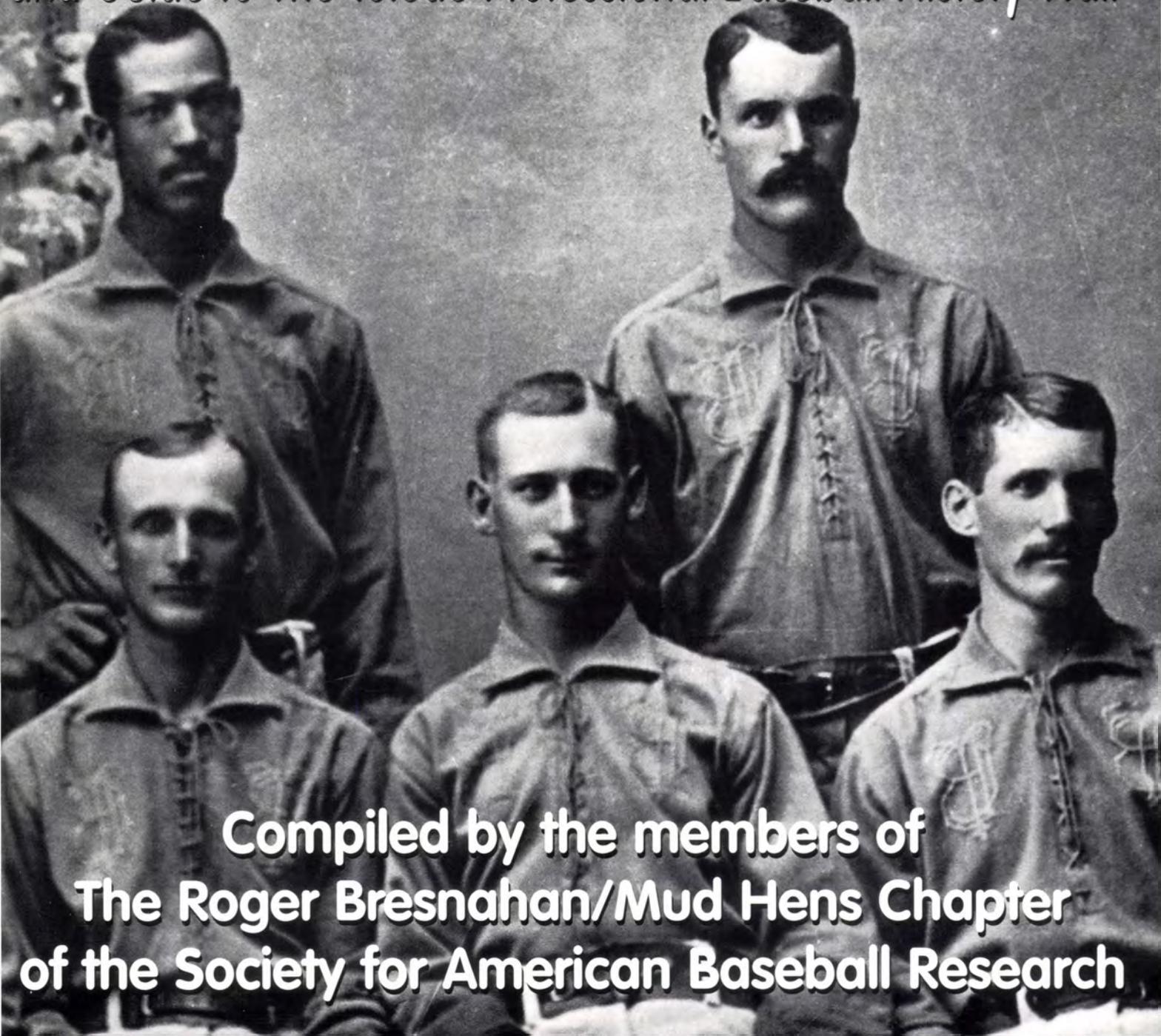


Blue Stockings to Mud Hens

A History of Professional Baseball in Toledo, Ohio
and Guide to The Toledo Professional Baseball History Wall



Compiled by the members of
The Roger Bresnahan/Mud Hens Chapter
of the Society for American Baseball Research



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count on us!*

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of the Society for American Baseball Research**



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Introduction & Acknowledgments

The Toledo Professional Baseball History Wall was compiled by members of the Roger Bresnahan / Mud Hens Chapter of the Society for American Baseball Research at the behest of the Toledo Mud Hens. The Wall encompasses the history of professional baseball in Toledo from 1883 to the present.

The Wall is on display in the Hard Ball Grille at Ned Skeldon Stadium, home of the Toledo Mud Hens, in Maumee, Ohio and was first opened to the public at the start of the 1997 season.

Blue Stockings to Mud Hens is a collection of the history articles written for the Wall as well as display keys outlining each section. All proceeds from the sale of these booklets will be used by the Bresnahan / Mud Hens SABR Chapter for the furtherance of local baseball history research and to recognize and mark historic baseball sites within Toledo and the surrounding area.

The Chapter wishes to thank Seaway Food Town, Inc. for providing the financial backing for *Blue Stockings to Mud Hens* and to acknowledge Ralph Lin Weber for his *Guide to the Mud Hens 1883 to 1943*. We would also like to recognize the local history section of the Toledo Public Library, the National Baseball Hall of Fame and the Toledo Mud Hens for their support of the project.

*-the Roger Bresnahan / Mud Hens Chapter of the
Society for American Baseball Research (SABR)*





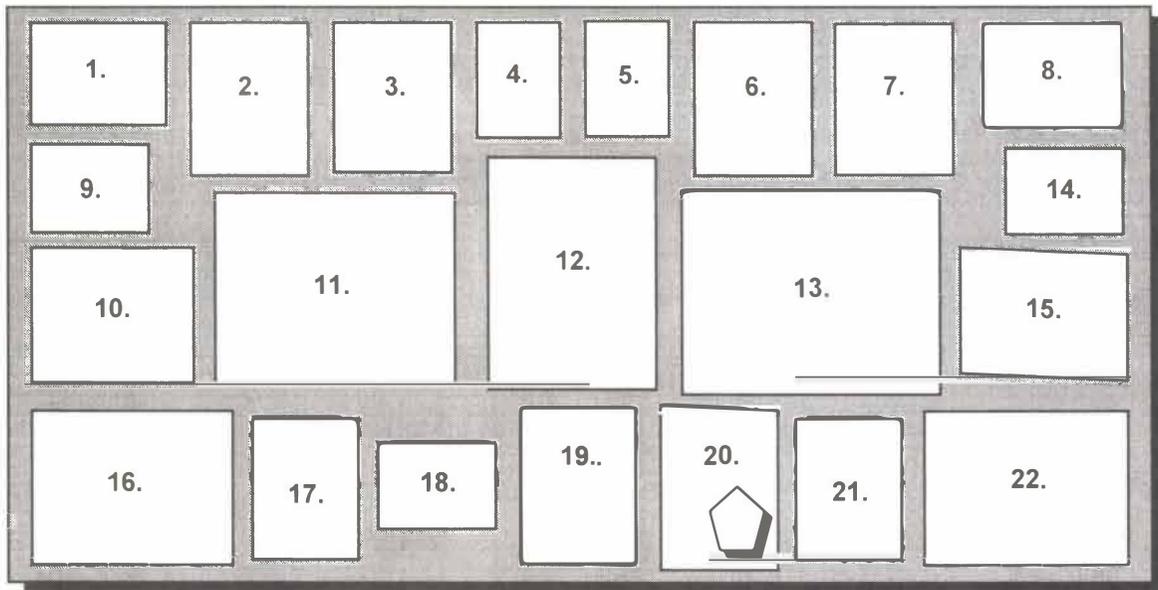
1891 AMATEUR GAME



1891 to 1900

History Wall Display Key

1883 to 1900



1. TROLLEY CAR (BASE BALL TODAY) PHOTO
2. TOLEDO GOES PROFESSIONAL, THE COLOR LINE IS DRAWN, 1883
3. 19TH CENTURY PLAYING RULE CHANGES
4. REPRODUCTION OF 1891 REACH GUIDE
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Toledo Professional Baseball, 1883 to 1900

| Year | Nickname | League | Finish |
|------|----------------|---|---------------------|
| 1883 | Blue Stockings | Northwestern League, 8 teams | 56 - 28, 1st Place. |
| 1884 | Toledos | American Association, 12 teams (Major League) | 46 - 58, 8th Place. |
| 1885 | Toledos | Western League, 6 teams | 9 - 21, 5th Place. |

The Western League disbanded June 15th, 1885 due to financial problems.
Toledo did not field another professional team until 1888.

| | | | |
|------|---------------|--|---------------------|
| 1888 | Maumees | Tri-State League, 10 teams | 46 - 64, 8th Place. |
| 1889 | Black Pirates | International League, 8 teams | 54 - 51, 4th Place. |
| 1890 | Black Pirates | American Association, 8 teams (Major League) | 68 - 64, 4th Place. |

Toledo did not field a Professional Team in 1891 after dropping out of
the American Association at the end of the 1890 season.

| | | | |
|------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 1892 | Black Pirates | Western League, 8 teams | 26 - 25, 4th Place. |
|------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------------|

Due to the World's Fair in Chicago that destroyed baseball attendance in
the area, the Western League ceased operations July 7th, 1892 and did
not restart play until the Spring of 1894.

| | | | |
|------|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 1894 | White Stockings | Western League, 8 teams | 67 - 55, 2nd Place. |
| 1895 | White Stockings | Western League, 8 teams | 52 - 72, 7th Place. |

Because of "Blue Law" restrictions on Sunday ball, the Toledo franchise
was transferred to Terre Haute, Indiana July 1st, 1895.

| | | | |
|------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1896 | Swamp Angels / Mud Hens | Inter-State League, 8 teams | 86 - 46, 1st Place. |
| 1897 | Mud Hens | Inter-State League, 8 teams | 83 - 43, 1st Place. |
| 1898 | Mud Hens | Inter-State League, 8 teams | 84 - 68, 2nd Place. |
| 1899 | Mud Hens | Inter-State League, 8 teams | 82 - 58, 3rd Place. |
| 1900 | Mud Hens | Inter-State League, 8 teams | 81 - 58, 3rd Place. |



Toledo Goes Professional The Color Line Is Drawn

1883

Amateur base ball (two words then) was well established in Toledo by late 1882, when the Toledo Base Ball Association formed to bring professional ball to the city. The group was composed of twelve local businessmen, including Noah Swayne, the Toledo attorney who would later donate land for the ballpark that would bear his name.

At a meeting in Toledo at the end of the year, the eight team Northwestern Base Ball league was organized. As a sign of things to come, the Peoria representative made a motion to ban colored players in the league. It was well known that Toledo had a black catcher, Moses Fleetwood Walker, so this action caused an uproar. After much bitter argument, the motion was tabled, but the matter was by no means resolved.

The Toledo team, called the Blue Stockings because of their blue and white uniforms, would play at the newly built League Park, on Monroe Street between 13th and 15th Streets. The first professional game in the city was on May 5, 1883, against Bay City. The Blue Stockings, with a battery consisting of former major leaguer Thomas Poorman and Fleet Walker, won 5-4.

By mid-season, Toledo had captured first place in the league. Led by manager Charles Morton, they held that position to win their first championship. The team led the league in batting and fielding, and had a record of 56-28.

In 1883, a batter could walk after seven balls, overhand pitches were illegal, and there was no such thing as a stolen base.



Moses Fleetwood Walker

Moses Fleetwood Walker was known for playing baseball at Oberlin College before going on to study law at Ann Arbor. In 1883, he joined Toledo's first professional baseball team as a catcher. He became the first black major leaguer in 1884, when Toledo joined the then-major American Association. Fleet, as he was known, was joined for several games by his brother, Weldy, who would be the second black major leaguer.

Walker was a brilliant player, whose baseball career was sadly marked by the racial discord that followed him. He was also an inventor, a writer, an activist, and an entertainer, to name only a few of his many endeavors. Recommended reading: Fleet Walker's Divided Heart, by David W. Zang.

The Cap Anson Incident

Toledo got the chance to play the National League champion Chicago club in an exhibition game on August 10, 1883. On arriving in Toledo, Chicago captain Adrian Anson lost no time in declaring that the club would not play against Toledo's black catcher, Moses Fleetwood Walker.

Walker was out of the lineup because of hand injuries, but manager Charles Morton answered Anson by playing Walker in the outfield. Threatened by a loss of the gate receipts, the Chicago team backed down and the game went on. Anson is considered to be the main force that kept black players out of major league baseball for the next sixty years.



Toledo Enters The Majors

1884

The Northwestern League closed after the 1883 season. Toledo, boosted by its championship, joined the major league American Association in 1884, one of twelve teams. The club was known as the Toledos, and home games continued to be played at League Park on weekdays. Games on weekends and holidays were played at the Tri-State Fair Grounds at Dorr Street and Upton Avenue.

The Toledos, managed by Charles Morton, finished eighth in the league with a record of 46-58. The Reach Baseball Guide of 1885 dismissed the team as one of four weak teams which failed to draw any interest either at home or away.

Moses Fleetwood Walker, Toledo's catcher, became the first black major league player with Toledo's entry into the American Association that year. His brother, Weldy, became the second black major leaguer that same year, playing six games in the outfield for Toledo.

There were two notable pitchers on the 1884 squad: Tony Mullane and Hank O'Day. Mullane, who had pitched the first no-hitter in the majors in 1882, set a Toledo record with 36 wins in 1884. He went on to a stormy career marked by disputes with club owners, but chalked up a career win/loss record of 284-220 and an ERA of 3.05. Awarding first base to a batter hit by a pitch is said to be a result of his pitching. O'Day was with the team for its 1883 championship and also pitched in 40 games in 1884. He went on to pitch for the Giants, but then distinguished himself as an excellent umpire with the National League. It was O'Day who declared Fred Merkle out in the famous "Merkle Boner" in 1908.



Major 19th Century Playing Rule Changes

- 1883:** Batters are no longer out on foul balls caught on one hop.
- 1884:** Batters are entitled to a walk after six balls are called.
Overhand pitching is allowed for the first time.
- 1886:** Number of balls needed for a walk raised to seven.
- 1887:** Batters can no longer call for high or low pitches. The strike zone is set as "not lower than the batsman's knees, nor higher than his shoulder".

Number of balls needed for a walk reduced to five. The number of strikes needed for a strike out raised from three to four. (The first called third strike does not count.)
- 1888:** The batter is out after three called strikes.
- 1889:** Number of balls needed for a walk reduced to four.
- 1893:** Pitching distance is increased to 60 feet 6 inches.
- 1895:** The Infield Fly Rule is added.

The first rule limiting the size of gloves and mitts is instituted.
-



Black Pirates And White Stockings

1885 to 1893

Toledo left the American Association and the majors, joining the Western league for the 1885 season. They continued to play at League Park, but moved to Riverside Park near Ash Street for Sunday games. There were no southpaws on the pitching staff that year.

The team played 30 games and was in fifth place by June, when the league disbanded because of financial problems. There was no professional ball played in Toledo for the rest of that year, or in 1886 and 1887.

A new club was formed in 1888 that joined the Tri-State League, formerly known as the Ohio State League. The team, known as the Maumees, played at Presque Isle Park. The park was a distance from most of the fans and could only be reached by ferry, which caused the club to lose money. George Ketcham, president of the Toledo Baseball Club, donated land for a new ballpark on a site just north of where St. Vincent Medical Center now lies, between Cherry Street and Franklin Avenue. It was called Speranza Park, after Ketcham's new yacht, although many fans called it Pastime Park. The club finished eighth out of ten teams with a record of 46-64.

Toledo joined the International League in 1889, with Charles Morton back at the helm and with a new nickname: the Black Pirates of the Maumee. All games were played at Speranza Park. The term "Texas Leaguer" was coined this year, applied to most of the hits by Arthur Sunday, a Toledo outfielder who had played in the Texas League until it disbanded. He hit a phenomenal .398 with Toledo, most of



them short fly balls just over the infielders. The term was used by an unnamed sportswriter and entered the history books. The Pirates finished fourth with a 54-51 record.

The roller coaster ride continued in 1890, with Toledo returning to the majors in the American Association under Charles Morton, who had managed them in their previous major league excursion. They fared better this time, finishing fourth with a record of 68-64, but dropped out of the league after that season. Fundraising problems the next year kept the city from fielding a team in 1891.

Financial problems were the biggest factor in the rise and fall of most professional leagues in the 1880's and 1890's. Drawing the necessary crowds to games was as much a challenge then as it is today.

Toledo had its next professional club in 1892, entering the reorganized Western League. The team kept the name Black Pirates, but games were played at a new park: Olympic Park at Indiana, Hawley, and Woodland Streets. The league only made it five games into the second half of the season, leaving Toledo in fourth place with a 31-27 record. The Pirates went on to play seven exhibition games against the Columbus Reds, winning four of the games.

Sunday ball games had been a source of controversy during the decade, and things came to a head at a game in May, when both Toledo and their Columbus guests were arrested and hauled off to the police station in streetcars.

The issue didn't come up in 1893. Although Toledo remained in the Western League, the Chicago World's Fair drew so many people from the area that no teams were fielded and no games were played.



The Sunday Ball Controversy

1894 to 1896

Denny Long became president of the team in the Western League in 1894. The team was unofficially known as the Swamp Angels, possibly a result of the eternally muddy Toledo springtimes. Officially, they were the White Stockings, playing at a new ballpark on Lagrange Street, between Hudson and Oakland Streets. The park was called Whitestocking Park after the team.

Until this season, only catchers had worn gloves. This year all the Toledo players wore gloves, a sign that the game was becoming more difficult as players' skills increased. The team led the league in batting and fielding, and took second place.

Long oversaw the building of a new ballpark for the 1895 season, in the middle of a residential area on Ewing Street, with the entrance between Indiana and Dorr Streets. Long expected attendance to double in the busy neighborhood. Four trolley lines served the area, which was only a twenty minute walk from downtown. The team started out strong in second place, but plummeted to last place by early June. Long was urged to strengthen the team, but ignored the advice, reportedly blaming the umpires for most of the losses.

Although there had been ordinances against Sunday ballgames within the city limits for some time, they had never been enforced. In June, a group of Ewing Street residents filed affidavits, complaining that their Sunday rest was being ruined by the games. A temporary injunction against Sunday games was issued, and made permanent shortly afterward.



There was no question that the loss of Sunday games would be a financial blow. Rumors that Terre Haute wanted the team were discounted. It was unreasonable to think that a losing team would do any better in Terre Haute than it had in



Roger Bresnahan, 1898

Toledo. But the rumors were fact. In spite of pleas that Long find new grounds for Sundays, he accepted offers from Terre Haute and moved the team there on July 1, 1895. Not only had Terre Haute guaranteed attendance of 2,000 for every Sunday game (or payment to make up the deficit), the city's trolley car company had also offered a contract to pay two cents a

head for every person attending a game. This offer alone was estimated to bring in as much as the regular gate receipts at Toledo's weekday games.

The Blade reported, "the Swamp Angels are taking off their wings and putting on war paint to celebrate their rechristening as Hottentots". The team, referred to in the local papers only as "Long's Team", finished seventh out of eight teams.



The city condemned Long for the loss of the team. He had refused to take responsibility for the team's poor showing, and had ignored those who had argued for a second park for Sunday games before the controversy became critical. He had also allowed the crowds to pour onto the Ewing Park field after games, creating the rowdy atmosphere that led to the ban.

Toledo, however, would not be without baseball for long. In 1896, after some debate as to whether the new team would be in the Michigan League or the reorganized Inter-State League, Toledo fielded a team in the latter circuit. The team officially inherited the name of Swamp Angels, playing at Ewing Park on weekdays, and at a new park on Sundays, Bay View Park, beyond the city limits.

The Trolleys

Trolley car companies often played an important part in the rise of professional baseball. The car companies had a stake in the success of a club, and were often involved financially.

One of the draws of Ewing Park, built in 1895, was the fact that it was in a residential area served by four trolley lines. Unfortunately, it was the park's location in this well-populated area that brought the Sunday ball controversy to a head, and ultimately led to the team leaving town for Terre Haute.

Ironically, it was also a deal with a Terre Haute trolley car company that helped to lure the team there. The company offered to pay two cents a head for every person attending a game.



“Mud Hens” And Stability Championship Seasons

1896 to 1900

Bay View Park was in a swampy area that was home to numerous coots, a bird also known as a mud hen. About halfway through the 1896 season, the team adopted Mud Hens as its official name. Their first game as Mud Hens was on July 16, 1896. By that date, the team had taken first place in the league. Toledo won its second championship with a 48-16 record.

The team chalked up a third championship in 1897, winning the Inter-State League with 83-43 record. Weekday games were played at the new Armory Park diamond, on Spielbusch Avenue, on the site of what is now the Federal Courthouse. Sunday games were still played out at Bay View Park.

The Mud Hens narrowly missed a fourth championship in 1898, taking the league lead by June 25th, and holding it until its last two games with the Dayton Old Soldiers. Dayton took first with a 87-65 record. Toledo took second with 84-68. Toledo native Roger Bresnahan joined the team for four games that year as a pitcher. He would go on to become a famous catcher, the first in the Hall of Fame, and the man who brought baseball back to Toledo after the franchise was moved to Cleveland in 1914.

1899 saw another near win, with the team in first place for most of the season. The championship slipped out of their grasp in the season's last three weeks. They tied for third with Fort Wayne, behind New Castle and Mansfield.



Toledo Professional Ball Parks

| Year | Park | Location |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 1883 to 1885..... | League Park | North side of Monroe between 13th & 15th |
| 1884..... | Tri-County Fairgrounds..... | Northwest corner of Dorr & Upton |
| 1885..... | Ash Street Grounds..... | Ash Street near Riverside Park |
| 1888..... | Presque Isle Park..... | C & O Railroad Coal Docks, East Toledo on the Maumee River at Otter Creek |
| 1888 to 1890..... | Speranza Park | Between Cherry & Franklin, North of St. Vincent's Hospital |
| 1892..... | Olympic Park | Indiana, Hawley & Woodland |
| 1894 to 1895..... | Whitestocking Park..... | Lagrange between Hudson & Oakland |
| 1894 to 1896..... | Ewing Street Park | Dorr, Ewing & Pinewood |
| 1896 to 1900..... | Bayview Park | Manhattan East of Summit |
| 1897 to 1909..... | Armory Park | Southeast corner of Spielbusch & Orange |
| 1909 to 1956..... | Swayne Field | Northeast corner of Monroe & Detroit |
| 1965 to Present.... | Ned Skeldon Stadium..... | Key Street, Maumee, Ohio |



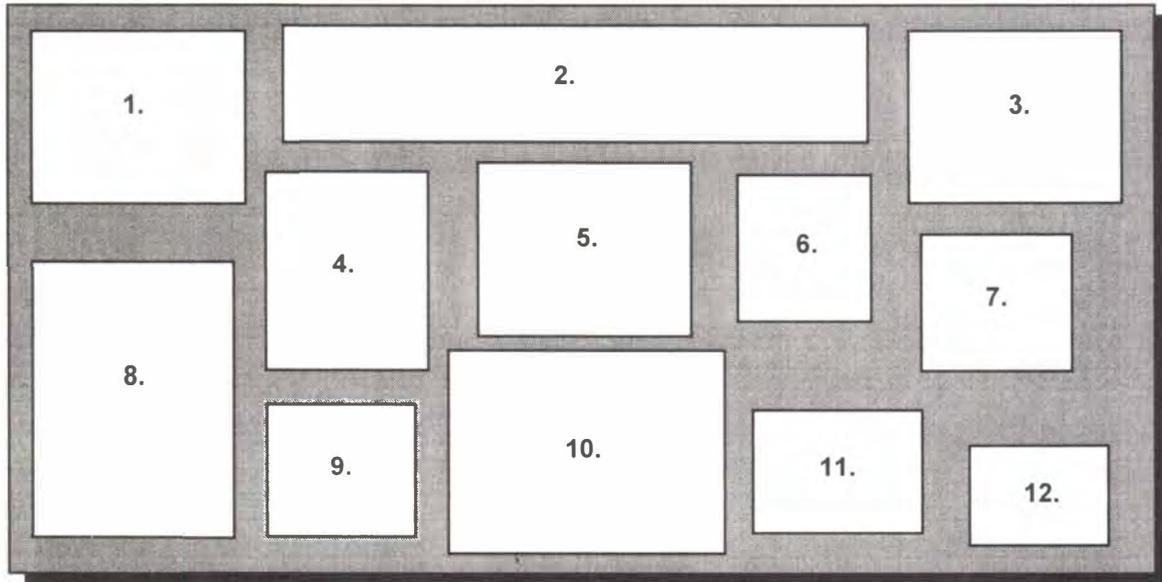


ARMORY PARK

1901 to 1929

History Wall Display Key

1901 to 1929



1. THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION, 1900 TO 1910
2. SWAYNE FIELD PHOTO
3. STENGEL AND THE CHAMPIONSHIP, 1920 TO 1930
4. ADDIE JOSS PHOTO
5. FLIGHT OF THE HENS & HOMECOMING, 1910 TO 1920
6. ROGER BRESNAHAN PHOTO
7. 1912 MUD HENS TEAM PHOTO
8. MUD HENS BUTTON DISPLAY FROM 1921, 1922 & 1923
9. BABE RUTH & FRANK GILHOOLEY SR, PHOTO
10. CASEY STENGEL PRINT
11. 1923 SWAYNE FIELD PHOTO
12. 1927 MUD HENS TEAM PHOTO



The American Association

1900 to 1910

Toledo entered the twentieth century with another third place finish in the Inter-State League and a record of 81 and 58. Adrian (Addie) Joss, future Hall of Famer, won 19 games in 1900 as a Mud Hen pitcher. The records also show that Elmer Stricklett, said to be the inventor of the spitball, pitched and played outfield on the 1900 Hens.

The Inter-State League folded after 1900, but the Hens were back in 1901 in the Western Association, a league formed from the remnants of the Inter-State league. Joss, who also worked as a sportswriter for the Toledo News-Bee, won 27 games that season, pitching 370 innings with 210 strikeouts and 67 walks. On September 21st, he struck out 13 men in a game against Indiana. Joss ultimately signed with the Cleveland Indians, playing in the majors for nine years and compiling a lifetime ERA of 1.88. His career was cut short on April 14, 1911 when he died of tubercular meningitis. He is buried at Woodlawn Cemetery in Toledo.

The modern day minor league American Association was formed in 1902, with Toledo as a charter member. The Mud Hens had a great beginning, beating St. Paul at Armory Park, but they failed to live up to opening day expectations. They ended the season in last place, a spot they would hold for the next few years.

The team gradually improved and in 1907 they soared to second place, mostly due to the sparkling hitting of Harry Armbruster, Joshua Clark, Homer Smoot, and George Perring. The team led the league in batting with a .279 average.



The batting prowess continued through 1908, when they hit .265. Future major league manager and Hall-of-Famer Joe McCarthy joined the Hens that year as an outfielder and third baseman. He remained with the team until 1911. He then went on to manage in the majors for 21 years, boasting an incredible .614 winning percentage.

In 1909, the Mud Hens moved to their new state-of-the-art stadium at Monroe and Detroit, Swayne Field. This 11,800 seat facility opened on July 3, 1909. Named for Noah Swayne, Toledo lawyer, banker, and ardent baseball fan who donated the land, Swayne Field was considered to be the finest park in minor league baseball.



Addie Joss, 1900 - 1901

The first game at the new ballpark was an 18-inning game against Columbus. Columbus finally topped the Hens in the 18th inning, winning 12-11, but the new park breathed new life into Toledo baseball.

Frank P. Gilhooley, father of Toledo sports personality Frank Gilhooley, Jr., was on the Mud Hens roster in 1910, but he never made it into a game. In 1911, he was picked up by the St. Louis Cardinals and in 1913 moved to the New York Yankees.



Flight Of The Hens & Homecoming

1910 to 1920

The early part of the decade saw players such as Elmer Flick and Ray Chapman playing for the Mud Hens under President William Armour in 1911 and Charles W. Somers in 1912.

Flick held the American League record for the most stolen bases (42), having played most of his twelve years in the majors with Cleveland. He was 35 when he came to Toledo in 1911. He batted .326 and stole 10 bases that season. In 1912, his average dropped to .262, but he stole 28 bases.

Ray Chapman is best remembered as the first major leaguer to die as a result of a game injury. As an Indian in 1920, he was hit on the temple with an inside pitch by Yankee Carl Mays. He collapsed and died 12 hours later, never regaining consciousness. As a Mud Hen, he began the 1912 season by stealing home to win the game. He batted .310, with 49 stolen bases and 101 runs. The fans nicknamed him "Cyclone". He was called up to Cleveland before the end of the season with the Mud Hens, where he set a club record of 52 stolen bases that stood until 1980.

1914 began with rumors that the Hens would be sold or moved, a response to an assault by the new renegade Federal League. The rumors were considered just that and the team continued with their usual spring preparations. A shocked city got the news in the Blade: the Hens had been transferred to Cleveland to keep the Federals from taking over League Park.



The Hens, now nicknamed Spiders, were lost. Toledo, however, wanted baseball and campaigned for a Federal League team. Spurned by the outlaw league, the Toledo Baseball Company succeeded in getting a berth in the Southern Michigan League. The team held its place in the top three spots through the first half of the season, but then things began to fall apart. There was only so much interest in baseball, and the Federal League had siphoned off a lot of the talent. The minors were hit the hardest. In July, 1914, Swayne Field was abandoned and Toledo played only road games, finishing in the cellar. There was no Toledo team at all in 1915. The Southern Michigan League folded in early 1915, sunk by serious financial problems.

1916 dawned with joyful rumors that native son Roger Bresnahan was considering buying the Spiders and bringing the team home. Bresnahan, the famous catcher credited with originating the “tools of ignorance”, the catcher’s mask, shin guards, and chest protector, had had a major league career which spanned stints with Baltimore, the Giants, St. Louis, and the Cubs. Now he was ready to come home.

By March, it was official. While the team was in Kentucky for spring training and Swayne Field was being readied, the Blade ran a contest to name the team. Mud Hens won, beating out Bresna Hens and Rajahs. But there were still controversies over the name, and the times seemed to call for a change. Shortly before Opening Day, the name “Iron Men” was adopted from a comment made by a bathhouse attendant at the Dawson Springs training grounds, who worked on the ballplayers’ tired muscles.

Toledo fans were rewarded with a 4-2 victory in their opener against the Milwaukee Brewers, and a second victory two days later, overcoming the Brewers 3-1. Toledo had baseball again, home owned this time.



In spite of their early victories, the team did not do well, finishing in the cellar in 1917 and 1918. The 1917 season ended early, with a number of players leaving to enter the First World War. The 1918 season ended on July 21st to allow more men to enlist.

The Mud Hens name returned in 1919, perhaps as a way to change the team's luck. They were successful in battling to a third place finish in 1920 with a record of 87 wins and 79 losses.

Bresnahan continued to manage the team through 1920, except for a short stint in 1919, when Ralph Zeider took over. Zeider resigned mid-season and Bresnahan stepped in again to finish the year. He continued as president through the 1923 season.

Bresnahan returned to the majors in 1925 and coached for the Giants and the Tigers.

STENGEL AND THE CHAMPIONSHIP

1920 to 1930

In 1921, Jim Thorpe, the famous Native American athlete, joined the Hens as an outfielder, batting .358 with 36 doubles and 34 stolen bases. He had been known for having been forced to return the decathlon and pentathlon gold medals he won at the 1912 Olympics, after it was found he had earlier played semi-professional baseball in North Carolina. Years later, after his death, the International Olympic Committee restored his medals.



Bill Terry, who would go on to three World Series with the Giants, joined the Hens in 1922. He served as both manager and coach in 1923, batting .377 with 15 home runs. Unfortunately, skilled hitting could not overcome poor pitching, and the team finished last.

1924 saw a number of injuries and erratic fielding, but also saw a stint at short by Moe Berg. Known for his scholarship (he was fluent in twelve languages, including Sanskrit) and his knowledge of trivia, he was just as well known for his weak bat. He had been sent to the minors in 1923 after a dismal year with the Dodgers. Berg would return to the majors; he would also go on to do espionage work for the U.S. Government, including several dangerous wartime missions to Germany.

Casey Stengel came to Toledo in 1926 to manage the Mud Hens, after a career with the majors that saw turns with the Dodgers, Pirates, Phillies, Giants, and the Braves. In 1923, as part of the Giants squad, he hit the first World Series homer in Yankee Stadium. In Toledo that first year, he played in 88 games and batted .328. More importantly, he led the team over the .500 mark and up to fourth place.

The 1927 Hens were loaded with ex-major leaguers, including Bobby Veach, Irish Meusel, Bullet Joe Bush, Rosy Ryan, Jeff Pfeifer, Everett Scott, and a former Stengel teammate from the Phillies, DeWitt ("Bevo") LeBourveau.

Bobby Veach had joined the team in 1926 after twelve years with the Tigers, and shorter stays with the Red Sox, the Yankees, and with Washington, where he had one official at bat in the World Series. Veach batted .362 and had 105 RBI's in 1926, topping this in 1927, when he batted .363 and led the league with 145 RBI's. His .382 average in 1928 topped the league, and he chalked up 102 RBI's that year.



This team gave Toledo its first American Association championship, clinching the win on the last day of the season by beating the Indianapolis Indians in both games of a twinbill, 5-2 and 2-0. Stengel only played in 18 games that year, but one of those games was particularly notable. The Hens were down 9-8 in the eleventh inning. Stengel put himself in as a pinch hitter. With two outs and bases loaded, he hit a grand slam home run. It was his only homer for Toledo, and the last of his professional career.

Not content with only one championship that year, the Mud Hens went on to win the 1927 Junior World Series by beating Buffalo's International League club five games to one.

The Stengel years also saw a well-known and popular Toledo figure: Mud Hens bat boy Carl "Ducky" Walinsky, who had started with the team in 1925 at age 15. Walinsky also advertised Toledo's own Buckeye Beer, driving a goat hitched to a cart for the Buckeye Brewing Company. Walinsky was bat boy for the Hens for six years.

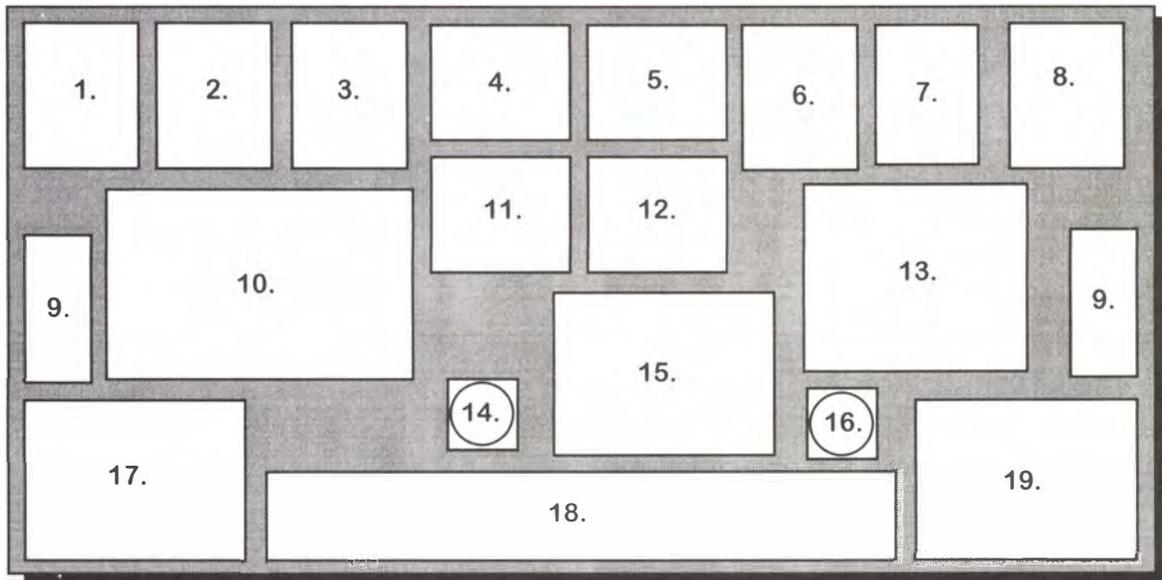


1930 to 1956



History Wall Display Key

1930 to 1956



1. BEVO LE BOURVEAU PHOTO
2. MIKE POWERS PHOTO
3. FRED HUTCHINSON PHOTO
4. 1939 TOLEDO MUD HENS TEAM PHOTO
5. 1943 TOLEDO MUD HENS TEAM PHOTO
6. 1951 TOLEDO MUD HENS PROGRAM
7. SAM JETHROE PHOTO
8. 1953 TOLEDO MUD HENS PROGRAM
9. MORTIMER, MUD HENS MASCOT, 1949 TO 1952
10. 1937 TOLEDO MUD HENS TEAM PHOTO
11. 1944 TOLEDO MUD HENS TEAM PHOTO
12. 1946 TOLEDO MUD HENS TEAM PHOTO
13. 1941 TOLEDO NEWS BEE
14. 1936 TOLEDO MUD HENS AUTOGRAPHED BASEBALL
15. WARTIME BASEBALL, 1940 - 1950
16. 1953 TOLEDO MUD HENS AUTOGRAPHED BASEBALL
17. SURVIVING THE DEPRESSION, 1930 - 1940
18. SWAYNE FIELD PHOTO
19. CHAMPIONS IN THE MIDST OF A SLUMP, 1950 - 1956



SURVIVING THE DEPRESSION

1930 to 1940

Minor league baseball struggled along with the rest of the country to survive the hard times of the Great Depression, seeking creative ways to hold the fans' interest and sustain the teams. Night games, the Shaughnessy Playoffs, and the growing number of major league affiliations all helped the minors pull through.

Night baseball made its first appearance in the Negro Leagues, with the Kansas City Monarchs carrying their own lighting system to games. In 1930, night games came to the minors, with the Mud Hens following suit in 1933. Lights first shone on Swayne Field on June 23, 1933, an event the Hens celebrated by beating the Columbus Red Birds 2-1. Hens pitcher Monte Pearson struck out 15 Red Birds, seven of them in a row.

The Shaughnessy Playoffs were also introduced in 1933, an invention of Montreal Royals' General Manager Frank Shaughnessy. This new post season plan extended the season (and the fans' interest) by allowing the league's four top teams to compete for a berth in the Junior World Series. The Mud Hens made five appearances in the Playoffs between 1937 and 1953.

The growing use of the farm system, perfected by Branch Rickey as a form of player development, also added to the public's interest in minor league baseball during the decade. The Mud Hens would not have such an affiliation until 1944, when they linked up with the St. Louis Browns.



Toledo baseball fans had more than one kind of depression to deal with during the Thirties. The decade had started out promising enough with Casey Stengel still at the helm. The Hens led the league in 1930 with a .315 batting average, a result of a starting lineup where every player had an average above .300. "Bevo" LeBourveau, a star on Stengel's 1927 team, had rejoined the team after a brief stint in the majors. He led the league with an average of .380, while driving in 100 runs and stealing 36 bases. Unfortunately, the rest of the league also boasted .300+ team averages, and Toledo was lacking in defensive skills. The team finished third.

The Hens improved defensively in 1931, but their offense began to slide. Even LeBourveau's stellar .446 could not keep the team from sinking to the bottom of the league. Over the next five years, they never climbed above fourth place, but the fans kept coming. One fan favorite was Mike Powers, an outfielder for the Hens from 1932-37. In six seasons with the club, his average never fell below .300. His popularity was rivaled by that of Hal Trosky, who would later move up to the Indians. Trosky hit .323 in 1933 with 33 homeruns, a team record until Phil Hiatt's 42 homeruns in 1996.

Fred Haney took over as club manager in 1935. His management debut was overshadowed by his defensive skills at third base. He led the league in fielding with a .966 average and 273 assists. He also led the league with 29 stolen bases.

It took Haney a couple of years to produce a contender, with the 1937 team finishing second in a close contest with Columbus for the American Association pennant. The Hens won their last seven games (including three doubleheaders), but they were not in the deciding game. Columbus won, relegating the Hens to second, but they were eligible for post season play in the Shaughnessy Playoffs. They were matched with the Milwaukee Brewers, but lost four games to two.



WARTIME BASEBALL

1940 to 1950

The Hens ended the Thirties and began the Forties in the league cellar. Fred Haney had left Toledo to manage the St. Louis Browns, but he was brought back after the disastrous finishes. He soon found himself with more to contend with than just improving the team, as Pearl Harbor jolted America into the war. A number of Mud Hens joined their countrymen in signing up to defend their country.

To preserve the country's morale, President Roosevelt declared that baseball should continue. Ten Hens had enlisted, but Haney was able to not only field a team, but to finish in fourth place and gain a berth in the playoffs. Once again, the team met the Milwaukee Brewers, but this time they overcame them and advanced to the final round. Unfortunately, the Hens went down in defeat to the Columbus Redbirds.

The team continued to lose players to the war effort, but Swayne Field stayed busy, with the Mud Hens making it to post season play in both 1943 and 1944. They broke even in 1943 under manager Jack Fournier, with a record of 76-76 and a fourth place finish. The first round of the Shaughnessy Playoffs matched them up with the Indianapolis Indians, but they went down in the first round.

They began their major league affiliation with the St. Louis Browns in 1944, a relationship that would last until 1948. Under manager Ollie Marquardt in 1944, they won 95 games and lost only 58. In spite of their record, they came up short and finished in second place in the league. Again they were defeated in the first round of the playoffs, this time by the St. Paul Saints.





Casey Stengel, 1926 - 1931

For the rest of their time with the Browns, they would not rise above sixth place. The Browns sold the team to Detroit early in 1948, but continued to operate the team for that season. In 1949, Detroit took over, but even the new ownership could not overcome the team's ineffectiveness on the field, and they finished the decade in the same position in which they had started, on the bottom.

The Forties saw its share of great players. Shortstop Vern Stephens hit .281 in his solo season in 1941, and also led the league in fielding his position with 453 assists. Ned Garver, a pitcher for the Hens in 1945 before he went on to pitch in the majors for 14 years, is still the only 20-game winner with a last place team. Pete Gray played outfield for the Hens in 1946, after a season with the St. Louis Browns. He had lost his right arm in a childhood accident, but developed a special glove and a style that allowed him to become the first one-armed major league ballplayer. He played 48 games with the club and batted .250.



CHAMPIONS IN THE MIDST OF A SLUMP

1950 to 1956

Attendance in the minors had swelled from 18.5 million in 1939 to 42 million in 1949, a sign of the public's increased leisure time and disposable income. But trouble was brewing in organized baseball as the Fifties dawned. The rights of the individual player began to conflict with the goals of the organization. At the same time, attendance began to drop.

The slump had several causes. One was the shift to the suburbs, which led to a decline in the inner cities where most stadiums were located. As the economic base deteriorated, poverty increased and crime rose. The stadiums themselves were also deteriorating. Parking was lacking, and an inadequate highway system also kept the fans at home.

At home, they were finding that there were more ways to spend leisure time and money. More people had cars, which also increased their entertainment options. More people were also tuning into the latest craze: television.

The minors found themselves dealing with overexpansion while the majors began cutting back on minor league affiliations. They also had to compete with major league broadcasts. Staying at home began to win out over going to the ballpark. By 1957, minor league attendance had dropped to 15.5 million, and hundreds of minor league teams had to fold.



Toledo had begun the Fifties under the guidance of the Detroit Tigers, but on June 23, 1952, owner Danny Menendez packed up the team and moved them to Charleston, West Virginia. Toledo fans were in shock. The day was saved in 1953, when the Boston Braves moved to Milwaukee and displaced the minor league Brewers. Toledo found itself with a new team, a two-time American Association pennant winner. A contest to name the team was held and the name "Glass Sox" won, to the chagrin of a large group of vocal fans. After a protest, the "Glass" was dropped from the name and the team was known as the Toledo Sox.

The Sox went 90-74 that season and brought Toledo its first American Association pennant since 1927. The team was loaded with outstanding players, such as Sam Jethroe, a former NL Rookie of the Year. He was the only .300 hitter on the club and also led the team in hits, runs, steals, and homeruns. Another star was Billy Klaus, a shortstop who led the team in doubles and later distinguished himself in the majors. Pitcher Gene Conley won 23 regular season games, with a league-leading 2.90 ERA.

After clinching the pennant, the Sox went on to defeat the Louisville Colonels in the first round of the playoffs, four games to two. They met the Kansas City Blues in the second round, but went down in defeat four games to three.

The Sox played only two more seasons in Toledo. At the end of the 1955 season, they too left town. Sadly, it would also be the last year for Swayne Field, which had served as Toledo's home ballpark since 1909. The stadium was determined to be too rundown to be repaired or renovated. With no prospect of a Toledo team to push for its preservation, the park was demolished in 1956.



1965 to the Present

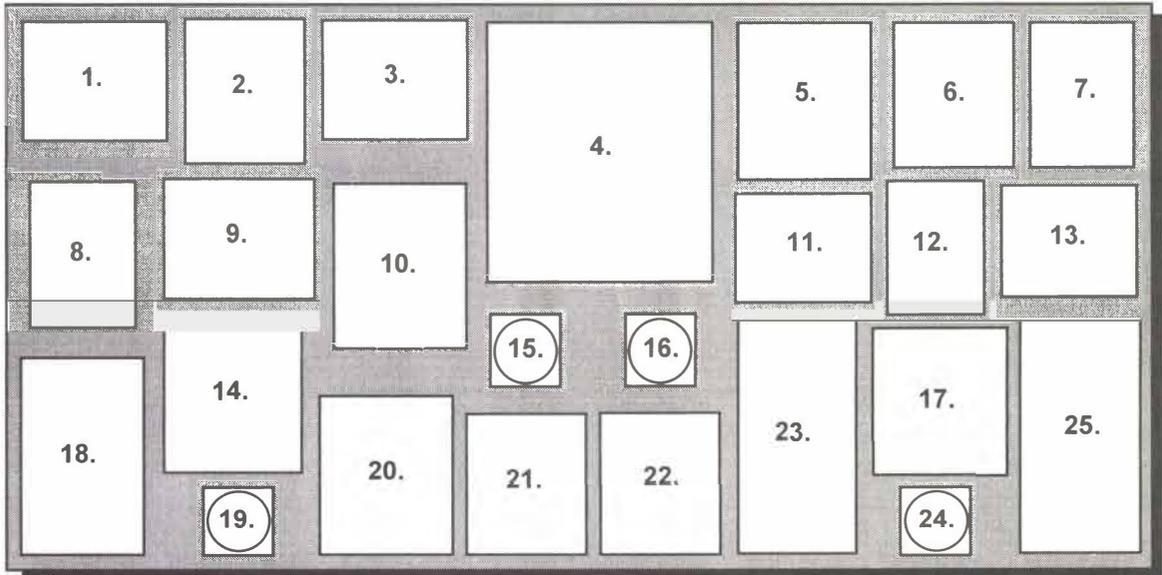


NED SKELDON STADIUM



History Wall Display Key

1965 to the Present



1. 1967 TOLEDO MUD HENS TEAM PHOTO
2. MIKE MARSHALL PHOTO
3. 1974 TOLEDO MUD HENS TEAM PHOTO
4. MUDDY THE MUD HEN
5. 1979 TOLEDO MUD HENS PROGRAM
6. CAL ERMER PHOTO
7. TRAVIS FRYMAN PHOTO
8. 1965 TOLEDO MUD HENS PROGRAM
9. 1968 TOLEDO MUD HENS TEAM PHOTO
10. 1975 TOLEDO MUD HENS PROGRAM
11. 1986 TOLEDO MUD HENS TEAM PHOTO
12. PHIL HIATT PHOTO
13. 1996 TOLEDO MUD HENS TEAM PHOTO
14. 1969 TOLEDO MUD HENS PROGRAM
15. 1980 TOLEDO MUD HENS AUTOGRAPHED BASEBALL
16. BOOMER WELLS AUTOGRAPHED BASEBALL
17. 1988 TOLEDO MUD HENS PROGRAM
18. END OF THE DROUGHT: THE INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE RETURNS, 1965 - 1973
19. 1976 TOLEDO MUD HENS AUTOGRAPHED BASEBALL
20. ENTER THE PHILLIES AND THE TRIBE, 1973 - 1978
21. JIM BUNNING PHOTO
22. JAMIE FARR AND HARRY MORGAN PHOTO
23. UP AND DOWN WITH THE TWINS, 1978 - 1986
24. 1991 TOLEDO MUD HENS AUTOGRAPHED BASEBALL
25. THE TIGERS RETURN, 1987 TO THE PRESENT



END OF THE DROUGHT: THE INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE RETURNS

1965 to 1973

Toledoans rejoiced in 1965 with the arrival of a new team and a new ballpark on the site of the old Fort Miami racetrack at the Lucas County Recreation Center. The Richmond Virginians, the Yankees' International League Triple-A club, were brought to town largely through the efforts of County Commissioner Ned Skeldon, who had also engineered the building of the new stadium.

This time there was no question of the team's name. The Mud Hens were back. They remained in the Yankee farm system in 1965 and 1966, finishing in 6th and 7th place, but allowing a number of future stars to show their stuff on the local diamond. 1965 saw no-hitters by Pete Mikkelsen and Stan Bahnsen. In 1966, future Tiger general manager Jerry Walker pitched out of the bullpen, and star-to-be Bobby Murcer played shortstop.

The Yankees and Tigers swapped Triple-A teams in 1967, thrilling local fans with the chance to have their Tiger neighbors in town. They were rewarded with a Governor's Cup playoff championship that year, and a first-place finish in 1968. These were excellent clubs skippered by former Tiger manager Jack Tighe, featuring pitchers such as Mike Marshall, Dick Drago, and Jim Rooker. Offense was buoyed by Don Pepper, Tom Matchick, Ike Brown, and Wayne Comer, to name only a few.



The Tigers stayed in Toledo until 1973, but were unable to equal the instant success of the first two seasons. They managed only 5th and 6th place finishes, but the fans had a front row seat in the development of future Tigers such as Les Cain, Lerrin LaGrow, Fred Holdsworth, and Tom Veryzer. Long-time major league star Joe Niekro pitched briefly for the Mud Hens in 1972, including a seven-inning perfect game.

ENTER THE PHILLIES AND THE TRIBE

1973 to 1978

The Tigers left Toledo after the 1973 season, leading to a quick succession of two more major league affiliations. The Phillies sent their Triple-A prospects to Toledo in 1974 and 1975. They finished third out of four teams in the Northern Division in 1974. The two-division format was dropped in 1975, and they finished seventh out of eight teams.

The highlight of the Phillies years was field manager and future Hall of Fame pitcher Jim Bunning. Bunning, an ex-Tiger and Phillie, worked hard to build a good team, but the talent was just not available. Players of note under Bunning included John Stearns, Alan Bannister, Dick Ruthven, Mike Paul, Jerry Martin, and Wayne Simpson. Simpson pitched a no-hitter on June 20, 1965, downing the Syracuse Chiefs 3-1.



The arrival of the Indians in 1976 excited both Toledo and Cleveland fans, who now had the chance to see the Tribe's farmhands only 100 miles from home. Their excitement, however, was fleeting since the Indian-stocked Hens finished eighth in both 1976 and 1977. The Tribe moved on, but not before local fans got to see the likes of Joe Lis, Rick Cerone, Jim Norris, Ron Hassey, Fred Beene, and Bob Reynolds play under managers Joe Sparks and Jack Cassini.

UP AND DOWN WITH THE TWINS

1978 to 1986

The void left by the Indians was filled by the Minnesota Twins in 1978. Cal Ermer came in as manager, having previously led the parent team in the American League. His eight-year stay set the record in Toledo for managerial longevity. Ermer, who was immensely popular with Toledo fans, retired after the 1985 season.

The results of the Twins' nine-year Toledo affiliation were decidedly mixed. Three teams made the IL playoffs. The Hens' 1978 third place finish got them to the playoffs, but they fell to Pawtucket in the first round, three games to two.

The 1980 Hens, the best team of the Minnesota years, finished second with a 77 and 63 record. They beat the Rochester Red Wings three games to one in the first round, but were then defeated for the Governor's Cup four games to one by arch rival Columbus. The 1980 season also saw General manager Gene Cook named International League Executive of the Year.



The third team to make the playoffs was the 1984 Hens, who finished third in the league, only to be ousted by the Maine Guides.

Many fine players graced the Toledo diamond during the Twins' nine-year stint. Kirby Puckett and Frank Viola made brief appearances in Toledo, while Glass City fans enjoyed longer stays by Gary Ward, Pete Redfern, Dave Engle, Greg "Boomer" Wells, Pete Filson, Tim Teufel, Brad Havens, Greg Gagne, Alvaro Espinoza, Mark Portugal, and Andre David.

This period did see a number of Toledo players recognized for their achievements. International League Batting Championships were won by Dave Engle in 1980, Boomer Wells in 1982, and Andre David in 1986. Second sacker Tim Teufel won the league MVP award in 1983, and Brad Havens won the Most Valuable Pitcher honor in 1984.

During this period, the Hens saw a surge in their popularity, thanks to Toledo actor Jamie Farr, whose character, Klinger, a Toledo native, frequently mentioned the team on his hit series MASH. This free and widespread publicity gave the team and their unusual name international recognition.

Muddy the Mud Hen, the team mascot, was hatched in 1978 and has become another well-recognized symbol of the team. The stadium at the Lucas County Recreation Center was remodeled in the mid-'80's, and has been recognized as one of the best Triple-A facilities for the fans in the country.

To top off the Minnesota years, NBC sportscaster Bob Costas, whose press biography reports a fictitious stint with the Hens as a "utility infielder", made an appearance at home plate and in the broadcast booth during the 1986 season.



THE TIGERS RETURN

1987 to the Present

The Twins left Toledo after the 1986 season, but Toledo fans were delighted when a deal was struck that returned the Tigers to town. The city's proximity to Detroit had traditionally made it Tiger territory. The fans came out to see the farm club in ever-increasing numbers. Since 1991, the Mud Hens have broken their home attendance record every season, with over 300,000 fans cheering the team on in both 1995 and 1996.

The ballpark was renamed Ned Skeldon Stadium in 1988, recognizing the retired Lucas County Commissioner who brought baseball back to Toledo in 1965.

Even though the Hens have not made the playoffs under the Tigers, many outstanding managers and players have appeared at the local ballyard. Leon Roberts, one-time Tiger outfielder, managed the team in 1987, with former catcher and manager Pat Corrales taking over in 1988.

Other managers included former Tiger John Wockenfuss, who managed the team in 1989 and for part of 1990. Tom Gamboa then finished that season. Joe Sparks, who had served as Toledo skipper in 1976, returned to the helm in 1991 and managed into the 1994 season. Former Texas Ranger Larry Parrish finished the year, with former Montreal Expos manager Tom Runnels coming to town in 1995. He continued to manage the team in 1996.

A number of excellent players called Toledo home under the Tigers. The Eighties saw Bill Laskey, Paul Gibson, Billy Bean, Doug Strange, Stan Clarke, Steve Searcy, and Torey Lovullo playing for the Mud Hens.



The Nineties brought such stars to Ned Skeldon Stadium as Kevin Ritz, Scott Aldred, Travis Fryman, Scott Livingstone, Milt Cuyler, Phil Clark, Rich Rowland, Rico Brogna, and Ron Rightnowar. Other Nineties Hens have included Greg Gohr, Buddy Groom, Chris Gomez, Shannon Penn, Tony Clark, Felipe Lira, Jose Lima, Sean Bergman, Justin Thompson, and Phil Hiatt.

Making brief appearances as Mud Hens were Mike Henneman, Kirk Gibson, Guillermo Hernandez, and Chris Hoiles.



Kirby Puckett, 1984

Other highlights have included Steve Searcy being named the International League's Most Valuable Pitcher in 1988, Felipe Lira's and Jose Lima's no-hitters in 1994, and Phil Hiatt's 42 home runs and 119 RBI's in 1996.

Hiatt's home run total broke the former Mud Hens record of 33, set in 1933 by Hal Trosky. He easily led all minor league players in 1996, and there is a good chance that his record will stand for quite some time in the annals of Toledo baseball history.





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