

“Colored Championship” Series

Over the course of the history of black baseball in the United States, there has always been the need for there to be a “number one” team or to have a “champion” of colored baseball. Championship series in colored baseball have been played as long as there have been two teams to vie for the distinction and title of being the “Champion of Colored Baseball.”

It is important not to confuse a “Colored Championship” with a Negro League World Series Champion. Many if not most “Colored Championship” series were played between two self appointed teams, while the Negro League World Series was played against the champions from two different formalized leagues. From 1924 to 1927 the Negro League World Series was a post season championship series that was played between the Negro National League champions and the Eastern Colored League champions. Then in latter years, there was also a Negro League World Series played from 1942 to 1948 when the champions of the Negro American League (NAL) met the champions of the Negro National League (NNL).

The following summaries represent some (definitely not all) of the “Colored Championship” series that have been played over the years.

“Colored Championship” Series (1900-1919) (Summaries)

1900 Chicago Unions vs Cuban X-Giants

In 1900 two of the top teams from the East (Cuban X-Giants and Genuine Cuban Giants) traveled to Chicago to play two of the top teams in the West (Chicago Unions and Columbia Giants). Both series were played at roughly the same time in and around the Chicago area.

The Cuban X-Giants had consistently dominated the Chicago Unions over the years. The Cuban X-Giants were led into the 1900 series by several of their veteran players that included William Jackson (outfield), Robert Jordan (third base and catcher), William Monroe (second base) and John Nelson (outfield and pitcher).

Chicago Unions manager, William S. Peters, put together a strong line-up to challenge the X-Giants. Peters’ team for the 1900 series included the following returning veterans: Robert Footes (catcher), William Horn (pitcher), Harry Hyde (third base), Bert Jones (pitcher), Willis Jones (outfield), Harry “Mike” Moore (outfield) and Bert Wakefield (first base). In addition, the Unions signed Grant “Homerun” Johnson (shortstop) away from the Columbia Giants to bolster their lineup.

The Chicago Unions prevailed in beating their perennial foe to claim the series championship.

“Colored Series Champions” – Chicago Unions

1900 Columbia Giants vs Genuine Cuban Giants

Approximately the same time that the Chicago Unions were beating the Cuban X-Giants, the Columbia Giants were dominating the Genuine Cuban Giants in their series.

The Columbia Giants were managed by Al Garrett and fielded a strong team that included returning veterans Sherman Barton (outfield), William Binga (third base), Harry Buckner (pitcher), Charles Grant (second base), George “Chappie” Johnson (first base), Joe Miller (pitcher), Pat Patterson (outfield) and George Wilson (pitcher). To strengthen their lineup, Columbia signed Bill Holland (outfield and pitcher) away from the Chicago Unions and Sol White (shortstop) from the Cuban X-Giants.

The Genuine Cuban Giants were based in New York and were led into the series by Frank Grant (second base), William “Big Bill” Smith (catcher) and Pop Watkins (first base). They were no match for Columbia and lost the series to the Columbia Giants.

“Colored Series Champions” – Columbia Giants

1903 Algona Brownies vs Chicago Union Giants

The Algona Brownies were based in Algona, Iowa. They were originally a “mixed” team but by 1903 they fielded an “all black” squad. The owners of the Brownies recruited players from the Chicago Union Giants and Columbia Giants to bring a powerhouse baseball team to the small Midwestern town.

The roster for the 1903 Algona Brownies was as follows:

Algona Brownies		Former Team
Robinson	1B	Unkown
George Richardson	2B	Chicago Union Giants
Albert Toney	SS	Chicago Union Giants
Dangerfield Talbert	3B	Chicago Union Giants
George Johnson	C	Columbia Giants
Sherman Barton	OF	Columbia Giants
Willis Jones	OF	Chicago Union Giants
Harry “Mike” Moore	OF	Chicago Union Giants
Pete Burns	OF/C	Columbia Giants
Bill Holland	P	Columbia Giants
William Horn	P	Chicago Unions
Bert Jones	P	Chicago Union Giants
John Davis	P	Chicago Union Giants

In 1903 Algona met Frank Leland’s Chicago Union Giants for the “Colored Championship of the West.”

The Chicago Union Giants were formed in 1901 when Frank Leland combined the Chicago Unions and the Columbia Giants. After loosing most of his best players to the Algona Brownies, Leland was forced to rebuild. The Chicago Union Giants would become Leland’s Giants in 1905.

Frank Leland's lineup for the 1903 season was as follows:

Chicago Union Giants

George Taylor	1B	Charles "Joe" Green	OF
Fred Roberts	2B	Eugene Milliner	OF
James Smith	SS	George "Walter" Ball	P
Harry Hyde	3B	Arthur Ross	P
Robert Footes	C	Joe Miller	P
David Wyatt	OF		

Game one of the series was played in Chicago on June 14th. The Chicago Union Giants won the game in the 10th inning by a score of 3-2. Four excursion trains brought fans to the tiny lakeside community of Okoboji (IA) for game two of the series which was played on June 17th at Arnold's Park. The Brownies won game two by a score of 5-4 (some newspaper accounts have the score as 6-4) to tie the series. With their star studded lineup, the Algona Brownies took game three at the Kossuth County Fairgrounds on June 18th in Algona by a score of 7-3. Two more games were played in Des Moines (IA) before the Brownies disposed of the Chicago Union Giants to claim the championship title. The Algona Brownies and Chicago Union Giants met again in a rematch in August of 1903. Algona won both games of the series by scores of 12-4 and 7-0. Algona continued to have a very successful season and played into October when they beat Winnipeg Maroons (champions of the Northern League) by a score of 5-3 in Postville, IA. Newspaper accounts have the Brownies with a won-loss record of 38-4 on August 18, 1903. Even with all their success, Algona did not field a team for the 1904 season.

"Colored Champions of the West" - Algona Brownies

1903 Philadelphia Giants vs Cuban X Giants

The Philadelphia Giants and Cuban X-Giants had squabbled back and forth for over two years as to who had the best team in "colored" baseball. To finally settle the score, an eight game series was scheduled in 1903 to determine which team would be considered the "Champions of Colored Baseball." Each team fielded an extremely strong line-up during the season.

The Cuban X-Giants were led by the pitching of Andrew "Rube" Foster. This is the same Foster who in latter years owned the Chicago American Giant and founded the Negro National League. For his many contributions to Negro League baseball as a player, owner and baseball executive, Foster would be elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown. The Cuban X-Giants team also included Captain Dan McClellan, Robert Jordan, Clarence Williams and Grant "Homerun" Johnson. Foster led all pitchers in the series with four wins and a 1.50 ERA. Dan McClellan picked up the other win for the X-Giants. Robert Jordan was the leading hitter in the series with a .560 batting average.

Some of the key players for the Philadelphia Giants were Frank Grant (National Baseball Hall of Fame), Sol White (National Baseball Hall of Fame), William Monroe, William Binga, John Patterson, Robert Footes, William Bell and Charles "Kid" Carter. Sol White led Philadelphia in hitting with nine hits in twenty-five at bats for a .320 batting average. Both William Bell and Charles "Kid" Carter each had one win in the series.

A summary of the series is as follows:

Game	Location	Date	Winning Team	Score	Winning Pitcher	Losing Pitcher
1	Philadelphia	Sept 12 th	Cuban X-Giants	4-2	Rube Foster	William Bell
2	Ridgewood (NJ)	Sept 13 th	Cuban X-Giants	8-1	Dan McClellan	Harry Buckner
3	Ridgewood (NJ)	Sept 13 th	Philadelphia	5-2	William Bell	Dan McClellan
4	Trenton (NJ)	Sept 14 th	Cuban X-Giants	3-1	Rube Foster	Charles Carter
5	Camden (NJ)	Sept 15 th	Philadelphia	3-0	Charles Carter	Dan McClellan
6	Harrisburg (PA)	Sept 18 th	Cuban X-Giants	12-3	Rube Foster	Charles Carter
7	Camden (NJ)	Sept 26 th	Cuban X-Giants	2-0	Rube Foster	Charles Carter

Top Hitters for the Series:

Philadelphia – Sol White (.320), Bill Monroe (.273) and Frank Grant (.222).

Cuban X-Giants – Robert Jordan (.560), Rube Foster (.353) and Clarence Williams (.286).

Leading Pitchers for the Series:

Philadelphia – Rube Foster (4-0 w/ 1.50 ERA) and Charles “Kid” Carter (1-3 w/ 4.50 ERA)

Cuban X-Giants - Bill Bell (1-1 w/ 3.00 ERA) and Dan McClellan (1-2 w/ 3.24 ERA)

Rube Foster took control of the series in game six. Besides pitching the X-Giants to a 12-3 victory he also led the team in hitting (triple, double and two singles). In game seven, Rube pitched a three hit 2-0 shutout of Philadelphia.

The series ended in seven games when the Cuban X-Giants won five of the first seven games.

“Colored Champions of the East” and “Colored World Champions” - Cuban X-Giants

1904 Cuban X-Giants vs Philadelphia Giants

A three game “Colored Championship” series between the Cuban X-Giants and Philadelphia Giants was held in Atlantic City (New Jersey) on September 1st, 2nd and 3rd to crown the “Colored Champions.” The championship series rosters for both teams were as follows:

Cuban X-Giants		Philadelphia Giants	
Robert Jordan	1B	Sol White	1B
John “Pat” Patterson	2B	Charles Grant	2B
Grant “Homerun” Johnson	SS	William Monroe	SS
James Smith	3B	John Hill	3B
Clarence Williams	C	Robert. Fouts	C
Robert Jordan	C	George Johnson Jr.	C
William Jackson	OF	Pete Hill	OF
Harry “Mike” Moore	OF	Andrew “Jap” Payne	OF
William “Big Bill” Smith	OF	William Bell	OF
Dan McClellan	P	Charles “Kid” Carter	P
George “Walter” Ball	P	Andrew “Rube” Foster	P
James Robinson	P	William Bell	P
Harry Buckner	P	William Horn	P

A summary of the series is as follows:

Game	Location	Date	Winning Team	Score	Winning Pitcher	Losing Pitcher
1	Atlantic City	Sept 1 st	Philadelphia	8-4	Rube Foster	Dan McClellan
2	Atlantic City	Sept 2 nd	Cuban X-Giants	3-1	Harry Buckner	William Horn
3	Atlantic City	Sept 3 rd	Philadelphia	4-2	Rube Foster	Dan McClellan

Behind the pitching of Andrew “Rube” Foster the Philadelphia Giants took the series two games to one for the Cuban X-Giants. Foster struck out eighteen X-Giants in game one and limited them to only two hits in game three. Foster picked up both pitching victories for Philadelphia and led the team in hitting by going 4 for 9 (.445 batting average). George Johnson (.352) and Sol White (.333) also had a good series at the plate for Philadelphia. Bill Jackson and Grant “Homerun” Johnson each went 3 for 12 (.333) for the Cuban X-Giants. John “Pat” Patterson had two homeruns and stole four bases in one game for the Cuban X-Giants. Unfortunately, none of the rest of the X-Giants hitters could deliver. The Cuban X-Giants were held to a .144 team batting average for the series.

“Colored Champions” - Philadelphia Giants

1904 Philadelphia Giants vs All-Cubans

According to Sol White in his book Sol White’s History of Colored Baseball with other Documents on the Early Black Game, 1886-1936 , the Philadelphia Giants played a championship series against a team by the name of the “All Cubans.” The All Cubans were managed by Able Linares and are thought to be the first Cuban team with black players to tour the United States. The All Cubans were led by Cuban Hall of Fame player Luis Bustamante.

The Philadelphia won three of the five games they played against the All Cubans and were crowned “Champions of Cuba.”

“Champions of Cuba” – Philadelphia Giants

1905 Philadelphia Giants vs Brooklyn Royal Giants

In September of 1905 the Brooklyn Royal Giants and Philadelphia Giants met for a three game “championship series” in Atlantic City. Originally the “championship series” was to have been played in August between E.B. Lamar’s Cuban X-Giants and Walter Schlichter’s Philadelphia Giants. Schlichter had proposed a five game series played in both New York City and Philadelphia with a winner take all stipulation. E.B. Lamar countered with a nine to ten game series that would be played on a 60/40 split basis. Schlichter would not back down from his winner take all position. Therefore, the series between the Cuban X-Giants and Philadelphia Giants was never played.

When their series with the Cuban X-Giants fell apart, Walter Schlichter looked for another worthy opponent and found one in the Brooklyn Royal Giants. The Philadelphia Giants dominated their three game series with the Brooklyn Royal Giants. Game one of the series was played in Atlantic City with approximately 1,200 fans in attendance. Emmett Bowman pitched 2-0 shutout to give the first game to Philadelphia. Game two was a hard fought contest going back and forth, but in the end Philadelphia came away with a 7-6 victory. Dan McClellan took the

mound in game three for the Philadelphia Giants. He scattered eight hits while allowing only two runs to score for a 7-2 Philadelphia win. Schlichter's Philadelphia Giants swept the series three games to none for the Brooklyn Royal Giants.

The rosters for the two teams were as follows:

Philadelphia Giants				Brooklyn Royal Giants		
	Sol White	1B			Al Robinson	1B
	Charlie Grant	2B			Ingersol	2B
	Grant "Homerun" Johnson	SS			George Wright	SS
	Harry "Mike" Moore	3B			U. Johnson	3B
	Pete Booker	C			Chappie Johnson	C
	Pete Hill	OF			Andrew "Jap" Payne	OF
	Emmett "Bill" Bowman	OF			W. Nux James	OF
	Dan McClellan	OF			Brown	OF
	Emmett Bowman	P			B. Merritt	P
	Rube Foster	P			Pop Andrews	P
	Dan McClellan	P			Warwick	P

Game	Location	Date	Winning Team	Score	Winning Pitcher	Losing Pitcher
1	Philadelphia	Sept 14 th	Philadelphia	2-0	Emmett Bowman	B. Merritt
2	Philadelphia	Sept 15 th	Philadelphia	7-6	Rube Foster	-
3	Philadelphia	Sept 16 th	Philadelphia	7-2	Dan McClellan	B. Merritt

Preston "Pete" Hill (Philadelphia) was the hitting star of the series by collecting seven hits in eight plate appearances (the box score for one game has yet to be found) for a .875 batting average. Grant "Homerun" Johnson had two doubles and stole two bases in the third game to lead Philadelphia to a 7-2 victory for the series title.

Even though the Philadelphia-Brooklyn series was more like a Playoff Series between the two top teams in the East, the Philadelphia Giants used their victory to declare another "World's Championship."

"World's Colored Championship Club" – Philadelphia Giants

1906 Three Team Double Header for the "Colored Championship" Brooklyn Royal Giants, Chicago Union Giants and Leland Giants

In early May of 1906 the Chicago Tribune announced that the Brooklyn Royal Giants, Chicago Union Giants and Leland Giants would play a three team double header on May 7th at Auburn Park in Chicago (IL) for the "Colored Championship."

Game one was played between the Brooklyn Royal Giants and the Chicago Union Giants. Behind the brilliant shut out pitching of Jack Emery, the Brooklyn Royal Giants took the first game of the double header by a score of 2-0.

The Brooklyn Royal Giants faced off against the Leland Giants in game two. The Leland Giants scored first and held a 2-0 lead going into the seventh inning. The Brooklyn Royal Giants scored two runs in the seventh and one run in their half of the ninth inning to come away with a 3-2 win and the “Colored Championship.”

“Colored Championship” - Brooklyn Royal Giants

1906 Philadelphia Giants vs Cuban X-Giants

The top teams in the East during the 1906 baseball season were the Brooklyn Royal Giants, Cuban X-Giants, Philadelphia Giants and Wilmington Giants. In head to head competition among these four teams, the Philadelphia Giants had the best record. They were 25-11-1 (.694) against their three leading competitors back East.

Under manager Sol White, the Philadelphia Giants were reported to have had a record of 108-31-6 (.777) for the entire 1906 season. They faced the Cuban X-Giants in a championship series in September. Philadelphia swept the series five games to zero for the Cuban X-Giants.

The starting lineups for the two teams were as follows:

Philadelphia Giants		Cuban X Giants	
Sol White	Mgr	Clarence Williams	Mgr
Robert Jordan	1B	Big Bill Gatewood	1B
Charlie Grant	2B	John Henry “Pop” Lloyd	2B
Nathan Harris	SS	John Hill	SS
Bill Francis	3B	W. Nux James	3B
James “Pete” Booker	C	Clarence Williams	C
Pete Hill	OF	Bobby Winston	OF
Dan McClellan	OF	Sherman Barton	OF
Harry “Mike” Moore	OF	Emilio Palomino	OF
Rube Foster	P	Harry Buckner	P
Bill Bowman	P	Bill Gatewood	P
Ray Wilson	P	Perez	P
Dan McClellan	P	Mayo	P

The Philadelphia Giants were led by the pitching of Rube Foster (3-0) and Bill Bowman (2-0). The leading hitters for Philadelphia were Pete Hill (.452 - 28 for 62), Robert Jordan (.342 - 13 for 38) and Dan McClellan (.311 - 19 for 61).

The Cuban X-Giants got good hitting from Clarence Williams (.333) and Sherman Barton (.316). Unfortunately the Cuban X-Giants pitching staff was bested by the Philadelphia hitters.

Rube Foster closed out the series on Labor Day with a 3-2 victory, giving the title to the Philadelphia Giants.

After taking the “Colored World’s Champions” title, Walter “Slick” Schlichter (sports editor for the Philadelphia Item newspaper and general manager of the Philadelphia Giants) issued a challenge to the winner of the American League, National League or “white” World Series

champion to play a three or five games series to see which team “white” or “black” was the best in America. Schlichter got no response from either Major League team.

“Colored World’s Champions” - Philadelphia Giants

1907 Four Team (Brooklyn Royal Giants, Cuban Giants, Cuban Stars and Philadelphia Giants) Eastern Championship Tournament

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

“Colored Champions of the East” – Philadelphia Giants

1908 Philadelphia Giants vs Leland Giants (Chicago)

The Champions of the East (Philadelphia Giants) met the Champions of the West (Leland Giants) in a “Colored Championship” series in Chicago during late July and early August of 1908. The Philadelphia Giants had been a perennial power in the East and had won the “Colored Championship” in 1904 and 1906. The Leland Giants were based in Chicago and played in the Chicago City League. In the Leland Giants played an extensive independent schedule and posted a reported record of 64-21 (.753) for their 1908 season.

The starting line-ups for the two teams were as follows:

Philadelphia Giants		Leland Giants	
Sol White	Mgr	Frank Leland	Mgr
William Weaver	1B	Harry “Mike” Moore	1B
W. Nux James	2B	Emmett Bowman	2B
John Henry “Pop” Lloyd	SS	George Wright	SS
Bill Francis	3B	Dangerfield Talbert	3B
Bruce Petway	C	James “Pete” Booker	C
Frank Duncan	OF	Pete Hill	OF
Jerry “Lefty” Fisher	OF	Andrew “Jap” Payne	OF
Dan McClellan	OF	Bobby Winston	OF
Harvey Martin	P	Rube Foster	P
Dan McClellan	P	Walter Ball	P
Jerry “Lefty” Fisher	P	Bob Garrison	P
Charles “Bugs” Hayman	P		

A summary of the series is as follows:

Game	Location	Date	Winning Team	Score	Winning Pitcher	Losing Pitcher
1	Chicago	July 27 th	Leland	-	-	-
2	Chicago	July 28 th	Philadelphia	5-4	Charles Hayman	Bob Garrison
3	Chicago	July 29 th	Leland	3-2	Walter Ball	Jerry Fisher
4	Chicago	Aug 3 rd	Leland	11-1	Rube Foster	Dan McClellan
5	Chicago	Aug 6 th	Philadelphia	8-2	Harvey Martin	Rube Foster
6	Chicago	Aug 7 th	Philadelphia	7-4	Harvey Martin	Walter Ball

Top Hitters for the Series:

Philadelphia – John Henry “Pop” Lloyd (.500), Pete Duncan (.474), Nux James (.348) and Martin (.300).
Leland – Pete Booker (.333), Bobby Winston (.286) and Big Bill Smith (.273).

Leading Pitchers for the Series:

Philadelphia – Harvey Martin (2-0 w/ 3.00 ERA) and Charles “Bugs” Hayman (1-0)
Leland - Rube Foster (1-1 w/ 4.50 ERA) and Walter Ball (1-1 w/ 5.00 ERA)

“Colored Champions” - No winner was declared, the series ended in a 3-3 tie

1909 Philadelphia Giants vs Leland Giants (Chicago)

The Philadelphia Giants dominated play in the East during the 1909 baseball season. Their main rivals were the Brooklyn Royal Giants, Quaker Giants (Philadelphia) and Cuban Stars.

In the West the St. Paul Gophers, Kansas City Giants and Leland Giants all vied for the top spot. The Leland Giants had a good season. They won the prestigious Chicago City League and had an excellent record for their independent schedule. The Leland Giants did however face tough competition from the St. Paul Gophers and Kansas City Giants. At the end of the season both the St. Paul Gophers and Kansas City Giants claimed to be the “Champions of the West” because they both had defeated the Leland Giants.

When the series to declare a “Colored Championship” began on August 9th in Detroit (MI), the Philadelphia Giants faced the Leland Giants. The Leland Giants started the series at a significant disadvantage because Rube Foster their manager and ace pitcher had suffered a broken leg in July. The rosters for both teams were as follows:

Philadelphia Giants

Dan McClellan	1B
W. Nux James	2B
John Henry “Pop” Lloyd	SS
Bill Francis	3B
Bruce Petway	C
Pete Duncan	OF
Spotswood Poles	OF
E. Patton	OF

Leland Giants

Chappie Johnson	1B
Harry “Mike” Moore	2B
George Wright	SS
Nathan Harris	3B
James “Pete” Booker	C
Charles “Joe” Green	OF
Andrew “Jap” Payne	OF
Pete Hill	OF

Charles “Bugs” Hayman	P	Pat Dougherty	P
Dan McClellan	P	Andrew “Rube” Foster	P
R. Martin	P	George “Walter” Ball	P

A summary of the series is as follows:

Game	Location	Date	Winning Team	Score	Winning Pitcher	Losing Pitcher
1	Detroit	Aug 9 th	Leland Giants	3-1	Pat Dougherty	Dan McClellan
2	Detroit	Aug 10 th	Philadelphia	6-1	Charles Hayman	Walter Ball
3	Detroit	Aug 11 th	Philadelphia	9-1	Charles Hayman	Moran
4	Chicago	Aug 17 th	Philadelphia	12-2	R. Martin	Rube Foster

Top Hitters for the Series:

Philadelphia – Dan McClellan (.500), John Henry “Pop” Lloyd (.462), Nux James (.417) and Pete Duncan (.346)

Leland – Pete Booker (.333), Joe Green (.333), D. Talbert (.313), Chappie Johnson (.300) and George Wright (.300).

Leading Pitchers for the Series:

Philadelphia – Charles “Bugs” Hayman (2-0 w/ 1.00 ERA) and R. Martin (1-0 w/ 2.00 ERA)

Leland – Pat Dougherty (1-0 w/ 4.000 ERA)

“Colored Champions” – Philadelphia Giants

1909 Brooklyn Royal Giants vs Cuban Stars

The New York Age reported on September 02, 1909 that the Brooklyn Royal Giants would play the Cuban Stars in a “championship series.” Five games were scheduled to determine the supremacy of black baseball in the East. The series was scheduled to be played on consecutive weekends in ball parks that were controlled by the National Association of Colored Baseball Clubs of United States and Cuba (NACBC).

Game one was played at the Bronx Oval with 6,000 fans in attendance. Charles Earle took the mound for the Royal Giants and Luis Padron was the starting pitcher for the Cuban Stars. The Brooklyn Royal Giants won the opening game of the series by a score of 5-3. Earle was the starting pitcher for the Royal Giants in game two and faced Cuban Stars ace pitcher Jose Mendez. In a pitcher’s duel Earl defeated Mendez by a score of 2-1. Luis Padron came back in game three and got the win for the Cuban Stars by a score of 4-2. Game four saw Charles Earle face off against Luis Padron. The Brooklyn Royal Giants defeated the Cuban Stars 5-3 to take the series and the title of “Colored Champions of the East.” Charles Earle was the hero for Brooklyn, as he won all three games he started.

“Colored Champions of the East” - Brooklyn Royal Giants

1910 Chicago Giants vs St. Paul Colored Gophers

In the summer of 1910 Frank Leland's Chicago Giants faced off against Phillip "Daddy" Reid's St. Paul Gophers for what was billed as the "Colored Championship of the World." The five game series was played at Lexington Park in St. Paul, Minnesota.

A summary of the 1910 championship series between the Chicago Giants and the St. Paul Gophers is as follows.

Chicago Giants vs St. Paul Gopher World's Championship Series (1910)

Game	Date	Location	Winning Team	Score	Winning Pitcher
1	July 24 th	Lexington Park	St. Paul	4-3	Dicta Johnson
2	July 25 th	Lexington Park	Chicago	5-1	Joe Williams
3	July 26 th	Lexington Park	Chicago	4-1	Walter Ball
4	July 27 th	Lexington Park	Chicago	8-5	Joe Williams
5	July 28 th	Lexington Park	Chicago	6-1	Johnny Taylor

The Twin Cities African American newspaper The Appeal described the Chicago Giants victory as follows:

"They came, they played, they conquered."

"Colored Champions of the World" - Chicago Giants

1911 All Cubans, Brooklyn Royal Giants, Philadelphia Giants, Pittsburg Giants and Washington Giants

The Association of Colored Professional Ball Players of America and Cuba held five team "Colored Championship" series at Union League Park. Game one was played between the Philadelphia Giants and Washington Giants. Game two was played between the Brooklyn Royal Giants and the winner of game one. Game three was to be played between the All Cubans and Pittsburg Giants.

Further details are unknown at this time.

"Colored Champion" - Unknown

1910 Leland Giants

Rube Foster's Leland Giants had an outstanding season in 1910. The Leland Giants had a reported record of 123-6 (.953). When the season was over, Rube Foster offered a challenge to any team in the country to play the Leland Giants for the "Colored Championship of the World." Foster also included a side bet of \$ 3,000.00 in his challenge. Foster was quoted in the media as offering the following challenge:

"If our challenge is not accepted, we will claim the undisputed championship of the world."

No team accepted Foster's challenge and the Leland Giants became the self-proclaimed "Colored Champions" without playing another team to win the title on the field of play.

"Colored Champions of the West" - Leland Giants

1913 New York Lincoln Giants vs Chicago American Giants

The New York Lincoln Giants (Colored Champions of the East) met the Chicago American Giants (Colored Champions of the West) for the 1913 title of "Colored Champions of the World." The New York Lincoln Giants were managed by John Henry "Pop" Lloyd. The leading hitters for the Lincoln Giants were Grant "Home Run" Johnson, Pop Lloyd, Spottswood Poles and Louis Santop. Smokey Joe Williams was the ace of New York's pitching staff. Rube Foster was the manager and owner of the Chicago American Giants. Foster's top hitters were Jess Barber, Pete Hill, Ben Taylor and Candy Jim Taylor. Chicago's pitching staff was anchored by Bill Lindsay, Bill Gatewood, Dicta Johnson, Charles Dougherty and Rube Foster

The series began on July 10th at Olympic Field in New York City. Originally it was reported that the two teams would play a 15 game series. The first five games of the series were played in New York City. The New York Lincoln Giants won two games, the Chicago American Giants won one game, one game ended in a tie and one game was not played. The reason that one game was not played stemmed from a controversy between the two teams regarding the contract of Frank "The Red Ant" Wickware. The Chicago American Giants had Wickware on their roster and the New York Lincoln Giants contended that they owned his contract and he was not eligible to play for Chicago. When Rube Foster's American Giants team showed up at the ball park for the game, Frank Wickware was refused entrance to the ball park. Rube Foster's response was that he took his entire team went back to their hotel and refused to play the game.

The series moved to Chicago's Schorling Park on July 27th. Smokey Joe Williams was the hero of the series for the Lincoln Giants. Over a 20 day period he pitched 11 games and pitched 6 games over one 5 day period. New York took the last game of the series which was played on August 13th by a score of 4-1 over the American Giants. The victory gave the New York Lincoln Giants seven wins in the twelve games played and the title of "Colored World's Champions."

Box and line scores have been found for ten games of the games that were played during the series.

Game	Score	Winning Team	Winning Pitcher	Losing Pitcher
1	8-0	Lincoln Giants	Smokey Joe Williams	Bill Lindsay
2.	3-1	Lincoln Giants	Lee Wade	Bill Gatewood
3	9-5	Chicago American Giants	Bill Gatewood	Smokey Joe Williams
4	2-1	Chicago American Giants	Bill Lindsay	Lee Wade
5	7-6	Chicago American Giants	Sam Crawford	Smokey Joe Williams
6	11-6	Lincoln Giants	Smokey Joe Williams	Bill Gatewood
7	14-2	Lincoln Giants	Jude Gans	Bombo Pedroso
8	3-2	Lincoln Giants	Smokey Joe Williams	Sam Crawford
9	3-0	Chicago American Giants	John Taylor	Smokey Joe Williams
10	4-1	Lincoln Giants	Smokey Joe Williams	-

“Colored Champions of the World” – New York Lincoln Giants

1914 Harrisburg Giants vs Pittsburg Giants

In May of 1914 the Harrisburg Telegraph and the Patriot newspapers both published in Harrisburg (PA) announced that their local team the Harrisburg Giants under the management of C.W. Strothers would play the Pittsburg Giants who were managed by legendary ball player Frank Grant for the “Colored Championship of the East.”

The three game series was played at Island Park in Harrisburg. The Harrisburg Giants won games one and two of the series. They took game one by a score of 8 to 7 and claimed the title in the second game by a score of 5 to 2. Grant’s Pittsburg Giants won game three by a decisive score of 12-5 but it was too little too late for Pittsburg.

“Colored Champions of the East” – Harrisburg Giants

1914 Brooklyn Royal Giants vs Chicago American Giants

In August of 1914 Nat Strong sent his Brooklyn Royal Giants team to Chicago to play Rube Foster’s Chicago American Giants for the “Colored World’s Championship.” The most interesting component of the series was the fact that the Brooklyn Royal Giants were representing black baseball in the East and they were clearly not the best team in the eastern part of the United States. What the Brooklyn Royal Giants did have, however, was Nat Strong as the team’s owner and he was a booking wizard.

The top players for the 1914 Brooklyn Royal Giants were Phil Bradley (1B), William “Dizzy” Dismukes (P), Charles Earle (OF), Joe Hewitt (SS), Jimmie Lyons (OF), Louis Santop (C) and Doc Sykes (P).

The Chicago American Giants were led by Rube Foster (P/Mgr), Jude Gans (OF), Pete Hill (OF), John Henry “Pop” Lloyd (SS), Bill Monroe (2B), Bruce Petway (C) and Smokey Joe Williams (P).

The Chicago Defender reported on September 12th that the Chicago American Giants took the championship series in five straight games by the scores of 3-0 (8/30), 7-0 (8/31), 7-6 (9/02), 3-1 (9/03) and 3-2 (9/04).

“Colored World’s Champions” – Chicago American Giants

1915 New York Lincoln Stars vs Chicago American Giants

The New York Lincoln Stars were considered the “Colored Champions of the East” in 1915. The Lincoln Stars were led by the hitting of John Henry “Pop” Lloyd (.398), Louis Santop (.318), Bill Pierce (.298), Bill Pettus (.296) and Spottswood Poles (.284). Dick “Cannonball” Redding was the ace of the Lincoln Stars pitching staff. In games against top level competition, Redding posted a 24-7 won-loss record during the regular season. Doc Sykes, Frank Harvey, Juan Padrone and Lee Wade rounded out the Lincoln Stars pitching staff.

The “Colored Champions of the West” for 1915 were the Chicago American Giants. The American Giants were owned and managed by Rube Foster. Chicago’s top hitters for the 1915 season were Jude Gans (.328), Hurley Mc Nair (.311) and Pete Hill (.255). The starting pitching rotation for the American Giants included Dick Whitworth, Frank “The Red Ant” Wickware, Bill Gatewood and Tom Johnson.

The Lincoln Stars and American Giants met in Chicago, Illinois for a championship series in late July through mid August of 1915. Going into the last game of the series, the two teams were tied with four wins each. The final game of the series was called after four innings with the Lincoln Stars leading by one run. The final game was never completed or re-played. Rube Foster, the owner and manager of the Chicago American Giants, declared the series a tie. The Lincoln Stars claimed the series victory by winning five games to Chicago’s four wins.

Box scores and line scores have been found for eight of the games played in the series.

Date	Winning Team	Score	Winning Pitcher	Losing Pitcher
July 31 st	Chicago American Giants	11-3	Frank Wickware	Frank Harvey
Aug 1 st	Lincoln Stars	11-3	Dick Redding	Tom Johnson
Aug 2 nd	Chicago American Giants	2-1	Tom Johnson	Lee Wade
Aug 7 th	Chicago American Giants	4-3	Dick Whitworth	Dick Redding
Aug 8 th	Lincoln Stars	13-0	Dick Redding	Frank Wickware
Aug 9 th	Lincoln Stars	11-4	Lee Wade	Rube Foster
Aug 10 th	Chicago American Giants	2-1	Frank Wickware	Doc Sykes
Aug 10 th	Lincoln Stars	1-0	Frank Harvey	Frank Wickware
Aug 12 th	Chicago American Giants	9-4		

To further support their claim as “World’s Champions” the Lincoln Stars followed up their victory over Chicago with a series against the Indianapolis ABC’s who were considered the second best team in the West during the 1915 season. New York defeated Indianapolis four games to two to win the series.

“Colored Champions of the World” – Chicago American Giants

1916 Chicago American Giants vs Indianapolis ABC’s

In October of 1916 the Chicago American Giants met the Indianapolis ABC's for the "Colored Championship of the West." Rube Foster's Chicago American Giants team was led by the hitting of John Henry "Pop" Lloyd, Preston "Pete" Hill, Leroy Grant, Pete Duncan and Brodie Francis. Tom Johnson, Dick Whitworth and Frank "Red Ant" Wickware were the top pitchers for Chicago.

C. I. Taylor fielded a strong team for the Indianapolis ABC's. Ben Taylor (first base), Bingo De Moss (second base), Mortie Clark (shortstop), Candy Jim Taylor (third base), Oscar Charleston (outfield) and Dave Malarcher were the top offensive stars of Indianapolis. Dizzy Dismukes was the ace of the pitching staff for the ABC's.

The first four games of the series were played in Indianapolis, giving the ABC's a real home team advantage from the outset. Chicago took game one by a score of 5-3 on a winning base hit by Pete Hill. The Indianapolis ABC's shut out the Chicago American Giants in games two and three by identical scores of 1-0 in both contests. Indianapolis continued to dominate Chicago and won game four by a score of 8-2 behind the pitching of Dizzy Dismukes. Moving the series to Chicago didn't help the American Giants as they were blown out of game five by a score of 12-8. Behind the brilliant pitching of Dizzy Dismukes who won all three of the games he started, the Indianapolis ABC's easily defeated the Chicago American Giants four games to one to claim the bragging rights of the best colored baseball team in the West.

No championship series between teams from the East and West was played in 1916.

A summary of the 1916 Chicago American Giants vs Indianapolis ABCs series is as follows:

Game	Location	Date	Winning Team	Score	Winning Pitcher	Losing Pitcher
1	Indianapolis	Oct 21 st	Chicago	5-3	Tom Johnson	Dicta Johnson
2	Indianapolis	Oct 22 nd	Indianapolis	1-0	Dizzy Dismukes	Frank Wickware
3	Indianapolis	Oct 24 th	Indianapolis	9-0	Dicta Johnson	Rube Tyree
4	Indianapolis	Oct 26 th	Indianapolis	8-2	Dizzy Dismukes	Tom Johnson
5	Chicago	Oct 29 th	Indianapolis	12-8	Dizzy Dismukes	Rube Tyree

Top Hitters for the Series:

Chicago – Pete Duncan (.333) and Judy Gans (.333)

Indianapolis – Candy Jim Taylor (.529), Oscar Charleston (.389) and Bingo De Moss (.286)

Leading Pitchers for the Series:

Chicago – Tom Johnson (1-2 w/ 6.34 ERA), Ruby Tyree (0-1 w/ 4.13 ERA) and Frank Wickware (0-1 w/ 5.16 ERA)

Indianapolis – Dizzy Dismukes (3-0 w/ 2.74 ERA) and Dicta Johnson (1-1 w/ 2.82 ERA).

"Colored Champions of the West" - Indianapolis ABC's

1916 Brooklyn Royal Giants vs Lincoln Giants

In 1916 the Brooklyn Royal Giants and Lincoln Giants played a ten game series for the “Colored Championship of Greater New York.” Each team won four games and two games ended in a tie. It does not appear that a tie breaking games was ever played.

“Colored Championship of Greater New York - Tie

1917 Brooklyn Royal Giants vs Lincoln Giants

On May 7, 1917 the Brooklyn Royal Giants and Lincoln Giants began what was supposed to have been a ten game championship series for the “Colored Championship of Greater New York.” The series lasted until mid-September and was extended to twelve games. The majority of the games were played at Olympic Stadium in Harlem.

The series featured the pitching of Andrew “Stringbean” Williams staff for the Brooklyn Giants and Smokey Joe Williams for the Lincoln Giants. The Lincoln Giants won three of the first four games before the Royal Giants took a double header from the Lincoln Giants. Andrew “String bean” William pitched a 6-0 shutout in the first game and Brooklyn took the second game by a score of 11-1. After ten games newspaper accounts report that the Brooklyn Giants held on to a slim lead with a 5-4-1 advantage. Scores for the final two games have not yet been found. Therefore, no definitive winner can be declared.

“Colored Championship of Greater New York - Undetermined

1917 New York Lincoln Stars vs Chicago American Giants

The New York Lincoln Giants with the pitching of Smoky Joe Williams were considered the top team in the East in 1917. The Brooklyn Royal Giants, Cuban Stars (East), Hilldale and the New York Lincoln Stars also fielded formidable teams in the East during the 1917 baseball season. The New York Lincoln Stars were led by the hitting of Zach Pettus and Louis Santop. Frank “Doc” Sykes, Ad Langford and Gunboat Thompson anchored the Stars pitching staff.

The Chicago American Giants were founded by Andrew “Rube” Foster in 1911 and from their very first year they were always the team to beat in the West. The 1917 American Giants were led by the pitching of Dick “Cannonball” Redding and Tom Williams. The top hitters for Chicago were Leroy Grant, Pete Hill and John Henry “Pop” Lloyd. During the 1917 season the Chicago American Giants had no problem dominating such teams in the West as the Indianapolis ABCs, Cuban Stars (West), Jewell’s ABCs, All Nations, Kansas City Tigers and the Leland Giants.

When the 1917 baseball season concluded, the fans expected to see the two best pitchers in black baseball hook up for a championship series. These pitchers were Smoky Joe Williams of the New York Lincoln Giants and Dick “Cannonball” Redding of the Chicago American Giants. Instead the New York Lincoln Stars traveled to Chicago in August to play the American Giants in the title series.

Chicago was at a disadvantage when the series started as neither of their ace pitchers (Dick “Cannonball” Redding and Tom Williams) were available to pitch. The series was a hard fought battle with each team taking alternate wins. Going into game seven, the two teams were tied with three wins each. The Chicago American Giants won a 17-7 slugfest in the final game and claimed the “Colored Championship.”

A summary of the 1917 championship series between the Chicago American Giants and New York Lincoln Stars is as follows:

Game	Location	Date	Winning Team	Score	Winning Pitcher	Losing Pitcher
1	Chicago	Aug 5 th	Chicago	6-4	Dick Whitworth	Frank Sykes
2	Chicago	Aug 5 th	New York	6-3	Ad Langford	Judy Gans
3	Chicago	Aug 13 th	Chicago	1-0	Frank Wickware	Frank Sykes
4	Chicago	Aug 14 th	New York	4-0	Gunboat Thompson	Tom Johnson
5	Chicago	Aug 15 th	New York	10-8	Ad Langford	Frank Wickware
6	Chicago	Aug 16 th	Chicago	7-0	Juan Padrone	Gunboat Thompson
7	Chicago	Aug 17 th	Chicago	17-7	Tom Johnson	Frank Sykes

Top Hitters for the Series:

Chicago – Leroy Grant (.482), John Henry “Pop” Lloyd (.359), Jess Barbour (.333) and Harry Bauchman (.333).

New York – Zach Pettus (.357), Ashby Dunbar (.296) and Louis Santop (.296).

Leading Pitchers for the Series:

Chicago – Juan Padrone (1-0 w/ 0.00 ERA), Dick Whitworth (1-0), Tom Johnson (1-1) and Frank Wickware (1-1).

New York – Ad Langford (2-0) and Gunboat Thompson (1-1).

“Colored Champions of the World” – Chicago American Giants

1918 Brooklyn Royal Giants vs Lincoln Giants

For the third year in a row the Brooklyn Royal Giants and Lincoln Giants played a twelve game series (six double headers) for the “Colored Championship of Greater New York.” The series was played at Olympic Field in Harlem. It began right after the start of the regular season and ended on September 2nd.

The Brooklyn Royal Giants got off to fast start and won five of the first six games. The Lincoln Giants lone victory in the first six games came on a 1-0 shutout thrown by Smokey Joe Williams over John Donaldson. The Lincoln Giants came on strong as the series went into the final six games. In the sixth double header that was played on September 2nd at Olympic Field, the Lincoln Giants won both games by the scores of 3-2 and 4-2 to tie the championship series at six games each. It does not appear that a tie breaking game was ever played.

“Colored Championship of Greater New York - Tie

1919 Atlantic City Bacharach Giants vs Hilddale

In September of 1919 the Atlantic City Bacharach Giants met Hilddale for the “Colored Championship of the East” Atlantic City was led by the hitting of Spottswood Poles (.441), John Henry “Pop” Lloyd (.408), Bill Handy .338 and Ben Taylor (.296). Dick Cannonball Redding was the ace of the Bacharach Giants’ pitching staff. Ben Johnson, Jesse “Mountain” Hubbard, Roy Roberts, Dick Whitworth and Frank “The Red Ant” Wickware rounded out Atlantic City’s pitching staff. Hilddale’s top hitters included Otto Briggs, Dick Lundy (.348), George Johnson (.328), Tom Allen (.283) and Louis Santop. Hilddale’s pitching staff was made up of Phil Cockrell, Willis “Pud” Flournoy, Otis “Lefty” and Tom Williams.

After the first eight games of the series had been played, neither team had the edge. Each team had won four games. The ninth and deciding game was played at Shibe Park in Philadelphia with over 5,000 fans in attendance. Dick “Cannonball” Redding took the mound for the Bacharach Giants. Hilddale countered with their ace, Tom Williams. Cannonball Redding pitched a two hit 5-0 shut out victory for Hilddale to give his team the championship.

“Colored Champions of the East” – Atlantic City Bacharach Giants.