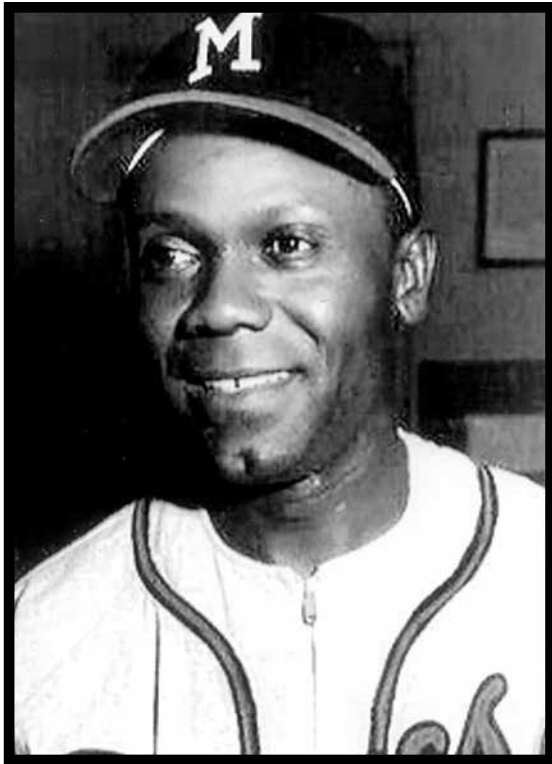
At forty-one (41) years of age and with Jim Gentile settled in at first base for the Orioles, Bob Boyd was expendable. On January 24, 1961 the Baltimore Orioles traded Bob Boyd, Jim Archer, Wayne Causey, Clint Courtney and Al Pilarcik to the Kansas City Athletics for Whitey Herzog and Russ Snyder.

When Bob got to Kansas City they already had a regular first baseman in Norm Siebern. Bob appeared in just twenty-six (26) games for the Athletics during the 1961 season. He only got to play first base in eight (8) of them. He played flawless defense when given the opportunity and did not make an error. The rest of his time was riding the bench and pinch hitting. In his brief stay with Kansas City, Bob went 11 for 48 for a meager .229 batting average. He did, however, make his hits count. Boyd drove in nine (9) runs with his eleven (11) hits.

On June 10, 1961 Bob Boyd's contract was sold by the Kansas City Athletics to the Milwaukee Braves of the National League. Milwaukee needed more depth on the bench and Braves management thought Bob might help.



**Bob Boyd**  
Kansas City Athletics



**Bob Boyd**  
Milwaukee Braves

Getting very much playing time at first base was out of the question. The Braves had power hitting Joe Adcock (35 HR, 108 RBI and .285 BA w/ .507 slugging percentage) at first base. Bob Boyd appeared in 36 games with only three games at first base for Milwaukee. His role was very clear; he was a pinch hitter and added insurance should he needed to fill in at first base or in the outfield. Bob went 10 for 41 for a .244 batting average for Milwaukee

The 1961 season would be Bob Boyd's last in the Major Leagues.

### Back in the Minors

During spring training with Milwaukee in preparation for the 1962 season, Bob was sent down to the Braves Triple A team at Louisville. During the 1962 season Bob Boyd played for both the Louisville Colonels and the Oklahoma City 89ers (Houston Colt 45s farm team). Both Louisville and Oklahoma City played in the American Association.

Bob started the season in Louisville before moving over to Oklahoma City. Boyd started at first base for both the Colonels and 89ers. He consistently hit the ball the entire season.

Back playing on a regular basis, Bob Boyd regained his hitting touch. Bob had a very good season offensively in 1962. He hit .326 with a .481 slugging percentage. His complete hitting statistics for the season were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1962	Louisville Oklahoma City	117	368	56	120	18	12	5	42	1	.326	.481

Bob Boyd finished the 1962 season in fourth place in the race for the American Association batting title.

When spring training for the 1963 season concluded, Bob Boyd was assigned to Houston's Double A team, the San Antonio Bullets of the Texas League. Upon joining the team he became their starting first baseman. Bob started at first base in 54 of the 55 games he played in San Antonio. The Bullets would be one of the top teams in the "league" during the season. Bob contributed from his first day with the team. At forty-three (43) years of age, Bob showed that he could still hit. His best game of the season was when he went 5 for 6 with a triple against the Amarillo Gold Sox in early May of 1963. Boyd started the season on a hot streak and according to the San Antonio Light he was hitting .349 on June 5<sup>th</sup>. In 55 games he went 77 for 229 at bats for a .336 batting average with a .472 slugging percentage. Bob's complete hitting statistics for the San Antonio Bullets in 1963 were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1963	San Antonio	55	229	34	77	17	4	2	25	3	.336	.472

Other top hitters on the Bullets team in 1963 were Mike White (.324), J.C. Hartman (.306), Ed Olivares (.292 w/ 23 HR and 90 RBI), Ron Davis (.289) and Jim Wynn (.288). San Antonio compiled a .272 team batting average which was second best in the Texas League.

Clifford Davis (13-7), Joe Hoerner (11-7), Conrad Cardinal (9-9), Larry Yellen (8-5), James Little (8-6), Raymond Cordeiro (8-4) and Wally Wolf (7-3) were the team's best pitchers. The Bullets pitching staff posted a 3.74 team ERA which was third best in the Texas League.

Bob had helped San Antonio get off to a good start and even without Bob in the line-up the Bullets finished the season by winning the Texas League championship with a record of 79-61 (.564).

In one of his last games before being called up to Oklahoma City, Bob went 4 for 4 in a game against Albuquerque. Then he went 3 for 5 the next day against the Austin Senators. He had helped the team stay within a game and a half of the first place El Paso team.

About midseason Bob Boyd was called up to bolster the roster of the Oklahoma City 89ers who were in the pennant race for the Pacific Coast League title. Unfortunately Bob didn't take his hot hitting with him to Oklahoma City. Boyd never got untracked at the plate. In 67 games for Oklahoma City, Bob went 56 for 223 for a disappointing .251 batting average with a .341 slugging percentage.



Oklahoma City 89ers (1963)

(Bob Boyd – third row down and second from left)

The Oklahoma City 89ers won the regular season Pacific Coast League title with a record of 84-74 (.532) and then went on to win the play-off "Championship Finals." Down three games to none in the finals against the Spokane Indians, Oklahoma City came back to win four straight for the "league" title.

An interesting side to Bob Boyd's 1963 season was that in his last full season of professional baseball, he played on two championship teams. Bob started the season with the San Antonio Bullets who won the Texas League championship and finished out the season playing for the Oklahoma City 89ers who were the Pacific Coast League champions.

Bob Boyd started the 1964 season with the Oklahoma 89ers of the Pacific Coast League. His role with the team had been reduced to pinch hitting. Boyd appeared in only nine games for the 89ers as a pinch hitter without getting a hit before he was released.

### **Bob Becomes a Dreamliner**

When Bob Boyd retired from professional baseball, he knew two things. Number one, he needed to find a new job and secondly, he wanted to continue to play competitive baseball. He found both of these things when he was hired as a bus driver for the Rapid Transit Lines, Inc. of Wichita (KS). When Bob went to work for Rapid Transit, he moved his family to Wichita and that was their home the rest of his life. In addition to his bus driving job, the company wanted him to play first base on their company sponsored "championship" semi-professional baseball team called the "Dreamliners."

### **National Baseball Congress "National Championship" Tournament**

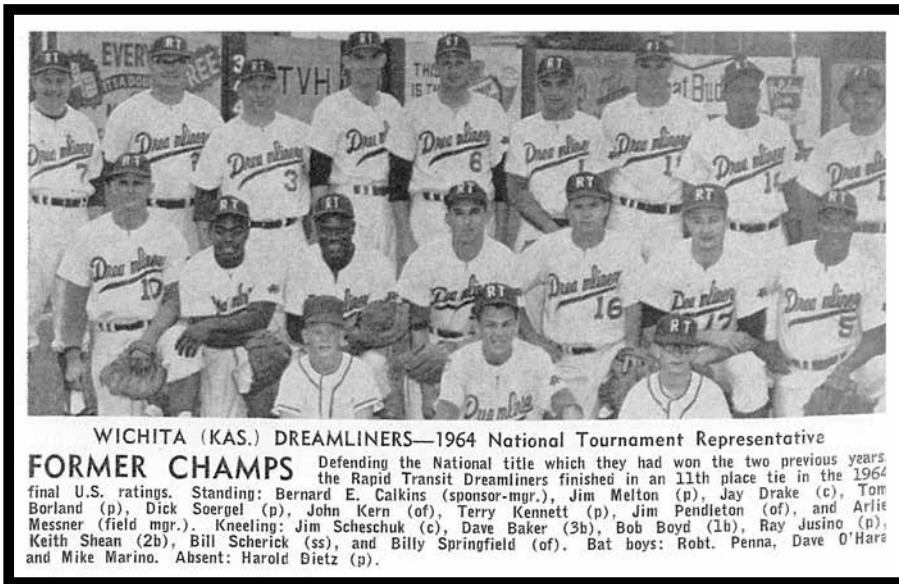
The National Baseball Congress "National Championship" Tournament had been held every year since 1935 in Wichita, Kansas. Negro League great Satchel Paige led the Churchill team to the first ever championship and Paige was also voted the Most Valuable Player (MVP) of the tournament. Top teams from all over the country gathered in Wichita to participate in a double elimination tournament which would crown a "National Champion." During the 1960's games were played at Lawrence-Dumont Stadium.



**Lawrence-Dumont Stadium**

**Wichita, Kansas**

The Rapid Transit Dreamliners were the reigning National Baseball Congress (NBC) champions. They had won the national title in 1962 and 1963. In addition to Bob, the team's 1964 roster also included Tom Borland who had pitched for the Boston Red Sox and Jim Pendleton who had played in the Negro Leagues and spent eight years in the Major Leagues with the Milwaukee Braves, Pittsburgh Pirates, Cincinnati Reds and Houston Colt 45s. Like he had done so many times in the past, Bob Boyd delivered for his new employer. In the four games the team played in the National Baseball Congress Tournament, Bob went 6 for 16 for a .375 batting average with a .563 slugging percentage. In addition he had three doubles, scored five runs and drove in four runs. As a team, however, the 1964 Dreamliners had a very lack luster showing in the tournament. They went 2-2 and finished tied for 11<sup>th</sup> place.

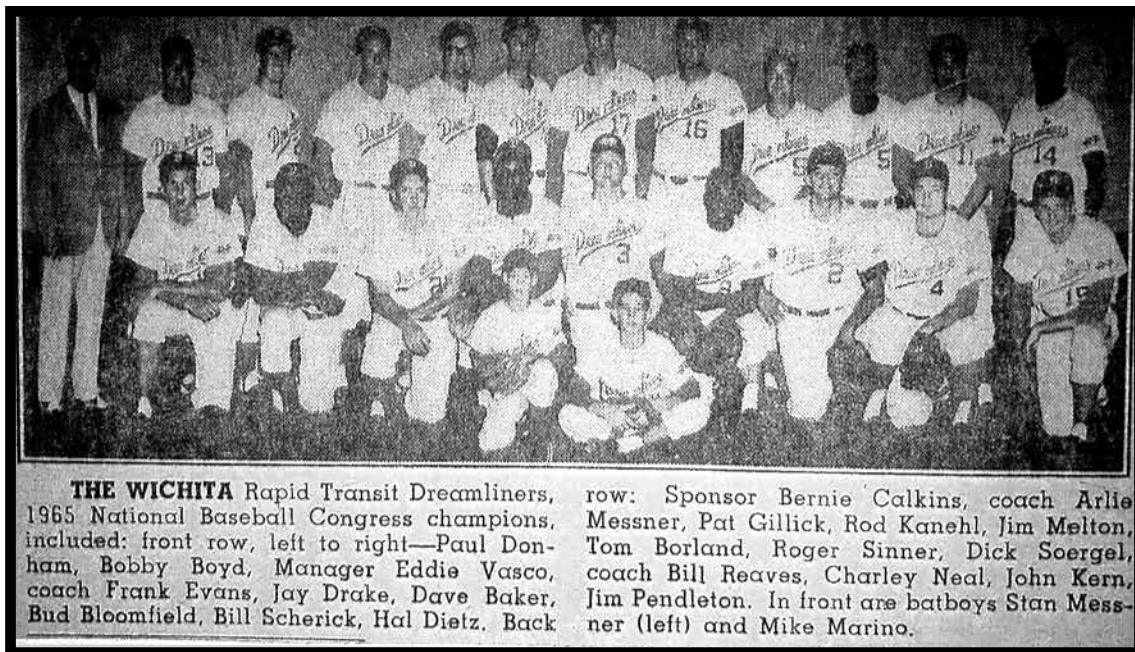


WICHITA (KAS.) DREAMLINERS—1964 National Tournament Representative  
**FORMER CHAMPS** Defending the National title which they had won the two previous years the Rapid Transit Dreamliners finished in an 11th place tie in the 1964 final U.S. ratings. Standing: Bernard E. Calkins (sponsor-mgr.), Jim Melton (p), Jay Drake (c), Tom Borland (p), Dick Soergel (p), John Kern (of), Terry Kennett (p), Jim Pendleton (of), and Arlie Messner (field mgr.). Kneeling: Jim Scheschuk (c), Dave Baker (3b), Bob Boyd (1b), Ray Jusino (p), Keith Shean (2b), Bill Scherick (ss), and Billy Springfield (of). Bat boys: Robt. Penna, Dave O'Hara and Mike Marino. Absent: Harold Dietz (p).

**Rapid Transit Dreamliners (1964)**

**(Bob Boyd - kneeling third from left)**

After a disappointing 1964 National Baseball Congress Tournament, the Dreamliners were determined to regain their championship form and Bob Boyd was a big part of that plan. In addition to Bob Boyd the Dreamliner's 1965 roster included five (5) other former Major League players: Bud Bloomfield (St. Louis Cardinals and Minnesota Twins), Tom Borland (Boston Red Sox), Rod Kanehl (New York Mets), Charlie Neal (Brooklyn Dodgers, Los Angeles Dodgers, New York Mets and Cincinnati Reds) and Jim Pendleton (Houston Colt 45s). The Dreamliner squad also included former Negro League player Frank Evans as a coach.



**THE WICHITA** Rapid Transit Dreamliners, 1965 National Baseball Congress champions, included: front row, left to right—Paul Donham, Bobby Boyd, Manager Eddie Vasco, coach Frank Evans, Jay Drake, Dave Baker, Bud Bloomfield, Bill Scherick, Hal Dietz. Back row: Sponsor Bernie Calkins, coach Arlie Messner, Pat Gillick, Rod Kanehl, Jim Melton, Tom Borland, Roger Sinner, Dick Soergel, coach Bill Reaves, Charley Neal, John Kern, Jim Pendleton. In front are batboys Stan Messner (left) and Mike Marino.

**Rapid Transit Dreamliners (1965)**

**.(Bob Boyd - kneeling second from left)**

The double elimination 1965 National Baseball Congress Tournament started on August 13<sup>th</sup> with thirty-two (32) teams most of whom were state or regional champions. Even with their winning tradition and six ex-Major Leaguers on their team, the Dreamliners were not the tournament favorite because the consensus of opinion was that the Dreamliners' starting line-up was a bit "too old." Led by the hitting of their five ex-Major Leaguers, the Dreamliners breezed through the tournament with a perfect 7-0 record. Teams the Dreamliners defeated were Indianapolis (IN) (1-0), Montgomery (AL) (9-2), Boulder (CO) (3-2), Eureka (CA) (3-2), Wichita Glass (12-3) and Liberal (KS) (11-6). The highlight of the tournament for the Dreamliners was a game they played against the highly favored Alaska Goldpanners who featured a young Tom Seaver on their roster. With future Hall of Fame pitcher Tom Seaver on the mound for Alaska, the Dreamliners took a 6-3 win over the young pitching sensation. Boyd went 2 for 3 against Seaver. Boyd was also the hero of the game against Boulder when he doubled in Rod Kanehl for the winning score. In the "championship" game the Dreamliners defeated Liberal (KS) by a score of 11-6 to claim their third national title in four years.

The "old timers" Bob Boyd (.423), Jim Pendleton (.480 w/ 2 homeruns and 11 RBI), Charlie Neal (.320) and Bud Bloomfield (.280) led the way offensively for the Dreamliners. In seven (7) games Bob Boyd went 11 for 26 for a .423 batting average. His complete hitting statistics for the 1965 National Baseball Congress Tournament were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1965	Dreamliners	7	26	4	11	2	0	0	7	1	.423	.500

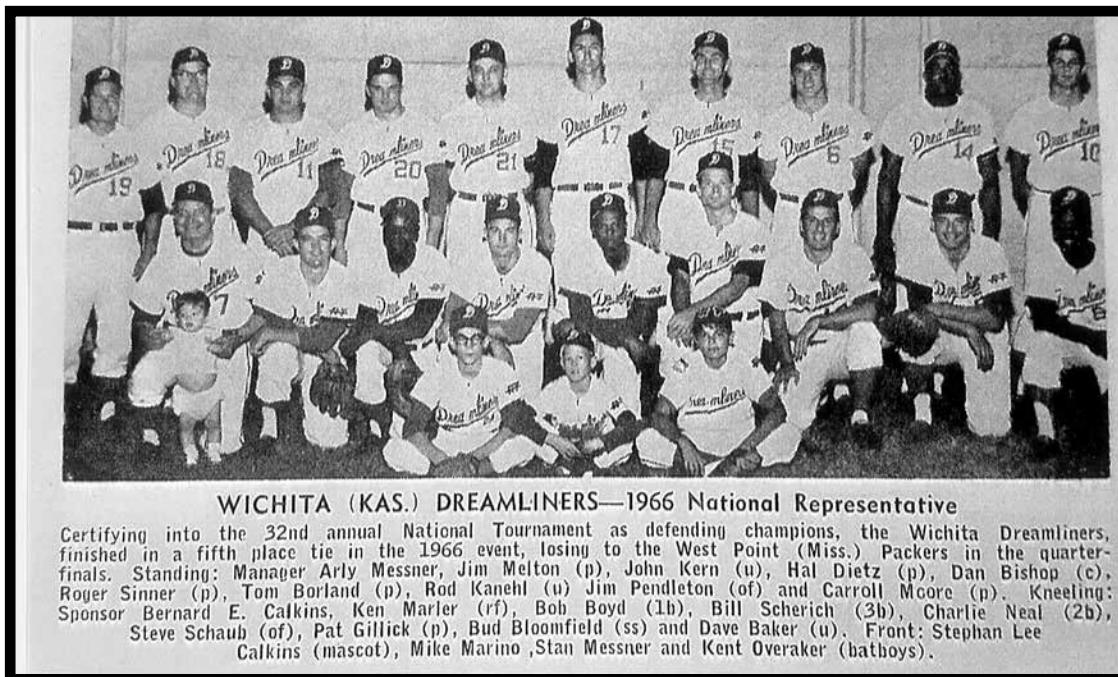
Both Bob Boyd and team manager Eddie Vasco were named to the All Tournament All Star team. Boyd was also selected as the Most Valuable Player (MVP) of the tournament.

One of the highlights of the 1965 National Tournament was the appearance of New York Yankee great Mickey Mantle. Mickey attended the tournament to help pay tribute to the late Fritz Brickell who was his Yankee team mate in 1958 and 1959.

The 1965 tournament was one of the most closely contested in the history of the tournament. Of the 63 games that were played, 23 of them were decided by one run.



**Wichita Rapid Transit Dreamliners (1965)  
National Champions**



### Wichita Rapid Transit Dreamliners (1966)

(Bob Boyd – kneeling third from left)

The Rapid Transit Dreamliners returned basically the same team that won the 1965 championship to compete in the 1966 National Baseball Congress Championship Tournament. Bob Boyd, Jim Pendleton, Charlie Neal, Rod Kanehl, Bud Bloomfield and Tom Borland were all members of the Dreamliners team that went to the National Baseball Congress tournament in 1965. They had a lot of experience but were also all a year older. Boyd himself was about to turn 47 years of age.

Bob was the team's starting first baseman and hit .304 (7for 23) with seven runs batted in for the tournament. The Dreamliners got off to a fast start by winning their first two games. They defeated Middlesex (NC) (4-0) and Valdosta (GA) (7-1) before losing to Lubbock (TX) by a score of 8-6. The Dreamliners then won their next two games. They beat Valley Stream (NY) (10-4) and Wichita Service (7-5) before being eliminated by West Point (MS) by a score of 11-5. Jim Pendleton (.450 w/ 2 homeruns and 11 RBI) paced the team in hitting. The Dreamliners ended the tournament with a record of 4-2.

Bob Boyd also scouted for the Baltimore Orioles for several seasons.

Boyd worked for the bus company for twenty (20) years until his retirement. According to Bob, he made as much money driving a bus as he did playing in the Major Leagues. Records indicate that the most he ever made in one season in the Major Leagues was \$ 18,500.

### Passing of a Baseball Great

Robert Richard Boyd passed away on September 7, 2004 in Wichita, Kansas after a long battle with cancer. He was 84 years old. Boyd was laid to rest in the Old Mission Cemetery which is located in Wichita, Kansas.



Mayaguez Indios (1949-50)

(Bob Boyd – standing seventh from right)



Roy Campanella All Stars (1953)

(Back row left to right – Othello Renfroe, Larry Doby, Dave Hoskins, Jim Pendleton, **Bob Boyd**, Don Newcombe and Harry Simpson, Front row left to right – Joe Black, Bill Bruton, George Crowe, **Roy Campanella** and Junior Gilliam.)

## Playing Career

### Regular Season:

Year	Team	League
1946	Knoxville Giants	Negro Southern League
1946-1950	Memphis Red Sox	Negro American League
1950	Colorado Springs Sky Sox	Western League
1951	Sacramento Solons	Pacific Coast League
1951	Chicago White Sox	American League
1952	Seattle Rainiers	Pacific Coast League
1953	Charleston Senators	American Association
1953	Toronto Maple Leafs	International League
1953-1954	Chicago White Sox	American League
1954-1955	Houston Buffaloes	Texas League
1956-1960	Baltimore Orioles	American League
1961	Kansas City Athletics	American League
1961	Milwaukee Braves	National League
1962	Louisville Colonels	American Association
1962	Oklahoma City 89ers	American Association
1963	San Antonio Bullets	Texas League
1963	Oklahoma City 89ers	Pacific Coast League
1964	Oklahoma City 89ers	Pacific Coast League
1964-1966	Wichita Dreamliners	National Baseball Congress (NBC)

### Winter Leagues:

1946	Memphis Red Sox	Post Season Series vs Birmingham Black Barons
1948	Memphis Red Sox	Post Season Game vs Jackie Robinson All Stars
1948	Robinson-Campanella All Stars	Post Season Barnstorming Tour
1949-50	Habana Leones	Cuban Winter League
1949-50	Mayaguez Indios	Puerto Rican Winter League
1950	Negro American League All Stars	Post Season Barnstorming Tour
1950	Negro American League All Stars	Game vs Jackie Robinson's All Stars
1950	Negro American League All Stars	Game vs Luke Easter's Major League All Stars
1950	Memphis Red Sox	Exhibition Game vs Jackson Cubs
1951-52	Ponce Leones	Puerto Rican Winter League
1952-53	Ponce Leones	Puerto Rican Winter League
1953	Roy Campanella's All Stars	Post Season Barnstorming Tour
1954-55	Cienfuegos Elephants	Cuban Winter League
1955-56	Cienfuegos Elephants	Cuban Winter League
1956	Cienfuegos Elephants	Caribbean World Series
1956	Negro American League All Stars	Post Season Barnstorming Tour
1956-57	Cienfuegos Elephants	Cuban Winter League
1959	Hank Aaron All Stars	Post Season Barnstorming Tour
1960	Willie Mays All Stars	Post Season Barnstorming Tour

### Career Statistics – Hitting (Regular Season – Negro Leagues)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1946	Knoxville	11	43	-	18	-	-	-	-	-	.419	-
1946	Memphis	No records										
1947	Memphis	73	283	54	96	-	-	4	-	-	.339	-
1948	Memphis	77	303	52	114	18	9	5	51	4	.376	.545
1949	Memphis	80	309	59	114	24	4	8	55	11	.369	.550
1950	Memphis	63	250	54	89	27	8	7	66	9	.356	.612
	Total	304	1188	219	431	69	21	24	172	24	.363	-

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

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1947	West	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	.500	1.000
1948	West	2	7	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	.286	.286
1949	West	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000	.000
	Total	4	13	1	3	1	0	0	1	0	.231	.308

### Career Statistics – Hitting (Regular Season – Minor Leagues)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1950	Colorado Springs	42	158	39	59	6	5	9	39	3	.373	.646
1951	Sacramento	145	555	82	190	32	11	5	64	41	.342	.467
1952	Seattle	161	641	100	205	29	18	3	75	33	.320	.435
1953	Charleston	49	198	33	64	8	6	2	22	12	.323	.455
1953	Toronto	31	120	16	37	4	4	3	12	1	.308	.483
1954	Houston	94	358	59	115	22	2	7	68	3	.321	.453
1955	Houston	163	635	96	197	39	6	15	94	13	.310	.461
1962	Louisville	117	368	56	120	18	12	5	42	1	.326	.481
	Oklahoma City											
1963	San Antonio	55	229	34	77	17	4	2	25	3	.336	.472
1963	Oklahoma City	67	223	19	56	12	1	2	23	0	.251	.341
1964	Oklahoma City	9	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000	.000
	Total	933	3493	535	1120	187	69	53	464	110	.321	.459

### Career Statistics – Hitting (Regular Season – Major Leagues)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1951	Chicago	12	18	3	3	0	1	0	4	0	.167	.278
1953	Chicago	55	165	20	49	6	2	3	23	1	.297	.412
1954	Chicago	29	56	10	10	3	0	0	5	2	.179	.232
1956	Baltimore	70	225	28	70	8	3	2	11	0	.311	.400
1957	Baltimore	141	485	73	154	16	8	4	34	2	.318	.408
1958	Baltimore	125	401	58	124	21	5	7	36	1	.309	.439
1959	Baltimore	128	415	42	110	20	2	3	41	3	.265	.345
1960	Baltimore	71	82	9	26	5	2	0	9	0	.317	.427
1961	Kansas City	26	48	7	11	2	0	0	9	0	.229	.271
1961	Milwaukee	36	41	3	10	0	0	0	3	0	.244	.244
	Total	693	1936	253	567	81	23	19	175	9	.293	.388

### Career Statistics – Hitting (National Baseball Congress Tournament)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1964	Dreamliners	4	16	5	6	3	0	0	4	-	.375	.563
1965	Dreamliners	7	26	4	11	2	0	0	7	1	.423	.500
1966	Dreamliners	6	23	5	7	0	0	0	7	0	.304	.304
	Total	17	65	14	24	5	0	0	18	1	.369	.507

### Career Statistics – Hitting (Cuba)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1949-50	Habana	9	36	2	9	1	0	0	4	4	.250	.278
1954-55	Cienfuegos	70	292	38	90	8	4	5	31	3	.308	.414
1955-56	Cienfuegos	-	285	43	89	11	2	5	42	5	.312	.418
1956	Cienfuegos	6	23	5	7	2	0	1	10	1	.304	.521
1956-57	Cienfuegos	-	38	2	8	1	0	0	3	-	.211	.237
	<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>.301</b>	<b>.402</b>

### Career Statistics – Hitting (Puerto Rico)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1949-50	Mayaguez	No records										
1951-52	Ponce	72	305	55	114	18	5	2	43	13	.374	.485
1952-53	Ponce	-	293	46	82	10	3	6	44	11	.280	.396
	<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>.328</b>	<b>.441</b>

### Career Hitting Statistics (Totals)

	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
Negro League	304	1188	219	431	69	21	24	172	24	.363	-
East-West All Star Games	4	13	1	3	1	0	0	1	0	.231	.308
Puerto Rico	72	598	101	196	28	8	8	87	24	.328	.441
Cuba	85	674	90	203	23	6	11	90	13	.301	.402
Minor League	933	3493	535	1120	187	69	53	464	110	.321	.459
Major League	693	1936	253	567	81	23	19	175	9	.293	.388
National Baseball Congress	17	65	14	24	5	0	0	18	1	.369	.507
<b>Total</b>	<b>2108</b>	<b>7967</b>	<b>1213</b>	<b>2544</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>1007</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>.319</b>	<b>-</b>

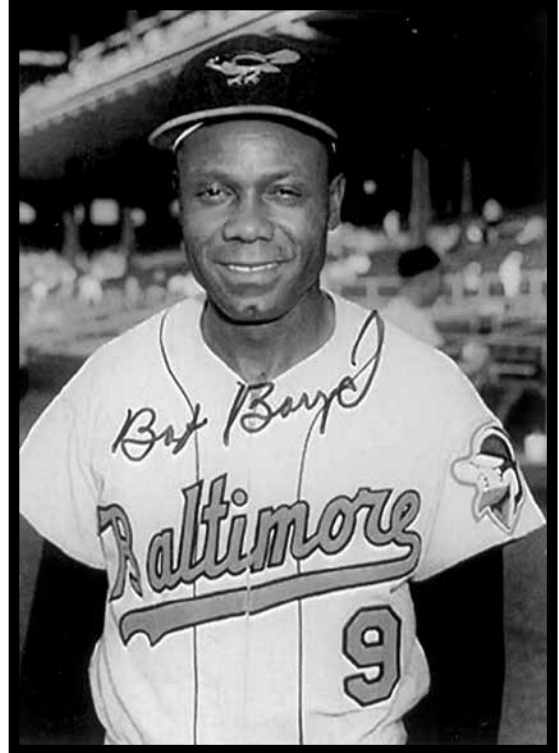
### Batting and League Leader - Batting Titles

Category	Year	League	Number
Batting Average	1951-52	Puerto Rican Winter League	.374
	1952	Pacific Coast League	.320
Games	1955	Texas League	163
At Bats	1951-52	Puerto Rican Winter League	305
	1954-55	Cuban Winter League	292
	1955	Texas League	635
Hits	1951-52	Puerto Rican Winter League	114
	1954-55	Cuban Winter League	90
	1955	Texas League	197
Triples	1948	Negro American League	9
	1951	Pacific Coast League	18
Runs Batted In	1956	Caribbean World Series	10
Stolen Bases	1951	Pacific Coast League	41

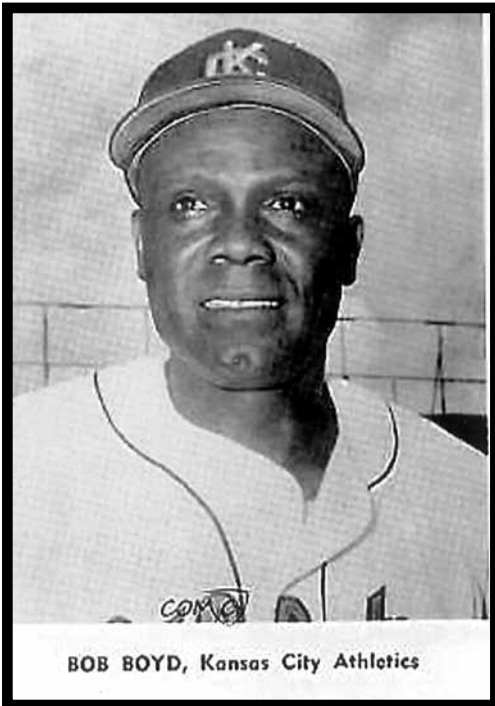
Bob Boyd – Major Leaguer



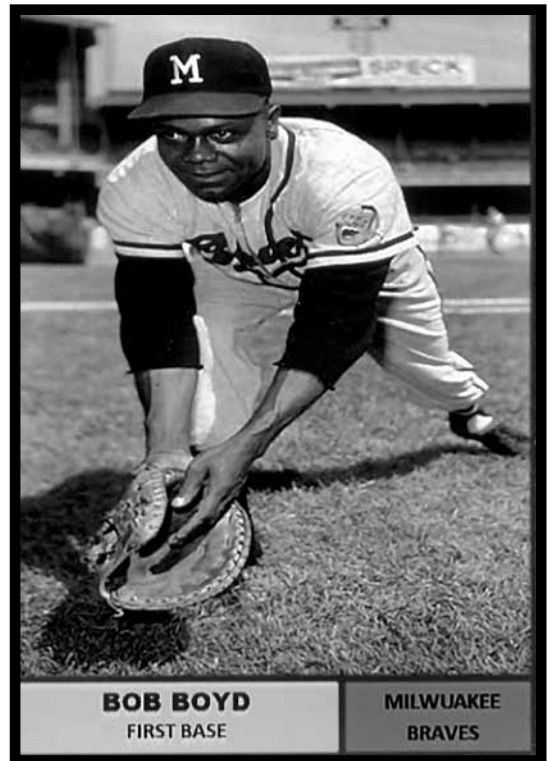
Bob Boyd  
Chicago White Sox



Bob Boyd  
Baltimore Orioles



Bob Boyd  
Kansas City Athletics



Bob Boyd  
Milwaukee Braves

## Assessing Bob Boyd's Career

- Bob Boyd was an **excellent hitter at every level he played**. The following chart identifies Boyd's offensive productivity during his professional baseball career:

Level	At Bats	Hits	Career Batting Average
Negro Leagues	1188	431	<b>.363</b>
Minor Leagues	3493	1120	<b>.321</b>
Major Leagues	1936	567	<b>.293</b>
Latin America	1272	399	<b>.314</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>7889</b>	<b>2517</b>	<b>.319</b>

According to Bob the toughest pitcher he faced in the Major Leagues was Herb Score (before he suffered his eye injury). Some of the other top pitchers that Bob thought were tough to hit against were Bob Feller, Whitey Ford, Mike Garcia, Bob Lemon, Ed Lopat, Vic Raschi, Allie Reynolds and Early Wynn.

- Bob had an **excellent eye at the plate**. He registered an exemplary 1.465 walk to strikeout ratio (167 walks to 114 strikeouts) in 1,936 "official" at bats in his Major League career. During his Minor League career he had a 1.34 walk to strikeout ratio (232 walks to 173 strikeouts) in 933 games with 3,493 "official" at bats.
- He was a **solid contact hitter who was difficult to strike out**. During his nine year Major League career he only struck out 114 times in 1,936 at bats for a strikeout percentage of 5.89 times per 100 at bats.
- His **outstanding reflexes enabled him to develop a smooth swing** which combined with his exceptional hand-eye coordination and level swing made him a pure hitter. Bob also had what was often characterized as a "quick bat." Boyd consistently hit the ball hard to all fields.
- **Defensively Bob possessed outstanding skills at first base**. He had an excellent glove and exhibited nibble foot work around the base. In the Major Leagues he only committed 36 errors in 4,159 chances in the 693 games in which he played. He compiled a .991 fielding percentage for his Major League career.

When The Sporting News asked Paul Richards, manager of the Baltimore Orioles, to comment on Bob's defensive ability at first base, Paul had the following to say:

"Boyd can really handle the mitt around first base. I know he's good enough defensively for the big leagues and he has real speed."

Another example of Bob Boyd's defensive skills at first base was leading the Texas League with 118 assists.

- Traditionally he was not known for his speed but when you evaluate his career it is obvious he had **very good speed and was a smart base runner**. His quickness enabled him to get a good lead which made it easier for him to steal a base. Two examples of his speed are that he led the Pacific Coast League in stolen bases in 1951 with 41 steals and came back the next season to steal 33 bases in the Pacific Coast League.

- Paul Richards probably did the best job in describing Bob Boyd's **baseball ability and dedication**. In a 1957 Sporting News article Paul Richards was quoted as follows:

“How are you going to get El Ropo (The Rope) out of there? It's almost impossible. **Boyd comes to play.**”

- Bob Boyd played an **important role in the integration of Major League baseball**. He was the second African American baseball player born in the United States to play for the Chicago White Sox. Sam Hairston debuted on July 21, 1951 and Bob Boyd debuted for the White Sox on September 8, 1951. It is important to note that the first person of color to play for the Chicago White Sox was Cuban born Minnie Minoso who debuted for Chicago in May of 1951.

Boyd was also the first black player for the Houston Buffaloes of the Texas League when he joined the team in 1954.

In addition, he was only the fourth black player to play for the Baltimore Orioles. Jehosie Heard (1954), Joe Durham (1954) and Dave Pope (1955) were the first three black players to play for Baltimore. Bob Boyd was the first African-American ball player to hit over .300 for the season in Baltimore. Bob Boyd hit .311 for his 1956 season with the Orioles.

- Bob Boyd's Major League **career is an excellent example of the frustration several very talented Negro League players faced during integration**.

Paul Richards, manager of the Chicago White Sox, shuttled Bob back and forth from the Minors to the Majors. It was common knowledge that Richards didn't like black ball players but he seemed to respect Boyd's talent. However, Richards never really gave Bob the chance to beat out Eddie Robinson for the first base job when he first came up. Then during the winter of 1951-52 Bob won the Puerto Rican batting title with an astounding .373 batting average and followed that up by winning the 1952 Pacific Coast League with a .320 batting average. Boyd did play for the White Sox in 1953 but never got a real shot winning the first base job that went to Ferris Fain. Bob spent most of the 1953 season in the Minor Leagues with Charleston and Toronto.

In an article by Doc Young that appeared in Jet magazine, Young summed up the problem in very direct terms:

“Boyd's case is typical of several Negro players who linger in organizations which, for one reason or another, are unable or unwilling to give them breaks. In Boyd's case, it is unlikely that the Sox will allow him to beat out Fain...just as they never let him threaten slow poke Eddie Robinson. Still, they won't sell him.”

Then in 1954 when he was again sent back to the Minor Leagues, this time in Houston, Bob almost didn't report. In an interview Bob is quoted as follows:

“When they sent me back to Houston again, I almost didn't report. I told them I was going back to the Negro League.”

Bob reconsidered and had two very productive seasons with the Houston Buffaloes.

In an interesting twist when Richards became the General Manager and Field Manager for the Baltimore Orioles, he drafted Bob Boyd and he became the Orioles starting first baseman.

- During his career Bob Boyd played on the following **championship teams**:

Year	Team	League
1954	Houston Buffaloes	Texas League
1955-56	Cienfuegos	Cuban Winter League
1956	Cienfuegos	Caribbean World Series
1963	Oklahoma City 89ers	Pacific Coast League
1963	San Antonio Bullets	Texas League
1965	Wichita Dreamliners	National Baseball Congress Tournament

- Boyd was a **fan favorite everywhere he played** and that was especially true in Baltimore. Bob produced offensively and that was greatly appreciated by the fans. Longtime sportswriter for the Baltimore Sun, Seymour Smith, wrote the following in one of his newspaper articles:

“You always saw Bob with a smile on his face. He would come out of the dugout and greet the fans. You couldn’t tell how he felt inside, but he always seemed like a happy guy – always taking care of the fans. Bob liked playing in Baltimore and the fans liked him. Baltimore fans do adopt their heroes. They like you and you have it made. Bob had it made. It’s ironic, when you think about it, Bob was an African-American and Baltimore was a southern town.”

- Boyd suffered his share of **severe injuries** during his career:

In 1947 when Bob was playing for the Memphis Reds Sox, he jammed his foot while sliding into second base. The injury required a trip to Dr. Marin’s hospital.

In May of 1951 Bob Boyd was knocked unconscious when he was hit in the head above the left temple with an errant fastball. He had to be carried off the field on a stretcher and taken to the hospital.

In early May of 1952 Bob was out of action and missed several games due to ulcers.

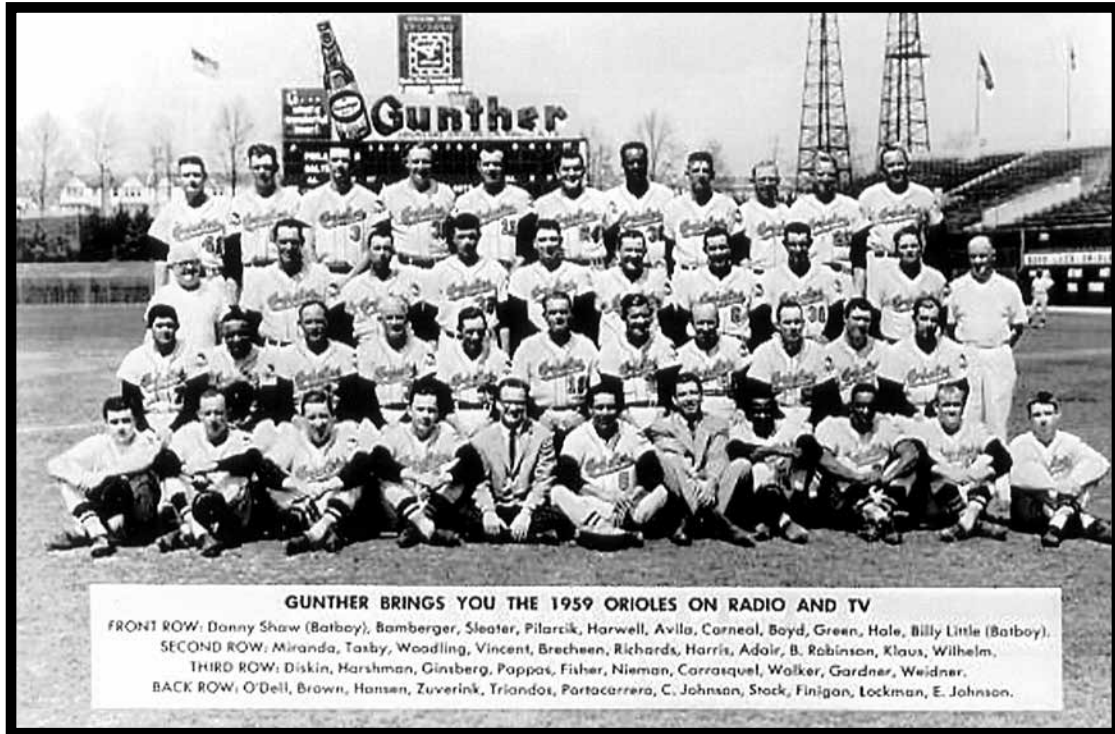
In 1953 Bob broke his elbow sliding into second base. He required surgery and post operative physical therapy. The injury cut his season short with the Chicago White Sox.

In 1956 Bob suffered a chip fracture of his elbow while attempting to throw out a runner from his outfield position. The injury required two surgeries and a long rehabilitation period.

While playing in Cuba during the 1956-57 winter league season, Bob re-injured the elbow that had put him out of action during the 1956 season in Baltimore. The re-aggravation of his elbow injury caused an abrupt end to his winter league season and forced him to return home for another surgery.

- Bob suffered with **health problems** especially late in his career. In addition, there were times when, according to him, he just didn’t feel good. It wasn’t until after he retired that doctors found an ulcer the size of a quarter in his stomach.
- He always had a **can-do attitude** and even if there was something bothering him he got the job done. His natural talent, positive attitude and an **extremely strong work ethic** led to a very impressive professional baseball career.
- Bob Boyd was a **true professional**. He always **exhibited dignity, grace and resilience** to go along with his **tremendous baseball abilities**. Perhaps his greatest attribute was his **perseverance** which regardless of his circumstances enabled him to succeed.

## Bob Boyd - Baltimore Orioles



## Baltimore Orioles (1959)

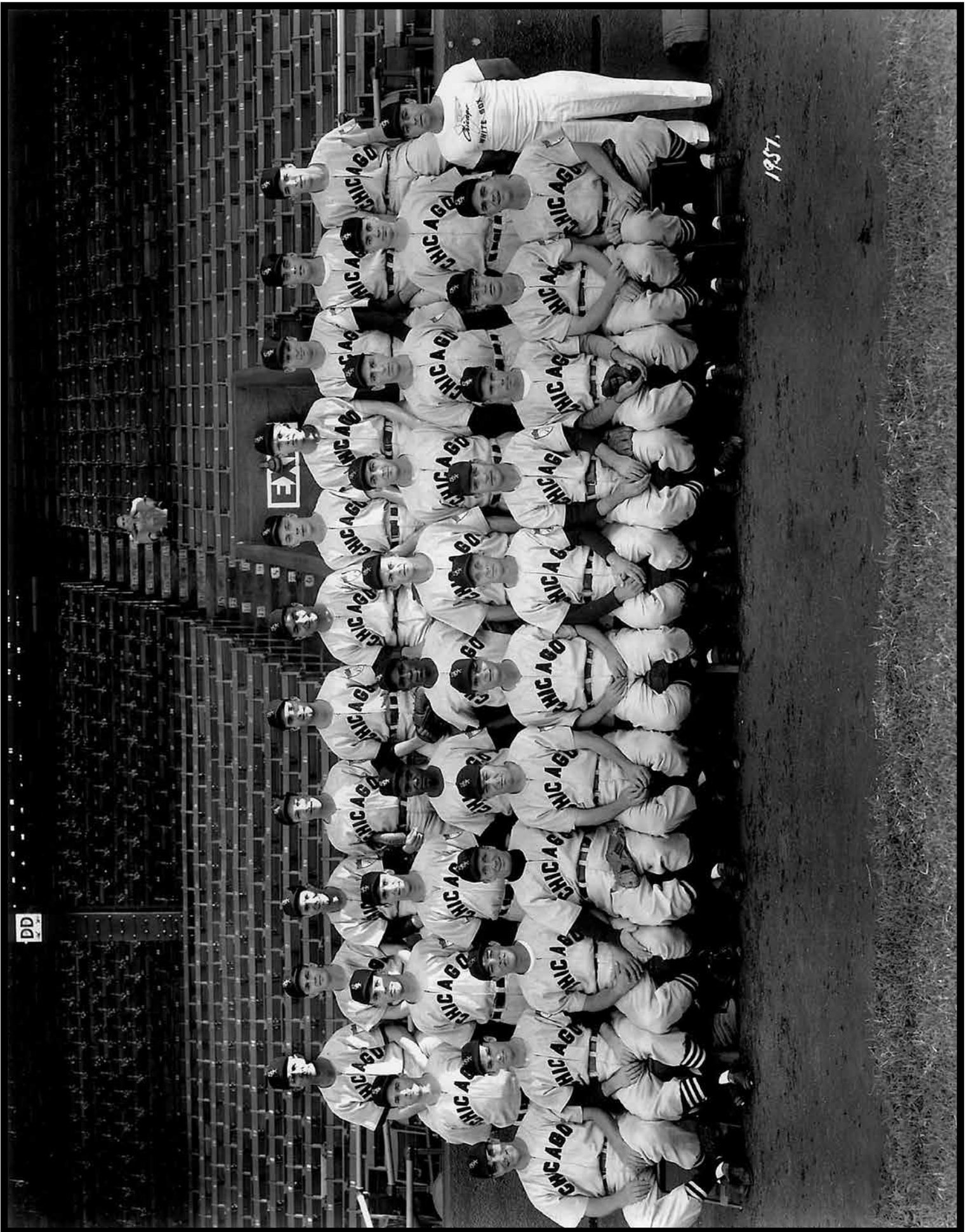
(Bob Boyd – front row fourth from right)



Memorial Stadium  
Home of the Baltimore Orioles

### Selected Career Highlights

- Bob Boyd was an excellent hitter throughout his career. In his five year Negro League career he compiled a .363 career batting average. He never hit less than .300 during his Negro League career (1946 - .416, 1947 - .339, 1948 - .376, 1949 - .369 and 1950 - .356).
- In organized baseball, Bob posted a career batting average of .321 with a slugging percentage of .459 for his nine (9) seasons in the Minor Leagues. He hit over .300 in all but one of his full seasons in the Minor Leagues.
- Bob also showed that he could hit Major League pitching. In nine seasons in the Big Leagues he compiled a career batting average of .293 with a slugging percentage of .388.
- Bob Boyd was selected to play in four East-West All Star games during his Negro League career.
- During his first season in organized ball with the Colorado Springs Sky Sox in 1950, Boyd put up phenomenal numbers. He compiled a .373 batting average with a .646 slugging percentage.
- Bob won the 1951-52 Puerto Rican Winter League batting title with a .374 average.
- He followed up his brilliant season in Puerto Rico by winning the 1952 Pacific Coast League batting title with a .320 batting average.
- He was selected to play in both the 1951-52 and 1952-53 Puerto Rican All Star games.
- In 1954 Boyd integrated the Houston Buffaloes and led them to the Texas League title.
- Bob Boyd was selected to the 1955 Texas League All Star team.
- Boyd led the Cienfuegos Elephants to the Cuban Winter League title during the 1955-56 season. He then led his team to the VIII Caribbean World Series championship in 1956.
- Bob's best seasons in the Major Leagues were with the Baltimore Orioles (1956 - .311, 1957 - .318, 1958 - .309 and 1960 - .317).
- In 1958 in a double header against the Cleveland Indians, Bob collected seven (7) straight hits. He also led the American League for hitting in night games during the season with a .367 batting average in 56 games.
- On April 9, 1959 while playing for the Baltimore Orioles against the Washington Senators, Bob turned the first opening day triple play in Major League history.
- In 1963 which was his last full season in professional baseball, Bob Boyd started the season with the San Antonio Bullets who won the Texas League championship. Bob hit .336 for his stay with the Bullets.
- After his retirement, Bob played for the Wichita Dreamliners and led them to the National Baseball Congress Tournament championship in 1965. Bob was named to the All Tournament team and was selected as the Most Valuable Player (MVP) of the series.
- For his many accomplishments in baseball, Bob Boyd has been inducted into the following Hall of Fames: National Baseball Congress Hall of Fame (1997), Kansas Baseball Hall of Fame (1984) and the Wichita Sports Hall of Fame (2004).
- Even though he has been inducted into three "minor" Hall of Fames, Bob Boyd's career has generally gone unnoticed and he has never really received the credit he is due as an exceptional ball player.



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