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# SEPARATE LEAGUES, PARALLEL LIVES 1920 – 1932

The first of the Negro leagues, the Negro National League, was formed in 1920 by black owner-managers Rube Foster of the Chicago American Giants and C.I. Taylor of the Indianapolis ABCs. They hoped to lessen the effects of discriminatory practices of white-run booking agencies and to enhance opportunities for black players. A second league, the Eastern Colored League, formed for the 1923 season. These leagues prospered in the boom years of the 1920s, as many southern rural African Americans migrated to northern and midwestern industrial cities.

## The Indianapolis ABCs

Charles Albert Taylor, known as C.I., began his baseball career in college like a number of other black players. He met his two partners, Dan Gandy and Ben, at an important reunion and played in black baseball during the early 20th century. C.I. organized several teams before finally settling with the ABCs in Indianapolis. He went back for quality personnel himself. A 1924 very different team from before and later of Rube Foster. After C.I. Taylor's death in 1922, the Indianapolis team lost control of its best players and folded back to earlier glory.



INDIANAPOLIS ABCs

## Kansas City Monarchs Take to the Road

In the 1920s, the Kansas City Monarchs were among the first to travel in team owned vehicles instead of by rail. The Monarchs, white owner, Ed of Frank Thompson & J. Williams traveled with them in "The Bus," the team bus. In the South, many restaurants often refused to serve black patrons. If the players could not find black restaurants, they had to lounge in their homes. Sometimes they did not eat at all. In big cities, they could find housing in segregated hotels, but in small towns they slept in people's homes, hotels, under the stars or in their bus.



KANSAS CITY MONARCHS



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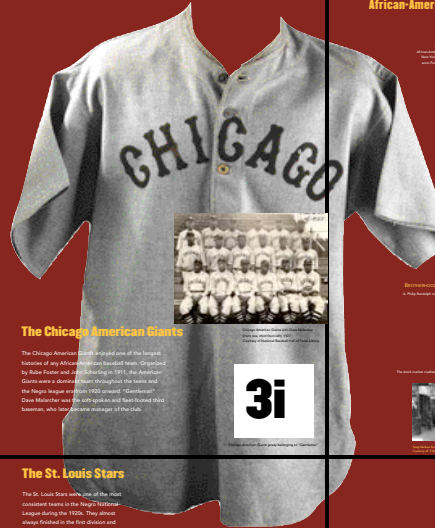
## The Eastern Colored League

Taking the success of the Negro National League, Ed Bidwell, manager and part owner of the Hilldale club of suburban Philadelphia, joined Ted Stang, a prominent white booking agent who controlled two New York black baseball teams, to

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## The Chicago American Giants

The Chicago American Giants were the largest of any African American baseball teams. Organized by Rube Foster and C.I. Taylor in 1921, the American Giants were a dominant team throughout the 1920s and the Negro league's most successful. "Champion" Dave Webster was the club's first and best known star player, who later became manager of the club.

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## African-American History Baseball History

**1919** Age of the "Negro Renaissance" begins. The Harlem Renaissance is a cultural movement that flourishes in the 1920s and 1930s, centered in Harlem, New York. It is a period of artistic and intellectual production, primarily by African Americans, that has become a defining characteristic of the African American experience.

**1920** Rube Foster's Negro National League is founded. It is the first professional league for African American baseball players.

**1923** The Eastern Colored League is founded. It is the second professional league for African American baseball players.

**1924** The Chicago American Giants are founded. They are the largest and most successful team in the Negro leagues.

**1925** The Hilldale Club is founded. It is the first professional team to play in the Negro leagues.

**1926** The Kansas City Monarchs are founded. They are one of the most successful teams in the Negro leagues.

**1927** The St. Louis Stars are founded. They are one of the most successful teams in the Negro leagues.

**1928** The Newark Eagles are founded. They are one of the most successful teams in the Negro leagues.

**1929** The Philadelphia Stars are founded. They are one of the most successful teams in the Negro leagues.

**1930** The Birmingham Black Bears are founded. They are one of the most successful teams in the Negro leagues.

**1931** The Memphis Red Sox are founded. They are one of the most successful teams in the Negro leagues.

**1932** The New York Black Yankees are founded. They are one of the most successful teams in the Negro leagues.

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## Rube Foster and the First Successful Pro League

Andrew "Rube" Foster played for numerous teams in the 1910s and early 1900s. By the 1910s, he had achieved stardom. First with Chicago's Lincoln Giants and then the Chicago American Giants. In 1920, he pioneered the first successful professional black league, the Negro National League. This league had teams from the independent cities of Chicago, Dayton, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Detroit and St. Louis, as well as the Cuban Club. Only 10 teams had represented the Negro leagues because they were never considered equal to the white major and minor leagues in Foster had hoped.

"Organization is [black baseball's] only hope. With the proper organization patterned after the men who have made baseball a success, we will in three years be rated as other leagues." *Rube Foster quoted in the Baltimore Afro, 1913*

# PRIDE & The African-American Baseball Experience

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## The Hilldals

Ed Bidwell's Hilldale, already a professional club for six seasons, was the Eastern Colored League's greatest team through years from 1921 to 1925. Typical of professional black teams, the Hilldals, based in Philly, Philadelphia, played a variety of clubs, including other league teams, who were paid and local teams. During the past season, one or two games a day, seven days a week, was not unusual. By the mid-1920s, three games a day on weekends and holidays became common.



Hilldale Club logo



Hilldale Club team photo



Ed Bidwell

## World's Colored Championship

In 1924, the Kansas City Monarchs, champions of the Negro National League, and Hilldale of suburban Philadelphia, champions of the Eastern Colored League, played the first World's Colored Championship, with games in four different cities to increase attendance. The Monarchs won in 1924, the following year Hilldale captured the series.



K.C. Monarchs logo



East Colored League logo

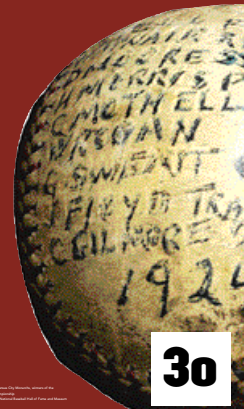
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## The St. Louis Stars

The St. Louis Stars were one of the most successful teams in the Negro National League during the 1920s. They always finished in the first division and were known for their discipline. "Lightning" Red James "Cool" Pflug" Red was among the best-known players. Star teams tended to play a very fast running game, a strategy they kept while adding power hitting in the 1930s. In contrast, white major league teams began to adopt a slower-paced, grinding game of ball during the same era.



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