

## **The Negro Baseball Leagues**

### **The Women's Professional Baseball Leagues**

### **Some of the Greatest Negro League Players**

### **The Last Man to Bat .400 in an American Professional Baseball League**

### **The Last Person to bat .400 in an American Professional Baseball League**

### **The First African American Players to Join Each Major League Team**

### **Women Offered Minor League Contracts**

## **Learning Statistics with Baseball Chapter 16**

*The interesting facts for **Chapter 16** are dedicated to two populations excluded from playing in the Major Leagues. African American players were excluded until 1947. At one time the population of women was excluded from the Major Leagues. Today, even though there are no women in the Major Leagues, they are not excluded officially anymore.*

### **Other Professional American Baseball Leagues**

This entire section is devoted to two other professional baseball leagues, the Negro Baseball Leagues and the Women's Professional Baseball League. These leagues were established because their players were excluded from the Major Leagues.

For the Negro Leagues, the baseball statistics of the players were not kept accurately. Records were not kept of all Negro League games because the media paid little attention to them. Several black newspapers did make an attempt to keep records. However, when these newspapers went out of business their records were destroyed or lost much of the time. Many times the teams in the Negro Leagues would play games against teams outside their league. The statistics kept were cumulative and involved both league games and non-league games. After Jackie Robinson entered the Major Leagues in 1947, the statistics were kept more accurately because the leagues wanted to sell their players' contracts to the Major Leagues.

A brief summary of the careers of arguably the two greatest Negro League players, Satchel Paige and Josh Gibson, will be given.

Two other players will be discussed. The two players are Artie Wilson, who played in the Negro League, and Joanne Weaver, who played in the Women's Professional Baseball League. The reason for choosing these two players is they both were the last players in their respective leagues to bat over .400 for a season. The topic of batting .400 for a season is covered in the next chapter of this book.

### **The Negro Leagues**

Some of the following brief history of the Negro Leagues was taken from the website [www.nlbm.com](http://www.nlbm.com) (Negro League Baseball Museum). You are encouraged to visit this website or other useful websites such as [www.negroleaguebaseball.com](http://www.negroleaguebaseball.com) and [www.blackbaseball.com](http://www.blackbaseball.com). These websites describe the players, teams, and leagues that constituted the Negro Leagues.

#### **Brief history of the Negro Leagues**

African-Americans began to play baseball in the late 1800s on military teams, college teams, and company teams. By the 1860s black amateur teams such as the Colored Union Club in Brooklyn and the Pythian Club in Philadelphia were formed. African-American players eventually found their way to professional teams with white players. Moses Fleetwood Walker and Bud Fowler were among the first to participate (see the special dates below). However, racism would force them from these teams by 1900. Thus, black players formed their own units, “barnstorming” around the country to play anyone who would challenge them.

After the World Series, white teams, in order to earn extra money, would also tour many cities. The black teams would play against the white teams in many cities. The evenness of the results of these games indicated the black teams performed at the same level as the white teams.

In 1920, an organized league structure was formed under the guidance of Andrew “Rube” Foster—a former player, manager, and owner for the Chicago American Giants. In a meeting held at the Paseo YMCA in Kansas City, Missouri (the current home of the Negro League Hall

of Fame), Foster and a few other Midwestern team owners joined to form the Negro National League. Soon, rival leagues formed in eastern and southern states, bringing the thrills and innovative play of black baseball to major urban centers and rural country sides in the U.S., Canada, and Latin America. The leagues maintained a high level of professional skill and became centerpieces for economic development in many black communities.

In 1924, the first World Series was played between the winner of the Negro National League and the Eastern Colored League. Over the years, there were eleven Black World Series held. Also, in 1933, the black teams began all-star competition. The game was known as the East-West game and was played each summer at Chicago's Comiskey Park.

In 1945, Major League Baseball's Brooklyn Dodgers recruited Jackie Robinson from the Kansas City Monarchs. In 1947, Robinson became the first African-American in the modern era to play on a Major League roster.

While this historic event was a key moment in baseball and civil rights history, it prompted the decline of the Negro Leagues. The best black players were now recruited for the Major Leagues, and black fans followed.

The last Negro League folded in the early 1960s, but their legacy lives on through the surviving players, The Negro League Hall of Fame, and the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum.

### **First African-American Players in the Major Leagues**

Table 19.17 gives in chronological order the first African-American player or players on each of the Major League teams.

**Table 19.17**

Player	Team	Date
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<a href="#">Jackie Robinson</a>	<a href="#">Brooklyn Dodgers</a> , NL	April 15, 1947
<a href="#">Larry Doby</a>	<a href="#">Cleveland Indians</a> , AL	July 5, 1947
<a href="#">Hank Thompson</a>	<a href="#">St. Louis Browns</a> , AL	July 17, 1947
<a href="#">Monte Irvin</a>	<a href="#">New York Giants</a> , NL	July 8, 1949
<a href="#">Hank Thompson</a>		
<a href="#">Sam Jethroe</a>	<a href="#">Boston Braves</a> , NL	April 18, 1950
<a href="#">Minnie Miñoso</a>	<a href="#">Chicago White Sox</a> , AL	May 1, 1951
<a href="#">Bob Trice</a>	<a href="#">Philadelphia Athletics</a> , AL	Sept. 13, 1953
<a href="#">Ernie Banks</a>	<a href="#">Chicago Cubs</a> , NL	Sept. 17, 1953
<a href="#">Curt Roberts</a>	<a href="#">Pittsburgh Pirates</a> , NL	April 13, 1954
<a href="#">Tom Alston</a>	<a href="#">St. Louis Cardinals</a> , NL	April 13, 1954
<a href="#">Nino Escalera</a>	<a href="#">Cincinnati Reds</a> , NL	April 17, 1954
<a href="#">Chuck Harmon</a>		
<a href="#">Carlos Paula</a>	<a href="#">Washington Senators</a> , AL	Sept. 6, 1954
<a href="#">Elston Howard</a>	<a href="#">New York Yankees</a> , AL	April 14, 1955
<a href="#">John Kennedy</a>	<a href="#">Philadelphia Phillies</a> , NL	April 22, 1957

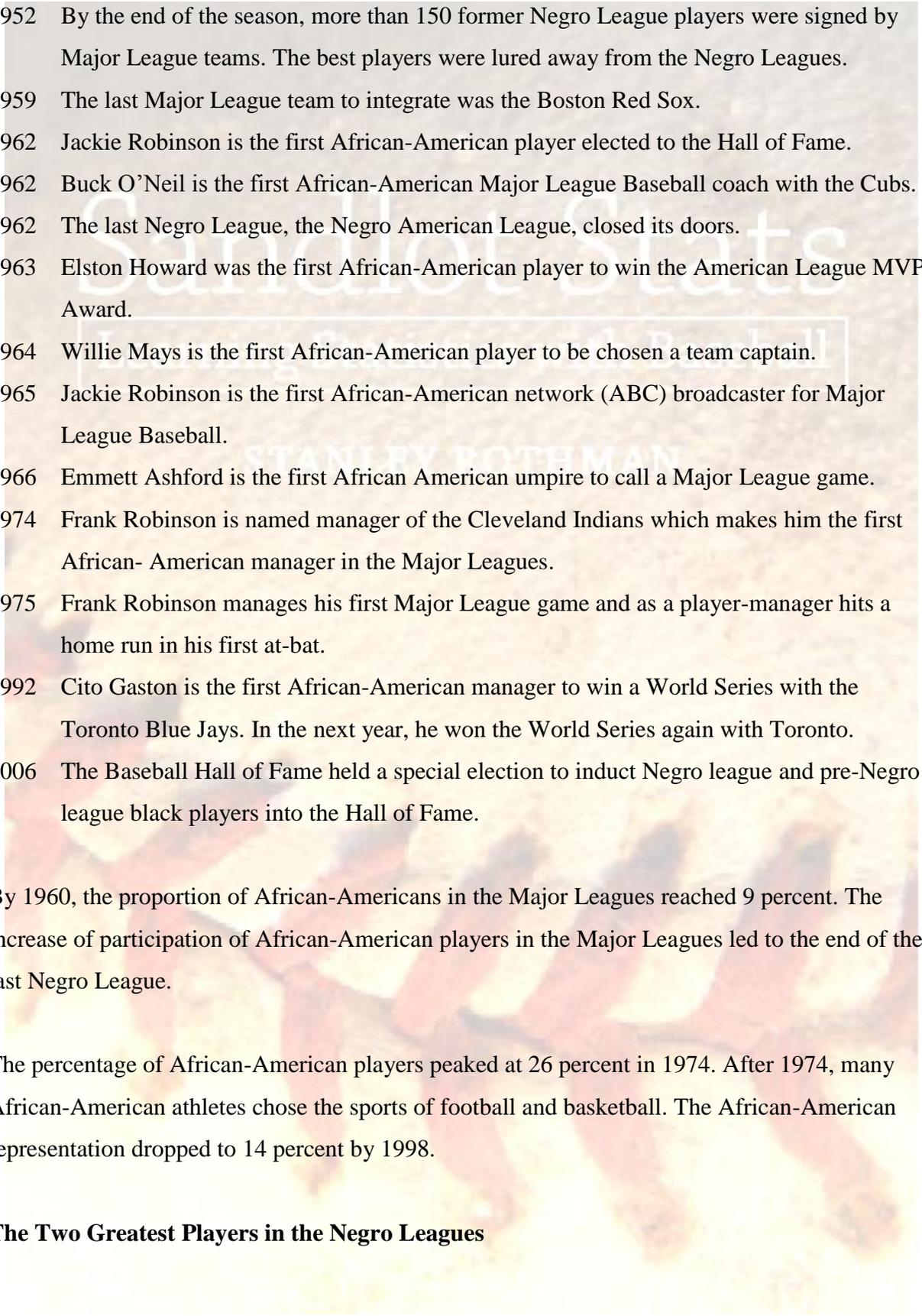


<a href="#">Ozzie Virgil, Sr.</a>	<a href="#">Detroit Tigers</a> , AL	June 6, 1958
<a href="#">Pumpsie Green</a>	<a href="#">Boston Red Sox</a> , AL	July 21, 1959

### Special Dates for the Negro Leagues and for African-American Players in the Major Leagues

- 1878 Bud Fowler is the first African-American player to cross the color barrier as a pitcher for Live Oaks of the International League.
- 1884 Moses Walker becomes first African-American to play in Major League baseball with the Toledo club of the American Association.
- 1885 The first all-black professional team, the Cuban Giants, is founded.
- 1890 The International League implements a ban on African-American players. The ban will continue until 1946.
- 1920 The first black professional baseball league, the Negro National League, is formed by Rube Foster.
- 1920 The Negro Southern League is formed.
- 1923 The Eastern Colored League is formed.
- 1924 The first Negro World Series is played between the Kansas City Monarchs (Negro National League Champion) and the Hillside Club (Eastern Colored League Champion).
- 1928 The Eastern Colored League disbands. The American Negro League is formed in the East.
- 1931 The Negro National League folds.
- 1932 The Negro Southern League is the only “major” black league left.
- 1933 A new Negro National League is formed.
- 1937 The Negro American League is formed.
- 1946 Jackie Robinson is signed by the Brooklyn Dodgers and debuts with their Minor League Montreal Royals.

- 1947 Jackie Robinson joins the Brooklyn Dodgers and becomes the first African-American player in the modern day Major Leagues. Robinson wins the National league Rookie of the Year award.
- 1947 Jackie Robinson was the first African-American to appear in a World Series. The Dodgers lost to the Yankees in seven games. Jackie played first base and went 7 for 27.
- 1947 Larry Doby is signed by the Cleveland Indians and becomes the first African-American player in the American League.
- 1948 Satchel Paige signs with the Cleveland Indians and becomes the oldest rookie at the age of 42. In his first game, he pitches a shut out against Chicago. In the 1948 World Series, he becomes the first African-American pitcher to pitch in a World Series game.
- 1949 Don Newcombe of the Brooklyn Dodgers and Hank Thompson of the New York Giants are the first black pitcher and black batter to face each other in a Major League game. Don Newcombe was the first African- American player to start a World Series game. As a rookie, he pitched the first game of the series against Allie Reynolds of the Yankees and lost a 1 to 0 game when Tommy Henrich hit a home run in the bottom of the ninth inning.
- 1949 Larry Doby was the first African-American American League All Star player.
- 1949 Don Newcombe, Roy Campanelli, and Jackie Robinson are the first African- American National League All Star players.
- 1949 Jackie Robinson is the first African-American player to lead his league in batting average.
- 1949 Jackie Robinson is the first African-American player to win the National League MVP Award.
- 1949 Don Newcombe is the first African-American player to win the Rookie of the Year Award.
- 1949 The Negro American League is the only Negro League left. The Negro American League continued through the 1950s as a shadow of its former self.
- 1952 Joe Black was the first African-American player to win a game in a World Series. Ironically, Joe Black faced Allie Reynolds in game one of the 1952 World Series. Four years after Don Newcombe lost to Allie Reynolds, Joe Black beat Allie Reynolds 4 to 2. During the regular season, Joe Black made 56 appearances of which 54 were in relief.

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- 1952 By the end of the season, more than 150 former Negro League players were signed by Major League teams. The best players were lured away from the Negro Leagues.
- 1959 The last Major League team to integrate was the Boston Red Sox.
- 1962 Jackie Robinson is the first African-American player elected to the Hall of Fame.
- 1962 Buck O'Neil is the first African-American Major League Baseball coach with the Cubs.
- 1962 The last Negro League, the Negro American League, closed its doors.
- 1963 Elston Howard was the first African-American player to win the American League MVP Award.
- 1964 Willie Mays is the first African-American player to be chosen a team captain.
- 1965 Jackie Robinson is the first African-American network (ABC) broadcaster for Major League Baseball.
- 1966 Emmett Ashford is the first African American umpire to call a Major League game.
- 1974 Frank Robinson is named manager of the Cleveland Indians which makes him the first African- American manager in the Major Leagues.
- 1975 Frank Robinson manages his first Major League game and as a player-manager hits a home run in his first at-bat.
- 1992 Cito Gaston is the first African-American manager to win a World Series with the Toronto Blue Jays. In the next year, he won the World Series again with Toronto.
- 2006 The Baseball Hall of Fame held a special election to induct Negro league and pre-Negro league black players into the Hall of Fame.

By 1960, the proportion of African-Americans in the Major Leagues reached 9 percent. The increase of participation of African-American players in the Major Leagues led to the end of the last Negro League.

The percentage of African-American players peaked at 26 percent in 1974. After 1974, many African-American athletes chose the sports of football and basketball. The African-American representation dropped to 14 percent by 1998.

### **The Two Greatest Players in the Negro Leagues**

*Satchel Paige*, called “The Black Matty”, after Hall of Famer Christy Mathewson, was probably the greatest pitcher in the Negro Leagues. He pitched more than 2500 games and threw more than 100 no-hitters. To understand what it means to start 2500 games, the average starting pitcher today starts 32 games a season. It would take a modern day starting pitcher about 80 years to reach 2500 games. His career began in 1926 and ended when he pitched three innings in a Major League game in 1965 when he was 60 years old. He was thin and wiry at 6 ft. 3 in. and 150 pounds.

In 1941, he pitched 30 consecutive games for the Kansas City Monarchs. In 1946, he threw 64 consecutive scoreless innings to help his club win the pennant.

After the Major League World Series, he played in exhibition games against white Major and Minor league players. In such a game in 1934, he pitched against Dizzy Dean, who had just won 30 games for the St. Louis Cardinals. Dean struck out 15 and yielded one run in 13 innings; Paige fanned 17 and pitched a shutout.

The following year Paige fanned 15 and yielded only three hits to a team of Major-Minor League players that included Joe DiMaggio. He lost that game 2 to 1.

In 1947, Paige threw a shutout against Bob Feller’s All-Stars in an exhibition game. In that game he struck out 16 members of a squad that included Charlie Keller, Phil Rizzuto, and Bob Lemon.

Satchel Paige was elected to Baseball’s Hall of Fame in 1971.

Satchel Paige was the first African-American player to pitch in a World Series game. He pitched for the Cleveland Indians in game 5 of the 1948 World Series at the age of 42. His Major League statistics are shown in the table below.

SEASON	TEAM	W	L	ERA	G	GS	CG	SHO	IP	H	R	ER	HR	BB	SO
1948	<a href="#">Cleveland Indians</a>	6	1	2.48	21	7	3	2	72.2	61	21	20	2	22	43

1949	<a href="#">Cleveland</a>	4	7	3.04	31	5	1	0	83.0	70	29	28	4	33	54
1951	<a href="#">St. Louis Browns</a>	3	4	4.79	23	3	0	0	62.0	67	39	33	6	29	48
1952	<a href="#">St. Louis Browns</a>	12	10	3.07	46	6	3	2	138.0	116	51	47	5	57	91
1953	<a href="#">St. Louis Browns</a>	3	9	3.53	57	4	0	0	117.1	114	51	46	12	39	51
1965	<a href="#">Kansas City Athletics</a>	0	0	0.00	1	1	0	0	3.0	1	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Career Totals</b>		28	31	3.29	179	26	7	4	476.0	429	191	174	29	180	288

His best year in the Major Leagues occurred when he was 46 years old in 1952. That year he had 12 wins and 10 losses with an ERA of 3.07. He pitched two shut-outs and three complete games.

*Josh Gibson* was called “The Babe Ruth” of black baseball. He was a catcher and hit more than 70 home runs in a season several times. It has been said that as a rookie in 1930, he hit a fair ball out of Yankee Stadium. If true, he would be the only player to ever achieve this feat. Since a new Yankee Stadium will be used starting in 2009, no player will ever equal this feat. It should be stated that there is a controversy as to whether he did in fact hit a fair ball out of Yankee Stadium.

As a member of the Homestead Grays, Gibson faced Satchel Paige in a game at Wrigley Field in Chicago. Against the great Paige, Gibson hit three home runs and a triple.

From 1933-1945 he was chosen for the East-West All-Star game every year except for 1941, when he played in Mexico. Roy Campanella, the great Brooklyn Dodger catcher said, “I couldn’t carry Josh’s glove. Anything I could do, he could do better.”

Gibson hit .457 in 1936 and .440 in 1938. It should be mentioned that the freak pitches like the spitter and shine ball, which were banned in the Major Leagues after 1919, were allowed in the Negro Leagues.

Unfortunately, Josh never had a chance to play in the Major Leagues.

Josh Gibson was elected to Baseball's Hall of Fame in 1972.

**Artie Wilson – The Last Man to Bat over .400 for a Season in a Major Professional Baseball League in the United States**

Arthur Lee Wilson, nickname Artie Wilson, played in the Negro Leagues with the Birmingham Barons from 1944 to 1948. He was a shortstop and by all accounts he was the best shortstop in the Negro Leagues for the 1940s. For those five years his batting averages were .346, .374, .288, .370 and **.402** in 1948.

Artie left the Negro Leagues and joined the New York Giants in 1951. He only batted 22 times in that year. He was never given a chance to win a starting position. He was sent down to the minors because the Giants needed a centerfielder. The Giant manager, Leo Durocher, brought up a kid named Willie Mays to replace Artie.

Artie continued to play in the Pacific Coast League from 1952 through 1957. His batting averages for those years were .316, .332, .336, .307, .293, and .263.

After retiring with a lifetime batting average of .312 in the minors, he opened a car dealership in Portland.

In 1948, his batting statistics were 134 hits in 333 at-bats in 76 official games. In the Negro Leagues, a typical schedule included between 75 and 100 games. Using the present day criteria of 3.1 plate appearances for the number of scheduled games, Artie's batting average of .402 would qualify him for the batting title.

**Therefore, Artie Wilson was the last man to bat over .400 in a major professional baseball league.** However, it is necessary to point out, that because fewer games were scheduled it would be easier to bat over .400.

Tommy Lasorda said, "Artie Wilson is the greatest player to never play in the Major Leagues." We now turn our attention to women's baseball and to the **last person** to bat over .400 for a season, Joanne Weaver.

**Women's Baseball before 1943**

In order for women to play baseball, the first problem they had to overcome was their clothing. In the late 1800s and early 1900s women wore dresses down to their ankles. Suffragist Amelia Bloomer solved this problem by designing trousers for women which later were called bloomers.

The women's teams that played after the introduction of bloomers were called Bloomer Teams. These Bloomer Teams would tour the country challenging men's teams. The earliest Bloomer Teams wore skirts over their bloomers. Also, many of these women played on teams with their male counterparts.

It was clear to many women that having skirts over their bloomers limited their mobility. By 1920, women began to wear uniforms.

Philip K. Wrigley outfitted players in short, flashy skirts in 1943 when he started the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League (AAGPBL).

The above discussion comes from the book "Baseball as America".

### **Women's Professional Baseball League (1943-1954)**

The following brief history of the Women's Professional League was taken from the website <http://www.aagpbl.org>. The letters "aagpbl" stand for the "All American Girls Professional Baseball League".

### **Women's Professional Baseball League History**

By the fall of 1942, many minor league teams disbanded due to the war. Young men, 18 years of age and over, were being drafted into the armed services. Fearing that attendance at Major League parks would fall sharply because of a lack of quality ball players, the chewing-gum king and owner of the Chicago Cubs, Philip K. Wrigley, searched for a possible solution to this problem. Wrigley formed a committee to come up with suggestions. The committee

recommended a girls' softball league be established. The committee figured this league could be prepared to go into Major League parks should attendance fall.

With the dedication of a group of Midwestern businessmen and the financial support of Wrigley, the All-American Girls Softball League emerged in the spring of 1943. The League was formed as a non-profit organization. A board of trustees was formed which included such people as Phillip K. Wrigley and Branch Rickey, the Brooklyn Dodgers President. Ken Sells was named President of the League. Midway in the first season of play, the board of trustees changed the League's name to All-American Girls Baseball League (AAGBBL) to make it distinctive from the existing softball leagues. However, the retention of shorter infield distances and underhand pitching caused some controversy in the media about the word "Baseball" in the League name. Thus, at the end of the 1943 season, the official league name was again changed to the more descriptive All-American Girls Professional Ball League (AAGPBL). This title was retained until the end of the 1945 season when All-American Girls Baseball League (AAGBBL) was again adopted and retained through 1950. It was during this time period that overhand pitching and smaller ball sizes were adopted. When independent team owners purchased the league at the end of the 1950 season, the official league name was changed to the American Girls Baseball League (AGBL), but it continued to be identified as the All-American League or the All-American Girls Baseball League (AAGBBL). Through the organization of the Players' Association in 1986, and through their efforts to gain recognition by the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1988, the league has now come to be recognized as what it was in actuality: the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League (AAGPBL).

A team consisted of 15 players, a manager, a business manager, and a chaperone. The managers were either former Major Leaguers or former Major League coaches. Two Hall of Famers that managed were Max Carey and Jimmie Foxx.

At the end of practice, the women were expected to attend charm school. It was very important that the women retained their femininity.

During World War II, the women would line up in a "V" before the "Star Spangled Banner" was sung. They also sung a victory song which appears below.

## VICTORY SONG

co-written by La Vonne Paire-Davis and Nalda Phillips

**Batter up! Hear that call!**

**The time has come for one and all**

**To play ball. For we're the members of the All-American League,**

**We come from cities near and far.**

**We've got Canadians, Irishmen and Swedes,**

**We're all for one, we're one for all,**

**We're All-American.**

**Each girl stands, her head so proudly high,**

**Her motto Do Or Die.**

**She's not the one to use or need an alibi.**

**Our chaperones are not too soft,**

**They're not too tough,**

**Our managers are on the ball.**

**We've got a president who really knows his stuff,**

**We're all for one, we're one for all,**

**We're All-Americans!**

The “League Rules” and the “Code of Conduct” were obtained from the website [www.aagpbl.org](http://www.aagpbl.org) .

### **All-American Girls' League Rules**

Just how does baseball as played in the All-American Girls' League differ from men's baseball? The rules underwent certain changes from 1943 through 1954. The length of the base paths went from 65 feet in 1943 to 85 feet in 1954; the distance of the pitching mound to home plate went from 40 feet in 1943 to 60 feet in 1954; and the type of pitching went from underhand in 1943 to overhand in 1948. These changes in distances were done gradually through the years. See Table 19.19 below.

With only a few exceptions, girls' baseball was the game being played in the Major Leagues by men's professional baseball players. The rules, strategy and general play were the same. Differences were only in the distances between the bases, the distance from the pitching mound to home plate, the size of the ball, and pitching styles. These differences varied from the beginning of the league, progressively extending the length of the base paths and pitching distance and decreasing the size of the ball until the final year of play. That year, 1954, the league was using an official men's baseball with pitching distances the same as the men. The length of the base paths, however, remained shorter than regulation baseball by 5 feet. Girl's baseball began in 1943 with a 12 inch ball which was pitched underhand a distance of 40 feet. The base paths were 65 feet in length. The league quickly adopted a smaller ball in mid-season of 1943, extended pitching distance to 42 feet and base paths to 68 feet. This game was modified fast pitch softball which was played with baseball rules, including leading off bases. The pitching distance and the base paths were, however, longer than regulation softball. Modifications were made throughout the league's history, including changing to pitching overhand in 1948, as detailed in the table below.

**Record of AAGPBL Changes in Ball Size, Distances, and Pitching Style**

Year	Ball Size	Length of Base Paths	Ptching Distance	Pitching Style
1943	12"	65'	40'	Underhand
1944	11 1/2"(midseason)	68'(midseason)	"	"
1945	"	"	42'(midseason)	"
1946	11"	72'	43'	Underhand Limited Side-arm
1947	"	"	"	Full Side-arm
1948	10 3/8"	"	50'	Overhand

1949	10"(red seam)	"	55'(midseason)	"
1950	10"(livelier)	"	55'(midseason)	"
1952	10"(livelier)	"	"	"
1953	"	75'	56'	"
1954	9"(midseason)	85'	60'	"

### Code of Conduct

THE RULES OF CONDUCT FOR PLAYERS AS SET UP BY THE ALL-AMERICAN GIRLS PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL LEAGUE

(Copy of rules of conduct courtesy of the Northern Indiana Historical Society, South Bend, IN)

THE MANAGEMENT SETS A HIGH STANDARD FOR THE GIRLS SELECTED FOR THE DIFFERENT CLUBS AND EXPECTS THEM TO LIVE UP TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT WHICH RECOGNIZES THAT STANDARD. THERE ARE GENERAL REGULATIONS NECESSARY AS A MEANS OF MAINTAINING ORDER AND ORGANIZING CLUBS INTO A WORKING PROCEDURE.

1. ALWAYS appear in feminine attire when not actively engaged in practice or playing ball. This regulation continues through the playoffs for all, even though your team is not participating. AT NO TIME MAY A PLAYER APPEAR IN THE STANDS IN HER UNIFORM, OR WEAR SLACKS OR SHORTS IN PUBLIC.
2. Boyish bobs are not permissible and in general your hair should be well groomed at all times with longer hair preferable to short hair cuts. Lipstick should always be on.
3. Smoking or drinking is not permissible in public places. Liquor drinking will not be permissible under any circumstances. Other intoxicating drinks in limited portions with after-game meal only, will be allowed. Obscene language will not be allowed at any time.
4. All social engagements must be approved by chaperone. Legitimate requests for dates can be allowed by chaperones.
5. Jewelry must not be worn during game or practice, regardless of type.
6. All living quarters and eating places must be approved by the chaperones. No player shall change her residence without the permission of the chaperone.
7. For emergency purposes, it is necessary that you leave notice of your whereabouts and your home phone.
8. Each club will establish a satisfactory place to eat, and a time when all members must be in their individual rooms. In general, the lapse of time will be two hours after the finish of the last game, but in no case later than 12:30 a.m. Players must respect hotel regulations as to other guests after this hour, maintaining conduct in accordance with high standards set by the league.
9. Always carry your employee's pass as a means of identification for entering the various parks. This pass is NOT transferable.

10. Relatives, friends, and visitors are not allowed on the bench at any time.
11. Due to the shortage of baseballs, they must not be given as souvenirs.
12. Baseball uniform skirts shall not be shorter than six inches above the knee-cap.
13. In order to sustain the complete spirit of rivalry between clubs, the members of different clubs must not fraternize at any time during the season. After the opening day of the season, fraternizing will be subject to heavy penalties. This also means in particular, room parties, auto trips to out of the way eating places, etc. However, friendly discussions in lobbies with opposing players are permissible. Players should never approach the opposing manager or chaperone about being transferred.
14. When traveling, the members of the clubs must be at the station thirty minutes before departure time. Anyone missing her arranged transportation will have to pay her own fare.
15. Players will not be allowed to drive their cars past their city's limits without the special permission of their manager. Each team will travel as a unit via method of travel provided for the league.

FINES OF FIVE DOLLARS FOR FIRST OFFENSE, TEN DOLLARS FOR SECOND, AND SUSPENSION FOR THIRD, WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE IMPOSED FOR BREAKING ANY OF THE ABOVE RULES.

#### **The Teams in the League from 1943 to 1954**

The franchises chosen for the teams were located in the Midwest. Most of the teams were located in Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, and Indiana. The operation of the league was conducted out of Chicago. Below, we present the teams in the league for each of the years 1943 through 1954.

##### 1943 (4 teams)

Racine Belles

South Bend Blue Sox

Kenosha Comets

Rockford Peaches

##### 1944 (6 teams)

Added 2 teams

Milwaukee Chicks

Minneapolis Millerettes

1945 (6 teams)

Added

Lost

Fort Wayne Daisies

Minneapolis Millerettes

Grand Rapid Chicks

Milwaukee Chicks

1946 (8 teams)

Added

Muskegan Lassies

Peoria Redwings

1947 (8 teams)

Same as 1946

1948 (10 teams)

Added

Springfield Sallies

Chicago Colleens

1949 (8 teams)

Lost

Springfield Sallies

Chicago Colleens

1950 (8 teams)

Added

Lost

Kalamazoo Lassies

Muskegan Lassies

Battlecreek Belles

Racine Belles

1951 (8 teams)

Same as 1950

1952 (6 teams)

Lost

Peoria Redwings

Kenosha Comets

1953 (6 teams)

Same as 1952

1954 (5 teams)

# Sandlot Stats

Learning Statistics with Baseball

Lost

Muskegan Belles

STANLEY ROTHMAN

## League Batting Champions

The table below lists the players who led the league in batting average.

1943	Gladys "Terrie" Davis	(.332)
1944	Betsy Jochum	(.296)
1945	Mary Nesbitt Wisham	(.319)
1946	Dorothy Kamenshek	(.316)
1947	Dorothy Kamenshek	(.306)
1948	Audrey Wagner	(.312)
1949	Jean Faut	(.291)
1950	Betty Foss	(.346)
1951	Betty Foss	(.368)

1952	Joanne Weaver	(.344)
1953	Joanne Weaver	(.346)
<b>1954</b>	<b>Joanne Weaver</b>	<b>(.429)</b>

# Sandlot Stats

## Joanne Weaver – The Last Person to Bat over .400 for a Season in a Major Professional Baseball League

Joanne was one of the greatest hitters in the history of the AAGPBL. She began her career playing third-base for the Fort Wayne Daisies in 1951. She joined the team that already consisted of her two older sisters. She won three straight batting titles from 1952 to 1954. Her best year was in 1954 when she batted .429 with 29 home runs. She topped the next player by 52 points. Her league leading .429 average was 61 points higher than the next highest league leading average of .368 by Betty Foss in 1951.

Joanne Weaver was only woman in league history to bat .400 for a season. Her batting statistics for 1954 were:

G	AB	H	R	RBI	BA
93	333	143	109	87	.429

She died of Lou Gehrig's disease at the age of 64.

### The End of the League

The league ended in 1954. For the years from 1943 to 1954 a total of 600 women played in the league.

## **A League of Their Own**

The movie “A League of Their Own” is all about the Women’s Professional League for the years 1943 to 1954.

In my last visit to Cooperstown, I met two of the women who played on the Rockford Peaches team in 1947. I asked them about the accuracy of the movie. They said the movie was close to 80% accurate. One thing they mentioned was that it was very common for sisters to play on the same team. The movie only showed one pair of sisters. I reasoned that since many of the women came from rural areas it would be very convenient to practice with a sister. They also believed at least two of the players in the league were good enough to play in the Major Leagues at that time.

## **Women Baseball Players Offered Minor League Contracts**

In 1898, Lizzie Arlington became the first woman to sign a pro contract in the minor leagues. She pitched for Reading in Class A baseball. She was hired because the owner believed she would draw a large crowd. When she failed to increase the attendance, she was let go.

Shortstop Eleanor Engle signed with the Harrisburg Senators in July 1952. However, the Class B Interstate League voided her contract.

When Fort Lauderdale’s Class B club offered a contract to first baseman Dorothy Kamenshek, the All American Girls Professional Baseball League refused to let her leave.

The first woman, in the modern era, to make an all-male minor league team was Ila Borders. She served as a left-handed relief pitcher for two teams in the independent Northern League in 1997.

Jackie Mitchell was a pitcher used in exhibition games by the Chatanooga Lookouts of the Southern Association in 1931. It was reported that in one game against the Yankees she struck out Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig. Her contract was voided by Commissioner Kenesaw Landis.