

The Demise of Negro League Baseball

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The Demise of Negro League Baseball

There has long been controversy and disagreement as to when Negro League baseball in the United States ended. Typically there are five different dates that different people have used to mark the end of Negro League baseball. These dates are as follows:

- **1947** – This is the year that Jackie Robinson broke into Major League baseball with the Brooklyn Dodgers. Branch Rickey of the Brooklyn Dodgers had signed Jackie Robinson of the Kansas City Monarchs to a Major League baseball contract in 1945. The signing of Jackie Robinson and his debut with the Brooklyn Dodgers on April 15, 1947 against the Boston Braves is considered the beginning of the integration of Major League Baseball.
- **1950** – By 1950 the Negro National League had folded, many of the superstars of the “old” Negro Leagues (Buck Leonard, James “Cool Pappa” Bell, Josh Gibson, Willie Wells and others) were gone from the game, most of the remaining established Negro League stars (Satchel Paige, Roy Campanella, Monte Irvin, Larry Doby, Hank Thompson, Willard Brown and others) of the Negro National League and Negro American League had signed with Major League baseball organizations and it was evident to everyone that the quality of play in the Negro American League was beginning to decline dramatically.
- **1955** – When the 1955 Negro American League season ended the league had been reduced to six teams. This was a dramatic departure from the twelve Negro League teams that had played the 1948 season. Gone were teams like the Homestead Grays, Newark Eagles, New York Cubans, Cleveland Buckeyes and Baltimore Elite Giants. These teams had been an integral part of the foundation of Negro League baseball. The Indianapolis Clowns under the ownership of Syd Pollock dropped out of the league to pursue a full time barnstorming schedule. Tom Baird would sell his best twelve players to Major and Minor League organizations and then sell what was left of the team to Ted Rasberry. In addition, the up and coming stars of the league (Hank Aaron, Ernie Banks, Elston Howard, Willie Mays and others) were all sold to the Major League.
- **1959** – This is the year that the last Major League team finally integrated their Major League roster. Elijah “Pumpsie” Green broke in with the Boston Red Sox of the American League in 1959, making the Red Sox the last Major League team to integrate.
- **1960** – The year the last Negro League East-West All Star game was played in Comiskey Park in Chicago.

From this researcher's perspective, none of these dates are historically accurate. While it is true that the quality of play in the Negro National League and Negro American League diminished as soon as black ball players left to sign with Major League baseball organizations, the Negro American League played a full schedule of games through the 1962 season. The 1950's are also particularly important to Negro League and Major League baseball because a significant number of Major League players got their start playing for teams in the Negro Leagues. In addition a large number of future Major League ball players got their start in professional baseball playing with a Negro Minor League team or for a local black team.

Negro League baseball had presented black baseball players with the opportunity to become stars in their chosen profession. The thing that all Negro League players wanted the most, the chance to play in the Major Leagues, would ironically lead to the downfall of Negro League baseball.

Negro League Baseball Undergoes a Major Reorganization

The first major change in Negro League baseball after Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier came after the 1948 season when the Negro National League announced it was formally dissolving on November 30, 1948. The Negro National League had been the very foundation of Negro League baseball since it was founded in 1920 by Rube Foster. In 1948 the Negro National League and Negro American League fielded the following teams:

Negro National League

Newark Eagles
New York Cubans
Baltimore Elite Giants
Homestead Grays
Philadelphia Stars
New York Black Yankees

Negro American League

Birmingham Black Barons
Kansas City Monarchs
Cleveland Buckeyes
Memphis Red Sox
Indianapolis Clowns
Chicago American Giants

When Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in 1947 and the Negro National League folded after the 1948 season, five major changes took place in the reorganization of Negro League baseball.

1. Abe and Effa Manley sold their two star players. Larry Doby was sold to the Cleveland Indians for \$ 20,000 and Monte Irvin was sold to the New York Giants for \$ 5,000. Effa Manley then sold what was left of her team to Memphis businessman W.H. Young and his partner Hugh Cherry. Effa Manley was very bitter about being forced to sell the Eagles. Having suffered serious financial losses for the past two seasons, the Manleys did not feel they

had any other options. Effa Manley blamed both Branch Rickey and the Negro League fans for the demise of the black baseball. She was quoted in the New York Times (November 10, 1948) as saying:

“We are not quitters, but it is impossible for us to continue. The gullibility and stupidity of Negro baseball fans themselves in believing that he (Branch Rickey) has been interested in anything more than the clicking of the turnstiles...”

The Newark Eagles were then moved to Houston for the 1949 season and would land in New Orleans for the 1951 campaign.

2. The Homestead Grays dropped out of the Negro National League and moved south to barnstorm and play in the Negro American Association. The Grays would play the 1949 and 1950 seasons before folding.
3. The New York Black Yankees dropped out of the Negro National League and played a barnstorming schedule for the 1949 and 1950 seasons before folding.
4. The Cleveland Buckeyes were moved to Louisville for the 1949 season and became the Louisville Buckeyes for one season before folding.
5. The Negro American League expanded to incorporate the four remaining former Negro National League teams and was divided into an Eastern and Western division for the 1949 season.

Negro American League – East

Baltimore Elite Giants
New York Cubans
Philadelphia Stars
Indianapolis Clowns
Louisville Buckeyes

Negro American League – West

Kansas City Monarchs
Birmingham Black Barons
Houston Eagles
Memphis Red Sox
Chicago American Giants

Negro League Baseball in the late 1940's

One of the first indicators that Major and Minor League baseball might finally become integrated was the establishment of the Major League Committee on Baseball Integration in 1945. The purpose of the committee was to study the issue of black players playing in the Major and Minor Leagues. The committee included the following individuals:

- Judge Joseph Rainey – Pennsylvania State Athletic Commissioner
- Branch Rickey – Brooklyn Dodgers
- Larry Mc Phail – New York Yankees
- Sam Lacy – Sport writer for the *Afro American*

While the committee accomplished very little, it showed that Major League baseball had a genuine interest in integration. It also helped set the stage for the Brooklyn Dodgers signing Jackie Robinson and the integration of Major and Minor League baseball.

As soon as Jackie Robinson broke in with the Brooklyn Dodgers of the National League, the Negro League team owners saw that they would be fighting a losing battle in an attempt to keep their stars from signing with Major League clubs. The owners started selling their star players in an attempt to at least make some money, rather than have their players leave the team, sign with a Major League club and receive no compensation themselves. Some of the key transactions that took place during this time were:

- John Wright was signed by the Montreal Royals of the International League (Brooklyn Dodgers farm team) on January 29, 1946. Wright became the second player after Jackie Robinson to play for the Montreal Royals. Wright would appear in only 2 games for the Royals before being released. He finished the year with Three Rivers of the Canadian-American League where he posted a won-loss record of 12-8 with a 4.15 earned run average. Wright was back in the Negro National League with the Homestead Grays for the 1947 season.
- Roy Campanella and Don Newcombe were signed by the Brooklyn Dodgers and assigned to Nashua of the New England League on April 4, 1946.
- Roy Partlow was signed by the Brooklyn Dodgers and assigned to the Montreal Royals of the International League on May 14, 1946. Partlow would appear in 10 games for the Royals and post a won-loss record of 2-0 with an earned run average of 5.59 before being released. He finished the year with Three Rivers of the Canadian-American League. Partlow was back in the Negro National League with the Philadelphia Stars for the 1947 season.
- The Brooklyn Dodgers purchased the contract of Jackie Robinson from the Montreal Royals on April 10, 1947.
- Effa Manley, owner of the Newark Eagles, sold Larry Doby to the Cleveland Indians of the American League for \$ 20,000 on July 3, 1947.
- St. Louis Browns signed Willard “Homerun” Brown and Hank Thompson for undisclosed financial considerations on July 17, 1947.
- St. Louis Browns took an option on Lorenzo “Piper” Davis. Tom Hayes, owner of Birmingham Black Barons, allowed the option to expire on August 3, 1947 because he wanted Davis to go straight to the Major Leagues and the Browns wanted to assign him to their farm team in Elmira, New York.

- Branch Rickey of the Brooklyn Dodgers paid a reported \$ 15,000 for Dan Bankhead's Memphis Red Sox contract on August 24, 1947. Dan Bankhead would make his Major League debut two days later.
- Effa Manley sold Monte Irvin to the New York Giants of the National League for \$ 5,000.
- Tom Baird, owner of Kansas City Monarchs, sold Satchel Paige to Bill Veeck and the Cleveland Indians on July 7, 1948. The Monarchs received \$ 15,000, booking agent Abe Saperstein received \$ 15,000 and Satchel Paige received a \$ 10,000 signing bonus. Paige's contract with the Indians called for him to be paid \$ 5,000 per month.
- Ernie Wright, owner of the Cleveland Buckeyes, sold Sam Jethroe to the Brooklyn Dodgers for \$ 5,000 on July 8, 1948. Jethroe was assigned to the Montreal Royals of the International League.
- Alex Pompez, owner of the New York Cubans, sold Orestes "Minnie" Minoso and Jose Santiago to the Cleveland Indians for \$ 25,000 on August 28, 1948.
- Tom Hayes, owner of the Birmingham Black Barons, sold Artie Wilson to the Oakland Oaks of the Pacific Coast League for \$ 10,000 in 1948.
- Alex Pompez of the New York Cubans sold Dave Barnhill, Ray Dandridge and Ray Noble as a package to the New York Giants for \$ 20,000 in 1948.
- Tom Baird, owner of the Kansas City Monarchs, sold Bob Thurman and Earl Taborn to New York Yankees.
- Tom Hayes sold Alonzo Perry to the Oakland Oaks for \$ 5,000 in 1949.

Several strategies were employed by the owners to save the Negro Leagues. One of the strategies that Negro League owners tried to employ in order to save their teams and the Negro Leagues was to try to develop a working relationship with Major League teams. As soon as the color barrier was broken the following working relationships were developed between Negro League teams and Major League organizations.

Negro League Team	Major League Working Relationship	
Chicago American Giants	with	St. Louis Browns
Kansas City Monarchs	with	New York Yankees
New York Cubans	with	New York Giants

Negro League owners understood the seriousness of the threat that Major League baseball presented when Jackie Robinson was signed in October 23, 1945 by Branch Rickey and the Brooklyn Dodgers. One of the first things the team owners did at the

Negro American League and Negro National League Joint Meeting in Chicago in December of 1945 was to adopt league constitutions and contracts modeled after Major League baseball. This was an attempt by team owners to protect themselves legally and structure black baseball more like the Major Leagues.

In 1946 the Cleveland Buckeyes signed a “white” pitcher by the name of Eddie Klepp. The idea was to integrate the Negro League with white players, develop these white players and if possible sell them to the Major Leagues. The experiment was short lived and Klepp was released before the end of the season.

Another attempt to save Negro League baseball was by Abe Saperstein when he formed a Major Negro League on the West Coast. In 1946 Abe Saperstein formed the Negro Pacific Coast League, also referred to as the West Coast Colored League or West Coast Baseball Association. The league included the following six teams: Fresno Tigers, Los Angeles White Sox, Oakland Larks, Portland Rose Buds, San Francisco Sea Lions and Seattle Steelheads. The league experienced problems with fan support, securing stadiums to play ball games and funding problems. The Negro Pacific Coast League folded less than 30 games into the season. Saperstein had owned the Seattle franchise in the league. He took his Seattle Steelheads team and put them on the road as a barnstorming team. First they were called the Cincinnati Crescents and later became the Harlem Globetrotters baseball team.

Not only did the Negro League have Major League baseball to worry about in signing their best players but also in 1946 Jorge Pasquel (Mexican League President and owner of the Vera Cruz team) began raiding the Negro Leagues for top players. Pasquel was one of the richest men in Mexico and had the money to lure top players to Mexico. Pasquel was able to sign the following stars of the Negro Leagues: Ray Dandridge, Martin Dihigo, Ray Brown, Bill Cash, Theo Smith and Wilmer Fields. Loss of these marquee players had a dramatic impact on the teams they played for in the Negro Leagues and on fan attendance.

The Negro American League and Negro National League would play two all star games in 1946. The first game was played in Griffith Stadium in Washington, D.C. The East squad beat the West by a score of 5 to 3. Bill Byrd picked up the win for the East and Vibert Clarke took the loss for the West. The second game was played at Comiskey Park in Chicago. The West got their revenge by beating the East by a score of 4 to 1. Felix Evans got the win for the West and Bill Byrd took the loss for the East.

The 1947 season would start to see significant changes in Negro League baseball that would begin to spell the end of the Negro National League and a major reorganization of the Negro American League.

The New York Black Yankees had seen a significant drop in game attendance over the previous two years and made the decision to relocate the team. The team was moved to upstate New York for the 1947 Negro National League season. The team was based in Rochester and played their home games in Rochester, Buffalo and Syracuse. The Black

Yankees strategy did not work and in 1948 they dropped out of the Negro National League to pursue a barnstorming schedule.

Negro League owners still tried to remain optimistic with the struggles of trying to compete with Major League baseball. The following officers were elected by the Negro National League on January 6, 1947 for the upcoming season.

Reverend John J. Johnson	President
Alex Pompez	Vice President
Abraham Manley	Treasurer
Curtis A. Leak	Secretary

At the Negro National League Meeting in New York in January 1947, an application was made by Gus Greenlee for a franchise in Montreal and another group proposed a franchise in Brooklyn. In 1947 there were several proposals to expand the Negro American League. At the February 1947 Joint Negro American League and Negro National League Joint Meetings in Chicago, proposals were discussed to expand the Negro American League with teams in Detroit and St. Louis. The St. Louis Stars proposal by George Mitchell was approved with the caveat that the Detroit team must also enter the league. The Detroit proposal had a strong backing from Jesse Owens, Wingfield S. Welch and Joseph Brown. The major problem with the Detroit proposal was that it was unclear if the Detroit team would be able to use Briggs Stadium for their home games. Detroit was not given a franchise. This action also meant that St. Louis would not be able to join the league. During the Negro American Meeting in Chicago, in December 1947, Jim Taylor applied for a franchise in Nashville and Wingfield S. Welch applied for a franchise in New Orleans. Both of these applications were voted down during the Negro American League meetings in December 1947 in Chicago. During the Joint League Meetings, both leagues voted to continue the five-year ban on players who had jumped to the Mexican League. Willie Jefferson, Ted "Double Duty" Radcliffe, Roy Welmaker, Marvin Williams and Parnell Woods were the players who were banned during this action. It was also during the 1947 Negro American League and Negro National League Meetings that the leagues voted to change the format of the Negro League World Series to follow the model of "white" organized baseball. Under this new format, Negro League World Series play would be restricted to the cities of the teams participating in the championship series. In the past the Negro League World Series games toured the country.

The Negro American League and Negro National League opened the 1947 season with a strong compliment of teams.

Negro American League

Birmingham Black Barons
Chicago American Giants
Cleveland Buckeyes
Indianapolis Clowns

Owner – Management

Tom Hayes
Dr. J.B. Martin
Ernie Wright and Wilbur Hayes
Syd Pollock

Kansas City Monarchs
Memphis Red Sox

T.Y. Baird and J.L. Wilkerson
Dr. B.B. Martin and Dr. W.S. Martin

Negro National League

Owner – Management

Baltimore Elite Giants
Homestead Grays
Newark Eagles
New York Black Yankees
New York Cubans
Philadelphia Stars

Tom Wilson and Vernon Green
Rufus Jackson, Ethel Posey and Seay Posey
Abe and Effa Manley
James “Soldier Boy” Semler
Alejandro Pompey
Ed Bolden

One of the biggest events in Negro League baseball in 1947 was the death of Josh Gibson. Satchel Paige and Josh Gibson had been the two biggest stars of Negro League baseball for the past decade. Gibson was coming off an outstanding year in 1946 when he led the Negro National League in homeruns with 16 and hit over .350 for the Homestead Grays. With Jackie Robinson debuting for the Brooklyn Dodgers in the National League, the only question on many people’s minds was when were Josh and Satchel going to join Jackie in the Majors. The passing of Josh Gibson was a blow to all of baseball.

The 1947 Negro National League season ended with the New York Cubans being crowned champions. The New York Cubans won the title while leading the league in hitting with a .292 team batting average. The Cubans also got outstanding pitching performances from Luis Tiant and Pat Scantlebury. The official Negro National League batting and pitching leaders for the 1947 season were:

Title	Player	Team	
Batting Average	Luis Marquez	Homestead	.417
	John Washington	Baltimore	.392
	Henry Kimbro	Baltimore	.363
	Lorenzo Cabrera	New York Cubans	.352
	Bob Davis	Baltimore	.340
Homeruns	Monte Irvin	Newark	14
	John Davis	Newark	13
	Leonard Pearson	Newark	10
	Luke Easter	Homestead	10
Stolen Bases	Luis Marquez	Homestead	29
	Butch Davis	Baltimore	27
	Monte Irvin	Newark	19
Wins (Pitching)	Max Manning	Newark	15-6
	Rufus Lewis	Newark	11-6
	Pat Scantlebury	New York Cubans	10-5

	Luis Tiant, Sr.	New York Cubans	10-0
Strikeouts (Pitching)	Bob Romby	Baltimore	107
	Max Manning	Newark	104
	Rufus Lewis	Newark	99
	Henry Miller	Philadelphia	86
	Lino Donso	New York Cubans	82

The big story of the 1947 Negro National League season was 41-year-old Luis “Lefty” Tiant, Sr. who pitched the New York Cubans to the Negro National League title with a perfect 10-0 record. Tiant also led the Negro National League with three (3) shutouts. In seventeen (17) starts, Luis pitched eight (8) complete games. Tiant would retire at the end of the season after playing Negro League baseball since 1930.

The Cleveland Buckeyes would win the Negro American League 1947 championship behind phenomenal hitting and strong pitching. Cleveland had a team batting average of .301 for the entire season. The hitters dominated the 1947 season. Besides Cleveland’s league leading .301 batting average, three of the five remaining teams hit over .280 as a team batting average: Birmingham Black Barons (.297), Kansas City Monarchs (.289) and Memphis Red Sox (.284). The official Negro American League batting and pitching leaders for the 1947 season were:

Title	Player	Team	
Batting Average	John Ritchey	Chicago	.381
	Artie Wilson	Birmingham	.373
	Sam Hairston	Indianapolis	.361
	Lorenzo Davis	Birmingham	.360
	John Bissant	Chicago	.353
	Quincy Troupe	Cleveland	.352
	Archie Ware	Cleveland	.349
	Hank Thompson	Kansas City	.344
	Sam Jethroe	Cleveland	.340
Homeruns	Bob Boyd	Memphis	4
Wins (Pitching)	James La Marque	Kansas City	12-2
	Chet Brewer	Cleveland	12-6
	Vibert Clarke	Cleveland	11-2
	Robert Sharpe	Memphis	8-2
Earned Run Average	Curtis Hollingsworth	Birmingham	1.80
	Clyde Williams	Cleveland	1.93
	Alonzo Boone	Cleveland	2.67
	John Ford Smith	Kansas City	2.67

Strikeouts (Pitching)	James La Marque	Kansas City	99
	Chet Brewer	Cleveland	81
	Vibert Clarke	Cleveland	75

In the Negro League East West All Star game, the West beat the East by a score of 5 to 2. Dan Bankhead got the win and Max Manning took the loss.

One of the highlights of black baseball in the 1940's was the barnstorming series between Satchel Paige's All Stars and Bob Feller's All Stars. From September 30 to October 26, 1946, Satchel Paige and Bob Feller faced off in a barnstorming series of about thirty games across the United States. In cities from New York to Los Angeles, these games consistently drew crowds in excess of 20,000 fans. Satchel Paige's All Stars included: Hilton Smith, Buck O'Neil, Barney Brown, Max Manning and Artie Wilson. Bob Feller's team included: Phil Rizzuto, Bob Lemon, Stan Musial, Mickey Vernon, Charlie Keller and other Major League stars.

The Negro American League and Negro National League owners also tried to become part of "organized" baseball in 1948 when they applied for admission to the National Association of Professional Baseball Clubs as "minor" league organizations. The Negro Leagues hit another roadblock in early 1948 when George M. Trautman, President of the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues, notified the Negro National League and Negro American League that their applications to join his organization had been turned down. Trautman cited "territorial rights" as the major barrier for the black leagues being admitted into the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues. The fact that Negro League teams played in Major and Minor ballparks was presented as a conflict of interest. In his press release of February 25, 1948, Trautman could offer no solution to the problem.

Before the 1948 Negro National League season began owners met and agreed to put a salary limit on the monthly payrolls of each ball club. A \$ 6,000 per month salary cap was established for each Negro National League team. The salary cap was an effort to establish financial stability in the league, force teams to control costs, keep the teams from losing money and help ensure the survival of Negro League baseball. Teams responded by cutting salaries, which made the players unhappy and eventually would result in players leaving the United States to play in Canada, Mexico or Japan. Vernon Greene, owner of the Baltimore Elite Giants, went so far as to reduce his roster from 25 to 20 players. This enabled him to continue to pay all of his players, especially his stars, more money.

The Negro National League opened the 1948 season with a four-team doubleheader at Yankee Stadium in New York on May 2. A crowd of only 10,000 were in attendance to see the top stars of black baseball in action. The New York Cubans behind the hitting of Minnie Minoso who went 4 for 5 at the plate beat the Homestead Grays in the first game by a score of 7-1. In the second game, The Philadelphia Stars behind the pitching of Roy Partlow beat the New York Black Yankees 5 to 2.

One of the biggest highlights related to Negro League baseball in 1948 was Satchel Paige signing with the Cleveland Indians. This made Paige the seventh black player in the Major Leagues. More than 72,000 fans jammed into Cleveland's stadium to see Paige pitch his first game. Satchel had an excellent season for the Indians winning six games against only one loss. Paige was baseball's oldest rookie and walked away with Rookie of Year honors.

In 1948, the Negro American League tried to expand their media coverage when a game between the Cleveland Buckeyes and Memphis Red Sox was broadcast on radio and television at the same time. The game took place on June 6, 1948 and was played at League Park in Cleveland. Ernie Wright, the owner of the Cleveland Buckeyes, thought the broadcast hurt attendance and cancelled all future television broadcasts.

Based on statistics from the Howe News Bureau (Chicago) the "official" Negro American League batting and pitching leaders for the 1948 season were:

Title	Player	Team	
Batting Average	Artie Wilson	Birmingham	.402
	Bob Boyd	Memphis	.376
	Hank Thompson	Kansas City	.375
	Willard Brown	Kansas City	.374
	Lorenzo Davis	Birmingham	.353
	Lloyd Bassett	Birmingham	.350
	Archie Ware	Cleveland	.349
	Leonard Pigg	Indianapolis	.345
	Quincy Troupe	Chicago	.342
Homeruns	Willard Brown	Kansas City	18
	Hank Thompson	Kansas City	11
	Quincy Troupe	Chicago	10
	Ed Steele	Birmingham	8
Runs Batted In	Lorenzo Davis	Birmingham	69
	Willard Brown	Kansas City	68
	Hank Thompson	Kansas City	58
	Bob Boyd	Memphis	51
Stolen Bases	Sam Jethroe	Cleveland	29
	Hank Thompson	Kansas City	20
	Willard Brown	Kansas City	13
	Leon Kellman	Cleveland	13

Wins (Pitching)	James La Marque	Kansas City	15-5
	Jimmy Newberry	Birmingham	14-5
	William Powell	Birmingham	11-3
	Alonzo Perry	Birmingham	10-2
	John Ford Smith	Kansas City	10-5
Earned Run Average	James La Marque	Kansas City	1.96
	Jimmy Newberry	Birmingham	2.18
	Gene Collins	Kansas City	2.23
	John Ford Smith	Kansas City	2.64
	Luis Cabrera	Indianapolis	2.80
Strikeouts (Pitching)	Sam Jones	Cleveland	112
	Jimmy Newberry	Birmingham	112
	James La Marque	Kansas City	109
	William Powell	Birmingham	103

The Homestead Grays and New York Black Yankees dropped out of the Negro Leagues when the Negro National League folded after the 1948 season. The Homestead Grays played in the Negro American Association during the first part of the 1949 season. Besides the Homestead Grays, the Negro American Association included the Asheville Blues, Greensboro Red Wings, Richmond Giants, Raleigh Tigers and Winston-Salem Pond Giants. The former Negro National League powerhouse Grays easily dominated their league opponents and won the first half season championship with a 24-2 record. The Homestead Grays also barnstormed during the 1949 and 1950 seasons. The New York Black Yankees would barnstorm for the 1949 and 1950 seasons along the East Coast. The Black Yankees were also known as the New York Black Travelers.

The 1949 Negro American League (NAL) season would see the Baltimore Elite Giants beat the Chicago American Giants four straight games to win the Negro League World Series. Leonard Pigg of the Indianapolis Clowns won the NAL Batting Title with a .388 average, Johnny Davis of the Houston Eagles won the Homerun Crown with 14 four baggers and Gene Richardson of the Kansas City Monarchs was the top pitcher in the league with a 14-5 record. Even with some outstanding hitting performances, attendance continued to dwindle and the house names like Willard "Homerun" Brown, Josh Gibson and Satchel Paige that had once dominated Negro League baseball were replaced with what appeared to the fans to be just ordinary guys.

Based on statistics from the Howe News Bureau (Chicago) the "official" Negro American League batting and pitching leaders for the 1949 season were:

Title	Player	Team	
Batting Average	Leonard Pigg	Indianapolis	.388
	Lorenzo Cabrera	New York	.377
	Lorenzo Davis	Birmingham	.375

Batting Average (continued)	Willard Brown	Kansas City	.371
	Bob Boyd	Memphis	.369
	Lomax Davis	Baltimore	.366
	Ray Neil	Indianapolis	.364
	Henry Kimbro	Baltimore	.360
	Robert Wilson	Houston	.355
	Bob Thurman	Kansas City	.351
	John Washington	Houston	.349
	Art Pennington	Chicago	.348
	Leonard Hunt	Kansas City	.347
	Pedro Formental	Memphis	.341
	Leonard Pearson	Baltimore	.340
Slugging Percentage	Willard Brown	Kansas City	.639
	Leonard Pigg	Indianapolis	.609
	Lorenzo Davis	Birmingham	.596
	Pedro Formental	Memphis	.590
	Art Pennington	Chicago	.582
Homeruns	Johnny Davis	Houston	14
	Pedro Formental	Memphis	13
	Willard Brown	Kansas City	12
	Leonard Pigg	Indianapolis	12
	Lonnie Summers	Chicago	10
Runs Batted In	Willard Brown	Kansas City	83
	Leonard Pearson	Baltimore	76
	Lorenzo Davis	Birmingham	67
	Pedro Formental	Memphis	67
	Lomax Davis	Baltimore	63
	James Gilliam	Baltimore	60
Wins (Pitching)	Gene Richardson	Kansas City	14-5
	Gentry Jessup	Chicago	13-6
	James La Marque	Kansas City	13-7
	Bob Romby	Baltimore	13-7
	Bill Byrd	Baltimore	12-3
	Gready Mc Kinnis	Chicago	12-7
	Alonzo Perry	Birmingham	12-4
Earned Run Average	Robert Griffith	Philadelphia	2.31
	Gready Mc Kinnis	Chicago	2.35
	Gene Richardson	Kansas City	2.37
	Jehosie Heard	Houston	2.39

Strikeouts (Pitching)	Gene Collins	Kansas City	131
	Gene Richardson	Kansas City	126
	William Powell	Birmingham	124
	Gentry Jessup	Chicago	122

The Research Library section of this website contains a listing of the standings, number of games played, won-loss records and championship details for the Negro National League (1946-1948) and Negro American League (1946-1963).

Negro League Baseball in the 1950's

Baseball was significantly different in the Negro Leagues in the 1950's. Gone from the game were the Negro League stars that had dominated the game in the 1930's and 1940's. James "Cool Papa" Bell, Raymond Brown, Leon Day, Ray Dandridge, Josh Gibson, Buck Leonard, Raleigh "Biz" Mackey, Turkey Stearnes and Willie Wells were no longer attracting fans to black baseball. The young black baseball stars were signing with the Major League. Up and coming ball players like Hank Aaron (Indianapolis Clowns), Ernie Banks (Kansas City Monarchs) and Willie Mays (Birmingham Black Barons) would start their Hall of Fame professional careers in the Negro Leagues, but soon move to Major League baseball. The net result was that the Negro League did not have a talent pool sufficient to attract and maintain a fan base with the level of baseball that the Negro League had provided before integration.

The 1950 Negro American League opened with ten teams that were divided into two Divisions.

Negro American League – East Negro American League – West

Baltimore Elite Giants	Kansas City Monarchs
New York Cubans	Birmingham Black Barons
Philadelphia Stars	Houston Eagles
Indianapolis Clowns	Memphis Red Sox
Louisville Buckeyes	Chicago American Giants

Negro League owners knew that they couldn't compete with the "white" Major League organizations. If they were to survive they would have to explore all potential opportunities and come up with new strategies. One of the most novel ideas was by Dr. Martin who owned the Chicago American Giants. Dr. Martin's plan was to sign white ball players who had been missed by the Major League teams, showcase their talents in the Negro American League and then sell the players to the Major Leagues. In July of 1950, the Chicago American Giants signed two "white" players: Louis Clarizio (outfielder) and Louis Chirban (pitcher). During the season, Dr. Martin would sign three additional white players. They were Al Dubetts, shortstop Frank Dyll and second baseman Stanley Miarka. Having white ball players on their team caused the Chicago American Giants problems when they traveled in the South to play. When the Chicago American Giants played in Birmingham, the white players (Chirban, Dyll and Miarka) could not play in the game because it would violate Birmingham segregation laws. The

players had to change into civilian clothes and sit in the “white” section of the grand stands. None of these players made it past the 1950 season and Dr. Martin’s experiment went by the wayside.

The 1950 Negro American League season was the year of the hitter. Five teams led by the Baltimore Elite Giants (.288) finished with a team batting average over .280. The other teams that had team batting averages over the .280 mark were Indianapolis Clowns (.287), Birmingham Black Barons (.285), Kansas City Monarchs (.283) and the New York Cubans (.282). There were thirty-eight (38) players who hit better than .300 in league play for the entire 1950 season. Based on statistics from the Howe News Bureau (Chicago) the “official” Negro American League batting and pitching leaders for the 1950 season were:

Title	Player	Team	
Batting Average	Sam Hairston	Indianapolis	.424
	Lorenzo Davis	Birmingham	.383
	Bob Romby	Baltimore	.381
	Art Pennington	Chicago	.370
	Henry Kimbro	Baltimore	.370
	Bob Harvey	Houston	.367
	Robert Wilson	Houston	.359
	Bob Boyd	Memphis	.356
	Clinton Mc Cord	Chicago	.349
	Earl Taborn	Kansas City	.345
Homeruns	Sam Hairston	Indianapolis	17
	Alonzo Perry	Birmingham	14
	Clinton “Casey” Jones	Memphis	11
	Neil Robinson	Memphis	10
Runs Batted In	Sam Hairston	Indianapolis	71
	Alonzo Perry	Birmingham	64
	Neil Robinson	Memphis	62
	Bob Boyd	Memphis	58
Stolen Bases	Henry “Speed” Merchant	Indianapolis	45
	Clyde Mc Neal	Chicago	20
	Nate Peeples	Kansas City	20
Wins (Pitching)	William Powell	Birmingham	15-4
	Sam Williams	Birmingham	13-7
	Vibert Clarke	Memphis	13-10
	George Walker	Kansas City	12-3

Earned Run Average	George Walker	Kansas City	1.98
	Mel Duncan	Kansas City	2.14
	Connie Johnson	Kansas City	2.17
	Frank Barnes	Kansas City	2.41
	William Greason	Birmingham	2.41
Strikeouts (Pitching)	Raul Galata	Indianapolis	120
	William Powel	Birmingham	110
	Harry Butts	Indianapolis	107
	William Greason	Birmingham	106
	Vibert Clarke	Memphis	105

Sam Hairston was the “big” story of the 1950 Negro American League season. Hairston won the Triple Crown of the Negro American League with a .424 batting average, 17 homeruns and 71 runs batted in. He also led the league in hits (100) and total bases (176).

By 1952 the Negro American League was reduced to six (6) teams:

Negro American League (1952)

Birmingham Black Barons
Chicago American Giants
Indianapolis Clowns
Kansas City Monarchs
Memphis Red Sox
Philadelphia Stars

Gone from the Negro Leagues were the Baltimore Elite Giants, Cleveland/Louisville Buckeyes, Newark/ Houston Eagles and New York Cubans.

The remaining Negro League owners continued to sell their best players to the Major League teams. Some of the key transactions during the 1950’s were:

- Syd Pollock, owner of Indianapolis Clowns, sold Hank Aaron to the Boston Braves organization in 1952 for \$ 15,000.
- Tom Hayes, owner of the Birmingham Black Barons, sold Willie Mays to the New York Giants for \$ 15,000 in 1950.
- Tom Hayes of the Birmingham Black Barons sold Lorenzo “Piper” Davis to the Boston Red Sox for \$ 15,000. Davis was assigned to Scranton of the Eastern League. The sale was structured so that Hayes got \$ 7,500 up front and would get the additional \$ 7,500 if Davis were still on the Scranton roster on May 15 of the 1950 season. The Red Sox not wanting to pay the additional \$ 7,500 cut Davis on May 1st. An interesting footnote is that Davis was leading the Scranton team in

hitting .333, homeruns with 3 and runs batted in with 10 at the time he was released.

- Tom Baird, owner of the Kansas City Monarchs, sold Elston Howard to the New York Yankees for \$ 7,500 in 1950.
- Tom Baird of the Kansas City Monarchs sold Ernie Banks to the Chicago Cubs of the National League for \$ 15,000 in 1953.
- Kansas City Monarchs sold Frank Barnes to the New York Yankees on July 19, 1950.
- August A. Busch, President of the St. Louis Cardinals, bought Tom Alston from San Diego Padres of the Pacific Coast League for \$ 100,000 cash and four players on January 26, 1954.
- Tom Baird of the Kansas City Monarchs sold Roberto “Poncho” Herrera to Philadelphia Phillies of National League for \$ 10,000 in 1954.

At the end of the 1952 Negro American League season, the League Leaders per the Howe News Bureau were:

Title	Player	Team	
Batting Average	Roy Williams	Chicago	.347
	James Jones	Philadelphia	.342
	Henry Kimbro	Birmingham	.341
	Julio Toledo	Indianapolis	.341
	Felix Mc Laurin	Chicago	.340
	James Wilkes	Indianapolis	.325
	Doc Dennis	Birmingham	.322
	Sherman Watrous	Memphis	.313
	Joe Durham	Chicago	.311
Total Bases	Sherman Watrous	Memphis	169
Hits	Doc Dennis	Birmingham	104
Doubles	Henry Kimbro	Birmingham	25
Triples	Carl Long	Birmingham	8
Homeruns	Sherman Watrous	Memphis	20
	Doc Dennis	Birmingham	14
Runs Batted In	Doc Dennis	Birmingham	79

	Sherman Watrous	Memphis	66
	Henry Kimbro	Birmingham	55
	Curtis Hardaway	Indianapolis	47
	Roy Williams	Chicago	46
Runs Scored	Henry Kimbro	Birmingham	75
Stolen Bases	Jimmy Wilkes	Indianapolis	49
	Henry Merchant	Indianapolis	29
	Eddie Brooks	Birmingham	21
Wins (Pitching)	Frank Thompson	Birmingham	13-6
	T.W. Richardson	Indianapolis	12-5
	Taylor Smith	Birmingham	10-6
	Sam Woods	Memphis	10-10

The 1953 Negro American League season was played with four teams: Birmingham Black Barons, Indianapolis Clowns, Kansas City Monarchs and Memphis Red Sox. The Kansas City Monarchs totally dominated league play and at the end of the season were the Negro American League champions. The Monarchs finished with a record of 56-21 and were the only team in the league to finish over .500. The Monarchs also led the league in team batting average with a .274 batting average (Indianapolis Clowns were a distant second with a .243 batting average), team fielding with a .964 percentage and team pitching (John Jackson, Dagoberto Nunez and Gene Richardson finished 1-2-3 in all the top pitching categories).

Based on statistics from the Howe News Bureau (Chicago) the “official” Negro American League batting and pitching leaders for the 1953 season were:

Title	Player	Team	
Batting Average	Ray Neil	Indianapolis	.397
	Doc Dennis	Birmingham	.350
	Ernie Banks	Kansas City	.347
Homeruns	Earnest Johnson	Kansas City	11
	Doc Dennis	Birmingham	9
	Curtis Hardaway	Indianapolis	9
Runs Batted In	Verdes Drake	Indianapolis	58
	Doc Dennis	Birmingham	54
	Curtis Hardaway	Indianapolis	50
Stolen Bases	Jeff Williams	Kansas City	16
	Willie Brown	Indianapolis	14
	Henry Kimbro	Birmingham	14
	Ray Neil	Indianapolis	14

Wins (Pitching)	John Jackson	Kansas City	15-3
	Dagoberto Nunez	Kansas City	11-4
	Gene Richardson	Kansas City	11-4
Earned Run Average	John Jackson	Kansas City	1.53
	Dagoberto Nunez	Kansas City	2.01
	Gene Richardson	Kansas City	2.95
Strikeouts (Pitching)	Dagoberto Nunez	Kansas City	133
	John Jackson	Kansas City	124
	Gene Richardson	Kansas City	95

When Negro American League meetings were held after the conclusion of the 1953 season, the main topic of discussion was expansion. Cities that were planning to make proposals to join the “league” were Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C.

Two new teams were added to the Negro American League for the 1954 season. These teams were the Detroit Stars and Louisville Black Colonels. The 1954 Negro American League season started with six teams:

Negro American League

Birmingham Black Barons
 Detroit Stars
 Indianapolis Clowns
 Kansas City Monarchs
 Louisville Black Colonels
 Memphis Red Sox

Hitters dominated the 1954 Negro American League season. Led by John Williams of the Indianapolis Clowns, nineteen (19) players hit over .300 for the season. The Louisville Buckeyes and Memphis Red Sox were tied for the league led in team hitting with a .287 team batting average. Only two pitchers, Kelly Searcy (Kansas City Monarchs) - 2.27 ERA and Charley Davis (Memphis Red Sox) - 2.36 ERA were able to post an earned run average under three runs a game for the entire year. Based on statistics from the Howe News Bureau (Chicago) the “official” Negro American League batting and pitching leaders for the 1954 season were:

Title	Player	Team	
Batting Average	John Williams	Indianapolis	.388
	George Wanamaker	Indianapolis	.371
	Juan Armenteros	Kansas City	.354

Homeruns	Bill Washington	Memphis	18
	George Wanamaker	Indianapolis	14
	Pancho Herrera	Kansas City	13
	Curly Williams	Birmingham	12
Runs Batted In	Ray Haggins	Memphis	62
	Bill Washington	Memphis	61
	George Wanamaker	Indianapolis	60
Stolen Bases	Lonnie Harris	Louisville	26
	Frank Ensley	Indianapolis	25
	Eddie Brooks	Birmingham	22
Wins (Pitching)	Isiah Harris	Memphis	13-5
	Dave Amaro	Indianapolis	12-4
	Charley Davis	Memphis	10-7
Earned Run Average	Kelly Searcy	Birmingham	2.27
	Charley Davis	Memphis	2.36
	Phil Laduna	Indianapolis	3.07
Strikeouts (Pitching)	Isiah Harris	Memphis	130
	Kelly Searcy	Birmingham	121
	Charley Davis	Memphis	101

Outstanding individual pitching performances during the 1954 season included Marshall Bridges (Memphis Red Sox) striking out 16 Kansas City Monarchs on July 22 and James Gilmore combined with Hank Mason to pitch a no-hitter for the Kansas City Monarchs.

Tom Baird, the owner of the Kansas, City Monarchs could see the handwriting on the wall as soon as Jackie Robinson was signed by the Brooklyn Dodgers organization. It wasn't a matter of whether or not the end of Negro League baseball was in the future; it was how soon it would be before the Negro Leagues were gone. Almost immediately Baird began to sell off his best players. Over the remaining years that Baird owned the Monarchs he sold the following players to Major and Minor League organizations.

Year	Player	Major League Team
1947	Willard Brown	St. Louis Browns
	Satchel Paige	Cleveland Indians
	Hank Thompson	St. Louis Browns
1948	John Ford Smith	New York Giants
	Hank Thompson	New York Giants
1949	Gene Baker	Chicago Cubs
	Booker Mc Daniels	Los Angeles Angels (Pacific Coast League)

	Earl Taborn	New York Yankees
	Robert Thurman	New York Yankees
1950	Frank Barnes	New York Yankees
	Elston Howard	New York Yankees
1951	Gene Collins	Chicago White Sox
	Jesse Williams	Vancouver (Western International League)
	Bill Breda	Boston Braves
1952	Willard Brown	Dallas Eagles (Texas League)
	Connie Johnson	St. Louis Browns
	George Walker	Seattle (Pacific Coast League)
1953	Ernie Banks	Chicago Cubs
	Bill Dickey	Chicago Cubs
	John Jackson	Cincinnati Reds
	Earnest Johnson	St. Louis Browns
	Jeff Williams	Cincinnati Reds
1954	Poncho Herrera	Philadelphia Phillies
	Hank Mason	Philadelphia Phillies
1955	George Altman	Chicago Cubs
	Lou Johnson	Chicago Cubs
	J.C. Hartman	Chicago Cubs

Of the players that Baird sold, sixteen (16) would play in the Major Leagues.

In 1955 Baird sold eight players to Major League teams and four other players to Minor League teams. The season ended with the Kansas City Monarchs as Negro American League champions. With his team totally dismantled, Baird released Monarchs manager, Buck O'Neil so he could sign a contract to coach for the Chicago Cubs and then sold what was left of the team, the equipment, team name and franchise in the Negro American League to Ted Rasberry of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Tom Baird then turned his attention to scouting for the Kansas City Athletics.

Ted Rasberry's mission was to save Negro League baseball. Rasberry's background in baseball came from his ownership of the Grand Rapids Black Sox. The Black Sox were a powerhouse in black semiprofessional baseball in the Great Lakes area. Rasberry would start the 1956 season with only three players from the 1955 Monarchs roster on his team. Rasberry moved baseball operations for the Monarchs from Kansas City to Grand Rapids (Michigan). The Monarchs would play their home games at Valley Field in Grand Rapids. Ted Rasberry would be the pillar of the Negro American League until it folded after the 1962 season. Besides owning the Kansas City Monarchs, Rasberry also owned the Detroit Stars and served as an officer of the Negro American League.

During the 1950's Dr. J.B. Martin was the President of the Negro American League.

Dr. Martin was the best individual that could have been selected to fill this position. He had experience as an owner and officer with the Chicago American Giants and Memphis Red Sox. In addition he had also been President of the Negro Southern League and Negro Dixie League. Dr. Martin realized that the Negro Leagues could not survive going head to head with Major League baseball. From his perspective there was still a place in baseball for the Negro American League in professional baseball. He felt that the Negro American League teams could play an important role in preparing young black ball players for the Major Leagues. In an interview with the *Chicago Defender* (leading black newspaper), Dr. Martin's feelings about the importance of the survival of the Negro American League were expressed as follows:

“ the league is important for preparing young ball players for entrance into the major leagues. For this reason, he feels that the league is deserving of continued support from baseball fans. With this support Martin says the league can continue to do its valuable work of training future major leaguers.”

(*Chicago Defender* – August 20, 1960)

Prior to the 1956 season, Floyd Meschack lost the Birmingham Black Barons franchise for a long list of league violations. Dr. Anderson Ross of Memphis was brought in as the new team owner. Dr. Anderson's first problem was a dispute over the name of the team. Meschack claimed ownership of the name “Black Barons.” If Dr. Ross could not use the “Black Barons” name, then he would have to come up with a new name for the team. Dr. Ross chose to call his Birmingham franchise the “Giants.” But fans in Birmingham only knew the team by the name “Black Barons.” It is unclear how Dr. Ross and Floyd Meschack worked out their differences, but the Birmingham team remained the Black Barons. The 1956 season opened with Dr. J.B. Martin as Negro American League President, two new team owners (Birmingham – Dr. Anderson Ross and Kansas City – Ted Rasberry) and four teams all managed by former Negro League stars.

Team	Manager
Birmingham Black Barons	Jim Canady
Detroit Stars	Ed Steele
Kansas City Monarchs	Jelly Taylor
Memphis Red Sox	Goose Curry

One strategy that the Negro American League tried to employ during the mid-1950's was to schedule games in cities that had recently lost their Minor League team. This strategy was only marginally successful.

The top hitters of the Negro American League during the 1956 season were:

Player	Team	Batting Average
Billy Joe Moore	Birmingham Black Barons	.373

John Kennedy	Kansas City Monarchs	.356
Juan Soler	Detroit Stars	.355
Otha Bailey	Birmingham Black Barons	.344
Harold Shade	Detroit Stars	.339

When the season ended, the Detroit Stars were crowned Negro American League champions. Ted Rasberry continued the policy of selling off his best players to Major League baseball that had been employed by previous owner Tom Baird. At the end of the 1956 season, Ted Rasberry sold eight players to Major and Minor League organizations. Four of these players included: Frank Barnes, Willie Ivory, John Kennedy and Juan Soler.

The 1957 Negro American League season would open on a positive note and the hope of a renewed interest in black baseball. Two new teams were added to the league: Mobile Havana Cuban Giants (Willie Davis - owner) and New Orleans Crescent Bears (Leroy Robinson – owner). The Mobile Havana Cuban Giants was a team composed primarily of Cuban players. The idea of a Cuban team was not new. The Kansas City Monarchs operated the Cuban Giants for several years as their farm team and Indianapolis in the 1940's operated the Havana La Palomas team as their farm club. A third team in Jacksonville was also to be added to the Negro American League schedule, but when Jacksonville team owner Jim Williams failed to make the necessary franchise payment, his team was dropped. The addition of Mobile and New Orleans put the Negro American League back up to six teams. However this did not last long because Mobile and New Orleans folded before the end of the season.

The Kansas City Monarchs changed managers for the 1957 season. Jelly Taylor was gone and Negro League great Dizzy Dismukes was selected to guide the Monarchs. Under Dismukes leadership the Kansas City Monarchs posted a won loss record of 98-45 and won the Negro American League title. Top hitters for the 1957 Negro American League season were:

Player	Team	Batting Average
Jim Banks	Memphis Red Sox	.434
Lonnie Harris	Memphis Red Sox	.378

The 1957 season ended with the East-West All Star game that was played on July 28th. The West beat the East by a score of 8 to 5 with Gene Williams (Memphis Red Sox) getting the victory and Joe Elliot (Birmingham Black Barons) taking the loss.

The 1958 season saw the Negro American League back to four teams: Birmingham, Detroit, Kansas City and Memphis. Per a press release from Sudon Sports Promotions (Julie Issacson – President and Frank Forbes – General Manager) and a story in the *New York Times* (May 7, 1958) the Negro American League season was to consist of a 140 game schedule for each of the four league teams. The Detroit team was under new ownership. Goose Tatum had taken over ownership of Detroit. Tatum made two major

changes when he took over the Detroit franchise: changed the name to the “Clowns” and added two important ball players who could play and entertain the crowd (Nat “Sweetwater” Clifton and Prince Joe Henry). The Kansas City Monarchs won the 1958 Negro American League championship with a record of 30-24-1 by a game and a half over the second place Memphis Red Sox (18-15-1). The Monarchs led the league in hitting with a team batting average with a .267. The Detroit Clowns finished a distant second with a .247 batting average. Based on statistics compiled by the Howe News Bureau (Chicago) the official Negro American League hitting and pitching leaders for the 1958 season were:

Title	Player	Team	
Batting Average	John Williams	Birmingham	.357
	Harold Hair	Kansas City	.355
	John Self	Kansas City	.298
	Price West	Detroit	.298
Homeruns	Bernard Porter	Detroit	6
	Bobby Sanders	Birmingham	5
	Willie Washington	Kansas City	5
Runs Batted In	Willie Washington	Kansas City	42
	John Self	Kansas City	38
	Price West	Detroit	37
Stolen Bases	Lonnie Harris	Memphis	16
	James Robinson	Kansas City	6
	John Self	Kansas City	5
	William White	Kansas City	5
Wins (Pitching)	Willie Harris	Detroit	8-2
	Aubrey Grisby	Kansas	7-0
	Charlie Pride	Memphis	7-3
Earned Run Average	John Childress	Detroit	2.21
	Willie Harris	Detroit	2.33
	Willie Smith	Birmingham	2.67
Strikeouts (Pitching)	Jesse Townsend	Kansas City	85
	Willie Harris	Detroit	76
	Ben Adams	Kansas City	62

Frank Mc Cullum of the Kansas City Monarchs pitched the leagues only no-hitter with a 5-2 victory over the Memphis Red Sox on July 4. The 1958 East West All Star game was played in Yankee Stadium on August 31. The East squad defeated the West by a score of

6 to 5 when Nat “Sweetwater” Clifton stole home in the eighth inning. Willie Harris of the Detroit Clowns was the winner of the game for the East squad and Marion “Sugar” Cain of the Kansas City Monarchs took the loss for the West.

The Negro American League expanded to six teams for the 1959 season:

Negro American League (1959)

Birmingham Black Barons	Memphis Red Sox
Detroit Stars	Newark Indians
Kansas City Monarchs	Raleigh Tigers

The two new teams that were added to the league were Arthur Dove’s Raleigh Tigers and the Newark Indians. Goose Tatum was no longer associated with the Detroit Clowns. The Detroit franchise was reorganized and assumed their “Stars” name with Herman Green as the manager. Two other managerial changes that took place before the season were Lorenzo “Piper” Davis was named manager of the Birmingham Black Barons and Marion “Sugar” Cain took over the managerial duties of the Kansas City Monarchs. Local black teams and barnstorming teams continued to play all over the country in 1959. One of the most popular and successful of these lower division teams was Roy Campanella’s Brooklyn Stars. The Stars frequently played Negro League teams when they came to the New York City area. Roy Campanella still believed in Negro League baseball and appreciated what it had done for him and dozens of other black ball players. The Brooklyn Stars were a serious effort by Campanella to support Negro League baseball. There was an East-West All Star game played at the end of the season, but attendance was less than stellar. The West squad defeated the East by a score of 8 to 7 in 11 innings at Comiskey Park in Chicago on August 10th. The East West All Star game had once been the focal point of the Negro League season and had always been a huge financial success. According to the *Chicago Defender* (August 22, 1959 newspaper article), the 1959 East-West All Star game netted the Negro American League only about \$ 5,000 to be split among the teams. At the end of the season another fatal blow hit the Negro American League when Dr. J.B. Martin folded the Memphis Red Sox for financial reasons.

One of the major factors that led to the demise of the Negro League was the defection of players to play professional baseball outside the Negro League. Negro League players left the Negro League to sign with:

- American and National Leagues of “white” Major League baseball.
- Minor League Organizations of the “white” Major League teams.
- Canadian professional baseball leagues – Mandak League, Canadian Provincial League, etc.
- Mexican League
- Dominican Summer League
- Japanese League
- and other Latin countries

The Research Library section of this website contains a listing of the standings, number of games played, won-loss records and championship details for the Negro National League (1946-1948) and Negro American League (1946-1963).

Negro League Players Leave the United States

When baseball was integrated in 1947 and the Negro League owners started losing fans and money, one of the first things that the owners did was to cut expenses. The biggest expense on any baseball club is player salaries. Almost immediately all the surviving players on Negro League teams were faced with significant cuts in the salary. Negro League players quickly saw that they could make more money going north to Canada, south to Latin America to play ball and even to Japan in the Far East.

Negro League Players Defect to Canada

Negro League baseball was nothing new to Canada. Black teams had barnstormed through Canada for many years. Some of black baseball's best teams barnstormed through Canada on a regular basis. These teams included the Chicago Union Giants, Gilkerson's Union Giants, Texas Giants, Mohawks Colored Giants, Kansas City Monarchs, Jacksonville Eagles, Satchel Paige's All Stars, Colored House of David and Rufus Ligon's All Stars.

One of the highlights of Canadian baseball was a schedule of regional baseball tournaments and annually sponsored city tournaments. Black teams of lesser notoriety often participated and won these tournaments. Some of the top black independent teams to tour Canada were: Ligon's All Stars, San Francisco Cubs, San Francisco Sea Lions, Louisiana Black Travelers, Muskogee Black Cardinals, St. Louis Black Cardinals and the Florida Cubans.

Negro League players had a history of going north to Canada to occasionally play with Canadian teams. John Donaldson traveled to Canada to play for a team in Moose Jaw in 1925 when the team needed to bring in an "ace" pitcher. Donaldson responded with a 28-4 record for the season. Gene Bremmer played for Broadview from 1936-1938. When Red House, long time Detroit area player, was interviewed by Dr. Revel of the Center for Negro League Baseball Research he recounted numerous times when he or other ball players from the Great Lakes area would go to Canada to play for a Canadian team in a big tournament.

Another unique practice that was seen in Canadian baseball was bringing an entire black team from the United States to play as a Canadian team. The Jacksonville Eagles regularly went to Canada in the early and mid-1950's and played their Canadian season as the Indian Head Rockets. The 1952 Florida Cubans team became the Indian Head Rockets for the 1953 Canadian season. The Ligon's All Star team also changed jerseys and became the Prince Albert Imperials for parts of the 1953 season.

Canadian owners and fans loved their baseball and would go to any extreme to win. When the San Francisco Sea Lions were barnstorming through Canada in 1949 and ran into financial troubles, seven players left the Sea Lions and went to play for the Buchanan All Stars. Overnight the Buchanan team was turned into a formidable opponent. In addition several Canadian teams were predominately black. Stanley Zedd, owner of the Winnipeg Buffaloes, fielded an all black team that starred Willie Wells for the 1950 Mandak League season. Estevan of the North-Eastern Saskatchewan League added twelve black players in June of the 1950 season when the team got off to a slow start. The Regina Red Sox of the Saskatchewan League were a predominately all black team during the 1953 season.

Probably one of the best examples of the opportunities for black ball players in Canada is seen in the 1954 Rosetown Phillies team of the Saskatchewan League. In May of 1954, team owner, Fred Banks, arrived in Rosetown with his team of 18 black players and immediately announced their goal of dominating baseball on the prairies of Western Canada. Banks had put his team together with former Negro League veterans like: Buddy Burbage, Cy Morton, Fred Hill, Felton Morrison and Pancho Gray. Rounding out the squad was a group of top-notch ball players from the sandlots of Philadelphia. The roster for the 1954 Rosetown Phillies were:

Player	Position	Player	Position
Fred Banks	Owner	Fred Johnson	OF
Preston Bessicks	P	Harold Johnson	INF
Ben Brown	SS	Lionel King	P
Boyd Brown	P	Leon Miller	
Buddy Burbage	OF	Felton Morrison	OF
Randy Cisco	2B	Cy Morton	3B
Major Coleman	P	Ray Munson	OF
Pancho Gray	P	Dick Price	C
Arlington Henderson	C/OF/3B	Roland Summers	P
Benny Hill	Mgr/P	Howard Warfield	OF
Reg Jackson	1B		

Rosetown did not dominate baseball in western Canada. They finished in the middle of the Saskatchewan league standings with a record of 30 wins against 30 losses. They also did reasonably well in the Canadian baseball tournaments. Banks and his Rosetown team did not return for the 1955 season.

The presence of Negro League players in Canada changed dramatically in the late 1940's when Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier and the decline of the Negro National League and Negro American League began. Research by the Center for Negro League Baseball Research has identified three hundred and eighty-two (382) Negro League baseball players who left the United States to play in Canada during the late 1940's and early 1950's. It seems like there were periods when there were more Negro League

players in Canada than in the United States. Without any question black ball players dominated the Mandak League and Canadian Provincial League in the early 1950's.

The number of Negro League players that went to Canada is most likely significantly higher than reported in this research. It is important to take into consideration that the research conducted by the Center for Negro League Baseball Research concentrated on the Mandak League and to a limited degree the Canadian Provincial League. Research still needs to be done on the other Canadian professional baseball leagues. There were a significant number of other professional and semipro baseball leagues in Canada from the late 1940's through the mid 1950's. Some of these Canadian leagues were:

- Big Four League (Alberta)
- Big Six League
- Canadian-American League
- Canadian Foothills Wheat Belt League
- Chinnok League
- Foothills League
- Foothills-Wheat Belt League
- Laurentian League
- Manitoba Senior Baseball League
- North Peace League
- Northeastern Saskatchewan Baseball League
- Northern Alberta League
- Northern Saskatchewan League
- Northern Senior League
- Northwest League
- Ontario Inter County League
- Ontario Senior League
- Quebec Provincial League
- Saskatchewan League
- Saskatoon and District League
- Southern Alberta League
- Southern League
- South Peace League
- Western Canada League

Many former Negro League star players ended their careers while playing in Canada. This group included players like: Lyman Bostock, Chet Brewer, Barney Brown, Ray Brown, Pee Wee Butts, Ray Dandridge, Leon Day, Ted "Double Duty" Radcliffe, Ted Strong and Willie Wells.

Young black ball players were also attracted to Canadian teams. Future Major League ball players Sammy Drake (Carman), Solly Drake (Elmwood), Elijah "Pumpsie" Green (Medicine Hat), Hector Lopez (St. Hyacinthe) and Vic Power (Drummondville) got their first taste of professional ball as teenagers playing in the Mandak League.

Canada also gave Negro League ball players the opportunity to manage an integrated team. The black managers included:

- **Sam Bankhead** (Homestead Grays star and 20 year Negro League veteran) managed Farnham of the Canadian Provincial League in 1951. When he signed to manage the Farnham Blacksox team, Bankhead became the first black manager in organized baseball. Bankhead was also the manager of the Homestead Gray in 1949 and 1950.
- **Wesley Barrow** (who managed the New Orleans Black Pelicans, Nashville Cubs, Baltimore Elite Giants and Raleigh Tigers in the Negro Leagues) managed the Winnipeg Elmwood Giants during the 1951 Mandak League season.
- **Chet Brewer** managed the 1950 and 1953 Carman Cardinals of the Mandak League.
- **Jose “Hippy” Hernandez** managed the 1953 and 1954 Indian Head Rockets of the Saskatchewan League. Hernandez had come to Canada with the Florida Cubans on one of their barnstorming tours.
- **Benny Hill** managed and pitched for the Rosetown Phillies of the Saskatchewan League in 1954.
- **Charles “Red” House** left Detroit to manage the Carman Cardinals of the Mandak League in 1950.
- **Gentry Jessup** pitched, played outfield and managed the 1951 Carman Cardinals of the Mandak League.
- **Ted “Double Duty” Radcliffe** caught, pitched and managed the Winnipeg Elmwood Giants during part of the 1951 Mandak League season.
- **Fate Simms** caught for and managed the Dauphin Redbirds of the Northern Senior League in 1950.
- **Quincy Troupe** managed the Drummondville Cubs in 1949 and 1950. Troupe signed a young Puerto Rican slugger by the name of Vic Pellot Power to play for the Cubs. Vic Power was signed by Tom Greenwade of the New York Yankees while playing in Drummondville.
- **Willie Wells** began managing the Winnipeg Buffaloes in 1950 and led them to their first Mandak League championship in 1951. Wells also managed the Brandon Greys of the Mandak League in 1952 and 1953.
- **Jimmy Williams** managed the Indian Head Rockets in 1950, 1951 and 1952. The Rockets were an independent team that toured western Canada and played in all

the major tournaments. Williams also managed the Regina Caps of the Saskatchewan Baseball League in 1953.

- **Gilberto Yzquierdo** managed the 1953 Indian Head Rockets. Gilberto came to Canada with the 1952 Florida Cubans on a barnstorming tour.

The impact of Negro League ball players in Canada may best exemplified by looking at the makeup of the 1950 Mandak League All Star Team:

Mandak League All Star Team (1950)

Position	Player	Mandak Team	Negro League Team
Catcher	Ramon Rodriquez	Brandon	
First Base	Lyman Bostock	Winnipeg	New York Cubans
Second Base	John Kennedy	Winnipeg	Birmingham Black Barons
Third Base	Ian Lowe	Brandon	
Shortstop	Rafe Cabrera	Brandon	New York Cubans
Left Field	Butch Davis	Winnipeg	Baltimore Elite Giants
Center Field	Solly Drake	Elmwood	Dukeson Tigers
Right Field	Jack Schaefer	Carman	
Utility	Leon Day	Winnipeg	Newark Eagles
Pitchers	Dirk Gibbons	Brandon	Philadelphia Stars
	Art Hunt	Brandon	Winston Salem Pond Giants
Manager	Taylor Smith	Winnipeg	Chicago American Giants
	Gentry Jessup	Carman	Chicago American Giants
	Lefty Lefebvre	Minot	

Of the thirteen (13) players that made the 1950 Mandak League All Star team ten (10) of them or 77 % were black players with Negro League experience.

Most Negro League players would only play a relatively short period of time from part of a season to a year or two in Canada. Some former Negro League players, who went to Canada, fell in love with baseball north of the border and played in Canada for a significant number of years were:

Player	Number of seasons in Canada	Canadian Team	Years in Canada
Jimmy "Sea Biscuit" Wilkes	11	Three Rivers Brantford	1950 1953-1963
William "Curley" Williams	11	Carman Lloydminster	1953 1954-1963

Bennie Griggs	10	Delisle	1950
		Saskatoon	1953-1955
		North Battleford	1956-1957
		Lethbridge	1958
		Lloydminster	1958
		North Battleford	1962-1964
Marion “Sugar” Cain	7	Minot Mallards	1951-1957
Ira Mc Knight	7	Saskatoon	1960 and 1965
		North Battleford	1964 and 1968
		Melville	1966-1967
		Drummondville	1969
Bob Herron	5	Saskatoon	1951
		North Battleford	1952-1953
		North Battleford	1956-1957

The number of black ball players that went to Canada to play is staggering. Our research has already identified five hundred and twenty-three (523) different players with Negro League experience who went to Canada to play from the late 1940's to the mid 1950's. In addition, we have identified one hundred and seventy-three (173) additional black ball players from the United States with no apparent Negro League experience who went to play in Canada during this time frame. As other Canadian leagues are more thoroughly researched, this number will rise even further.

A complete listing of the five hundred and twenty-three (523) different players with Negro League experience, some of the Negro League team (s) they played for, the Canadian teams they played for and years played in Canada can be found in Research Library of this website.

The Research Library of this website also lists the black players with no apparent Negro League experience that went to play in Canada from the late 1940's to the mid 1950's.

Negro League Players go South of the Border (Mexico)

The Mexican Professional Baseball League was formed in 1925. Negro League teams started traveling to Mexico in the 1930's to play the Aztecas baseball team from Mexico City. Homobono Marquez formed the Aztecas baseball team when he started hiring the top Mexican and Cuban ball players to form one high caliber baseball team.

The influx of black ball players to Mexico to play in the Mexican League started about 1940. Jorge Pasquel wanted to make the Mexican League another Major League circuit. Pasquel and his brother were two of the richest men in Mexico. The Pasquel brothers' plan was to bring the top Negro League, Cuban and Major League players to Mexico. Money was their incentive to lure these players to Mexico. The Pasquel brothers' plan was to pay Negro League, Cuban and Major League ball players significantly more money than they could make anywhere else. From 1940 to 1949, the Pasquel brothers spared no expense to lure top ball players to the Mexican League. They were able to lure a significant number of top players to their Vera Cruz based team. But when this strategy resulted in only four league championships for them, the Pasquel brothers started to reduce their high salaries in 1948.

The Negro League baseball's response to Negro League players who jumped their contracts in order to play in Mexico resulted in the Negro National League and Negro American League imposing a five year ban on any player not honoring his league contract and going to Mexico to play. This ban on contract jumpers came in May of 1946. Among the players banned by the Negro National League and Negro American League in 1946 were: Ray Brown, Ray Dandridge, Tom Glover, Bert "Buffalo" Hunter, Terris Mc Duffie, Ed Stone, Johnny Taylor, Marvin Williams and Burnis "Wild Bill" Wright. The ban was retained during the Negro American League and Negro National League Joint Meeting in February 1947 in Chicago. The Negro National League reviewed the ban again in 1948 during the Negro National League Annual Meeting in New York. League owners voted to continue the ban and then proceeded to ban the following players: James "Buz" Clarkson, Ray Dandridge, Leon Day, Leon Ruffin, Roy Welmaker, Marvin Williams and Burnis "Wild Bill" Wright.

By 1951 the Pasquel brothers were out of Mexican baseball, but they had set the stage for many of the top Negro League and Cuban ball players playing in the Mexican League.

During the 1940's and 1950's Negro League ball players dominated the Mexican League in every way. Four Negro League players won the Mexican League "Triple Crown" (leading the league in home runs, runs batted in and batting average).

Mexican League Triple Crown Winners by Negro League Players

Player	Year	Team	Home Runs	RBI	Batting Average
James “Cool Pappa” Bell	1940	Torreon Vera Cruz	12	79	.437
Burnis “Wild Bill” Wright	1943	Mexico	13	70	.366
Hiram Rene Gonzales	1952	Aguila	20	63	.343
Alonzo Perry	1956	Mexico	28	118	.392

Negro League ball players thoroughly dominated hitting in the Mexican League from the late 1930’s through the early 1960’s. Over a period of twenty-five years from 1938 to 1962, Negro League players won nineteen (19) of the twenty-five (25) Mexican League batting titles.

Mexican League Batting Titles Won by Negro League Players

Year	Player	Team	Batting Average
1938	Martin Dihigo	Aguila	.387
1939	Lazaro Salazar	Cordoba	.374
1940	James “Cool Pappa” Bell	Torreon Vera Cruz	.437
1941	Burnis” Wild Bill” Wright	Mexico	.390
1942	Monte Irvin	Vera Cruz	.397
1943	Burnis “Wild Bill” Wright	Mexico	.366
1945	Claro Duany	Monterrey	.375
1946	Claro Duany	Monterrey	.364
1948	Ray Dandridge	Vera Cruz	.369
1950	Lorenzo “Chiquitin” Cabrera	Mexico	.354
1952	Hiram Rene Gonzalez	Aguila	.370
1953	Hiram Rene Gonzalez	Aguila	.343
1954	Hiram Rene Gonzalez	Aguila	.359
1956	Alonzo Perry	Mexico	.392
1958	Pablo Bernard	Nuevo Laredo	.371
1959	Al Pinkston	Mexico	.369
1960	Al Pinkston	Mexico	.397
1961	Al Pinkston	Aguila	.374
1962	Al Pinkston	Aguila	.381

Negro League players also dominated in homeruns and runs batted in the Mexican League. From 1940 to 1962 Negro League players won ten (10) home run titles and sixteen (16) runs batted in titles.

Mexican League Home Run Titles Won by Negro League Players

Year	Player	Team	Home Runs
1940	James “Cool Pappa” Bell	Torreon Vera Cruz	12
1941	Josh Gibson	Vera Cruz	33
1942	Monte Irvin	Vera Cruz	20
1943	Burnis “Wild Bill” Wright	Mexico	13
1952	Hiram Rene Gonzalez	Aguila	21
1954	Hiram Rene Gonzalez	Aguila	21
1955	Mario Ariosa	Aguila	22
1956	Alonzo Perry	Mexico	28
1957	Earl Taborn	Nuevo Laredo	27
1959	Marvin Williams	Tigres Mexico	29
1978	Hal King	Saltillo	28

Mexican Runs Batted In Titles Won by Negro League Players

Year	Player	Team	Runs Batted In
1940	James “Cool Pappa” Bell	Torreon Vera Cruz	79
1941	Josh Gibson	Vera Cruz	124
1942	Silvio Garcia	Mexico	83
1943	Alejandro Crespo	Torreon	70
	Raymond Dandridge	Vera Cruz	70
	Burnis “Wild Bill” Wright	Mexico	70
1945	Claro Duany	Monterrey	100
1947	Alejandro Crespo	Puebla	96
1951	Hiram Rene Gonzalez	San Luis Potosi	79
1952	Hiram Rene Gonzalez	Aguila	84
1953	Hiram Rene Gonzalez	Aguila	63
1954	Fernando Pedroso	Nuevo Laredo	80
1955	Alonzo Perry	Mexico	122
1956	Alonzo Perry	Mexico	118
1957	Alonzo Perry	Mexico	107
1959	Marvin Williams	Tigres Mexico	109
1960	Al Pinkston	Mexico	144
1962	Alonzo Perry	Monterrey	105
1978	Hal King	Saltillo	114

Besides dominating hitting, Negro League players also dominated Mexican League pitching. From 1937 to 1954, there were only five no hitters pitched in the Mexican League. Negro League pitchers hurled all five of these no hitters with Chet Brewer pitching two during the 1939 season.

No Hitters Pitched by Negro League Players in Mexican League

Year	Player	Team	Opponent	Score
1937	Martin Dihigo	Aguila	Nogales	4-0
1939	Chet Brewer	Tampico	Comintra	6-0
1939	Chet Brewer	Tampico	Santa Rosa	1-0
1939	Raymond Taylor	Cordoba	Monterrey	4-0
1948	Manuel “Cocaina” Garcia	Tampico	Vera Cruz	2-0

Former Negro League pitchers were also named the “Top Mexican League Pitcher” twelve (12) times from 1938 to 1965. Ramon Bragana who had played in the Negro League off and on from 1928 to 1947 with Cuban Stars (East), Stars of Cuba, New York Cubans and Cleveland, would win 211 games in the Mexican League. Bragana’s thirty (30) win season in 1944 is the only time a pitcher won thirty games in Mexican League history.

Mexican League “Top Pitcher Award” Won by Negro League Players

Year	Player	Team	Won-Loss Record
1938	Martin Dihigo	Aguila	13-2
1939	Raymond Taylor	Cordoba	11-1
1940	William Jefferson	Monterrey	22-9
1942	Martin Dihigo	Torreon	22-7
1944	Ramon Bragana	Vera Cruz	30-8
1946	Martin Dihigo	Torreon	11-4
1947	Armando Torres	Monterrey	14-6
1950	William Greason	Jalisco	10-1
1951	James “Lefty” La Marque	Mexico	19-6
1957	Lino Donso	Tigres	8-2
1959	Robert Vargas	Poza Rica	13-3
1965	Frank Barnes	Reynosa	13-5

On the playing field, Negro League players dominated every aspect of the game. The influence of the Negro Leagues did not stop with the players. From 1939 to 1956, thirteen (13) of the eighteen (18) Mexican League championships were won by managers with Negro League playing experience. Lazaro Salazar would win seven Mexican League championships. Salazar would also have this same level of success while managing in the Venezuelan League. For his accomplishments as a player and manager, Lazaro would be inducted into the Cuban, Mexican and Venezuelan Baseball Hall of Fames.

Mexican League Managers with Negro League Background

Year	Manager	Team
1939	Lazaro Salazar	Cordoba Cafeteros
1941	Lazaro Salazar	Mexico Azules de Vera Cruz
1942	Martin Dihigo	Torreon Union Laguna
1943	Lazaro Salazar	Monterrey Industriales
1944	Ramon Bragana	Mexcio Azukes de Vera Cruz
1945	Armando Marsans	Tampico Alijadores
1946	Armando Marsans	Tampico Alijadores
1947	Lazaro Salazar	Monterrey Industriales
1948	Lazaro Salazar	Monterrey Industriales
1949	Lazaro Salazar	Monterrey Industriales
1953	Adolfo Luque	Nuevo Laredo Tecolotes
1954	Adolfo Luque	Nuevo Laredo Tecolotes
1956	Lazaro Salazar	Mexico Diablos Rojos
1962	Clement Carrera	Monterrey Sultanes

Other former Negro League players who managed in Mexico during the 1950's included:

- **Leon Kellman** – Managed Yucatan of the Mexican League during the 1957 season.
- **Alonzo Perry** – Managed the Puebla Camoterros of the Liga Invernal Veracruzana during the 1959-60 winter league season.

The following statistics for hitting and pitching by Negro League players in the Mexican League substantiate the importance of their presence in baseball in Latin America.

Mexican League Statistics of Selected Negro League Players Batting Statistics

Player	Years	Games	AB	Hits	HR	RBI	B.A.	SLG.
James "Cool Papa" Bell	4	287	1189	436	27	168	.367	.560
Raymond Dandridge	8	644	2714	943	34	447	.347	.468
Josh Gibson	2	116	450	177	44	162	.393	.802
Monte Irvin	1	63	237	94	20	79	.397	.772
Alonzo Perry	7	832	3122	1107	138	721	.355	.589
Al Pinkston	7	879	3233	1204	108	659	.372	.568
Lazaro Salazar	15	717	2103	703	31	407	.334	.465
Burnis "Wild Bill" Wright	10	758	2891	969	67	504	.335	.501

Mexican League Statistics of Selected Negro League Players
Pitching Statistics

Player	Years	Games	Won	Lost	Innings	SO	ERA
Frank Barnes	5	101	58	31	734	595	2.33
Ramon “Professor” Bragana	18	542	211	162	3376	1372	3.57
Chet Brewer	3	76	32	24	505	317	3.03
Martin Dihigo	11	213	119	57	1523	1109	2.84
Lino Donso	11	327	118	84	1789	1230	2.92
Eddie Locke	7	214	75	73	1220	589	3.41
Lazaro Salazar	14	270	112	78	1666	786	3.43

Negro League player’s dominance of Mexican League baseball would result in sixteen (16) former Negro League players being inducted into the Mexican Baseball Hall of Fame.

Negro League Players Inducted into Mexican Baseball Hall of Fame

Player	Negro League Team	Mexican League Team	Year Inducted
Martin Dihigo	New York Cubans	Torreon	1964
Lazaro Salazar	New York Cubans	Monterrey	1964
Ramon Bragana	New York Cubans	Vera Cruz	1964
Roy Campanella	Baltimore Elite Giants	Monterrey	1971
Josh Gibson	Homestead Grays	Vera Cruz	1971
Monte Irvin	Newark Eagles	Vera Cruz	1971
Al Pinkston	Cleveland Buckeyes	Aguila	1974
Basilio Rossell	Cuban Stars	Agrario	1979
Mario Ariosia	New York Cubans	Aguila	1981
Burnis “Wild Bill” Wright	Baltimore Elite Giants	Mexico	1982
Mario Ariosia	New York Cubans	Aguila	1982
Adolfo Luque	Cuban Stars	Nuevo Laredo	1985
Lino Donso	New York Cubans	Aguila	1988
Ray Dandridge	Newark Eagles	Vera Cruz	1989
Hiram Rene Gonzales	New York Cubans	Aguila	1993
Orestes “Minnie” Minoso	New York Cubans	Jalisco	1996

The impact of Negro League players and managers was significant in Mexican baseball. Negro League players and managers dominated every aspect of the game. The Center for Negro League Baseball Research identified two hundred and five (205) players with Negro League experience who left the United States to play in Mexico. Research conducted by the Center for Negro League Baseball Research only looked at the Negro League players and the Mexican League. The Mexican minor leagues were not researched. Some of the many Mexican minor leagues that operated during this time were:

- American - Mexican League
- Liga Beto Avila
- Liga Central (Central Mexican League)
- Liga Central de Sinaloa
- Liga de Beisbol del Centro
- Liga de la Costa
- Liga de Novates
- Liga del la Costa del Pacifico (Mexican Pacific Coast League)
- Liga del Noreste
- Liga Intercoloniale Independiente de Tampico
- Liga Invernal del Centro
- Liga Invernal del Norte
- Liga Invernal de Sonora
- Liga Invernal del Sur de Vera Cruz
- Liga Invernal Veracruzana
- Liga Veracruzana
- Liga Metropolitana
- Liga Mexicana Estudiantil
- Liga Otonal de Beisbol de Monterrey
- Liga Peninsular
- Liga Regional de Bajio
- Liga de Sonora
- Liga del Sureste
- Liga de Tabasco
- Liga Tabasquena

A listing of the two hundred and five (205) players with Negro League experience, the Negro League team they played for, the Mexican League teams they played for and years played in Mexico can be found in Research section of this website.

Dominican Summer League: Haven for the Negro League Player

The first real influx of Negro League players in the Dominican Republic was in 1937 when Dominican Republic Dictator, Rafael Trujillo, imported several key Negro League players to help him win the Dominican championship for his Ciudad Trujillo team. After his Ciudad Trujillo team got off to a slow start at the beginning of the season, Trujillo sent an emissary to the United States with a suitcase full of money and instructions to bring back Satchel Paige and as many Negro League players as would be necessary to win a championship. The emissary met with Satchel Paige and signed him up. With Satchel's help several other key Negro League players were also signed. Among the first players signed after Satchel were Negro League super stars Josh Gibson, James "Cool Pappa" Bell and Sam Bankhead. In addition the following Negro League players were added to the Ciudad Trujillo roster: Bob Griffith, Leroy Matlock, Cy Perkins and Harry Williams. The remainder of the Ciudad Trujillo team was primarily made up of Latin players who also had Negro League playing experience. These players included: Perchuco Cepeda (father of Orlando Cepeda), Francisco "Cho Cho" Correa, Rudy Fernandez, Silvio Garcia, Enrique Lantigua and Lazaro Salazar (Playing Manager). Of the entire Ciudad Trujillo roster only two players, outfielders Tony Castanos and Jose Vargas, had no Negro League experience. In 1937 the Dominican League had three teams: Ciudad Trujillo, Aquilas Cibanaes and Estrellas Orientales. The Ciudad Trujillo team is most often mentioned for importing Negro League players, but the other two teams also imported a significant number of Negro League players for the season. Martin Dihigo headed up the Aquilas Cibanaes team and Juan "Tetelo" Vargas anchored the Estrellas Orientales team. A complete roster of the Negro League players who participated in the 1937 Dominican season is as follows:

Roster of Negro League Players in the Dominican Republic in 1937

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

One of the highlights of the 1937 season was when Chet Brewer pitched a one-hitter against Satchel Paige and the Ciudad Trujillo team. Rafael Trujillo's plan worked as his team won the Dominican League baseball championship. The financial impact of bringing in all the Negro League players for the 1937 season virtually bankrupted Dominican professional baseball for years and professional baseball on a major scale would not return to the Dominican Republic until 1951.

The "Statistics" section of the Research Library of this website contains the official standings, batting statistics and pitching statistics for the 1937 Dominican League season.

The Dominican Summer League proved to be a haven for black ball players from 1951 to 1954. The Dominican Summer League turned out to be a great place to play. The pay was much better than the Negro Leagues and with some players approached what many Major League players were paid. Alonzo Perry left the Brandon Greys of the Mandak League to join the Licey Tigers for a salary of \$ 1,500 per month plus his travel and living expenses. Most contracts called for the player to be paid for living expenses and their travel to and from the Dominican Republic in addition to their regular salary. The schedule and travel was very easy. Games were generally played on the weekends and there were only limited practices during the week. The net result was that the players were making good money and had a lot of free time in a tropical island paradise. The players stayed in first class hotels and ate in the best restaurants. In the Dominican Republic, the black players were not second-class citizens and did not face the racial discrimination they did in the United States. The black players were superstars and most often treated like celebrities.

Our research identified seventy-three (73) different Negro League ball players that played in the Dominican Summer League from 1951 to 1954. The Research Library section of this website includes a listing of all these players and the teams that they played for in the Dominican Summer League.

Former Negro League players dominated Dominican Summer League play offensively. Hitting titles that were won by former Negro League players during the Dominican Summer League seasons of 1951 to 1954 were:

Dominican Summer League

Hitting Titles Won by Former Negro League Players

Title	Year	Player	Team	
Batting Title	1951	Luis Villodas	Cibaenas	.346
	1953	Tetelo Vargas	Orientales	.355
	1954	Alonzo Perry	Licey	.336

Slugging Average Leader

	1951	Pedro Formental	Cibaenas	.704
	1952	Alonzo Perry	Licey	.599
	1953	Alonzo Perry	Licey	.519
	1954	Bob Thurman	Escogido	.607
Homerun Leader	1951	Pedro Formental	Cibaenas	13
	1952	Alonzo Perry	Licey	11
	1953	Alonzo Perry	Licey	11
	1954	Bob Thurman	Escogido	11
Runs Batted In	1952	Alonzo Perry	Licey	38
	1953	Alonzo Perry	Licey	53
	1954	Bob Thurman	Escogido	34

Of these 16 major hitting titles of the Dominican Summer League from 1951-1954, fourteen (14) of them or 87.5 % were won by former Negro League ball players.

Examples of some of the outstanding Dominican Summer League seasons that were enjoyed by former Negro League players included:

Year	Player	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1951	Pedro Formental	Cibaenas	-	108	34	35	-	-	13	31	8	.324	-
1951	Alonzo Perry	Licey	25	90	27	36	4	1	9	32	10	.400	.767
1951	Luis Villodas	Cibaenas	47	156	19	54	6	1	6	25	2	.346	.513
1951	Sandy Amoros	Orientales	-	79	20	31	-	-	-	19	8	.392	-
1952	Willard Brown	Escogido	-	183	27	55	-	-	-	28	8	.301	-
1952	Alonzo Perry	Licey	45	162	29	53	9	1	11	38	5	.327	.599
1953	Bill Cash	Cibaenas	-	89	16	32	-	-	-	21	0	.360	-
1953	Wilmer Fields	Orientales	-	107	15	42	-	-	0	19	2	.393	-
1953	Alonzo Perry	Licey	56	229	40	67	11	4	11	53	16	.293	.520
1953	Tetelo Vargas	Orientales	49	186	35	66	8	2	2	16	-	.355	.452
1954	Alonzo Perry	Licey	42	146	29	49	11	1	8	29	6	.336	.589
1954	Bob Thurman	Escogido	-	140	29	42	-	-	13	34	2	.300	-

Terris Mc Duffie led all the Negro League pitchers that went to the Dominican Republic in the early 1950's. While pitching for Cibaneas and Oriente from 1952-1954, Terris posted a record of 23-9 in Dominican Summer League play. His best season was when he led all Dominican Summer League pitchers with a 12-3 record and a 1.80 E.R.A.

When the Dominican Summer League changed to a winter schedule in 1955, former Negro League players also won two of the league's first batting titles.

1955-56	Robert Wilson	Licey	.333
1957-58	Alonzo Perry	Licey	.332

The Dominican Summer League also provided former Negro League players the opportunity to manage. Former Negro League players that managed in the Dominican Summer League were:

- **Ramon “El Professor” Bragana** (Cleveland Buckeyes) – Bragana is considered as one of the top three pitchers to ever come out of Cuba. Ramon managed the Estrellas Orientales in 1954 in the Dominican Summer League and also managed the Estrellas Orientales during their 1955-56 winter league season in the Dominican League. Bragana is a member of both the Cuban and Mexican Baseball Hall of Fames.
- **William “Bill” Cash** (Philadelphia Stars) – Cash was a veteran of the Negro National League and was the starting catcher for the Philadelphia Stars from 1943-1950. Cash managed the Aguilas Cibaenas during the 1954 Dominican Summer League season.
- **Felix Delgado** (New York Cubans) – This Puerto Rican Baseball Hall of Fame player managed the 1951 Licey Tigers and Escogido in 1952.
- **Martin Dihigo** (New York Cubans) – Dihigo was one of the greatest baseball players to ever come out of Cuba. He is in the National Baseball Hall of Fame (Cooperstown), Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame, Mexican Baseball Hall of Fame and Venezuelan Baseball Hall of Fame. In 1951 he managed the Aguilas Cibaenas and then managed Escogido in 1952.
- **Jose Maria Fernandez** (New York Cubans) – This former catcher and long-time Cuban League manager was elected to the Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame. Fernandez managed the 1952 Licey Tigers of the Dominican Summer League.
- **Rodolfo “Rudy” Fernandez** (New York Cubans) – Rudy was the brother of Jose Fernandez. He was an excellent pitcher in the Negro Leagues, Cuba and several other Latin American countries. Like his brother he is a member of the Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame. Rudy managed the Aguilas Cibaenas in 1952 and 1953. He also managed the Licey Tigers of the Dominican League during their 1955-56 winter league season.
- **Manuel “Cocaina” Garcia** (New York Cubans) – Garcia’s play on the field resulted in him being elected to the Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame and the Mexican Baseball Hall of Fame. Garcia managed the Estrellas Orientales in 1951 and 1952.
- **Alonzo Perry** (Birmingham Black Barons) – Besides being the most dominant hitter and player of the Dominican Summer League from 1951-1954, Perry also had the opportunity to serve as interim manager of the Licey Tigers in 1951 and 1952. Alonzo Perry is in the Dominican Baseball Hall of Fame.
- **Antonio Rodriquez** (Cuban Stars) – Rodriquez managed Escogido during the 1954 Dominican season.

- **Julio Rojo** (New York Lincoln Giants) – Rojo played in the Negro leagues from 1916 to 1930. He also played, coached and managed all over Latin America. Rojo managed the Estrellas Orientales in 1952. Rojo is also a member of the Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame.
- **Dick Seay** (New York Black Yankees) – This Negro League veteran was an outstanding infielder from 1927 to 1940. During the 1952 season, he managed Escogido.

The Research Library section of this website contains a listing of Negro League players who played in the Dominican Summer League and the Dominican Winter League.

Venezuela: Negro Leaguers go to South America

Professional baseball had been played in Venezuela for years and the lure of a good payday had drawn Negro Leaguers to Venezuela on several occasions. However, the first real strong presence of Negro League players in Venezuela came in 1945 when the American All Stars were invited to play an exhibition schedule in the country. The American All Stars were a barnstorming team of all stars from the Negro American League and Negro National League. The roster of the American All Stars was:

American All Stars (1945)

Player	Negro League Team	Position
Bill Anderson	New York Cubans	Pitcher
Marvin Barker	New York Black Yankees	Second Base
Gene Benson	Philadelphia Stars	Outfield
Roy Campanella	Baltimore Elite Giants	Catcher and Outfield
George Jefferson	Cleveland Buckeyes	Pitcher
Sam Jethroe	Cleveland Buckeyes	Outfield
Walter Leonard	Homestead Grays	First Base
Verdell Mathis	Memphis Red Sox	Pitcher
Jackie Robinson	Kansas City Monarchs	Shortstop
Felton Snow	Baltimore Elite Giants	Manager
Quincy Troupe	Cleveland Buckeyes	Catcher
Roy Welmaker	Homestead Grays	Pitcher
Parnell Woods	Cleveland Buckeyes	Third Base

The American All Stars played a fourteen (14) game series that began on November 24 and concluded on December 23 against Cerveceria Caracas and the Estrellas del Caribe. The series was billed in Venezuela as the “Serie de las Estrellas Negras” (Series of the Negro Stars). The American All Stars won the exhibition series with a record of 12-2. The hitting and pitching records for the American All Stars were as follows:

American All Stars - Hitting Statistics (1945)

Player	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	B.A.	SLG.
George Jefferson	7	0	6	1	0	0	0	.857	1.000
Buck Leonard	47	12	20	2	0	4	15	.462	.723
Parnell Woods	31	4	13	4	0	0	4	.419	.548
Quincy Troupe	46	7	19	2	0	1	9	.413	.522
Sam Jethroe	59	7	20	5	1	3	16	.339	.610
Jackie Robinson	56	5	19	2	1	1	13	.339	.464
Gene Benson	57	9	16	3	0	0	6	.281	.333
Roy Campanella	65	11	17	5	0	1	12	.262	.385
Marvin Barker	56	12	12	3	0	1	7	.214	.321
Verdel Mathis	25	0	4	0	0	0	5	.160	.160
Roy Welmaker	19	0	3	1	0	0	1	.158	.211
Bill Anderson	9	0	1	0	0	0	0	.111	.111
Felton Snow	17	1	1	0	0	0	1	.059	.059

American All Stars - Pitching Statistics (1945)

Player	Games	Won	Loss	Innings	Hits	S/O	BB	ERA
Felton Snow	1	1	0	9	9	2	2	0.00
Bill Anderson	9	3	1	30	31	13	6	2.99
Verdel Mathis	4	3	0	27	28	7	18	3.00
Roy Welmaker	6	3	0	34	47	29	25	3.71
George Jefferson	3	2	1	16	14	2	11	3.88

The series also included three other Negro League stars: Frank Austin, Marvin Williams and William “Bill” Jefferson. All three of these Negro League players played for the Estrellas del Caribe. Marvin Williams in particular had an excellent series. Marvin’s hitting statistics for the series were:

AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	B.A.	SLG.
52	10	22	5	1	2	16	.423	.673

The success of the exhibition series between the American All Stars and local professional and all-star teams helped launch the first official season of the Venezuelan League in 1946. The American All Stars had made such an impression on Venezuelan team owners and fans that when the first Venezuelan League was scheduled for play at the start of the 1946 regular season, three of the four Venezuelan League teams (Magallanes, Vargas and Venezuela) signed Negro League players for the season. Cervecia Caracas was the only team not to sign foreign players to their roster. The Negro League players that played in Venezuela during the league’s regular season in 1946 were:

Player	Negro League Team	Venezuelan League Team
Bill Anderson	New York Cubans	Magallanes
Roy Campanella	Baltimore Elite Giants	Vargas
Tom Glover	Baltimore Elite Giants	Venezuela
Bill Jefferson	Cleveland Buckeyes	Vargas and Venezuela
Sam Jethroe	Cleveland Buckeyes	Vargas
Quincy Troupe	Cleveland Buckeyes	Magallanes
Roy Welmaker	Homestead Grays	Vargas
Marvin Williams	Philadelphia Stars	Vargas and Venezuela

It was not surprising that the Negro League players dominated play during the season. Behind the pitching of Roy Welmaker, Vargas won the Venezuelan League championship with a record of 18-12. Welmaker accounted for 12 of Vargas 18 league victories and Bill Jefferson picked up four of the other six victories for Vargas. Welmaker led the Venezuelan League in the following pitching categories: complete games (17), wins (12), strikeouts (139) and earned run average (2.80). Marvin Williams who played for two teams (Vargas and Venezuela) was one of the league's leading hitters. Marvin led the Venezuelan League in the following hitting categories: doubles (14), runs (29) and runs batted in (41). Sam Jethroe used his exceptional speed to lead the league in triples (5) and stolen bases (11). Another all star team of Negro League players would make a barnstorming tour of Venezuela in 1949 The American All Stars were an all star team from the Negro Leagues toured Latin America in 1949. The American All Stars played exhibition games in Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Venezuela. The roster for the American Stars was:

American All Stars (1949)

Player	Negro League Team	Position
James Clarkson	Philadelphia Stars	Shortstop
Lloyd "Duckie" Davenport	Chicago American Giants	Outfield
Luke Easter	Homestead Grays	Third Base
Stanley "Doc" Glenn	Philadelphia Stars	Catcher
Bob Griffin	Baltimore Elite Giants	Pitcher
Walter "Buck" Leonard	Homestead Grays	First Base
Ernest "The Kid" Long	Cleveland Buckeyes	Pitcher
Gready "Lefty" Mc Kinnis	Chicago American Giants	Pitcher
Felix Mc Laurin	Birmingham Black Barons	Outfield
Ray Neil	Indianapolis Clowns	Second Base
Art "Superman" Pennington	Chicago American Giants	Outfield
Andy "Pullman" Porter	Baltimore Elite Giants	Pitcher

Othello “Chico” Renfroe
Pat Scantlebury

Kansas City Monarchs
New York Cubans

Catcher
Pitcher

After the 1946 season, the Venezuelan League was played with a winter league schedule like Cuba, Puerto Rico and Panama. The only exception to this was in 1957 and 1959 when the league attempted to play a regular season schedule. Negro League players continued to go to Venezuela to play winter league baseball. Some of the highlights of Negro League players in the Venezuelan Winter League were:

Player	Hitting Title	Number	Year
Parnell Woods	Batting Average	.354	1946-47
James Pendleton	Batting Average	.387	1949-50
Sam Hairston	Batting Average	.380	1950-51
Wilmer Fields	Batting Average	.336	1951-52
Dave Pope	Batting Average	.345	1953-54
Robert Wilson	Batting Average	.350	1956-57
Gene Collins	Batting Average	.356	1959
Luke Easter	Homeruns	8	1947-48
Jim Pendleton	Homeruns	8	1948-49
Howard Easterling	Homeruns	9	1949-50
Rene Gonzalez	Runs Batted In	56	1950-51
Wilmer Field	Runs Batted In	45	1951-52
Roy Campanella	Stolen Bases	8	1947-48
Carlos Colas	Stolen Bases	14	1950-51
Jim Pendleton	Stolen Bases	12	1951-52
Player	Pitching Title	Number	Year
Don Newcombe	Wins	10-3	1947-48
Theo Smith	Wins	8-3	1949-50
Don Newcombe	Earned Run Average	2.30	1947-48
Jehosie Heard	Earned Run Average	3.03	1952-53

Former Negro League players also excelled as managers in the Venezuelan League. Lazaro Salazar won three Venezuelan League championships for Magallanes for the 1949-50, 1950-51 and 1954-55 seasons. Martin Dihigo led Caracas to the Venezuelan League championship for the 1952-53 season. Rodolfo “Rudy” Fernandez won a title for Valencia for the 1960-61 winter league season.

The Research Library section of this website contains a listing of Negro League players who played in the Venezuelan League.

Other Latin American Baseball Venues for Negro League Players

Mexico, Dominican Republic and Venezuela weren't the only options for Negro League players in Latin America. Colombia, Cuba, Nicaragua, Panama and Puerto Rico also played professional baseball.

While Mexico consistently played a regular season schedule over the years, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela dropped their regular season schedule in favor of a winter league schedule. Over the years only Mexico played both a regular and winter league schedule in Latin America.

Winter league baseball in Cuba, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Mexico and Panama consistently attracted some of the best black and white players from the United States. Prior to the 1960's and 1970's, most professional ball players did not make enough money playing baseball during the regular season to support their families. Winter league baseball provided players the opportunity to play baseball year round and earn additional income.

Negro League players excelled in Latin America, just like they had starred in the Negro Leagues in the United States.

Cuban Winter League Baseball

Cuba started playing professional baseball in 1878. In the early 1900's, Negro League stars like Pete Hill, Frank Johnson, Pop Lloyd, Adolfo Luque, Armando Marsans, Emilio Palomino, Spottswood Poles, Cristobal Torriente and Smoky Joe Williams also dominated Cuban baseball. The 1920's saw Negro League stars James "Cool Papa" Bell, Oscar Charleston, Oliver Marcelle, Alejandro Oms, Cristobal Torriente and Jud Wilson as standouts in the Cuban Winter League also. In the 1930's Negro League stars like Sam Bankhead, Martin Dihigo, Josh Gibson, Bill Perkins, Cando Lopez, Lazaro Salazar, Mule Suttles and Willie Wells starred in both the United States and Cuba.

The domination of Cuban baseball by Negro League and black ball players during the early years of Cuban baseball may be best analyzed by looking at the players inducted into the Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame. Prior to 1961 (year professional baseball in Cuba ceased to exist), there had been sixty-eight (68) players inducted into the Cuban Baseball Hall of Fame. Thirty-four (34) of these players had experience in the United States playing for black or Negro League teams. Some of the most notable of these Cuban Baseball Hall of Famers with black baseball experience are: Jose Mendez, Cristobal Torriente, Alejandro Oms, Pelayo Chacon, Isidro Fabre, Lazaro Salazar, Ramon Bragana, Adolfo Luque and Mike Gonzalez.

From the 1940-41 to the 1950-51 season, Negro League players won 9 of 11 of the Cuban Winter League's of batting titles.

Player	Negro League Team	Season	Average
Lazaro Salazar	New York Cubans	1940-41	.316
Silvio Garcia	New York Cubans	1941-42	.351
Alejandro Crespo	New York Cubans	1942-43	.337
Claro Duany	New York Cubans	1944-45	.340
Lloyd Davenport	Chicago American Giants	1945-46	.333
Harry Kimbro	Baltimore Elite Giants	1947-48	.346
Alejandro Crespo	New York Cubans	1948-49	.326
Pedro Formenthal	Memphis Red Sox	1949-50	.336
Silvio Garcia	New York Cubans	1950-51	.347

Some of the Negro League player's outstanding individual performances in the Cuban League were:

- **David Barnhill** (New York Cubans) led the Cuban League in victories with a 13-8 record during the 1948-49 season. Barnhill also set the Cuban League for strikeouts in one game with 15 on January 10, 1948.
- **James "Cool Pappa" Bell** (St. Louis Stars) holds the single game record for homeruns with three (3). Amazingly all three of Bell's homeruns were inside the park. This was an unbelievable example of Bell's blazing speed.
- **Joe Black** (Baltimore Elite Giants) was the leading pitcher during the 1951-52 season with a 15-6 record.
- **Raymond Brown** (Homestead Grays) led the Cuban League in victories and complete games in the 1936-37 and 1937-38 seasons. Brown had a record of 21-4 with 23 complete games in 1936-37 and 12-5 record with 14 complete games in 1937-38. Raymond's 21 victories stands as the most wins by a pitcher in one season in the Cuban League. It is also the only time in Cuban professional baseball history that a pitcher won 20 games. Brown also pitched a no-hitter in 1936.
- **Alejandro Crespo** (New York Cubans) and **Pedro Formenthal** (Memphis Red Sox) share the Cuban League career runs batted in record with 362 RBIs.
- **Martin Dihigo** (New York Cubans) was one of Cuba's greatest hitter and pitchers. He also won two league titles as a manger. Martin holds the Cuban League record for career pitching victories with 105 wins. Dihigo is the only ball player to be elected into four different baseball hall of fames (Cuba, Mexico, Venezuela and the United States).

- **Pedro Formenthal** (Memphis Red Sox) holds the Cuban League record for career homeruns with 54.
- **Manuel “Cocaina” Garcia** (New York Cubans) led the league in wins in 1942-43 (10-3 record) and 1943-44 (12-4 record).
- **Josh Gibson** (Homestead Grays) won the Cuban League homerun title with 11 in 1938-39. This is the first time any player in Cuban baseball history had ever hit double-digit homeruns in one year.
- **Mike Gonzales** (New York Lincoln Stars) managed the Havana Leones to a record 14 Cuban Winter League titles.
- **Henry Kimbro** (Baltimore Elite Giants) won the league batting title with a .346 batting average during the 1947-48 season.
- **Adolfo Luque** (Long Branch Cubans) managed Almendares and Cienfuegos to seven Cuban Winter League titles during the 1930’s and 1940’s.
- **Alejandro Oms** (Cuban Stars) won three Cuban League batting titles: 1924-25 .393, 1928-29 - .432 and 1929-30 - .380. Alejandro hit over .300 for eight straight seasons from 1922-23 to 1929-30. This still stands as a Cuban League record.
- **Lenny Pearson** (Newark Eagles) led the Cuban League in runs batted in for three straight years (1946-47, 1947-48 and 1949-50).
- **Lazaro Salazar** (New York Cubans) as a player won several batting and pitching titles. As a manager, he led Santa Clara to back-to-back Cuban League titles in 1936-37 and 1937-38.

Puerto Rican Winter League

From the first season of the Puerto Rican Winter League (1938-39) to the mid 1950’s (1954-55 season), Negro League players totally dominated the Puerto Rican Winter League in hitting.

- Negro League players won 16 of the 17 league batting titles during this time frame.

Player	Negro League Team	Season	Batting Average
Perucho Cepeda	New York Cubans	1938-39	.465
Perucho Cepeda	New York Cubans	1939-40	.383
Roy Partlow	Homestead Grays	1940-41	.443

Josh Gibson	Homestead Grays	1941-42	.480
Francisco Coimbre	New York Cubans	1942-43	.342
Tetelo Vargas	New York Cubans	1943-44	.410
Francisco Coimbre	New York Cubans	1944-45	.425
Fernando Pedrozo	New York Cubans	1945-46	.368
Willard Brown	Kansas City Monarchs	1946-47	.390
Willard Brown	Kansas City Monarchs	1947-48	.432
Luke Easter	Homestead Grays	1948-49	.402
Willard Brown	Kansas City Monarchs	1949-50	.354
George Crowe	New York Black Yankees	1950-51	.375
Bob Boyd	Memphis Red Sox	1951-52	.374
Luis Marquez	Homestead Grays	1953-54	.333
Willie Mays	Birmingham Black Barons	1954-55	.395

Only George Freese who played in the Major Leagues with the Detroit Tigers, Pittsburgh Pirates and Chicago Cubs could break the Negro League players' stranglehold on hitting. Freese won the 1952-53 Puerto Rican League batting title with a .330 batting average. Freese also led the league with 94 runs batted in that year.

- Negro League players won 14 of the 17 league homerun titles.

Player	Negro League Team	Season	Homeruns
Ed Stone	Newark Eagles	1938-39	9
Josh Gibson	Homestead Grays	1939-40	6
Roy Campanella	Baltimore Elite Giants	1940-41	8
Buck Leonard	Homestead Grays	1940-41	8
Josh Gibson	Homestead Grays	1941-42	13
Juan Guilbe	Indianapolis Clowns	1943-44	2
Monte Irvin	Newark Eagles	1945-46	3
Sam Bankhead	Homestead Grays	1945-46	3
Luis Marquez	Homestead Grays	1946-47	14
Willard Brown	Kansas City Monarchs	1947-48	27
Willard Brown	Kansas City Monarchs	1948-49	18
Bob Thurman	Homestead Grays	1948-49	18
Willard Brown	Kansas City Monarchs	1949-50	16
James Clarkson	Philadelphia Stars	1950-51	17
George Crowe	New York Black Yankees	1951-52	9
Al Smith	Cleveland Buckeyes	1951-52	9
James Clarkson	Philadelphia Stars	1952-53	18
Hank Aaron	Indianapolis Clowns	1953-54	9

Negro League pitchers also dominated Puerto Rican Winter League baseball in the 1940's.

- The following Negro League players led the Puerto Rican Winter League in victories in 8 of the 10 years during the 1940's.

Player	Negro League Team	Season	Wins
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Satchel Paige	Kansas City Monarchs	1939-40	19
Bill Byrd	Baltimore Elite Giants	1940-41	15
Barney Brown	Philadelphia Stars	1941-42	16
Rafaelito Ortiz	Chicago American Giants	1943-44	15
Tomas Quinonez	Indianapolis Clowns	1944-45	16
Tomas Quinonez	Indianapolis Clowns	1945-46	10
Barney Brown	Philadelphia Stars	1946-47	16
John Ford Smith	Kansas City Monarchs	1947-48	13

- Negro League pitchers also dominated in earned run average. Negro League players had the lowest earned run average in 10 of the 11 years from the 1939-40 to 1949-50 season. These players were:

Player	Negro League Team	Season	E.R.A.
Silvio Garcia	New York Cubans	1939-40	1.32
Roy Partlow	Homestead Grays	1940-41	1.49
Raymond Brown	Homestead Grays	1941-42	1.82
Rafaelito Ortiz	Chicago American Giants	1942-43	1.83
Tomas Quinonez	Indianapolis Clowns	1943-44	1.69
Tomas Quinonez	Indianapolis Clowns	1944-45	2.52
Johnny Davis	Newark Eagles	1945-46	2.42
Barney Brown	Philadelphia Stars	1946-47	1.24
Rafaelito Ortiz	Chicago American Giants	1947-48	2.97
Cecil Kaiser	Homestead Grays	1949-50	1.68

From the Puerto Rican winter League's first season in 1938-39 to the 1950-51 season, Negro League players won every Most Valuable Player award.

Year	Player	Negro League Team	Puerto Rican Team
1938-39	Perucho Cepeda	New York Cubans	Guayama
1939-40	Satchel Paige	Kansas City Monarchs	Guayama
1940-41	Luis Cabrera	New York Cubans	Santurce
1941-42	Josh Gibson	Homestead Grays	Santurce
1942-43	Francisco Coimbre	New York Cubans	Ponce
1943-44	Tomas Quinones	Indianapolis Clowns	Ponce
1944-45	Tomas Quinones	Indianapolis Clowns	Ponce
1945-46	Monte Irvin	Newark Eagles	San Juan
1946-47	Barney Brown	Philadelphia Stars	San Juan
1947-48	Willard Brown	Kansas City Monarchs	Santurce
1948-49	Luke Easter	Homestead Grays	Mayaguez
1949-50	Willard Brown	Kansas City Monarchs	Santurce
1950-51	Bob Thurman	Homestead Grays	Santurce

Some of the outstanding individual performances of Negro League players in the Puerto Rican Winter League include:

- **Satchel Paige** (Kansas City Monarchs) led the league in wins (19) and strikeouts (208) while pitching for Guayama during the 1939-40 season. Satchel also posted a 1.93 earned run average that season.
- **Josh Gibson** (Homestead Grays) won two homerun titles in the Puerto Rican Winter League (1939-40 – 6 homeruns and 1941-42 – 13 homeruns). Gibson also led the Puerto Rican Winter League in hitting with a .480 batting average for the 1941-42 season.
- **Roy Partlow** (Homestead Grays) won the Puerto Rican Winter league batting title for the 1940-41 season with a .443 batting average. Partlow pitched and played in the outfield for San Juan. As a pitcher, Roy posted a 1.49 earned run average during the 1940-41 season. The season before (1939-40), Partlow batted .366, had an earned run average of 1.40 and posted an 11-4 record on the mound.
- **George Scales** (Baltimore Elite Giants) won six (6) Puerto Rican Winter League championships. He managed Ponce to four straight league championships from 1941 to 1945. Scales also won another Puerto Rican League championship for Ponce during the 1946-47 winter league season and managed Santurce to the league title in the 1950-51 season.
- **Barney Brown** (Philadelphia Stars) while pitching for San Juan, led the league in wins (16) and earned run average (1.24) during the 1946-47 season.
- **Willard “Homerun” Brown** (Kansas City Monarchs) won three batting titles (1946-47 - .390, 1947-48 - .432 and 1949-50 - .354) in the Puerto Rican Winter League. Willard led the Puerto Rican Winter League in homeruns three years: 1947- 48 with 27 homeruns, 1948-49 with 18 homeruns and 1949-50 with 16 homeruns. He also led the Puerto Rican Winter League in runs batted in 1946-47 with 99 RBI, 1947-48 with 86 RBI and 1949-50 with 117 RBI. Willard won the Puerto Rican Winter League Triple Crown for the 1946-47 and 1949-50 seasons.
- **Luke Easter** (Homestead Grays) while playing for Mayaguez during the 1948-49 season, led the league in runs scored (81), doubles (27) triples (9) and batting average (.402). Luke also hit 14 homeruns that season.
- **Artie Wilson** (Birmingham Black Barons) led the Mayaguez Indians to the Puerto Rican Winter League title during the 1948-49 season. As the player-manager of the Indians, Wilson also led the league in base hits with 126 during that same season.

Some of the Puerto Rican League career hitting statistics of Negro League players are:

Player	Years	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	BA	SLG
Hank Aaron	1953-54	274	37	84	16	3	9	.307	.485
Bob Boyd	1951-53	598	101	196	28	8	8	.331	.441
Willard Brown	1941-57	1940	378	679	135	27	101	.350	.604
Buz Clarkson	1940-56	2063	448	621	109	15	98	.301	.511
Pancho Coimbre	1938-51	1915	370	646	135	17	24	.337	.463
Luke Easter	1948-56	440	112	158	34	10	31	.359	.693
Alphonso Gerard	1944-58	2288	365	693	88	24	6	.303	.370
Luis Marquez	1944-64	4018	768	1206	235	66	97	.300	.464
Willie Mays	1954-55	172	63	68	15	7	12	.395	.773
Herbert Souell	1947-48	252	44	87	11	0	3	.345	.425
Bob Thurman	1947-60	2978	527	931	149	61	120	.313	.525
Juan Vargas	1938-63	2821	606	906	119	56	23	.321	.428

Negro League players also excelled on the mound in Puerto Rican League play. Some of the outstanding pitching performances of Negro League players in Puerto Rico are:

Player	Years	Won	Lost	Strikeouts
Dan Bankhead	1941-63	48	33	565
Barney Brown	1946-48	34	15	-
Luis Cabrera	1939-62	105	99	704
Bill Greason	1953-58	46	31	372
Sam Jones	1951-52	27	9	311
Cecil Kaiser	1949-50	13	2	-
Rafaelito Ortiz	1938-53	85	51	344
Tomas Quinones	1940-53	82	39	344
Jose Santiago	1946-63	107	97	976

When the “All Decade Puerto Rican Winter League team” was selected for the 1940’s, every player selected had Negro League experience.

Position	Player	Negro League Team	Puerto Rican Team
Catcher	Josh Gibson	Homestead Grays	Santurce
First Base	Luke Easter	Homestead Grays	Mayaguez
Second Base	Fernando Pedroso	New York Cubans	Ponce
Third Base	Carena Marquez	Homestead Grays	Mayaguez
Shortstop	Perucho Cepeda	New York Cubans	Guayama
Outfield	Willard Brown	Kansas City Monarchs	Santurce
Outfield	Tetelo Vargas	New York Cubans	Guayama
Outfield	Pancho Coimbre	New York Cubans	Ponce
Pitcher	Roy Partlow	Homestead Grays	San Juan

The Puerto Rican League also gave Negro League ball players the opportunity to manage outside the Negro American League or Negro National League. The following chart identifies all the Negro League players who managed in Puerto Rico.

Negro Leaguers Who Managed in Puerto Rico

Player	Negro League Team	Puerto Rican Team	Years in Puerto Rico
Robert Clark	Baltimore Elite Giants	San Juan	1945-46
Francisco "Pancho" Coimbre	New York Cubans	Ponce	1938-39
		Ponce	1950-51, 1951-52
		Ponce	1956-57
		Ponce	1958-59
James Clarkson	Philadelphia Stars	Santurce	1952-53, 1953-54
Monchile Concepcion	Cuban Stars	Santurce	1944-45
		Santurce	1956-57, 1957-58
		Santurce	1958-59
Anthony Cooper	New York Black Yankees	Ponce	1940-41
Lorenzo "Piper" Davis	Birmingham Black Barons	Ponce	1949-50
Felix "Felle" Delgado	New York Cubans	San Juan	1948-49
Isidore Fabre	Cuban Stars (East)	White Star Line	1932
		Ponce	1939-40
Rodolfo "Rudy" Fernandez	New York Cubans	Aguadilla	1946-47
Josh Gibson	Homestead Grays	Santurce	1939-40
Vic Harris	Homestead Grays	Santurce	1947-48, 1948-49
		Santurce	1949-50
Junior Gilliam	Baltimore Elite Giants	San Juan	1973-74
Dick Lundy	Atlantic City Bacharach Giants	Mayaguez	1943-44, 1944-45
		Mayaguez	1946-47
Luis Marquez	Homestead Grays	Ponce	1960-61
		Mayaguez	1969-70
Emilio "Millito" Navarro	Cuban Stars (East)	Ponce	1938-39
Clarence Palm	New York Black Yankees	Humacao	1941-42
		Santurce	1946-47
Alonso Perry	Birmingham Black Barons	Mayaguez	1950-51
Ramiro Ramirez	Cuban Stars (West)	Caguas	1947-48
Carlos Santiago	New York Cubans	Arecibo	1967-68, 1968-69
Jose Santiago	New York Cubans	San Juan	1967-68
George Scales	New York Black Yankees	Aguadilla	1939-40
		Ponce	1940-41, 1942-43
		Ponce	1943-44, 1944-45
		Ponce	1945-46, 1946-47
		Ponce	1947-48, 1948-49
		Ponce	1949-50
		Santurce	1950-51, 1951-52
		Ponce	1958-59, 1959-60
Dick Seay	New York Black Yankees	Santurce	1939-40
		Santurce	1941-42, 1945-46
Jimmy Starks	New York Black Yankees	Mayaguez	1938-39
		Mayaguez	1948-49, 1949-50
Ed Stone	Newark Eagles	Humacao	1938-39, 1939-40
Quincy Troupe	Cleveland Buckeyes	Mayaguez	1947-48
		Caguas	1948-49
		Ponce	1956-57, 1957-58

Harry Williams	New York Black Yankees	San Juan	1940-41
		Humacao	1940-41
Artie Wilson	Birmingham Black Barons	Mayaguez	1948-49
Burnis Wright	Baltimore Elite Giants	San Juan	1940-41, 1941-42

Former Negro league players found success in managing in Puerto Rico. George Scales won five championships with Ponce (1941-42, 1942-43, 1943-44, 1944-45 and 1946-47) and one title with Santurce (1950-51). Other former Negro League players that managed championship teams in Puerto Rico included: Quincy Trouppe (Caguas-Guayama in 1947-48), Artie Wilson (Mayaguez in 1948-49), James Clarkson (Santurce in 1952-53) and Monchile Concepcion (Santurce in 1958-59).

The contribution of Negro League players in Puerto Rico has been recognized by the election of a large number of these players to the Puerto Rican Baseball Hall of Fame.

Puerto Rican Baseball Hall of Fame

Player	Negro League Team
Willard Brown	Kansas City Monarchs
Perucho Cepeda	New York Cubans
Francisco Coimbra	New York Cubans
Leon Day	Newark Eagles
Jose Figueroa	New York Cubans
Juan Guilbe	Indianapolis Clowns
Luis Marquez	Homestead Grays
Milito Navarro	Cuban Stars
Rafaelito Ortiz	Chicago American Giants
Carlos Santiago	New York Cubans
Jose Santiago	New York Cubans
Bob Thurman	Homestead Grays
Tetlo Vargas	New York Cubans
Luis Villodas	Baltimore Elite Giants
Artie Wilson	Birmingham Black Barons

Panamanian Winter Baseball League

Panama played its first professional baseball season in 1946. Baseball in Panama was played during the winter after the Major League baseball and Negro League seasons were over. The Panamanian League attracted Major League players, Negro League players, Latin American players and the best Panamanian players. Panama also sent several outstanding players to the Negro Leagues.

Player	Negro League Team	Years
Frank Austin	Philadelphia Stars	1944-1948
Pablo Bernard	Louisville Buckeyes	1949
	Cleveland Buckeyes	1950
Archie Brathwaite	Newark Eagles	1944
	Philadelphia Stars	1947-1948
Vibert Clarke	Cleveland Buckeyes	1946-1948
	Louisville Buckeyes	1949
	Memphis Red Sox	1950-1953
Granville Gladstone	Indianapolis Clowns	1950
Leon Kellman	Cleveland Buckeyes	1946-1948
	Louisville Buckeyes	1949
	Memphis Red Sox	1950, 1952-1953
	Indianapolis Clowns	1952
Alberto Osorio	Louisville Buckeyes	1949
Clyde Parris	Baltimore Elite Giants	1946
	New York Black Yankees	1946-1948
	Louisville Buckeyes	1949
Bobby Prescott	Jacksonville Eagles	1951
Pat Scantlebury	New York Cubans	1944-1950

Negro League players dominated Panamanian baseball during the late 1940's through the mid 1950's. During the first eight seasons of the Panamanian League, Negro League ball players won six of the eight Panamanian League Most Valuable Player awards at the end of the season. Patricio Scantlebury had also just won the Liga Nacional (top amateur league in Panama) Most Valuable Player award for the 1945 season while pitching his team Jardin Tropical to the league championship.

Panamanian League – Most Valuable Player Awards

Year	Player	Position	Team
1945-46	Leon Kellman	catcher	General Electric
1946-47	Frank Austin	shortstop	General electric

1947-48	Horacio Martinez	shortstop	Ceverceria Nacional
1948-49	Patricio Scantlebury	pitcher	Spur Cola
1950-51	Vibert Clarke	pitcher	Spur Cola
1952-53	Frank Austin	shortstop	Chesterfield

The two seasons that Negro League players did not win the Most Valuable Player awards, the award was won by Carta Vieja players Tony Jacobs (1949-50) and Forrest “Spook” Jacobs (1951-52).

Negro League players led the league in hitting eight years during the early years of the Panamanian League.

Panamanian League - Hitting Leaders

Player	Year	Panamanian Team	Batting Average
Rafael Noble	1946	Ceverceria Nacional	.380
Quincy Barbee	1949	Chesterfield	.381
Archie Brathwaite	1950	Chesterfield	.357
Joe Atkins	1951	Chesterfield	.343
Clyde Parris	1953	Cerverceria Nacional	.328
Clyde Parris	1955	Chesterfield	.331
Frank Austin	1955	Chesterfield	.331
Frank Austin	1956	Chesterfield	.378
Clyde Parris	1960	Comerico	.434

Negro League players also dominated in hitting homeruns. In seven out of the nine seasons from 1946 to 1954, a Negro League player won the Panamanian League home run title. Homerun titles won by former Negro League players in Panama were:

Panamanian League – Homerun Titles

Player	Year	Panamanian Team	Homeruns
Henry Mc Henry	1946	CPR	10
Clyde Parris	1947	General Electric	5
Quincy Barbee	1948	Chesterfield	7
Quincy Barbee	1950	Cerverceria Nacional	10
Joe Atkins	1951	Chesterfield	8
Leon Kellman	1953	Spur Cola	5
Bobby Prescott	1954	Chesterfield	8
Harry Simpson	1962	Cerveza Balboa	9

Negro League player dominance did not stop with hitting. Negro League pitchers also dominated the Panamanian League. Former Negro League players that led the Panamanian League in pitching included:

Panamanian League – Pitching Leaders

Pitching

Year	Player	Panamanian Team	Category	Number
1947	Pat Scantlebury	General Electric	Wins	11-3
	James Jenkins	CPR	Strikeouts	66
	Cecil Kaiser	Cerveceria Nacional	ERA	0.86
1948	Henry Mc Henry	Chesterfield	ERA	1.81
1949	Pat Scantlebury	Spur Cola	Wins	13-1
	Pat Scantlebury	Spur Cola	Strikeouts	74
	Pat Scantlebury	Spur Cola	ERA	1.41
1950	Gentry Jessup	Chesterfield	Wins	10-4
	Sam Jones	Spur Cola	Strikeouts	79
1951	Vibert Clarke	Spur Cola	Wins	14-4
	Connie Johnson	Chesterfield	Strikeouts	88
	Gentry Jessup	Chesterfield	ERA	1.69
1952	Alberto Osorio	Chesterfield	Wins	10-2
	Alberto Osorio	Chesterfield	Strikeouts	64
	Alberto Osorio	Chesterfield	ERA	2.01
1953	Pat Scantlebury	Spur Cola	Wins	8-4
1954	Theo Smith	Chesterfield	Wins	7-4
	Vibert Clarke	Spur Cola	ERA	3.02

Of all the players who played winter baseball in Panama, Panama native and former Negro League player Clyde Parris put up the best career batting statistics in Panamanian League history. Parris career statistics and rank on the Panamanian League all time career list are:

Clyde Parris – Career Batting Statistics (Panama)

	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	TB	BA	SLG
Number	553	1912	325	585	107	25	63	311	914	.306	.478
Rank on Panama All Time Career List	1 st	2 nd	2 nd	1 st	1 st	1 st	2 nd	2 nd	1 st	2 nd	2 nd

Former Negro League player Archie Brathwaite (Philadelphia Stars) holds the Panamanian League career batting average with .310 and former black barnstormer George “Bobby” Prescott (Jacksonville Eagles) holds the career marks for runs scored with 329, homeruns with 79 and runs batted in with 371. Some of the other outstanding individual performances by Negro League players in the Panamanian League include:

- **Frank Austin** (Philadelphia Stars) won the Panamanian League batting title with a batting average of .331 while playing for Chesterfield during the 1954-55 season. Frank hit over .300 seven times during his baseball career in Panama. Frank also won a batting title in the Panamanian Amateur League when he hit .343 while playing for Jardin Tropical of the Liga Nacional in 1943.
- **Frank Austin** (Philadelphia Stars) won two Panamanian League Most Valuable Player awards (1947 and 1953).
- **Frank Austin** (Philadelphia Stars) holds the Panamanian League career record for stolen bases with 83.
- **Archie Brathwaite** (Philadelphia Stars) holds the Panamanian career batting mark with a .310 batting average. Interestingly enough, Archie never won a season batting title in his 11 seasons in the Panamanian League.
- **Chet Brewer** (Cleveland Buckeyes) pitched Panama to its only Caribbean World Series win. While pitching for the Carta Vieja team in 1950, Brewer had two victories in the six game series.
- **Vibert Clarke** (Memphis Red Sox) led the Panamanian League in wins during the 1949-50 season with a 9-5 record and again during the 1950-51 season with a won-loss record of 14-4. Clarke's 14 victories in 1950-51 is the all time season record for most wins in a season in Panama.
- **Vibert Clarke** (Memphis Red Sox) had an earned run average of 1.96 while pitching in the Panamanian League during the 1962-63 season.
- **Leon Kellman** (Cleveland Buckeyes) won the Most Valuable Player award in 1941 for the Liga Nacional (top amateur league in Panama) and the Most Valuable Player award for the Liga Profesional (Panamanian Winter League) for the 1945-46 season. Kellman played professional baseball in Panama for 17 seasons.
- **Leon Kellman** (Cleveland Buckeyes) hit .357 with one homerun and 30 runs batted in while playing third base for Spur Cola during the 1948-49 season.
- **Leon Kellman** (Cleveland Buckeyes) won three league championships as a manager (Spur Cola 1948-49, Spur Cola 1950-51 and Cerveza Balboa 1956-57).
- **Alberto Osorio** (Cleveland Buckeyes) posted a 10-2 record with a 2.01 earned run average during the 1951-52 season. Both of these marks led the Panamanian League during the 1951-52 season.

- **Alberto Osorio** (Cleveland Buckeyes) posted a 1.40 earned run average during the 1956-57 season. Alberto played professional baseball in Panama a league record 24 seasons.
- **Alberto Osorio** (Cleveland Buckeyes) led the Panamanian League in victories with a 5-0 record during the 1972 season. Osorio pitched a record 24 seasons in the Panamanian League.
- **Clyde Parris** (Louisville Buckeyes) hit .355 with 5 homeruns and 42 runs batted in during the 1946-47 season while playing for General Electric.
- **Clyde Parris** (Louisville Buckeyes) won the Panamanian League batting title for the 1959-60 season with a .434 batting average. Interestingly enough, this was Clyde's final season in professional baseball.
- **George "Bobby" Prescott** (Jacksonville Eagles) played in the Panamanian League for twenty-one (21) seasons. He led the league three time in homeruns: 1954 (8), 1967 (7) and 1968 (5). Bobby is also the Panamanian League career leader in homeruns (79) and runs batted in (371). Prescott also hit over .300 for seven different seasons.
- **Patricio Scantlebury** (New York Cubans) was the Panamanian League's leading pitcher for the 1944-49 season with a 13-1 record.

The Panamanian League also gave several former Negro League players the opportunity to manage. Negro League players who managed in the Panamanian League included:

- **Leon Kellman** managed Spur Cola for nine (9) seasons from 1947 to 1956 and Cerveza Balboa for four seasons from 1956 to 1962. Leon also managed Cerveza Balboa during the 1963-64 and 1964-65 seasons. He then returned to manage the Cerveza Balboa team during the 1966-67, 1967-68 and 1968-69 seasons. In between his two stints with Cerveza Balboa, Kellman managed the Ron Santa Clara team of the Panamanian League during the 1965-66 season. Kellman won nine (9) Panamanian League championships: two (2) for Spur Cola (1948-49 and 1950-51), six (6) for Cerveza Balboa (1956-57, 1960-61, 1964-65, 1966-67, 1967-68 and 1968-69) and one (1) for Ron Santa Clara (1965-66). Kellman won more league championships than any other manager in Panamanian League history.
- **Quincy Barbee** managed Cerveceria Nacional during the 1950-51 season.
- **Chet Brewer** managed Chesterfield during the 1950-51 and 1951-52 seasons.
- **Frank "Pee Wee" Austin** managed Chesterfield during the 1954-55 season.

- **Alberto Osorio** managed Provincias Centrales (Colon) during the 1962-63 season and Ron Santa Clara during the 1966-67 season. Alberto also managed Panalit (1967-68), Rambler (1968-69) and Guardia Nacional (1970-71 and 1971-72). Alberto's 1971-72 Guardia Nacional team won the Panamanian League championship.
- **George Prescott** managed the Incude team of the Panamanian League during the 1970-71 and 1971-72 seasons.

Another indication of the dramatic impact Negro League players had on the Panamanian League is the fact that thirteen (13) former Negro league players have been inducted into the Panama Baseball Hall of Fame. These players are as follows:

Negro League Players in Panamanian Baseball Hall of Fame

Player	Negro League Team (s)	Year (s)
Frank "Pee Wee" Austin	Philadelphia Stars	1944-1948
Victor Barnett	Newark Eagles	1944-1945
Pablo Bernard	Louisville Buckeyes	1949
	Cleveland Buckeyes	1950
Archie Brathwaite	Newark Eagles	1944
	Philadelphia Stars	1946-1948
Vibert Clarke	Cleveland Buckeyes	1946-1948
	Louisville Buckeyes	1949
	Memphis Red Sox	1950-1953
Gil Garrido	New York Cubans	1944-1946
Leon Kellman	Cleveland Buckeyes	1946-1948
	Louisville Buckeyes	1949
	Memphis Red Sox	1950
	Indianapolis Clowns	1952
	Memphis Red Sox	1952-1953
Oscar Levis	All Cubans	1921
	Cuban Stars	1921-1929
	Hilldale Daisies	1930-1931
	Cuban Stars	1931-1932
	Cuban Stars	1934
Ulyses Mahoney	Philadelphia Stars	1944-1945
Alberto Osorio	Louisville Buckeyes	1949
Clyde Parris	Baltimore Elite Giants	1946
	New York Black Yankees	1946-1948
	Louisville Buckeyes	1949
George "Bobby" Prescott	Jacksonville Eagles	1950
Pat Scantlebury	New York Cubans	1944-1950

Panama also sent several other black players with no Negro League experience to the Major Leagues from the 1950's through the mid 1960's. This list of players includes:

Player	Major League Team	Year (s)
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Ossie Chavarria	Kansas City Athletics	1966-1967
Gil Garrido Jr.	San Francisco Giants	1964
	Atlanta Braves	1968-1972
Hector Lopez	Kansas City Athletics	1955-1959
	New York Yankees	1959-1966
Ivan Murrell	Houston Astros	1963-1968
	San Diego Padres	1969-1973
	Atlanta Braves	1974
Adolfo Phillips	Philadelphia Phillies	1964-1966
	Chicago Cubs	1966-1969
	Montreal Expos	1969-1970
	Cleveland Indians	1972
Dave Roberts	Houston Astros	1962, 1964
	Pittsburgh Pirates	1966
Humberto Robinson	Milwaukee Braves	1955-1956, 1958
	Cleveland Indians	1959
	Philadelphia Phillies	1959-1960
Chico Salmon	Cleveland Indians	1964-1968
	Baltimore Orioles	1969-1972
Rupe Toppin	Kansas City Athletics	1962

Of this group of black Panamanian players who went on to play in the Major Leagues, Hector Lopez and Humberto Robinson were also two of the most dominating players in the Panamanian Winter League. Over his career in the Panamanian League, Hector Lopez won three league batting titles (1952 - .335, 1958 – .387 and 1962 - .325), four homerun crowns (1956 – 13, 1957 – 7, 1958 – 5 and 1959 – 9) and three runs batted in titles (1956 – 41, 1958 – 19 and 1959 – 35). When Hector retired as an active player in Panama, he ranked among the league’s leaders in numerous offensive categories.

Hector Lopez – Career Batting Statistics (Panama)

	Games	Hits	2B	HR	RBI	TB	BA	SLG
Number	397	479	99	52	244	686	.298	.486
Rank on Panama All Time Career List	4 th	3 rd	2 nd	3 rd	3 rd	2 nd	4 th	1 st

While Humberto Robinson’s career in the Major Leagues was not very impressive, he was one of the most if not the most dominant pitchers in the Panamanian League during the 1950’s. Some of Humberto Robinson’s career in the Panamanian League include:

- Named the Panamanian League Most Valuable Player (MVP) on two different occasions: 1956 and 1960.
- Led the Panamanian League in wins five times: 1953 (8-3), 1954 (7-4), 1956 (7-5), 1958 (8-3) and 1960 (7-4).
- Led the league in strikeouts six times: 1954 (53), 1955 (59), 1956 (71),

1958 (60), 1959 (71) and 1960 (95).

- Led the league in earned run average four times: 1953 (1.98), 1956 (2.67), 1959 (2.68) and 1960 (1.89).

Over the year, sixty-five (65) former Negro league players played professional baseball in Panama. The Research Library section of this website contains a listing of Negro League players who also played baseball in Panama.

Nicaraguan League

The first professional baseball league in Nicaragua was founded in 1956 and folded at the end of the 1966-67 winter league season. Regular seasons that began in February were played during 1956 and 1957. The winter league schedule was adopted at the start of the 1957-58 winter league season. After winning the 1957-58 Nicaraguan season, Leon went on to win the Pan American Series which was played against Vanytor (Colombia) and Mazatlan (Mexico). There was no season played in 1960-61 because of financial reasons. The Nicaraguan League was reorganized for the 1961-62 season by combining with the Panamanian League. The new league consisted of four teams: two from Nicaragua (Boer Indios and Cinco Estrellas) and two from Panama (Marlboro and Cerveza Balboa). The most prominent teams in the Nicaraguan League over the years were:

Team	Number of League Titles	Years
Boer Indios	3	1962-63, 1964-65 and 1965-66
Leon Leones	3	1957, 1957-58 and 1959-60
Cinco Estrellas	2	1963-64 and 1966-67
Marlboro (Panama)	1	1961-62
Oriental	1	1958-59

The highlight of Nicaraguan professional baseball came in 1964 when Cinco Estrellas won the league championship for the 1963-64 season and went on to win the Inter-American Series against Oriental (Nicaragua), Marlboro (Panama) and San Juan (Puerto Rico). This was the first and only major international title that a team from Nicaragua would ever win.

The Nicaraguan League folded after the 1966-67 winter league season. The cause cited for the folding of the league was that the Nicaraguan government had withdrawn its annual subsidy of \$ 30,000 per year.

Negro League players that played in the Nicaraguan League include: Ollie Brantley, Lorenzo Cabrera, Carlos Colas, Alejandro Crespo, Claro Duany, Rodolfo Fernandez, Silvio Garcia, Rene Gonzalez, Sam Jones, Fernando “El Bicho” Pedroso, Curt Roberts and Harry “Suitcase” Simpson.

Some of the former Negro League players that had standout seasons in Nicaragua were:

- **Lorenzo “Chiquitin” Cabrera** (New York Cubans) won the 1957 Nicaraguan League (regular season) batting title with a .376 batting average while playing for team Granada-Combinado.
- **Claro Duany** (New York Cubans) took his big bat to the Nicaraguan League during the 1956 season.
- **Rodolfo Fernandez** (New York Cubans) managed Boer during the 1957 season.
- **Rene Friol** (Kansas City Monarchs) won the Nicaraguan League homerun title for the 1963-64 season with 10 homeruns. Friol played the 1963-64 season with Oriental
- **Silvio Garcia** (New York Cubans) won the 1956 Nicaraguan League (regular season) runs batted in title with 54 RBI while playing for team Cinco Estrellas. He also played in the Nicaraguan league during the 1957 season.
- **Hiram Renee Gonzalez** (New York Cubans) won the 1957 Nicaraguan League (regular season) homerun and runs batted in titles with 16 homeruns and 56 RBI while leading Leon to the league championship. Rene also played in the Nicaraguan League during the 1956 baseball season.
- **Hiram Renee Gonzalez** (New York Cubans) hit 6 homeruns, had 25 runs batted in and had a .340 batting average while playing first base for Oriental of the Nicaraguan League during the 1957-58 winter league season. Gonzalez finished just four points behind Major Leaguer Marvin Throneberry who won the batting crown with a .344 average.
- **Armando Ibanez** (New York Cubans) played for Leon in 1957.
- **Sam Jones** (Cleveland Buckeyes) posted a 2-0 record while pitching for Boer of the Nicaraguan League during the 1964-65 winter league season.
- **Eddie Locke** (Kansas City Monarchs) led the Nicaraguan League in pitching victories with 14 while playing for 5 Estrellas during the 1958-59 season.
- **Enrique Maroto** (Kansas City Monarchs) pitched for Granada during the 1957 Nicaraguan season.
- **Pedro Naranjo** (Kansas City Monarchs) pitched for Boer during the 1957 season.
- **Fernando “Bicho” Pedroso** (New York Cubans) got 52 hits in 178 plate appearances for a .292 batting average while playing for Oriental of the Nicaraguan League during the 1957-58 season.

- **Jose Piloto (Memphis Red Sox)** pitched in the Nicaraguan League during the 1956 season.
- **Curt Roberts** (Kansas City Monarchs) hit .283 and drove in 21 runs while playing second base with Leon in the Nicaraguan League during the 1963-64 season.
- **Harry Simpson** (Philadelphia Stars) led the Nicaraguan League in homeruns, runs and runs batted in during the 1961-62 season. Harry had 9 homeruns, scored 33 runs and batted in 31 runs. Simpson played for Cerveza Balboa, one of the two Panamanian teams that played in the Nicaraguan League that year.
- **Harry Simpson** (Philadelphia Stars) hit .302 and drove in 32 runs while playing in the Nicaraguan League during the 1963-64 season.
- **Juan Soler** (Detroit Stars) played for Granada during the 1957 season.

The following Negro League players played in the Nicaraguan League during the 1956 season: Pedro Ballester (New York Cubans), Orlando O’Farrill (Indianapolis Clowns, Philadelphia Stars and Baltimore Elite Giants), Pedro Naranjo (Kansas City Monarchs) and Orlando Varona (Memphis Red Sox).

The Nicaraguan League also attracted several outstanding Major League players over the years. Major League players who played in the Nicaraguan League included: Ferguson Jenkins, Bert Campaneris, Mike Cuellar, Jim Katt, Phi Regan, Doug Rader, Dick Scott, Marv Throneberry, Ron Henry, Jim Hughes, Lou Jackson, Lee Tate, Fred Valentine and Sandy Valdespino.

Colombian League

Very little research has been conducted on baseball in Colombia. Starting as far back as 1941, Colombia fielded an amateur team in international events. There was a professional baseball league in Colombia from 1948 to 1958. From all reports, the Colombian League operated at a very low level. The Colombia League played a winter schedule. The winter leagues of Latin American countries provided another opportunity for white and black ball players from the United States the opportunity to find winter employment playing baseball.

Negro League players that played in Colombia during the 1950’s and early 1960’s include: Ollie Brantley, Wilmer Fields, Jehosie Heard, Willie Scruggs, Al Spearman, Quincy Troupe and Len Williams. Former Homestead Grays and Chicago White Sox Minor League player, Willie Pope also managed Baranquilla of the Colombian League in the late 1950’s to early 1960’s.

Some of the outstanding individual performances of Negro League players who played in the Colombian League include:

- **Wilmer Fields** (Homestead Grays) played two winter seasons in Colombia for the Vanytor Elegantes in 1955-56 and 1956-57. Wilmer hit .330 during the 1954-55 season and .325 during the 1955-56 season. Fields was voted as the Colombian League Most Valuable Player (MVP) for the 1956-57 season.
- **Jehosie Heard** (New Orleans Eagles) pitched in the Colombian League during the 1956-57. Heard compiled a record of 7-7 in 139 innings.
- **Quincy Troupe** (Cleveland Buckeyes) played for Cartagena during the 1953-54 winter league season and made the Colombian All Star team at the end of the year. Troupe also managed the 1957-58 Cartagena team.
- **Leonard Williams** (Indianapolis Clowns) while playing for Willard of the Colombian League won the league's Triple Crown with 14 homeruns, 52 runs batted in and a .313 batting average.

Negro League Players go to Japan

Barnstorming black baseball in Japan was nothing new. Several black teams had traveled to and played a barnstorming tour in Japan. The Philadelphia Royal Giants barnstorming tours of Japan in 1927 and 1932 were major highlights of Japanese baseball in the 1920's and 1930's. The Royal Giants were led by National Baseball Hall of Fame players Raleigh "Biz" Mackey and Andy Cooper. During their 1927 tour the Royal Giants compiled a record of 23 wins and only one loss. During both tours the Royal Giants played to sold-out crowds all over Japan.

While black teams had toured Japan, no black ball player had ever played for a Japanese League team during the regular season. This would change in 1952 when Negro League promoter and team owner Abe Saperstein would develop a relationship with the Hankyu Braves management of the Japanese League. Saperstein was one of the major promoters of black baseball in the United States. He also owned all or part of the following teams from the 1930's through the 1950's: Harlem Globetrotters (basketball and baseball teams), Cincinnati Crescents, Seattle Steelheads (West Coast Negro Baseball Association), Indianapolis Clowns (part owner with Syd Pollock), Cleveland Cubs (part owner) and Chicago American Giants (minority owner). During the 1950's Saperstein would arrange for six (6) Negro League players to play for the Hankyu Braves. The Negro League players that broke the color barrier in Japan were:

Player	Negro League Team	Japanese Team	Years in Japan
Chico Barbon	Florida Cubans	Hankyu Braves	1955-1964
Johnny Britton	Indianapolis Clowns	Hankyu Braves	1952-1953

Jonas Gaines	Philadelphia Stars	Hankyu Braves	1953
Jimmy Newberry	Birmingham Black Barons	Hankyu Braves	1952
Larry Raines	Chicago American Giants	Hankyu Braves	1953-1954, 1962
Al Spearman	Chicago American Giants	Hankyu Braves	1955

These six players set the stage for a significant number of black players to play professional ball in Japan. In 1952, Frank Evans and Jehosie Heard also had tryouts in Japan. Frank Evans had a tryout with the Tokyo Giants and Jehosie Heard tried out with the Hiroshima Carp. Several other black ball players with no Negro League experience played in Japan in the 1960's and early 1970's. These players were: Jim Hicks, Lou Jackson, Willie Kirkland, Charlie Lewis, Stan Johnson, Dave Roberts and Fred Valentine.

Negro League baseball also impacted Japanese baseball when several Negro League ball players who went on to play in the Major Leagues would extend their professional baseball careers by playing in Japan. These players were as follows:

Player	Major League Team	Japanese Team	Years in Japan
Larry Doby	Cleveland Indians Detroit Tigers Chicago White Sox	Chunichi Dragons	1962
Don Newcombe	Brooklyn Dodgers Los Angeles Dodgers Cincinnati Reds Cleveland Indians	Chunichi Dragons	1962
George Altman	Chicago Cubs St. Louis Cardinals New York Mets	Tokyo Orions Lotte Orions Hanshin Tigers	1968 1969-1974 1975
Willie Smith	Detroit Tigers Los Angeles Angels California Angels Chicago Cubs	Nankai Hawks	1972-1973

The Research Library section of this website has complete statistics by team and year of all the Negro League players who played in Japan.

Fans Abandon Their Negro League Teams

Before Jackie Robinson was signed (marking the start of the integration of Major League baseball), Negro League baseball more than held it's own in fan attendance and community support. An Associated Negro Press (APN) news release from June 20, 1945 provides excellent insight into how exciting Negro League baseball was in the African American community. The news release from Washington D.C. promotes an upcoming game between the Kansas City Monarchs featuring Satchel Paige and the world champion Homestead Grays. The following excerpt from the news release gives us a good idea of the number of fans that attended Negro League games prior to Jackie Robinson breaking into the Majors.

“Indications this week were that nearly 30,000 fans will jam their way through the turnstiles to see the two teams clash, and club officials were urging fans to purchase tickets early to avoid a late rush at the ball park offices. In seven previous games within the past three seasons here these two clubs have played before an aggregate of 137,512 paid admissions, and already hold the ball park's attendance record of 26,115 customers for a single nocturnal game.”

When the Major Leagues started signing black ball players there was talk that this could be good for Negro League baseball. Most people believed that only a few black ball players would be added to Major League rosters. This would create more interest in the Negro League teams because fans would be interested in watching the up and coming ball players that might some day be headed for the Majors. Still others speculated that Negro League games would attract more white fans. None of these conjectures would prove valid.

As soon as the stars of the Negro Leagues began playing in the Major Leagues, the fans that had been so loyal to the Negro League teams began following the “white” teams. Attendance at Negro League ballparks dropped dramatically. The Newark Eagles were one of the top teams in the Negro National League. In 1946, they had paid attendance of 120,000 fans; that figure dropped to 57,000 fans in 1947 and plummeted further in 1948 to 35,000 fans attending Eagles home games. Even with selling off their best players to the Major League clubs almost all the Negro League team owners were losing money.

The impact on fan attendance was seen almost immediately after Jackie Robinson signed. Negro League season openers and important games generally were played to sold out crowds in years before integration. The Negro National League opening game for the

1946 season that was played in Ruppert Stadium in Newark, New Jersey drew a small crowd as compared to previous years. A crowd of approximately 8,500 people saw Leon Day of the Newark Eagles no hit the Philadelphia Stars behind Barney Brown. In years past, the Newark Eagles would have played to a crowd of 25,000 to 30,000 fans.

Crowds continued to drop. A review of the opening day crowds of the 1947 season opening games of the Negro American League and Negro National League provides a good example as to how Negro League baseball was losing its fan base. When the Cleveland Buckeyes opened the 1947 season on May 4 by defeating the Birmingham Black Barons 9-4 at League Park in Cleveland, they only drew a crowd of 7,000 fans for the Negro American League opener. The Negro National League didn't fare much better. On May 4, 1947, the New York Cubans took a double header from the Homestead Grays by the scores of 9-1 and 5-2. This game drew an estimated attendance of only 8,000 fans.

Reviewing two stories that appeared in the *Chicago Defender* provides insight as to how black fans abandoned their Negro League teams in favor of watching a few black players play in the Major Leagues. The first story ran on July 7, 1949 and the second story appeared in the July 15, 1950 issue of the *Chicago Defender*.

- *Chicago Defender* – July 6, 1949

“The question of fan support of Negro baseball teams was brought up last week by another baseball Official R.S. (Robert Sampson) Simmons, business manager of the Chicago American Giants. Reason behind this flare up at the lack of support of the American Giants seems to be that an average attendance of around 3,000 fans have been coming to see Giants play doubleheaders and night games at Comiskey Park which seats 48,000 fans, while Negro fans flock in much larger numbers to see the Cleveland Indians play the Chicago White Sox of the American League or the Brooklyn Dodgers play the Chicago Cubs of the National League. Two weeks ago the Giants came face to face with the competition from Jackie Robinson, Roy Campanella, Don Newcombe and the Brooklyn Dodgers. Only a scattered few fans strolled into spacious Comiskey Park to see the Giants, now the hottest team in Negro baseball, win a doubleheader from the Houston Eagles. On the north side of Chicago at the other end of town a crowd of more than 42,000 jammed the Cubs park to see the Dodgers loose to the Cubs. Of the massive crowd, at least one third was Negro. Simmons advised the fans about Negro baseball - Don't kill the goose that laid the golden eggs. I call Negro baseball the goose and our players the golden eggs.....”

- *Chicago Defender* - July 15, 1950

“When the Brooklyn Dodgers played their last series in Chicago against the Cubs, the Sunday game – with Jackie Robinson as stellar attraction – drew an attendance of nearly 40,000. An estimated 6,000 Negro fans were on hand to

cheer Jackie and the “Bums.” On the Southside, the same day at Comiskey Park, the American Giants (Chicago) played a visiting Negro team. Although the paid attendance was not announced, the fans sadly admitted that the attendance was less than 1,000 – and Comiskey Park has a seating capacity of 50,000. Which shows fans went to the Northside to see Jackie and the Dodgers at Wrigley Field.”

Analyzing the attendance at the East West All Star game can see further evidence of the fans abandonment of the Negro Leagues. The following chart shows the significant decline in attendance of the Negro League All Star game.

East-West All Star Game Attendance

Year	Game Attendance
1946	45,474
1947	48,112
1948	42,099
1949	31,097
1950	24,614
1951	21,312
1952	18,279
1953	7,000 -10,000
1954	10,000
1955	11,000
1959	3,000
1961	7,245

Starting in 1953 only estimated figures for attendance are available.

Black fan support for Negro League baseball continued to decline and reached its lowest points when a “white” Major League game (with black players) was played on the same day and in the same city as a Negro League game. Negro league owner would not recover from the loss of fan support nor were they able to come up with other ideas to win the black fans back

Black fans attendance of Major League ball games and Negro League games evidenced where the black fans loyalty lay. Black fans showed they would rather go to a Major League game to see one black player at the Major League level than support their local black teams that had been a part of baseball and the community for decades.

Two additional factors impacted Negro League fan support. During the 1950’s professional basketball and football made a serious effort to increase their fan base. In addition during the 1950’s television expanded in programming and the number of homes in the United States with a television. Both of these had a negative impact on the fan base that would support Negro League baseball in the United States.

In a few short years, Negro League baseball had gone from a major force in the African American economy and community to a business base at the point of extinction.

Financial Condition of Negro League Baseball Declines

The financial component of Negro League baseball was a dichotomy. On one hand Negro League baseball was an important part of the economy of the black community. After insurance, hair care products and racketeering, baseball was the fourth leading industry in the black community. The problem is that the only source of income for the Negro League baseball team was “paid” gate attendance. This also was before the day of corporate sponsorship, media revenues and endorsement deals. The financial success of the black baseball team was derived from keeping expenses reasonable and playing well enough to attract the paying fans at the ballpark.

Negro League baseball was never based on a strong financial foundation derived from their fan base. In general, the black community was always impoverished. Ownership of the teams was generally from the wealthy blacks that could afford to financially back the teams out of their own pockets. The four Martin brothers (Memphis Red Sox and Chicago American Giants) were all doctors. Several of the owners were involved in the “numbers” game and racketeering: Gus Greenlee (Pittsburgh Crawfords), Rufus “Sonnyman” Jackson (part owner of Homestead Grays with Cumberland Posey), Abe Manley (Newark Eagles), Alex Pompez (New York Cubans) and James “Soldier Boy” Semler (New York Black Yankees).

When the decline of the Negro Leagues began in 1946, attendance at Negro League games dropped dramatically. A good example of this can be seen in analyzing fan attendance at Negro League baseball games played at Yankee Stadium. The New York Yankees had a practice of renting Yankee Stadium to Negro League teams for years. Negro League teams that played at Yankee Stadium on a regular basis included New York Black Yankees, Baltimore Elite Giants, Homestead Grays and Newark Eagles. For the Negro League teams this arrangement provided an excellent stadium to play and for New York Yankees this was a significant source of income. Yankee management reported that in 1945 approximately 200,000 black fans attended Negro League games played at Yankee Stadium. In 1946 this number dropped to 158,155 and in 1947 only 63,402 fans attended Negro League games at Yankee Stadium. In only two years attendance at Negro League baseball games dropped 60 % in New York.

Another excellent means to look at how Negro League baseball changed after Jackie Robinson integrated the Major Leagues in 1947 is to review the actual “Financial Statements” from the East-West All Star game. These financial records are a part of

public records. The following chart shows how black baseball changed after the integration process started.

East-West All Star Game Financial Analysis

Year	Location	Attendance	Gate Receipts
1942	Comiskey Park - Chicago	44,897	\$ 48,916.10
1943	Comiskey Park – Chicago	46,871	\$ 51,208.55
1944	Comiskey Park – Chicago	46,247	
1945	Comiskey Park – Chicago	33,088 (reported)	
		32,762 (paid)	\$ 70,096.58
1946	Comiskey Park – Chicago	45,474 (reported)	
		42,000 (paid)	\$ 86,814.35
1947	Comiskey Park – Chicago	48,112 (reported)	
		42,963 (paid)	\$ 89,249.36
1948	Comiskey Park – Chicago	42,099 (reported)	
		37,099 (paid)	\$ 84,868.80
1949	Comiskey Park – Chicago	31,097	
1950	Comiskey Park - Chicago	40,000 (reported by Kansas City paper)	
		24,614 (actual paid)	
1951	Comiskey Park – Chicago	21,312 (reported)	
		14,161	\$ 32,511.91
1952	Comiskey Park – Chicago	18,279 (reported)	
		14,122 (paid)	\$ 31,860.79
1953	Comiskey Park – Chicago	7,000 to	
		10,000 (estimated)	\$ 11,013.58

As this chart shows there was a phenomenal drop-off in fan support for the East-West All Star game. Fan attendance was down 85% from 1943 to 1953. Gate receipts also took a dramatic drop. There was an 88% drop in revenues from 1947 when gate receipts were \$ 89,249.36 to 1953 when the gate receipts were a meager \$ 11,013.58.

An interesting footnote to the financial aspects of the East West All Star game is looking at how much money each player received for playing in the game. In 1942 each player received \$ 200.00 for participating in the game. Players were only receiving \$ 50.00 each per game in 1946 when they threatened not to play if they didn't each get \$ 100.00 for the game.

Negro League owners responded to their financial pressures by continuing to cut expenses. At the Negro American League Annual Meeting in Chicago in December of 1947, the Negro American League voted to establish a salary cap of \$ 6,000 per month for all teams. The Negro National League adopted the same policy when their owners

met in New York in January 1948. The following are some examples of how cutting player's salaries impacted the Negro Leagues:

- **Johnny Banks** was a standout ball player in Virginia when he signed to play for the 1950 Philadelphia Stars. Banks only played one season for Philadelphia because the Newport News Royals of the Negro American Association offered him twice as much money to return home.
- **Riley Stewart** played in the Negro Leagues from 1946 to 1950 with the Chicago American Giants, New York Cubans, Memphis Red Sox and Harlem Globetrotters. He finally gave up his Negro League career to return to Shreveport, Louisiana to teach and coach. As Riley told his good friend Dr. Revel "I couldn't see how I could support my family on a long-term basis playing Negro League baseball. Teaching and coaching provided me with the opportunity to provide financial security for my family."
- **Bill Beverly** played Negro League baseball like his father and uncle. During his Negro League career, which lasted from 1950 to 1955, Bill played for the Houston Eagles, New Orleans Eagles, Chicago American Giants and Birmingham Black Barons. Bill gave up Negro League baseball in 1955 and returned to Houston, Texas to work in oil industry plants because he could make significantly more money and was able to be with his family.
- **Al Barks** was a standout first baseman for the Norfolk Tigers when he and Walt Lundy (also from Norfolk) tried out for the New York Black Yankees in 1957. Both young players made the team. Their contracts called for them to be paid \$ 150.00 per month. They also got \$ 2.00 per day meal money, which was taken out of their \$ 150.00 at the end of the month. After one year on the road, Barks came to the realization that there were other opportunities other than black baseball. Al returned to Norfolk and went to work for the post office where he stayed until his retirement.

Things did not improve for Negro League baseball in the 1960's. They seemed to go from bad to worse. In an interview with Eugene Holmes (Raleigh Tigers (1959-1961), Gene shared the following comments about life in the Negro Leagues off the field:

- "Arthur Dove (owner of Raleigh Tigers) had a friend of his who was an undertaker draw up my contract. I was supposed to get \$ 175.00 every two weeks. In all the time I was with the Tigers, I never got a regular paycheck. Dove would give the players a little money every now and then, just enough to keep you hanging on. Dove had the reputation of having a lot of money for a black man, but he had a bigger reputation of being tight with a dollar. I drove Dove's car for him, so I got to see a lot of the behind the scenes things. I drove him to all the games and to league meetings with the other owners."

- “Eating on the road was terrible. We got some meal money, but many of the places we traveled wouldn’t serve blacks. Our bus driver was in charge of getting groceries. We lived on lunchmeat. It was hard.”
- “Mr. Dove wanted me to come back for the 1962 season, but I wasn’t making any money, had a child on the way and needed to settle down and get a real job. I ran a bar for a few years but went back into phosphate mining.”

In short if the fan base of Negro League baseball wouldn’t support a championship series or all-star game that showcased their top athletes, how could anyone expect that the fans would support all the teams on a day-to-day basis at the box office?

Negro League Baseball in the 1960’s: The Final Chapter

During the 1960’s, Negro League baseball continued its slide downward. Had it not been for the efforts of Ted Rasberry, Negro League baseball would have folded several years before. But almost single-handedly, Ted kept the Negro American League afloat. The Negro American League was reduced to four teams for the 1960 season.

Team	Owner	Manager
Birmingham Black Barons	Arthur Dove	Jim Canady
Detroit-New Orleans Stars	George Foster	Wesley Barrow
Kansas City Monarchs	Ted Rasberry	Sherwood Brewer
Raleigh Tigers	Arthur Dove	Eugene Holmes

The Negro American League continued on its financial downward spiral during the 1960 season. Examples of the financial difficulties of the Negro American League are:

- The Newark Indians had folded before the end of the 1959 season. The Memphis Red Sox followed suit and folded before the 1960 season began. The folding of the Memphis Red Sox was a crushing blow. Memphis had fielded a Negro League team since 1924.
- Negro American League President Dr. J.B. Martin continued in his leadership role but without a salary for himself or reimbursement of his office expenses.
- Dr. Martin had failed to develop a relationship with Major League baseball. The Negro League had hoped to develop a financial relationship similar to the Major League farm system. Of all the Major League ball clubs, only the Philadelphia Phillies of the National League team had shown any interest.
- The East-West All Star game which had always been a moneymaker for the Negro League was now losing money.

Rosters for Negro League teams from 1960-1962 are contained in Research Library section of this website.

The highlight of Negro League baseball in the 1960's was the 1960 East-West All Star game that was played in 1960 at Comiskey Park in Chicago on August 21st. This would prove to be one of the last all star games in a long rich history that had begun in 1933. This would be the last Negro League All Star game played at Comiskey Park in Chicago. Gone were the superstars of black baseball. In the 1960 classic a young Ernie Westfield of the Birmingham Black Barons faced off against Bill Matthews of the Kansas City Monarchs. The West beat the East by a score of 8 to 4. The starting line-ups for the 1960 East-West All Star game were:

East-West All Star Game (1960)

East All Star Team			West All Star Team		
Jesse Bass	SS	Birmingham	Nate Dancy	2B	Kansas City
James Ivory	3B	Birmingham	Don Bonner	LF	Detroit-New Orleans
Rufus Gibson	2B	Raleigh	Frank Williams	RF	Kansas City
Ralph Fortson	1B	Raleigh	Palmer Hubbard	CF	Kansas City
Bob Washington	C	Raleigh	Ira McKnight	3B	Kansas City
Willie Harris	LF	Birmingham	Pat Patterson	1B	Detroit-New Orleans
Brown Jackson	RF	Birmingham	Art Hamilton	C	Detroit-New Orleans
John Mitchell	CF	Birmingham	Ike Brown	SS	Kansas City
Ernie Westfield	P	Birmingham	Bill Matthew	P	Kansas City

Interestingly enough the game did feature three young ball players that would go on to play in the Major Leagues:

Player	Negro League Team	Major League Team	Years in MLBB
Ike Brown	Kansas City Monarchs	Detroit Tigers	1969-1974
Willie Smith	Birmingham Black Barons	Detroit Tigers	1963
		Los Angeles Angels	1964
		California Angels	1965-1966
		Cleveland Indians	1967-1968
		Chicago Cubs	1968-1971
George Spriggs	Detroit Stars	Pittsburgh Pirates	1965-1967
		Kansas City Athletics	1969-1970

Even to the end the Negro Leagues were contributing to Major League baseball. When Willie Smith (left handed pitcher at the time) was sold to the Chicago White Sox organization for \$ 10,000, he was hitting .450 and a pitching record of 5-0 for the Black Barons. Appendix O contains a copy of the *Chicago Defender's* newspaper article promoting the 1960 East-West All Star Game.

The 1961 Negro American League opened the season with four teams: Birmingham Black Barons, Detroit –New Orleans Stars, Kansas City Monarchs and Raleigh Tigers. According to Wardell Jackson who owned the Birmingham Black Barons, Philadelphia Stars and Champaign Eagles; the Philadelphia Stars were an associate member of the

Negro American League. Dr. J.B. Martin was still President of the Negro American League and actively worked to save Negro League baseball. The season opened on April 30 with a month long barnstorming tour between the Kansas City Monarchs and the Raleigh Tigers. The tour started in Sumter, South Carolina and ended on May 24 in Wallace, North Carolina. The focus of the tour was to concentrate on small market cities where there was less competition. During the season, Dr. Martin tried several ideas to help speed up the game. At the end of the 1961 Negro American League season an East West All-Star game was played on August 20th at Yankee Stadium in New York City. The game was held in New York City because the Negro Elks were holding their annual Grand Lodge Convention at this time. Dr. Martin felt that playing the all-star game in association with the Elks convention would increase publicity for the game and should have a dramatic impact on attendance. The 29th East West All-Star game was also declared as “Negro Elks Day.” New York Governor Rockefeller was on hand to throw out the first pitch. With all the hopes and preparation that had been made, only 7,245 fans showed up for the game. Players from the Birmingham Black Barons and Raleigh Tigers made up the East squad, while players from the Kansas City Monarchs and Detroit-New Orleans Stars made up the West team. The starting pitchers were Pete Gilliam of the Raleigh Tigers facing off against a 54 year old Satchel Paige. Paige and his fellow pitchers (Don Poindexter and Dick Hemphill) tossed a one hitter. The West won the ball game over the East squad by a score of 7 to 1. Satchel Paige got the win in his last official Negro League game and Pete Gilliam took the loss for the East. In a fitting end, Satchel Paige was named the game’s Most Valuable Player.

There were three official teams in the 1962 Negro American League: Birmingham Black Barons, Kansas City Monarchs and Raleigh Tigers. In addition, Wardell Jackson continued to represent the Philadelphia Stars as an associate member of the Negro American League. Several problems and concerns that spoke to the credibility of 1962 Negro American League being a “real” league emerged during the season:

- The Negro American League had been reduced to three official league teams.
- Dr. J.B. Martin had stepped down as Negro American League President and it does not appear that anyone took his place. According to Ted Rasberry, he took over the job as President of the Negro American league when Dr. Martin quit.
- No documentation has been uncovered to show that there were league officials, that league meetings were held or that team owners operated on a formalized basis.
- There does not appear to be a regular season balanced schedule of official league games.
- Teams seemed to operate more on a barnstorming basis.

A Negro League All-Star game was played in Kansas City at the end of the 1962 season. Frank Evans managed the East squad and Sherwood Brewer managed the West team. The

game was played at Municipal Stadium in Kansas City. Former Kansas City Monarch player and local resident, Mack Massingale did the “leg work” for the game. Before the game, former Negro League greats Jackie Robinson, Satchel Paige, Frank Duncan and Newt Allen were honored on the field. The West won the game by a score of 5 to 2. According to Frank Evans (Manager of the 1962 Birmingham Black Barons) the players were not paid for participating in the game.

According to Negro League researcher, Lyle Wilson, several teams that played in 1962 and 1963 sometimes billed themselves as part of the Negro American League. Some of these teams were the New York Jets, Cincinnati Tigers, Cincinnati Royals and Philadelphia Stars. Wardell Jackson who owned both the Birmingham Black Barons and Philadelphia Stars had his teams barnstorm against each other on a regular basis during 1962 and 1963. Documentation from Wardell Jackson shows that the Philadelphia Stars were an affiliate member of the Negro American League.

What happened to the Negro American League after the 1962 season has always been clouded in mystery. To unravel this mystery, Dr. Revel and the Center for Negro League Baseball Research focused on two major areas in their efforts: researching newspapers and interviewing ball players who played in 1962 and 1963.

As of the publishing date of this book, no newspaper articles have been found that supports the fact that there was a 1963 Negro American League season. The best source of information was the players who played during the 1962 and 1963 seasons. Numerous players and team officials who played or were there during 1962 and 1963 were interviewed for their personal recollections of what happened to the Negro American League after the 1962 season ended. The following seven (7) players are representative of the forty-six (46) interviews that were conducted during our research project.

- **Henry Elmore** (Birmingham Black Barons) – Elmore played third base for the Black Barons during the 1961 to 1962 seasons. Henry also played second base for the 1961 Philadelphia Stars that was owned by Wardell Jackson and managed by Charlie Drummond. Elmore’s recollections of what happened to the Black Barons and the Negro American League after the 1962 season were: “After the 1962 season the team and the league broke up. Most of the players went to work and/or played for the Stockham team in the Birmingham Industrial League. There was no Birmingham Black Barons team or Negro American League after the 1962 season. 1962 was the last season of Negro League baseball.” Elmore continued to play baseball for Stockham from 1963 through the early 1980’s. Other former Birmingham Black Barons and Negro League players on the Stockham team in 1963 included: Lorenzo “Piper” Davis (Manager), Jesse Mitchell (outfield), Jesse Bass (shortstop), James “Sap” Ivory (first base), Clifford Dubose (outfield), Clinton Forge (catcher), Pete Mumford (pitcher) and Walter Stoves (catcher).
- **Frank Evans** (Birmingham Black Barons) – Evans was the Manager of the 1962 Birmingham Black Barons team. Evans’ thoughts on the end of the Negro American League were: “After the regular season (1962) was over, we played an All Star game in Kansas City. The game was a disaster, we got rain and everybody wanted their money back. After all was said and done, the players didn’t get anything. Wardell Jackson (owner of the Birmingham Black Barons) shut the team (Birmingham) down after the

season (1962). The bus and the uniforms went back to Champaign, Illinois with Jackson. I went to Wichita and joined Jim Pendleton and Bob Boyd on the Wichita Dreamliners team. We had quite a team and dominated the Wichita amateur tournament.”

- **Ira Mc Knight** (Kansas City Monarchs and Philadelphia Stars) – Ira was the starting catcher for the 1962 Kansas City Monarchs and started the 1963 season as the manager of the Philadelphia Stars. Ira’s recollections of the 1962 and 1963 seasons were as follows: “There was no “league” in 1963. In fact in 1962 it seemed more like barnstorming than playing in a league. Yes, we did have an All Star game at the end of the 1962 season, but it was made up. By that I mean there was no voting or anything, we just got together and played another game. At the end of the season, I went home to South Bend (Indiana). I had worked out a deal with Wardell Jackson who owned both the Birmingham Black Barons and Philadelphia Stars to manage the Stars for the 1963 season. The Stars bus picked me up in South Bend before the start of the season. I only stayed with the Stars for a few weeks because I had trouble with two of the players. I wasn’t making enough money with Jackson to put up with all the problems. After I left the Stars I went back with Ted Rasberry and the Kansas City Monarchs. We barnstormed all over the Great Lakes and Canada. Sometimes we played as the Monarchs and sometimes we were the Satchel Paige All Stars. But to answer your original question, there was no league in 1963.” As a footnote, Ira returned to Canada in 1964 and played in Canada with Saskatoon, Melville, North Battleford and Drummondville through the 1969 season.
- **Leroy Miller** (Birmingham Black Barons and Philadelphia Stars) – Miller was a star pitcher for the 1962 Birmingham Black Barons and the 1963 Philadelphia Stars. Miller’s memories of the 1962 and 1963 seasons were as follows: “Wardell Jackson owned both the Birmingham Black Barons and the Philadelphia Stars. When the “league” ended in 1962, I kept on playing for Jackson. We started out the 1963 season as the Birmingham Black Barons. Now don’t get me wrong, this wasn’t the same Black Barons team I played for in 1962. You see Jackson still had the Black Barons bus and all the uniforms from the previous season. Both the Black Barons and Stars were based out of Champaign (Illinois) where Jackson lived and was a “big” numbers man. We barnstormed all over Illinois, Memphis (TN), Little Rock (AR), Danville (VA), Tennessee and all over the East. About the middle of the season, Jackson had me go the Philadelphia Stars team. They played out West. We went through the Dakotas, played all over Canada and came out in Washington State. In fact it was in Washington that they had me pitch a game, as Satchel Paige, Jr. It’s a funny story how that happened. Satchel was supposed to pitch for the Stars but was a “no show.” This wasn’t uncommon for Satch because he drove that old Cadillac and would just as soon stop and go fishing as play. Well it was about time for the game to start and the manager told the announcer to tell the crowd that Satchel was unable to make the game, but his son was going to pitch. I didn’t like the idea too much, but what could I do. Before the game I signed a few autographs, but had to sign “Leroy S. Paige, Jr.” because I didn’t know how to spell Satchel. I was getting hammered during the first several innings and the crowd was getting upset. People were starting to want their money back Fans were shouting things like this kid’s an imposter, he ain’t no Satchel Paige. I called time out and told the catcher I was tired of trying to imitate Satchel and I was going to pitch the rest of the game my way. Well, I struck out the next 9 straight batters. After the 1963 season was over, I had had enough. I figured if it (being signed by a Major League team) hadn’t happened by then, it wasn’t going to happen. I came back home to Leeds (Alabama) and played for and managed the Leeds Tigers up until about 1989.” From Miller’s recollections, there appears to have been both a Birmingham Black Barons and Philadelphia Stars team in 1963. This Black Barons team was different than

the Birmingham Black Barons team that had played in the Negro American League in 1962 and Miller was very emphatic that there was no Negro American League in 1963.

- **David Pearson** (Birmingham Black Barons) David played for the Birmingham Black Barons in 1961 and 1962. He also played with Satchel Paige's All Stars in 1963 before spending two years in Canada in the Manitoba Senior Baseball League. When he returned from Canada, David played with the Kansas City Monarchs in 1964. He finished his baseball career playing semipro baseball for the Kansas City Giants (Jay Hawk League) and John Wietzel's Cowboys (Victory League) from 1964 through 1969. Some of the memories about his baseball career that he shared during his interview were as follows: "I started out playing baseball at Alcorn State University. My coach was Willie Foster. He (Foster) was a big man and loved throwing batting practice. When I graduated in 1959, I was signed by the Dodgers but got cut during spring training. I went to Birmingham and played for two years with the Black Barons. In 1962 I was selected to the East West All Star game. At the end of the season, we weren't sure what was going to happen to the "league." With no Negro American League in 1963, I signed to play with Satchel Paige's All Stars. We traveled all over the country and extensively in Canada. Boy those Canadians sure loved their baseball. It was on this trip that I made contact with a team in the Manitoba Senior Baseball League. I went back and played two years in Canada. Would have stayed longer but the league changed the number of imports each team was allowed to have. When I started, each team could have five players from the United States and then the league changed it to two. I came back to Kansas City and played for a while with the Kansas City Giants, until Frank Evans convinced me to come to Wichita and play for John Weitzels' Cowboys. We played in the Victory League and had a pretty good team. The Cowboys were the last team I played for. I played up until the late 1960's."
- **Jim Walker** (Kansas City Monarchs) – Jim was the Publicity Director for Ted Rasberry's Kansas City Monarchs from the mid-late 1950's through the late 1960's. He also served in this capacity for Ted Rasberry's other Negro American League team the Detroit Stars. Jim was Ted Rasberry's nephew and lived with Ted in Grand Rapids. Jim's duties as Publicity Director included: booking games, media relations, interfacing with Major League baseball teams who might be interested in a player, getting media packages out for games and general administrative management of the team to support them while they were on the road. Jim ran the Detroit Stars and Kansas City Monarchs office while Ted was on the road with the team. As Jim explained to Dr. Revel of the Center for Negro League Baseball Research in an interview "We (Ted and Jim) lived at 603 Jefferson in Grand Rapids. The house had the team's office attached to it. We had phones that rang in the office and in the house. When the team was on the road, I was on duty twenty-four hours a day. You see the biggest problem we had with a road team was the bus breaking down. When the bus broke down, you didn't know who was going to fix it, how much it was going to cost, how you were going to get the money to the team and how the delay would affect the next game on the schedule." Dr. Revel's interview concentrated on what happened at the end of the 1962 season and what was his recollection of when the Negro American League ended. Jim's response to these questions was as follows: "The Negro American League ended at the end of the 1962 season. There wasn't a Negro American League in 1963. After the 1962 season we were strictly barnstorming and we kept the team on the road for several more years. But Ted always capitalized on the successes of the Kansas City Monarchs in the Negro Leagues. Our promotional and media packages that we sent out in 1963 and for the next several years still promoted the Monarchs as a Negro American League team. When the "league

ended in 1962, it didn't effect me at all, I kept on doing what I had been doing and that was booking the Monarchs all over the country. Ted didn't miss a beat either. He was just as focused as he had always been on promoting the Monarchs. We (Monarchs) kept on going till the late 1960's. Every year we seemed to book fewer games and the distance we traveled got shorter each year.

- **Ernie Westfield** (Birmingham Black Barons and Philadelphia Stars) – Westfield played for the Birmingham Black Barons from 1959 to 1964 and the Philadelphia Stars from 1961 to 1964. After the 1960 Negro American League season, Ernie moved to Champaign (Illinois) to play for Wardell Jackson who owned both the Birmingham Black Barons and Philadelphia Stars. Westfield shared the following about his playing days for Wardell Jackson: “I started playing for the Birmingham Black Barons in 1959. In 1960 while pitching for Birmingham, I was selected for the East West All Star game in Colicky Park in Chicago. In fact I was the starting pitcher for the East squad. After the 1960 season Wardell Jackson asked me to come up to Champaign (Illinois) and play for him there. You see, Wardell owned four teams: Birmingham Black Barons (Negro American League) Philadelphia Stars (barnstorming team), Champaign Eagles (Eastern Illinois League) and the Chicago-Urbana Eagles (farm team for the Champaign Eagles). Wardell really wanted to win the Eastern Illinois League title. One thing you need to understand about Wardell Jackson is that he was a big numbers man in Illinois. Sometimes when we were on the road it was hard getting paid or any money from him because he always dealt in cash. Now if you were around him, it was easy getting paid. He drove a great big Cadillac that always had a trunk full of cash. If you needed something he would open the car and pay you in cash on the spot. So I felt the best thing for me was staying close to Jackson because he always took real good care of me. During the 1961 and 1962 seasons, I played for the Birmingham Black Barons, Philadelphia Stars and Champaign Eagles. I played wherever Wardell needed me. The Negro American League was still going at this time, but we all knew it was fading fast. After the 1962 season, Wardell brought the Black Barons bus and uniforms back to Champaign. Some of the players came up here, but most of them stayed in Birmingham and got jobs out at the plants. There was no Negro American League season in 1963. Wardell continued to operate the Birmingham Black Barons and Philadelphia Stars out of Champaign. In 1963 and 1964 I played for both the Birmingham Black Barons and the Philadelphia Stars, but it was strictly barnstorming by this time. The Birmingham Black Barons played mainly in the Midwest and Great Lakes area; we never went back to Birmingham. Sure missed pitching at Rickwood Field. I also pitched for the Champaign Eagles when I wasn't out on the road with one of the other teams. I settled down permanently and made Champaign my home where I still live today. I did keep on playing baseball for the Champaign Eagles and Danville Boosters through the early 1970's.”

The Research Library section of this website contains a listing of all the player interviews conducted. All the players interviewed told basically the same story and in their minds there was a Negro American League in 1962. The consensus of the players is that they seemed to do a lot of barnstorming and the “league” in 1962 wasn't what it once was. None of the players interviewed remembered there being a Negro American League in 1963. All the players were very emphatic that after the end of the 1962 season, the teams that continued to play were strictly on a barnstorming schedule.

After interviewing a significant number of players who played in 1962 and 1963 and researching the seasons, it is the opinion of this researcher that a Negro American League

did exist in 1962 and ended with the close of the season and the East West All Star game in Kansas City at the end of the 1962 season. While the quality of play and level of organization may have diminished significantly, professional Negro League baseball did exist in 1962. This decision was based on the following factors.

- All the players who played in 1962 that we interviewed during our research unanimously agreed that there was still a Negro American League in 1962 and that the league folded after the season. The players' perspective is extremely important. They thought they were playing in the Negro American League.
- While there were only three official teams (Birmingham, Kansas City and Raleigh) and one associate member (Philadelphia), they appear to have played each other and worked together on a common basis. In addition, the number of teams should not be a defining factor to determine if a league existed. It is important to keep in mind that the Negro American League only had four league teams in: 1953, 1956, 1958 and 1960.
- While it is true that Dr. J.B. Martin had stepped down as Negro American League President after the 1961 season, Ted Rasberry was very emphatic that he took over as President of the Negro American League when Dr. Martin quit.
- While no documentation has been uncovered to show that there were meetings held or that team owners operated on a formalized basis, it is important to note that it appears that the teams played a coordinated schedule against each other over the course of the season. Even if no "official" league meetings were held and/or publicized, a tremendous amount of communication and coordination had to take place to play all the games that the teams played between the surviving Negro League teams. Players' memories were consistent that they played at least 60 to 80 games over the 1962 season.
- A regular season balanced schedule of official league games is not a good criterion to use when evaluating Negro League baseball. When you go back and look at the number of games that teams played in the Eastern Colored League, American Negro League, Negro National League and the Negro American League from their very beginning there was never a balanced schedule over the course of the season. The following chart provides some good examples of the unbalanced scheduling in Negro League baseball.

Negro League History of Unbalanced League Play

League	Year	Team	# Games	Team	# Games	Difference
NNL	1920	Kansas City Monarchs	70	Cuban Stars	45	25
	1930	St. Louis Stars	87	Cuban Stars	60	27
	1945	Homestead Grays	45	New York Cubans	26	19
ECL	1924	Hilldale	69	Brooklyn	41	28

		Daisies		Royal Giants		
	1925	Hilldale Daisies	67	Brooklyn Royal Giants	33	34
ANL	1929	Hilldale	74	Cuban Stars	54	20
NAL	1938	Memphis Red Sox	48	Birmingham Black Barons	31	17
	1944	Cleveland Buckeyes	81	Kansas City Monarchs	65	16
	1950	Birmingham Black Barons	78	Chicago American Giants	46	32

NNL – Negro National League ECL – Eastern Colored League ANL – American Negro League NAL – Negro American League

- The essence of Negro League baseball and black baseball in general has always included a tremendous amount of barnstorming.
- Our research had uncovered a significant number of newspaper articles, announcements and advertisements for games involving “Negro League” teams. The majority of this newspaper documentation refers to the team that was going to play in the upcoming game as playing in the Negro American League. Obviously, the Negro League teams that were playing from 1960-1963 still considered the Negro American League to exist and that they were a part of it.
- Finally, an East West Negro League All Star game was played in Kansas City at the end of the 1962 season.

One thing that will continue to leave the door open for controversy is the fact that no official press release by the Negro American League officials was ever given that officially announced that the league had folded.

Negro American League baseball seemed more like barnstorming baseball at times during the 1960’s. Ted Rasberry owned both the Kansas City Monarchs and Detroit Stars. Players moved back and forth between the two rosters at will. Teams rarely played in the hometown for which their name represented. The Kansas City Monarchs were actually based in Grand Rapids, Michigan. But Ted continued to use the “Kansas City” name because of its rich history, drawing appeal to the fans and as Ted once told Dr. Revel “the Kansas City Monarchs sounded a lot better than the Grand Rapids Monarchs.”

Barnstorming played an important role in black baseball in the 1960’s. The Indianapolis Clowns were the most famous of all the black barnstorming baseball teams. The Clowns combined outstanding baseball skills with a comedy routine on the field that was similar to the world famous Harlem Globetrotters basketball team. From 1955 when the Clowns dropped out of the Negro American League through the 1988 season, the Clowns would

play a full barnstorming season each year. Other black teams that barnstormed in the 1960's were: Kansas City Monarchs, Philadelphia Stars and Satchel Paige's All Stars. The Philadelphia Stars also barnstormed extensively in Canada during the early 1960's.

The Indianapolis Clowns would have several players signed by Major League baseball and even have three players make it all the way to the Major Leagues:

Player	Years w/ Indianapolis Clowns	Major League Team	Years in MLBB
Paul Casanova	1960-1961	Washington Senators Atlanta Braves	1965-1971 1972-1974
Hal King	1962-1964	Houston Astros Atlanta Braves Texas Rangers Cincinnati Reds	1967-1968 1970-1971 1972 1973-1974
Billy Parker	1961-1964	California Angels	1971-1973

The Negro American League would officially throw in the towel and fold after the 1962 season. Negro League baseball would disappear quietly into baseball history without so much as a mention in the sports pages around the country. Ted Rasberry still owned the Kansas City Monarchs. They would barnstorm off and on in the Great Lakes area or wherever Ted could hustle up a game. The Birmingham Black Barons under the ownership of Wardell Jackson moved to Champaign, Illinois and become the Champaign Eagles. They would integrate and continue to play in the Eastern Illinois League into the 1970's.

Social Implications of Negro League Baseball

The game of baseball knows no color lines, age barriers or other limiting factors. If you could play the game, it didn't matter how old you were or what color you were you played. Baseball has been the number one sport in America. As America's game it didn't matter whether the teams were black, brown, white or integrated.

Baseball played an important role in the black community. Baseball was the focal point of black America. It didn't matter whether it was a Negro Major League team, Negro Minor League team, barnstorming team coming to their town or their own local ball club, baseball was the focal point of social interaction and community. Every town no matter how small had a baseball club. Larger towns had multiple clubs and even their own black leagues. Companies sponsored black teams that played industrial league baseball. Rob Ruck in his book Sandlot Seasons estimated that during the 1920's to early 1940's there were more than 500 sandlot teams playing in 50 leagues on over 50 ball fields in the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania area alone. Baseball was number "one" whether it was black or white.

At the beginning of the baseball season, it was like a grand opening of a new major business or similar enterprise. Parades to showcase the teams were often held with the players and boosters marching down "main" street to the ballpark. Players were introduced to the public, public officials made speeches and everyone was involved. Everyone talked about the upcoming game and analyzed it in great detail once it was over. On the day of the game, everyone came to the ballpark in his or her Sunday best. Game day often wasn't just about the baseball game. It was not uncommon to have a huge picnic, dance or other social gathering as part of the game day events. There were beauty pageants and weddings held at the ballpark on game day. In short, baseball was the biggest thing in towns both large and small all over the country.

Integration was not a new subject to baseball when Jackie Robinson signed with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1945. Major League baseball had long been closed to persons of color, but baseball had been integrated in almost all areas of amateur and semipro baseball. Black and white ball players often played together on local teams, town teams, industrial league teams and at the college and university level. An excellent example of this is looking at the career of "Cannonball" Bill Jackman who spent 30 years barnstorming all over the New England area. Jackman pitched most of his career with

black teams like the Philadelphia Giants, Quaker Giants and Boston Royal Giants. Jackman also pitched for “white” ball clubs a significant number of times. Some of the white clubs that Cannonball Jackman pitched for during his career were:

- **1928 - Frates Dairy** – Local company sponsored team in New Bedford, Massachusetts.
- **1929 – East Douglas (MA)** of the Blackstone Valley League. Walter Schuster who owned textile mills in East Douglas hired Jackman to pitch important games for his team at the rate of \$ 175 for the game and \$ 10 for every strikeout. An interesting footnote is that Jackman’s first baseman was a future Detroit Tiger great and Hall of Famer Hank Greenberg.
- **1932 - Orleans** of the Cape Cod League. He was scheduled to pitch in the exclusive all white league, but the game got rained out.
- **1933-1934 - Waltham** (town team) of the Boston Twilight League.
- **1938-1940 - Portsmouth (NH)** – Pitched games mainly on Sundays when he wasn’t playing for another team.
- **1940 – Watertown Arsenal** of the Boston Park League.
- **1944 – Windsor Conomatics** of the Twin State Semipro League, a local team in Vermont

One of the most famous examples of a white team integrating with black players was the 1935 Bismarck team from North Dakota. The owner of the team Neil Churchill was rich and wanted to dominate baseball in the Dakotas. To this end, Churchill enlisted the help of Abe Saperstein (Negro League baseball promoter and owner of the Harlem Globetrotters) to sign the following Negro League players to play on his white team: Satchel Paige, Hilton Smith, Barney Morris, Chet Brewer, Red Haley, Art Hancock, Ted “Double Duty” Radcliffe and Quincy Troupe. Bismarck immediately became one of the most powerful “semipro” clubs in the country. Bismarck winning the initial National Baseball Congress (NBC) Tournament in Wichita, Kansas that same year evidenced their status at the top of semiprofessional baseball. The National Baseball Congress Tournament was organized by Raymond “Hap” Dumont with the purpose of bringing the best amateur and semiprofessional baseball clubs in the country together in order to crown a national champion. Satchel Paige led Bismarck to the tournament championship with the most outstanding pitching performance in the tournament’s history. Paige went 4-0 in the tournament and recorded 60 strikeouts. Paige’s 60 strikeouts in the tournament still stands as the NBC tournament record today. The Claybrook Tigers, an all black team from Arkansas, finished second in the tournament. Rival teams of Bismarck (Jamestown, New Rockford and Valley City) soon followed suit and began to hire black ball players. Negro League ball players would spent the mid-late 1930’s playing in the Dakotas, making the Dakotas the site of the best “semipro” baseball in the United States.

Other famous examples of Negro League players joining white teams include: John Donaldson (Bertha Fishermen – 1925), Chet Brewer (Crookston, Minnesota – 1931), Webster Mc Donald (Little Falls, Minnesota – 1928-1931), Dave Brown (Bertha, Minnesota – 1927, Sioux City, Iowa – 1929 and Little Falls, Minnesota – 1930), Chet Brewer (Jamestown, North Dakota – 1934), Walter “Steel Arm” Davis (Jamestown, North Dakota – 1934), Satchel Paige (House of David – 1934 Denver Post Tournament) and Hilton Smith (Bismarck, North Dakota – 1936). The Hancock brothers, Art and Charlie, who also played for Jamestown in the 1930’s spent 25 years in black baseball playing for independent teams and integrated town teams.

One of the biggest events that led to the integration of “organized” baseball might be tracked back to 1934 when the Denver Post Tournament invited the tournament’s first black team to participate. The Denver Post Tournament was the most prestigious “semipro” baseball event in the United States. In 1934 the Kansas City Monarchs finished second to the House of David (Satchel Paige and Cy Perkins pitched and caught for this all white team). Other notable black teams that participated in the tournament included: Denver White Elephants (5th place – 1935), Negro League All Stars (won Championship – 1936), Ciudad Trujillo (won Championship – 1937), Ethiopian Clown (5th place – 1939) and Ethiopian Clowns (won Championship – 1941). The Negro League All Stars team of 1936 was easily the best team to ever play in the tournament. On the team were five future National Baseball Hall of Fame Players: James “Cool Pappa” Bell, Raymond Brown, Josh Gibson, Buck Leonard and Satchel Paige.

College and universities were integrated long before Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier. Jackie Robinson himself is a good example of this. Jackie had been an All American in several sports at the predominately white UCLA University.

Professional baseball was also integrated outside the United States and to some degree on the West Coast in California. At the professional level there had been a long history of a black team playing in the California Winter League. Black and white ball players had always played side by side in Latin America during winter league baseball in Cuba, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and Puerto Rico. Baseball in Canada had been integrated long before Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in 1947.

The integration of Major and Minor League baseball was a slow difficult process. This was especially true in the South. An excellent example of this occurred during the 1953 season in the Cotton States League. The Hot Springs club had added two black ball players to their roster for the 1953 season. These were former Negro League players James and Leander Tugerson. As a result, the Cotton States League dropped the Hot Springs franchise from the league. The League President, A. Haraway presented the Cotton States League official position, in his press release that was published in the *New York Times* (April 7, 1953):

“ Since the Hot Springs club has assumed a position from which it refuses to recede, which would disrupt the Cotton States League and cause its dissolution, which position having been assumed without the courtesy of a league discussion and since it is a matter of survival of the league, or transfer of the Hot Springs franchise, this action was taken.”

The Hot Springs team backed off its position somewhat and later agreed to play the Tugersons only when the home teams approved.

The persecution of black ball players was something that Major League baseball and the federal government took very seriously. An example of this was an incident that occurred in March of 1954 during spring training in the community of Winterhaven, Florida where the Washington Senators trained. According to news reports in the *Washington Post*, *Times-Herald* and *New York Times*, city officials of Winterhaven had ordered eight black Cuban ball players out of town by sundown. The Federal Bureau of Investigation and United States Justice Department investigated the incident for possible civil rights violations. The Washington Senators responded by moving the players to Orlando in order to protect them.

Segregation was also a continuing problem for Major League baseball during spring training. In a news report in the *New York Times* (February 3, 1961) the New York Yankees and St. Louis Cardinals had been informed by their hotels (Soreno Hotel and Vinoy Park Hotel) in St. Petersburg (Florida) that the hotels would not provide lodging for the teams' black players. The hotel's position was that if this was an issue, the teams should look for accommodations elsewhere. By 1962 fifteen Major League teams had integrated their spring training facilities so that black players could eat and sleep at the same hotel as the rest of the team. This was sixteen years after Jackie Robinson had supposedly broken the color barrier. The five teams that had still not integrated were Detroit Tigers (Lakeland), Minnesota Twins (Orlando), Kansas City Athletics (West Palm Beach), Washington Senators (Pompano Beach) and Pittsburgh Pirates (Fort Myers). The Washington Senators tried to ease the situation for their black players by renting them a house, hiring a dietician to cook for the players and securing the players access to a local black swimming pool. Interestingly enough the Major League Clubs (Los Angeles Angeles – Palm Springs, Cleveland Indians – Tucson, Chicago Cubs – Mesa, Boston Red Sox – Scottsdale and San Francisco Giants – Phoenix) that conducted spring training in Arizona and California had no problems with black and whites being integrated.

The question that this researcher has posed was “That if Major League clubs had problems with segregation in Florida, why didn't they move their spring training operations to Arizona or California?”

During the times when black ball players were segregated during spring training or during the regular season, black ball players were housed in local residents homes or in local boarding houses. In an interview with the *New York Times* (February 19, 1961), Milwaukee Braves outfielder Hank Aaron explained the problem this way:

“Sometimes the place is so crowded that they have two guys sleeping in the hall. You wake up in the morning and rush for the bathroom and if you’re the last one all the hot water is gone.”

Segregation of players for meals and housing was more than a social issue; it also had significant financial implications. The Major League teams had invested a tremendous amount of money in spring training facilities. The local communities also benefited financially from spring training being conducted in their communities. In 1960 there were 143 games played by Major League teams in the Grapefruit League (Florida spring training baseball). These games and the Major League teams conducting spring training in Florida brought millions of dollars to the communities each year.

The question raised by this researcher is “Why couldn’t the local communities and Major League teams work out the problems?”

As Major and Minor League baseball was integrating, semiprofessional baseball was also going through the same change process. The impact of black ball players on semiprofessional baseball can best be evaluated by looking at the National Baseball Congress (NBC) and the National Semipro Baseball Association. Former Negro League players commonly joined predominately white semipro teams to help take the team to the next level, win a championship or dominate local competition. Satchel Paige had starred in the first National Baseball Congress National Championship Tournament in Wichita. When Jackie Robinson integrated Major League baseball, the appearance of Negro League players on semiprofessional baseball rosters became commonplace. Over the years, five former Negro League players were voted the Most Valuable Player Award of the NBC National Tournament. These players were:

Year	Player	Negro League Team	NBC Team
1935	Satchel Paige	Kansas City Monarchs	Bismarck Churchills
1949	Bill Ricks	Philadelphia Stars	Ft. Wayne – General Electric
1950	Pat Scantlebury	New York Cubans	Ft. Wayne Capeharts
1957	Wilmer Fields	Homestead Grays	Ft. Wayne Dairymen
1965	Bob Boyd	Memphis Red Sox	Rapid Transit Dreamliners

Satchel Paige and former Negro League player Charlie Drummond (Philadelphia Stars) also pitched for the Weller Construction Indians (Wichita, Kansas) in the 1959 and 1960 NBC National Tournaments.

Negro League players weren’t just brought in for tournament play. Two examples of former Negro League players transitioning to predominately white semipro baseball teams are Bob Boyd and Frank Evans. When Bob Boyd retired from professional baseball in 1964, he took a job with the Wichita Rapid Transit System driving a bus.

Rapid Transit also had a world-class semipro baseball club and Bob was invited to join the team. The Dreamliners also featured former Negro League ball players Charlie Neal, Frank Evans and James Pendleton. In addition the team had former Major League players Bud Bloomfield (Minnesota Twins) and Rod Kanehl (New York Mets). Bob played for the Rapid Transit Dreamliners from 1964 to 1967. He led them to NBC National Tournament appearances in 1964 and 1965. At the end of the 1965 tournament, Boyd was named the Most Valuable Player of the National Tournament. Frank Evans was one of the last managers of the Negro American League. He managed the 1962 Birmingham Black Barons. When Wardell Jackson moved the Black Barons to Champaign, Illinois at the end of the 1962 season, Frank moved to Kansas and began scouting for the Cleveland Indians. Frank also played for the Rapid Transit Dreamliners and managed John Wietzel's Cowboys of the Victory league from 1964 to 1969. Frank brought several of his former Negro League players with him to the Cowboys. Some of the former Negro League players that Evans had on his Cowboys baseball team included: David Pearson, Ike Walker, Oscar Walker and Al Neal (Charlie Neal's brother).

Former Negro League ball players also impacted the American Amateur Baseball Congress and National Semipro Baseball Association. The Stockham Valve and Fitting Company of Birmingham, Alabama won the 1957 National Semipro Baseball Association National Tournament. The Stockham team was made up of several former Birmingham Black Barons and other Negro American League players. The Sullivan's team from Grand Rapids, Michigan won four national titles over the years. The Sullivan's roster was loaded with former Negro League players who had played for the Kansas City Monarchs and Grand Rapids Black Sox. Ben Adams, Herman Green, Willie Lee, Ray Miller and Roscoe Price were among the former Negro league players who played for Sullivan's over the years.

In many cases, especially in the South, integration increased racial tension. But baseball also provided a venue for the easing of racial tensions and provided an opportunity to bring blacks and whites together. In baseball, black and white players found:

- Common **environment** in which to interact – the **ball park**
- Common **banner** to bind them together – the baseball **team**
- Common **adversaries** – **opposing teams**
- Common **goals** – **winning** the game and hopefully a **championship**.

In short, baseball touched the very fabric of our society for players, fans and the community as a whole.

Black Baseball after the Negro Leagues

When the Negro American League folded after the 1962 season, black baseball did not disappear in America. Black baseball in the United States still existed on three levels:

- Professional barnstorming teams
- Predominately all-black “bush” leagues
- All-black local semi-pro and sandlot teams.

Black Baseball goes Barnstorming

Independent teams with no formal league affiliation and exclusively playing a barnstorming schedule was nothing new to black baseball. Before there were formal Negro Leagues, black professional baseball teams barnstormed all over the United States, Canada and Latin America. Even when the powerful Negro Leagues (Eastern Colored League, Negro National League and Negro American League) were organized, there were still professional teams that played their entire season schedule on a barnstorming tour. Negro League teams would also barnstorm before and after the “league” season began or ended. Negro League teams from the north would often hold their spring training in the south due to better weather conditions and when spring training was over they would play a barnstorming schedule back to their home city. This provided more of an opportunity for the players to play themselves into shape and was a well-needed additional source of income to start the season with. Most Negro League players didn’t make enough money with their regular season contract salary to last them all year. In the off-season they needed to work and barnstorming baseball was a great way to make money. Some Negro League teams would barnstorm as a unit or an “all star” team would be formed around one of the Negro League stars. Satchel Paige’s All Stars was one of the most popular and successful teams in black baseball history. Satchel Paige’s barnstorming tour against Dizzy Dean’s All Stars and then against Bob Feller’s All Stars sold out Major League stadiums all over the country in the off-season for many years. Games between Satchel Paige’s All Stars and Bob Feller’s All Stars created so much attention that it resulted in the Commissioner of baseball limiting the number of barnstorming games that a Major Leaguer could play during the off-season.

During the 1940’s and 1950’s barnstorming was an important part of baseball in America. Some of the top barnstorming teams during this period of time were: Cincinnati Crescents, Harlem Globetrotters, Brooklyn Cuban Giants, Havana La Palomas, Havana Cuban Giants, Indianapolis Clowns, Jacksonville Eagles, Ligon’s All Stars, San Francisco Sea Lions, San Francisco Cubs and Satchel Paige’s All Stars.

The Indianapolis Clowns would drop out of the Negro American League following the 1955 season. Syd Pollock, the owner of the Clowns, felt that he could make more money with his team if they played an independent barnstorming schedule. The Indianapolis Clowns were the most famous of all the black barnstorming baseball teams. The Clowns combined outstanding baseball skills with a comedy routine on the field that was similar to the world famous Harlem Globetrotters basketball team. The Clowns operated from

1929 to 1989 and underwent significant changes over the years. Appendix Q contains a chronological history of the Indianapolis Clowns.

While the Clowns baseball skills on the field were always of paramount importance to Pollock, the Clowns became world famous for their entertainment during the game. The Clowns combined comedy skits with outstanding baseball. The most famous featured entertainers for the Clowns over the years were:

- Peanuts Nysses (Edward Davis)
- Ed Hamman
- Goose Tatum
- King Tut (Richard King)
- Nature Boy Williams
- Prince Joe Henry
- Bobo Nickerson
- Spec Bebob (Ralph Bell)
- Birmingham Sam Brison
- Dero Austin
- Nate “Bobo” Smalls

From 1955 when the Clowns dropped out of the Negro American League to the mid 1960’s, the Clowns traveled with approximately 30 players and two sets of uniforms. One was for the Clowns and the other was for their road team opponent. If the city in which the Clowns were booking did not have a worthy opponent to play, the Clowns would play their road team opponent. Players were interchangeable between the two teams. Road teams names and uniforms changed over the years because the Clowns would play in many of the same cities year after year and as Ed Hamman explained, the fans wouldn’t be satisfied seeing the same opponent for the Clowns all the time. The Indianapolis Clowns had the following road teams over the years:

- New York Black Yankees (1952 and 1955-1957)
- Los Angeles Hawks (1958)
- Georgia Flyers (1959)
- New York Royals (1960-1961)
- New York Stars (1962 and 1965-1966)
- Brooklyn Stars (1963-1964)
- Baltimore Stars (1967)

The Clowns would play over 150 games a season under Pollock and Hamman. That number would be cut in half when Long and Clark owned the team. During their barnstorming days, the Clowns billed themselves as the World Colored Independent Champions.

Under the ownership of Pollock and tour management of Ed Hamman the Clowns would be successful. Ed Hamman would become part owner of the Clowns and eventually sole owner. Under Pollock and Hamman the barnstorming Clowns of the 1950’s and 1960’s

would develop several players and sell a significant number of players to Major League organizations. Several of these players would make it to the Major Leagues.

Player	Years with Clowns	Major League Team
Paul Cassanova	1960 and 1961	Washington Senators
Clarence Coleman	1957-1957	Philadelphia Phillies
Hal King	1962-1964	Los Angeles Angels
Billy Parker	1961-1964	Los Angeles Angels
Charles Peete	1950	St. Louis Cardinals
Jim Proctor	1955	Detroit Tigers
George Smith	1956-1957	Detroit Tigers
John Wyatt	1953 and 1955	Kansas City Athletics

Ed Hamman sold the Indianapolis Clowns for \$ 5,000 to George Long of Muscatine, Iowa in 1973. Long's experience in baseball dated back to 1937 when he started the Muscatine Red Sox. The Red Sox were a local semipro powerhouse that had a winning record for 67 straight seasons. George Long's version of the Clowns would also send a player to the Major Leagues. Harry Chappas who played for the Chicago White Sox in 1978 started his professional baseball career with the Indianapolis Clowns in 1975. Long continued the Clowns barnstorming tradition until 1983, when he sold the Clowns to Dave Clark of Corning, New York.

Even during the days of George Long and Dave Clark owning the Clowns in the 1970's and 1980's there was still the tradition of trying to hold onto the Negro Leagues in place. According to Dave Clark who played for George Long during the 1975 and 1976 seasons, the Clowns would play one game each year in Comiskey Park in Chicago. The Clowns' opponent for these games would be a team billed as the Negro League All Stars. Dave Clark didn't know where this team came from but his best guess is that it was an all-star team made up of local standout black players. When Clark owned the team from 1984-1988, the Clowns played in Grand Rapids, Michigan on several occasions. The promoter in Grand Rapids was none other than Ted Rasberry from the Negro American League of the 1950's and 1960's. Ted's team that played the Clowns during these games in the 1980's was billed as the Kansas City Monarchs. It is hard to get away from tradition. The Clowns played their last full barnstorming schedule in 1988. The Clowns ceased operation after playing a few games at the start of the 1989 season.

Besides the Indianapolis Clowns there were several other dominant barnstorming black baseball teams that toured the United States when the Negro American League folded at the end of the 1962 seasons. These teams and their ownership were:

Team	Owner	Home Base
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Birmingham Black Barons	Wardell Jackson	Champaign, Illinois
Kansas City Monarchs	Ted Rasberry	Grand Rapids, Michigan
Philadelphia Stars	Wardell Jackson	Champaign, Illinois
Satchel Paige All Stars	Arthur Dove	Raleigh, North Carolina

Black Baseball in the Minor Leagues and Bush Leagues

There has always been significantly more to black baseball in the United States than the “Major Leagues” (Eastern Colored League, East West League, Negro American League, Negro National League, United States League, etc.) of Negro League baseball. Strong regional Negro Leagues once flourished all over the United States. In the south there were the Negro Southern League, Negro Carolina League, Florida State Negro League, Texas Negro League and Texas-Oklahoma-Louisiana Negro League. The Negro American Association, Baseball Association of America and Negro Eastern League played in the east. The Midwest once featured the Negro Major Baseball League of America and the Negro Midwest League. On the west coast there was the Negro Pacific Coast League.

The Florida State Negro League included the following teams: St. Petersburg Black Pelicans, Bradenton Nine Devils, Orlando All Stars, Coco Beach Black Indians and Daytona.

Baseball was always a very important component of the black community in Texas. Over the years there were several versions of the Texas Negro League and even a league that included Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma (Texas-Oklahoma-Louisiana League). Some of the top teams that played in these leagues were: Austin Black Senators, Dallas Giants, Dallas Green Monarchs, Fort Worth Black Cats, Houston Black Buffalos, San Antonio Black Aces, San Antonio Black Bronchos, San Antonio Black Missions, San Antonio Black Indians and Waco Yellow Jackets. Texas produced its share of Negro League greats. Newt Allen, Dave Brown, Marlin Carter, Andrew “Rube” Foster, Willie Foster, Raleigh “Biz” Mackey, Bill Pettus, Louis Santop, Willie Wells, Chaney White, Joseph “Smoky Joe” Williams and Marvin Williams were all Texas natives. Texas also produced future Major League and Hall of Fame ball players Ernie Banks and Frank Robinson.

At the very bottom of hierarchy of black baseball were the bush leagues. The bush leagues were made up of local semipro and sandlot teams. These local leagues flourished all over the country and brought baseball to virtually every part of the United States. In local communities that did not have “major” Negro League teams or “minor/regional” Negro League teams, baseball to these black communities were these local teams. Their stars of baseball were these local players. One of the unique aspects of baseball is that it doesn’t matter how old or young you are. If you have the skills and talent, you can play on the team. It was not uncommon to see a 14, 15 or 16 year old teenager playing next to a veteran ball play in his 40’s or 50’s. These teams and leagues provided young ball

players the opportunity to develop their baseball skills and showcase them. Most all Negro League ball players from the “Major Leagues” of Negro League baseball got their start in baseball playing for a local team in the Minor League or bush leagues. These teams and leagues also gave veteran Negro League ball players the opportunity to continue playing competitive baseball once their Negro American League or Negro National League careers were over. It is important to note that many black ball players did not see Negro League baseball as an attractive option because of the lack of money, long travel and hardships on the road. Playing for a local town team, in a strong industrial league or on one of the many teams that played in the bush leagues, gave black ball players the opportunity to get a good, steady paying job, be close to home and not have to leave their families for long periods at a time. There were outstanding ball players all over the country that never left their hometowns. During Dr. Revel’s interviews with former players, one of the questions that he would always ask players was “Who were the best players you saw during your career?” Quite often the answer was not the Negro League stars from the Negro League teams, but local ball players. These teams were often very competitive and frequently played the teams from the Negro American League, Negro National League and the professional barnstorming teams. It was not uncommon for the local team to beat the “big time” professional teams. Games played between local teams and Negro League teams also gave the “league” teams an excellent opportunity to scout local talent. Over the years hundreds of black ball players were signed by “league” teams based on their performance in one of these games.

Some of the more prominent “bush leagues” of black baseball were: Birmingham Industrial League, Florida West Coast Negro League, Gulf Coast Negro League, Industrial Sandlot League, Interstate League, South Texas Negro League, Tri-State League and West Texas Colored League.

The Birmingham Industrial League was based in the Birmingham, Alabama area. The league included teams that were sponsored by the large companies in and around Birmingham. The league was started in the 1930’s and continued play into the 1960’s as an all black league. Some of the teams that played in this league included: Acipico Pipe, Clow Pipe Shop, Ensley Steel, Fairfield Stars, Pullman-Stanley, Stockham Valve and Fitting Company, U.S. Steel and the 24th Street Red Sox. The league seemed to function as the farm team of the Birmingham Black Barons. The Birmingham Industrial League produced many players who went on to play in the Negro American League and several that played Major League baseball. Some of these players included: Lyman Bostock, Bob Boyd, Lorenzo “Piper” Davis, Willie Mays, Jessie Mitchell, William Powell, Willie Smith, Bob Veale and Artie Wilson

The Florida West Coast Negro League was started in the 1940’s and played a regular league schedule into the 1970’s. Teams that played in the Florida West Coast Negro League included: Bartow All Stars, Dade City Red Devils, Haines City Hornets, Lacoochee Pirates, Plant City Pirates, St. Petersburg Braves, St. Petersburg Black Pelicans, Tampa Dodgers and Tampa Grays. Avon Park, Clearwater and Ocala also fielded teams in the Florida West Coast Negro League over the years. Several future

Major League players like Ed Charles, James “Mudcat” Grant, Hal King, Nate Oliver and George Smith got their starts in professional baseball playing in this league.

The Gulf Coast Negro League reached its heyday in the 1960’s and 1970’s. From 1972 to 1974 the league included the following teams: Biloxi Dodgers, Gulfport Panthers, Hattiesburg Black Sox, Jackson Cuba Meridian Braves, Mobile Black Bears, New Orleans Royals, Pascagoula Merchants, Pensacola Pirates, Pritchard Athletics and Slidell Creoles. Gulf Coast Negro League teams during this time also played a lot of non league games against town teams and independent teams. According to Larry Smith, Biloxi Dodgers pitcher in the early 1970’s, some of the non league opponents they played were Delise Yellow Jackets, Dixie Corner Mets (Mobile, AL), Gulfport Angels, Homestead Braves (Jackson, MS) Hub City Wheels, Laurel Black Cats, May Oiler (Jackson, MS), Mobile Blue Devils, Moss Point Monarchs and Tyler Town.

The South Texas Negro League was formed in 1945 when Royal Brock, owner of the San Antonio Black Sox, and Odie Davis, Sr. brought together the best black baseball clubs in south Texas to play in a formal league. Most of the games were played in Black Sox Park and Pittman-Sullivan Park in San Antonio. Over the years the league became based in San Antonio. Teams that played in the South Texas Negro league included: Austin Greyhounds, Denver Height Bears, San Antonio Black Sox, San Antonio Bombers, San Antonio Black Missions, San Antonio Black Yankees, San Antonio Eagles, San Antonio Indians, San Antonio Reds and SP Giants. The league played a regular season schedule through the 1979 season. When the league disbanded in 1979, the Denver Heights Bears and San Antonio Yankees moved to play in the Spanish American League in San Antonio. Several former Negro League players like Sterling Fuller, Cleveland Grant, Alfred Ladsen, John “Mule” Miles, Roy White and Bernard Willis played in the league after their Negro League careers had ended. The South Texas Negro League produced three future Major League players: Cliff Johnson, Cito Gaston and Odie Davis.

Local black teams also created dynasties in their communities. Perhaps the greatest semipro – sandlot team of all time was the Washington Black Sox. The Black Sox were formed in 1934 by William R. “Doffey” Jones. The Washington Black Sox played in various leagues over the years and played thousands of games during an independent schedule. The team played a full season from 1934 through the 1992 season, when Doffey’s health would not permit him from running the team. Over the years the Black Sox played in the following leagues: Interstate Baseball League, Eastern League, Tri- State League, Maryland Industrial League, AABC League, Patuxent Valley League and Washington Industrial League. The Black Sox were the dominant force in black baseball from the 1930’s through the early 1990’s. They played their home games at their own stadium, Black Sox Park in the Washington, D.C. area. Over the years, the Black Sox won forty-five (45) league championships and countless baseball invitational tournaments. Many former Negro League ball players played for Doffey and the Black Sox on their way up or way down from the Negro American League and Negro National League. Some of the former Negro League players who also played for the Washington Black Sox were Lacy “Young Boy” Ellerbe, Dr. Thomas Faifax Johnson, Ben “Junior” Jones, Charles Rigby, Tommy Hill and John “Pud” Lancaster.

In the heyday of baseball, virtually every community in the country had a black baseball team. These teams played each other on a regular basis and formed local, industrial, county and city leagues.

The following chart contains a listing of Major League players who played with Negro “Minor” League or “bush” league teams.

**Players from Negro “Minor” Leagues and “Bush” Leagues
That made it to Major Leagues**

Player	Negro League Team	League	Major League Team	Debut Year
Tom Alston	Greensboro Red Wings	NCL	St. Louis Cardinals	1954
Sam Bowens	Nashville Elite Giants	NNBA	Baltimore Orioles	1963
Dennis “Oil Can” Boyd	Meridian White Sox	GCNL	Boston Red Sox	1982
Ed Charles	St. Petersburg Black Pelicans	FWCNL	Kansas City Athletics	1962
Player	Negro League Team	League	Major League Team	Debut Year
Wes Covington	Durham Eagles	NCL	Milwaukee Braves	1956
Odie Davis	Denver Heights Bears	STNL	Texas Rangers	1980
Cito Gaston	San Antonio Black Sox	STNL	Atlanta Braves	1967
James “Mudcat” Grant	St. Petersburg Black Pelicans Lacoochee Pirates Dade City Red Devils	FWCNL FWCNL FWCNL	Cleveland Indians	1958
Alvin Jackson	Waco Tigers	WTCL	Pittsburgh Pirates	1959
Cliff Johnson	San Antonio Black Sox	STNL	Houston Astros	1972
Charlie Neal	Atlanta Black Crackers Raleigh Tigers	NSL NSL	Brooklyn Dodgers	1956
Nate Oliver	St. Petersburg Black Pelicans	FWCNL	Los Angeles Dodgers	1963
Nate Puryear	Biloxi Dodgers	GCNL	Cleveland Indians	
Kim Seaman	Biloxi Dodgers	GCNL	St. Louis Cardinals	1979
Willie Tasby	Plant City Pirates	FWCNL	Baltimore Orioles	1958
Bob Veale	24 th Street Red Sox	BIL	Pittsburgh Pirates	1962

Maury Wills	Raleigh Tigers	NSL	Los Angeles Dodgers	1959
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* Abbreviations:

Birmingham Industrial League – BIL	Negro National Baseball Association - NNBA
Florida West Coast Negro League – FWCNL	Negro Southern League - NSL
Gulf Coast Negro League – GCNL	South Texas Negro League - STNL
Negro Carolina League – NCL	West Texas Colored League -WTCL

Segregation by Choice: Black Local Semi-pro and Sandlot Baseball

Black baseball has always extended beyond the confines of the Negro “Major and Minor” League teams. The Negro National League, Negro American League and Negro “Minor” Leagues gave many young black ball players their start in professional baseball. There were a significant number of black ball players who got their start in organized baseball by playing for a local black team that wasn’t affiliated with a formal professional league. Local teams represented a town, area of community or company.

After Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in 1947, young black ball players no longer saw the Negro National League and Negro American League as the highest level of professional baseball to which they could aspire. Two of the best examples of this attitude can be seen in reviewing the careers of St. Louis Hall of Fame pitcher Bob Gibson and Chicago Cubs Hall of Fame outfielder Billy Williams. Gibson was an outstanding local baseball player for the semi-pro Omaha Rockets in the early 1950’s. He was highly recruited by Buck O’Neil of the Kansas City Monarchs when he graduated from high school in 1953. But Gibson turned down the Monarchs offer to accept an athletic scholarship to Creighton University. He would sign with the St. Louis Cardinals and go on to be one of baseball’s most dominant pitchers from 1959 to 1975. Billy Williams started his career in professional baseball with the local powerhouse semi-pro Mobile Bears in 1954. The Mobile Bears were operated by former Negro Leaguer Edward Scott and were one of the top teams in the Gulf Coast region. Scott who was also a scout for the Pittsburgh Pirates convinced Williams not to sign with a team from the Negro American League because he felt Williams was a can’t miss player for the Major Leagues. Scott tried to get the Pirates to sign Williams; but before the Pirates could respond Billy was signed by Irv Griffin of the Chicago Cubs. Besides Billy Williams, former Major Leaguers Tommie Aaron, Tommy Agee and Cleon Jones all got their start in organized baseball with the Mobile Bears.

The following chart lists some of the Major League players who got their starts in organized baseball with a local semi-pro black team.

Player	Black Team	Time Period	Major League Team
Tommie Aaron	Mobile Black Bears	late 1950’s	Milwaukee Braves

Tommy Agee	Mobile Black Bears	late 1950's	Cleveland Indians
Earl Battey	Watts Giants	early 1950's	Chicago White Sox
Harvey Branch	Memphis Warriors	mid 1950's	St. Louis Cardinals
Billy Bruton	San Francisco Sea Lions Cincinnati Crescents San Francisco Cubs	late 1940's	Milwaukee Braves
Roy Foster	Tulsa Clowns	early 1960's	Cleveland Indians
Bob Gibson	Omaha Rockets	late 1940's-early 1950's	St. Louis Cardinals
Pumpsie Green	Richmond Stars	1948-1951	Boston Red Sox
Jim Ray Hart	Kinston Greys	1958-1959	San Francisco Giants
Chuck Hinton	Rocky Mount Black Swans Washington Black Panthers	1951-1955 1951-1955	Baltimore Orioles
Roy Foster	Tulsa Clowns	1960-1962	Cleveland Indians
Al Jackson	Jasper Steers	early 1950's	Pittsburgh Pirates
Cleon Jones	Mobile Black Bears	1959-1960	New York Mets
Carlos May	Acipico (Birmingham)	1960's	Chicago White Sox
Lee May	Acipico (Birmingham)	1960's	Cincinnati Reds
Lee Maye	Los Angeles Eagles Los Angeles Coasters	early 1950's	Milwaukee Braves
John "Blue Moon" Odom	Forrest Park Braves	1963	Kansas City A's
Amos Otis	Mobile Black Bears	early 1960's	Kansas City Royals
Willie Tasby	Oakland Giants		Baltimore Orioles
Leon Wagner	Inkster Colored Panthers	1953-1954	San Francisco Giants
Billy Williams	Mobile Black Bears	mid 1950's	Chicago Cubs

Final Thoughts

In the final analysis the Negro Leagues ended for the following reasons:

1. When Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier and signed with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1945, most of the established stars of the Negro Leagues left black baseball to join the “white” Major League organizations.
2. Up and coming black players like Hank Aaron, Ernie Banks, Elston Howard, Willie Mays, etc. were sold to the Major League teams.
3. Many older established players, whom did not sign with Major League teams, left the country to play ball in Canada, Mexico or other countries in Latin America.
4. Young black ball players like Orlando Cepeda, Roberto Clemente, Tommy Davis, Bob Gibson, Vic Power, Frank Robinson, Billy Williams, etc. chose to sign with Major League clubs rather than play in the Negro Leagues. Young black ball players no longer saw the Negro American League as the highest level of professional baseball to which they could aspire
5. When the decline of the Negro League began, many of the established owners of Negro League teams sold their franchise and got out of black baseball.
6. Fan base deserted the Negro League in favor of following the black players in the Major League organizations.
7. Other sports, predominately basketball and football, started to promote their teams more vigorously to the black community.
8. The introduction of television on a large scale in the 1950’s gave people all over the country another significant option in their entertainment choices.

The demise of Negro League was inevitable. The Negro Leagues lost their best players, young players signed with Major League teams, older established players left the country to play baseball in other countries, established owners sold their teams and the fans abandoned the Negro League teams.

Negro League baseball had been a powerful force in American sports and the black community. When the Negro American League folded after the 1962 season, its ending went unnoticed. Even though a few black teams would continue to barnstorm, Negro League baseball was gone.

With the passing of Negro League baseball, an extremely important chapter in the history of baseball in America came to an end.