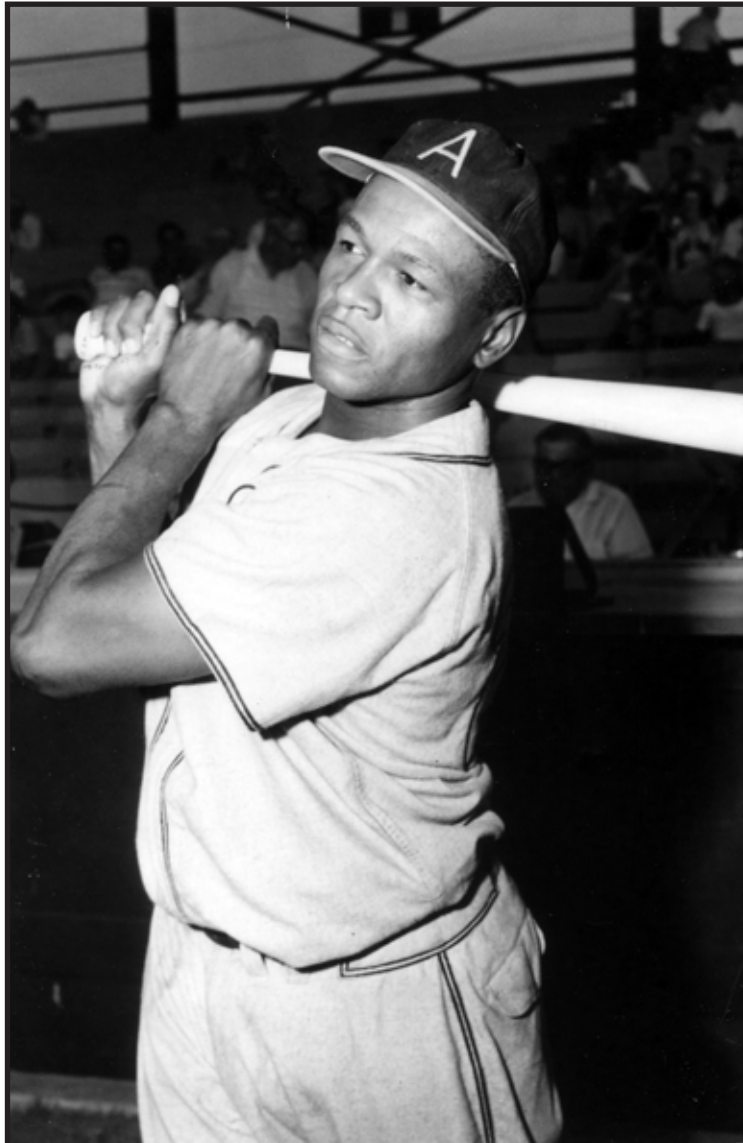


Forgotten Heroes:

Alfred Pinkston



by

Center for Negro League Baseball Research

Dr. Layton Revel

and

Luis Munoz

Alfred Pinkston – Latin Legend



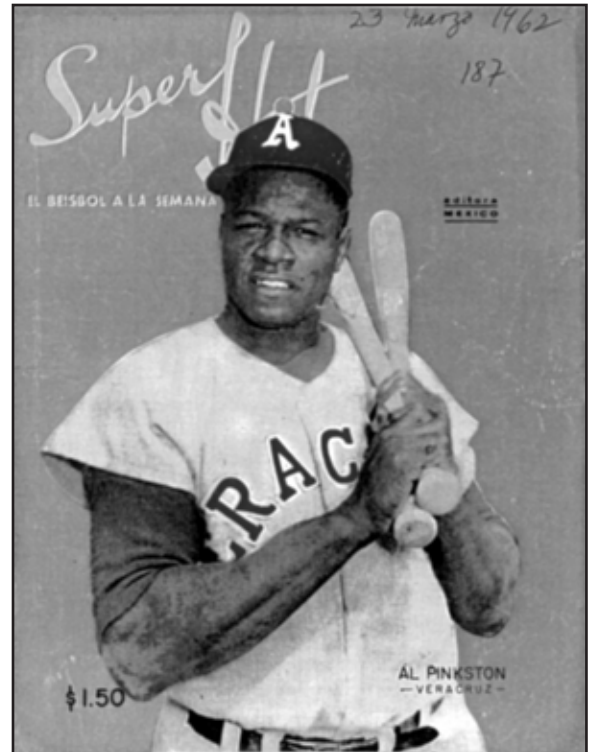
Mexico City Red Devils (Mexico)
(1959-1960)

Alfred Charles Pinkston was born to Eddie and Viola Chatman Pinkston in the predominately black rural community of Newbern, Alabama on October 22, 1917. Alfred was one of eleven children (six boys and five girls) born to the Pinkstons. Al honed his baseball skills at an early age playing with his father, uncles and brothers on a local sand lot team that was organized and run by his father who was an outstanding player himself. When he wasn't playing baseball, Al was working on the family farm. As a teenager, Alfred is reported to have played ball for semipro teams in the Birmingham, Alabama area which was located about 80 miles north of Newbern.

Pinkston stood six feet five inches tall and weighed between 225 to 245 pounds during his playing days. His size was not unusual in his family. According to his sister Janie, their father was six feet nine and their mother was six feet two. In addition Alfred was a very strong individual. This came from his hard work on the farm growing up and his off season job working as a longshore man during the off season when he was playing professional baseball

He batted left-handed and was an imposing figure at the plate. In Mexico he was given the nickname "El Gigante" (The Giant) and "El Monstruo" (The Monster). Pinkston threw right-handed and primarily played outfield and first base during his career. He also did some catching early in his career. In the field he only had average defensive skills. During his career in Mexico he almost exclusively played right field. Al did however have good speed for his size and was a very smart base runner. This was evidenced in his first two years in Canada when he stole 21 bases in 1951 and 18 bases in 1952. Even during the years when he didn't register a lot of stolen bases, he rarely got thrown out attempting to steal.

Al Pinkston was a pure hitter who consistently hit for both average and power. Over his four year career in the Negro Southern League with the New Orleans Creoles, he batted over .300 every season. According to newspaper articles he batted .385 in 1949 and .380 with 42 homeruns in 1950. He entered "organized" ball in 1951 and retired after the 1965 season. Al's career batting average of .372 is the highest career batting average in the history of the Mexican League. He finished his career in "organized" baseball with a .352 batting average.



Al Pinkston
Vera Cruz Aguilas

Early Baseball Career

Very little is known about the early baseball career of Al Pinkston. According to his sister Janie, Alfred played baseball on a local team in Newbern, Alabama run by their father. The Newbern baseball team played other local teams in the area and would occasionally play professional teams that came through their part of the country. It has been documented that Al Pinkston made his Negro League debut in 1936 as a first baseman with the St. Louis Stars of the Negro National League. His tenure with the St. Louis Stars was very short. Undocumented reports also have Al playing for the Chicago American Giants during the late 1930's or early 1940's.

Except for the four years in which he was in the military, the time frame from when Pinkston left St. Louis in 1936 until 1947 when he signed with the New Orleans Creoles of the Negro Southern League is still largely a mystery. According to his sister (Janie) who was interviewed by Dr. Revel, prior to going into the military Al left the farm all the time to play baseball with one team or another.

Pinkston served in the military during World War II. He enlisted in the United States Army on August 7, 1941 at Fort McClellan, Alabama. Interestingly, Al listed his civilian occupation as automobile serviceman and his education as grammar school on his military enlistment papers. He was initially assigned to the Army Air Base at Camp Leroy Johnson in the New Orleans, Louisiana area and it was here that he met his future wife Vera Lewis of New Orleans. When Pinkston got out of the military in 1944, he and Vera settled in the New Orleans area.

From this researcher's perspective, Pinkston most likely spent these early years playing for lower level Negro Minor League teams or barnstorming with independent black teams that toured all over the United States. When he was discharged from the military in 1944 he settled down in New Orleans. He most likely played ball for semipro teams in the New Orleans area until he signed with the New Orleans Creoles in 1947 to play professional baseball on a full time basis.

Negro League Career

Alfred Pinkston joined the New Creoles of the Negro Southern Association in 1947. At the age of thirty, he was finally a full time professional ball player. The New Orleans Creoles were owned by Allen Page who also owned the famous Page Hotel on Dryades Ave in New Orleans. Negro League veteran Harry Williams managed the 1947 Creoles. The Creoles played their home games in Pelican Stadium which was also the home field of the New Orleans' "white" Minor League team.



New Orleans Creoles Conduct a Baseball Clinic
Pelican Stadium (1947)

Pinkston fit right in with his new club and quickly became one of the stars of the league. Other top players for the New Orleans Creoles during the 1947 season were Oliver "Shorty" Andry (OF), Jim Ford (3B), Billy Horne (SS), Eddie Gavilan (2B), Fred McDaniels (OF), Merle Porter (1B) and James Watts (OF). Tom Purvis (16-6) was the ace of the Creoles' pitching staff which also included Bobby Fields (11-4), Charles McLaurin (10-5), Winslow "Bill" Gonzalez, Archie Ray, Ray Hart, Jimmy Newberry and Chet Brewer. Newberry and Brewer were added to the roster late in the season. Pinkston made an impact in his first full season in professional baseball by leading the Negro Southern Association in homeruns with 23 round trippers.

New Orleans started the season slowly but ended it on a roll. The Creoles won the second half of the Negro Southern Association season and played the Asheville Blues (winner of the first half of the season) for the league championship title. Asheville narrowly prevailed in the series, winning three games to two games for New Orleans. During the regular season, New Orleans played a significant number of "non-league" games and even barnstormed up the East Coast where they played the Brooklyn Bushwicks and New York Cubans. After the regular season the Creoles toured with the Indianapolis Clowns of the Negro American League.



Negro Southern Association
Championship Series

His outstanding season with New Orleans in 1947 got him noticed by the Cleveland Buckeyes of the Negro American League and Al was invited to the Cleveland's spring training camp in 1948. Pinkston's hitting was the talk of the 1948 Cleveland Buckeyes spring training and he appeared to have made the Buckeyes' final roster when for some unknown reason he left Cleveland and returned to New Orleans. Hank Presswood who played on the 1948 Buckeyes team offered one possible answer in an interview with Dr. Revel:

“Al may have been worried about playing time. Our outfield was already set with three all stars (Al Smith, Sam Jethroe and Willie Grace) and Archie Ware was a fixture at first.”

After leaving the Cleveland Buckeyes spring training camp, Alfred Pinkston returned to the New Orleans Creoles for their 1948 Negro Southern Association season. During the off season Allen Page took on Jesse Richardson as a partner. Page had come close to winning the league championship in 1947, but with the help of Richardson they were determined to win it all in 1948. One of the first things that the owners did was to hire T.J. “Tom” Brown as player-manager. Brown had extensive Negro League experience as a shortstop and third baseman with several of the top teams (Cleveland, Harrisburg-St. Louis, Indianapolis, Louisville, Memphis and New York) in Negro League baseball. The next step for management was putting together a new team. Page and Richardson replaced most of the previous year's roster. Some of the “new” players who were signed included: Alfred “Buddy” Armour (OF), John Bissant (OF), Dennis Gordon (C), Red Longley (C), Terry Moore (OF), Nat Peeples (1B), Freddie Sheppard (OF), Milton Smith (INF), Isaac Welch (INF) and Joe Wiley (INF).



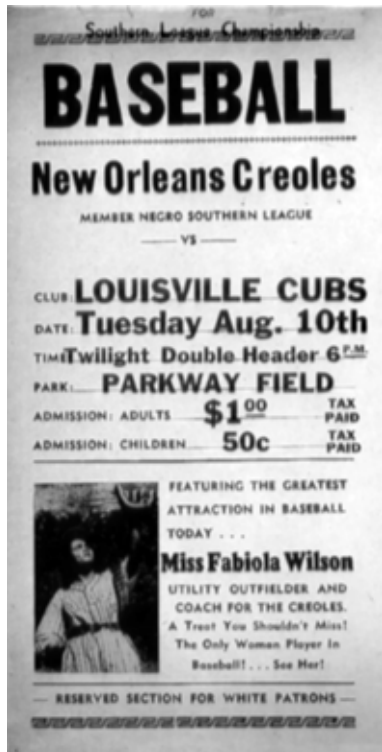
Cleveland Buckeyes (1948)

Offensively, the only real holdovers from the 1947 team were Oliver Andry (OF), Billy Horne (2B) and Al Pinkston who split his playing time between catching and the outfield during the 1948 season. Even though statistics for the 1948 season have not been uncovered, it appears from newspaper coverage that Pinkston was the leading hitter on the team.

Tom Purvis was still the ace of the pitching staff. The rest of the Creoles' pitching staff for 1948 included Johnny Edmond, Curtis Hardaway, Edgar Leonard, Amos Watson and Johnny Williams. Negro League veterans Chet Brewer, Jimmy Hill, Bill Jefferson, Tom Parker and Taylor Smith also pitched for the Creoles during the 1948 season.

Winning wasn't the only objective that Page and Richardson had in mind. They also wanted to make money and the best way to do that was to draw large crowds to the ball park. Winning brought in fans, but the owners also came up with a unique idea to draw even more fans. They signed two women. Gloria “Lovie” Dymond and Fabiola Wilson were signed as outfielders and according to newspaper coverage, the fans loved it.

The New Orleans Creoles opened their Negro Southern Association season on May 23rd against the Nashville Cubs at Pelican Stadium in New Orleans. They started the season winning and never looked back. Tom Purvis was unbeatable on the mound and won his first eight starts.



New Orleans vs Nashville
1948

The team was 11-2 (.846) on June 17th and 24-6 (.800) on July 11th. During the season New Orleans had a twenty-seven (27) game winning streak. In July of 1948 New Orleans took a break from Negro Southern Association play and went on a barnstorming tour of the Midwest. Some of the cities that they played in during this tour were Battle Creek, Ft. Wayne, South Bend and Toledo. The New Orleans Creoles won eight of the ten games they played on the tour. According to newspaper coverage New Orleans had a won-loss record of 45-6 (.882) on August 8th. One of the highlights of the season for New Orleans was playing in the 9th Annual Southern Negro All Star game in Greensboro, North Carolina. The game was played on August 8th in Memorial Stadium (Greensboro) and matched the New Orleans Creoles against the Southern Select All Stars (an all star team made up of some of the best players from Southern professional teams).

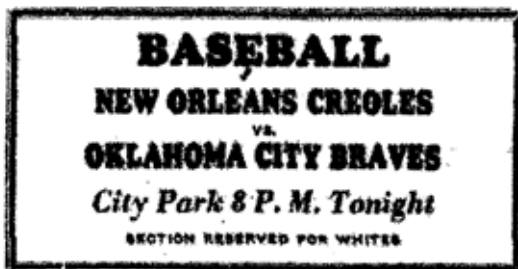
The New Orleans Creoles won both halves of the Negro Southern Association season and were crowned the “league” champions at the end of the regular season. The Creoles kept on playing after the regular season. In post season play some of the teams that they faced off against included the Cleveland Buckeyes, Newark Eagles and New York Black Yankees. In October of 1948, New Orleans added several Negro American League players to their roster and toured with the Jackie Robinson All Stars as the “Negro All Stars.”

New Orleans moved to the Negro Texas League for the 1949 baseball season. Other teams that played in the Negro Texas League in 1949 were the Birmingham Blues, Hot Springs (AR), Ft. Worth Giants, Oklahoma City Braves, San Antonio and Shreveport Tigers. For the third straight season New Orleans changed managers. Wesley Barrow managed the 1949 New Orleans Creoles. The team continued to play its home games at Pelican Stadium.

Pinkston was the team’s leading hitter with 28 homeruns and a .385 batting average. The 1949 Creoles roster was loaded with former and future Negro American League and Negro National League players that included: Alfred “Buddy” Armour (OF), Jimmie Armstead (OF), Billy Horne (2B), Frank Evans (OF), Willie Jefferson (P), Nat Peeples (1B), Freddie Shepard (OF), Roy Swanson (C), Jelly Taylor (1B), Marvin Terrell (SS) and Joe Wiley (3B). The combination of Armour, Sheppard and Pinkston gave the Creoles the best outfield in the league. New Orleans also had an excellent pitching staff that included: Eugene Bremmer, James Bolden, Bennie Griggs, Lefty Jones, Al Lombard, Nathan Owens, John Ruston, Tom Purvis and James Williams.



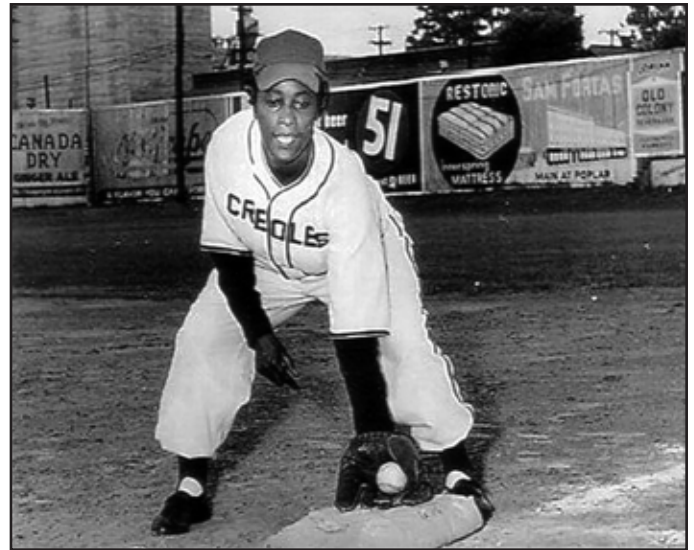
Times-Picavune
New Orleans, LA
05-30-49



Baton Rouge, Louisiana
05-23-49

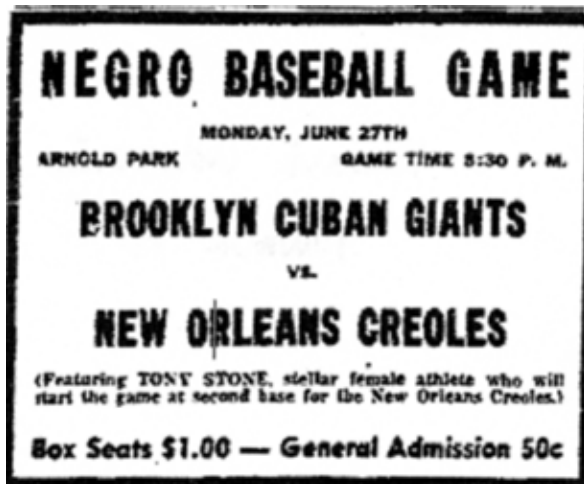
Al Pinkston was the team’s leading hitter with 28 homeruns and a .385 batting average for the 1949 season. With Pinkston in the line-up and batting in the clean-up spot, New Orleans was never out of the ball game.

During the season the top drawing card for New Orleans was Marcenia “Toni” Stone who was the only female playing professional baseball. Stone started at second base for the Creoles. Unlike many female ball players who were signed as a gimmick or novelty for attracting a bigger crowd, Stone could actually play ball.



Toni Stone
New Orleans Creoles
1948

With Barrow’s star studded line-up, New Orleans dominated opponents all season and won the Negro Texas League title at the end of the 1949 season. On June 9th New Orleans had a won-loss record of 17-2 (.895). By the end of June they had posted a record to 28-5 (.848) in games against all levels of competition. Besides their Negro Texas league schedule, the Creoles also played a significant number of games against “non-league” opponents. Some of the top “non-league” teams they played during the 1949 season were the Brooklyn Cuban Giants, Carta Blanca Negro All Stars, Homestead Grays, New York Black Yankees and San Francisco Sea Lions.

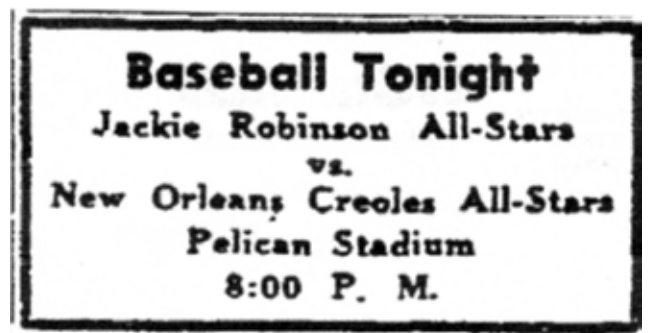


Newspaper accounts credit the New Orleans Creoles with a 26-6 (.813) record during their 32 game Negro Texas League schedule. After the regular season, New Orleans went on a barnstorming tour through the Midwest and Canada. On one barnstorming tour in August and early September, the New Orleans Creoles won 22 of their 28 games.

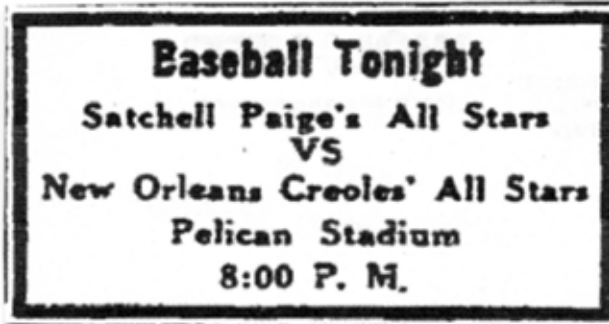
In October of 1949, Al Pinkston was selected to play in the 11th Annual North-South All Star game. Other New Orleans Creoles players that were selected for the all star game were Jimmie Armstead, T.J. Brown, Frank Evans, Billy Horne, John Johnson, Freddie Shepard Roy Swanson, Joe Wiley and James Williams. The all star game was played at Pelican Stadium in New Orleans.

Newark Advocate
Newark, OH
06-23-49

In late October, the New Orleans Creoles toured the South with the Jackie Robinson All Stars. Before the start of the tour, New Orleans added several players to their roster. John Britton, Ed Steele and Pepper Bassett came from the Birmingham Black Barons. Lyman Bostock and Taylor Smith were picked up from the Chicago American Giants. Roy Partlow (Homestead Grays) was also added to bolster the Creoles’ pitching and hitting attack.. During the tour the New Orleans Creoles were also billed as the “New Orleans All Stars” and “New Orleans Creoles All Stars.” Jackie Robinson’s All Stars featured Roy Campanella, Larry Doby, Buck



Times-Picavune
New Orleans, LA
10-24-49



Leonard, Don Newcombe and of course Jackie Robinson. The highlight of the tour for New Orleans occurred on October 23rd when Al Pinkston went 4 for 5 and knocked in the winning two runs in the ninth inning to give his team a 14-13 victory over Jackie Robinson's team. The game was played at Pelican Stadium with 16,000 fans in attendance.

- Times-Picayune
New Orleans, LA
10-21-49

The Creoles also played a game at Pelican Stadium in October of 1949 against the Satchel Paige All Stars.

When the 1950 Negro Southern League started, the New Orleans Creoles were back in the league and Alfred Pinkston was back in the starting line-up for the Creoles. Other teams that played in the Negro Southern League during the 1950 baseball season were the Atlanta Black Crackers, Chattanooga Choo Chos, Delta Giants, Gadsen Tigers, Louisville-Nashville Cubs, Memphis Red Sox and Owensboro Dodgers.

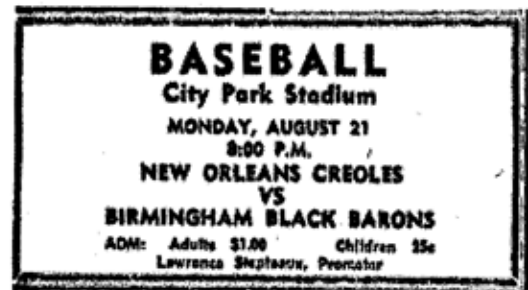
Felton Snow was the manager of the 1950 New Orleans Creoles team. This was the fourth year in a row that Pinkston would play for a "new" manager with the Creoles. The one consistency with New Orleans was that their home field of Pelican Stadium had not changed.



Pelican Stadium
New Orleans, Louisiana

Besides Pinkston at first base and in the outfield, New Orleans starting line-up included: Oliver Andry (OF), Buddy Armour (OF), Bill Bradford (OF), Eddie Gavilan (SS), Paul Harris (1B), Charlie Johnson (C), Ralph Johnson (3B), Don Mitchell (OF), Joe Spencer (2B), Toni Stone (2B) and Roy Swanson (C). The pitching staff for New Orleans included: John Johnson, Gene "Lefty" Jones, Buddy Lombard, Nathan Owen, John Ruston and James Williams.

Al Pinkston started the 1950 season with a hot bat and by July 9th had hit 10 homeruns and compiled a .385 batting average in “league” games. For the season, he led New Orleans in hitting and is reported to have hit 42 homeruns and had a .380 batting average when statistics for both “league” and “non-league” games were combined.



Times-Picavune

New Orleans, LA
08-21-50



Omaha World Herald

Omaha, Nebraska
07-11-50

The Creoles started the season strong going 6-2 for their first eight games. Unfortunately, complete won-loss records have still not been uncovered for the Creoles’ 1950 season. In June of 1950 the New Orleans made a ten game barnstorming tour through Indiana, Illinois and Ohio. They ended the tour in Council Bluffs (IA) where they played what was advertised in the local media as a “championship series” against the Council Bluffs Rainbows. The first game of the five game series was played on July 11th at Council Bluffs Legion Park. Game one of the series was hard fought and went ten innings before the Creoles came away with a 5-4 decision. Creoles’ third baseman Ralph Johnson was the star in game one with a grand slam homerun in the sixth inning. The New Orleans Creoles took the series three games to two and were awarded the championship trophy by Tom Kelley, the owner of the Rainbows. Another highlight of the season was a doubleheader against the Negro American League All Stars. After the regular 1950 season ended, the New Orleans Creoles traveled to Canada to barnstorm and play in the Canadian baseball tournaments. It was during this Canadian baseball tour that Canadian team owners took notice of Alfred Pinkston.

Pinkston Goes to Canada

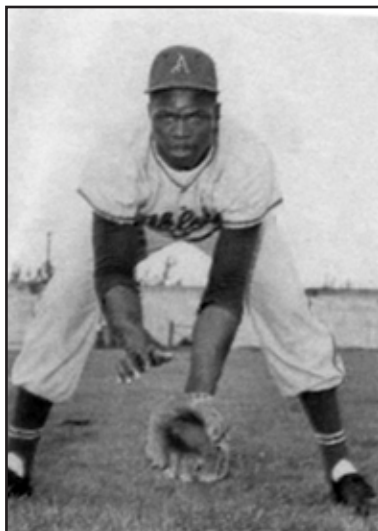
Alfred Pinkston signed with the Farnham Pirates of the Canadian Provincial League prior to the start of the 1951 baseball season. Sam Bankhead, legendary Negro League player, was the manager of Farnham. Bankhead used his extensive Negro League contacts to recruit a significant number of former Negro League players to come to Canada to play for the Pirates. Some of the top Negro League players who were with Farnham during the 1951 season were Joe Taylor (.360), Eudie Napier (.285), Sam Bankhead (.274), Joe Scott (.264), Cecil Kaiser (.260), Archie Ware (.257), Bob Trice (.237) and Lester Lockett (.217). Black Panamanian pitcher, Humberto Robinson (17-13), along with Cecil Kaiser (14-13) and Bob Trice (7-12) made up the team’s starting rotation. Al Pinkston had the second highest batting average (.301) on the team and led the Pirates in all other offensive categories: hits (140), doubles (32), triples (6), homeruns (15) and runs batted in (72). As a team, the Pirates struggled the entire year and finished the season in seventh place out of eight teams in the final league standings with a won-loss record of 52-71 (.423). The Sherbrooke Athletics led by former Negro League players Ray Brown (11-10), Silvio Garcia (.346), Claro Duany (.337) and Hiram Gonzalez (.319) won the Canadian Provincial League championship with a record of 73-50 (.593).



Farnham Pirates (1951)
 Canadian Provincial League
 (Pinkston – back row third from left)

Pinkston Signs into “Organized” Ball

Pinkston’s play with Farnham got him noticed by Major and Minor League baseball scouts. According to an article that appeared in the April 3, 1952 issue of Jet (magazine), the Minneapolis Millers (farm team of the New York Giants) purchased the contracts of Al Pinkston of Farnham (Quebec), Marvin Johnson of the Chicago American Giants and Bernell “Chick” Longest of the Memphis Red Sox. It is unclear what happened with these reported signings because Pinkston never played with Minneapolis or any team in the New York Giants Minor League system.



Philadelphia Athletics
 Minor League Organization

Like many former Negro League players of his day, Al shaved a few years off his “real” age in order to increase his chances of being signed. When he was asked how old he was by the Major League scouts, Pinkston told the Philadelphia Athletics that he was born in 1926. In reality he was born in 1917 and was nine (9) years older than what he told the Philadelphia scout. George McDonald of the Philadelphia Athletics signed Pinkston before the start of the 1952 season. At the same time that Pinkston was signed by the Philadelphia Athletics, the A’s also signed his Farnham teammates Joe Taylor and Bob Trice. The trio of Pinkston, Taylor and Trice became the first three black players in the Philadelphia Athletics organization. All three were assigned to St. Hyacinthe of the Canadian Provincial League.

Back in familiar territory, Pinkston tore up the league and finished the season by winning the Canadian Provincial League Triple Crown in 1952 at the age of 35. Pinkston hit 30 homeruns, drove in 121 runs and had a batting average of .360 during the 1952 season. He also led the league in slugging with a .635 slugging percentage and total bases with 305. John Sosh was the player-manager of St. Hyacinthe. Other leading hitters on the team during the season were Hector Lopez (.329), Joe Taylor (.308) and Bob Trice (.297). Interestingly enough Lopez, Taylor and Trice all went on to play in the Major Leagues. Bob Trice (16-3) was the ace of the pitching staff. The St. Hyacinthe Athletics won the regular season of the Canadian Provincial League with a record of 79-49 (.617) but lost in the league finals.

Al Pinkston started off his career in “organized” baseball in tremendous fashion. His two seasons in Canada produced the following results.

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1951	Farnham	123	465	67	140	32	6	15	72	21	.301	.492
1952	St. Hyacinthe	125	480	103	173	34	4	30	121	18	.360	.635
	Totals	248	945	170	313	66	10	45	193	39	.331	.565



Laval Dairy Baseball Card (1952)
(Canada)

The play of Al Pinkston and Bob Trice with St. Hyacinthe in 1952 and a strong spring training got them promoted from Class C ball to Triple A with the Ottawa Athletics of the International League for the start of the 1953 season. Joe Taylor was assigned to Williamsport of the Eastern League. Al Pinkston was now just one step away from the Major Leagues and seemed to be destined to become Philadelphia’s first black ball player in the Major Leagues. While Trice (21-10 with a 3.10 ERA) flourished, Pinkston struggled at the plate from the very start of the season at Ottawa. Unfortunately for Pinkston, he did not come close to putting up the kind of numbers for Ottawa that he had for St. Hyacinthe. After 45 games and 101 at bats, Al was only hitting .198 with only one homerun and was sent down to Class A ball with Williamsport of the Eastern League. Joe Taylor was called up to take his place on the Ottawa roster. Taylor had an excellent season with Ottawa, and finished the year with a .313 batting average and 25 homeruns. Bob Trice was called up to the Philadelphia Athletics in the closing weeks of the season and became their first black player to make their Major League roster in the American League.

Pinkston feasted on Eastern League pitching and led the team in batting average (.331), slugging percentage (.522), triples (4) and homeruns (10) while playing in only 70 of the team’s 150 games. His .331 batting average put him in second place just behind Danny Schell (.333) for the Eastern League batting title. Pinkston did lead the Eastern League in slugging percentage with a .522 average. Unfortunately for Williamsport, Al Pinkston was the only player on the team who hit over .300 for the season and produced offensively. The Williamsport A’s finished the season with a losing record of 65-85 (.433). They were in sixth place in the final 1953 Eastern League standings. Former Negro League players Billy Harrell (.321) and Joe Caffie (.321) led the Reading Indians to the Eastern League title.

In 1954 Pinkston played for the Savannah A's of South Atlantic League (Class AA). Pinkston had another outstanding season at the plate in 1954. He led the league in base hits (180), runs batted in (102), total bases (302), slugging percentage (.604) and won the South Atlantic League batting title with a .360 batting average. He also led his team in doubles (33), extra bases hits (64) and set a club record in homeruns (27). During the 1954 season in Savannah, Al had a 36 game hitting streak which established a new South Atlantic League record. Single handedly led by Pinkston's hitting attack, the Savannah A's finished the season with a record of 80-60 (.571) and were runners-up to the Jacksonville Braves (83-57) for the South Atlantic League championship. Pinkston and fellow former Negro League player Elbert "Izzy" Israel (third baseman) were named to the South Atlantic League All-Star team at the end of the season.

The Kansas City Athletics rewarded Pinkston's outstanding season in Class AA ball at Savannah by inviting him to spring training in West Palm Beach, Florida before the start of the 1955 season. Manager Lou Boudreau (Kansas City Athletics) was so impressed with Pinkston that Al made the final twelve Minor League players who worked out with the players on the Kansas City Athletics Major League roster. Even though Pinkston didn't make the Kansas City Athletics Major League roster, he was promoted to the Columbus Jets of the International League (Triple A farm team of the Kansas City Athletics of the American League). Injuries and a roster loaded with outfielders limited his playing time in 1955 to just 71 games for the season. Pinkston spent the entire 1955 season with Columbus and batted a respectable .300 in 71 games and 263 plate appearances. He was second on the team in slugging percentage with a .480 average. The only Jets starter to post a higher batting average than Al for the season was Spook Jacobs (.316). Unfortunately, the Jets like their parent club (Kansas City Athletics) struggled the entire season. Columbus finished the season with a record of 64-89 and were in next to last place in the final International League standings.



1955 Columbus Jets (International League)
(Pinkston – Middle row third player from right)

Pinkston started the 1956 season with Columbus, but when he got off to a slow start getting only four hits in his first twenty-two at bats in his first 12 games he was sent down to Columbia of the South Atlantic League. He played 51 games with Columbia before being dealt to the Jacksonville Braves (Milwaukee Braves farm team) who were also in the South Atlantic League. Jacksonville was making a run for the South Atlantic League title and wanted another big bat on their roster. The Braves already had the best pitcher in Minor League baseball in Juan Pizarro who ended the season with a 23-6 (.793) and Pinkston fit the bill for additional hitting. The

Braves finished the regular season with a record of 87-53 (.621) and easily won the league championship by eight games over the Charlotte Hornets and Columbus Foxes who tied for second place with identical 79-61 (.564) records. For the 1956 season, Pinkston hit reasonably well (.293) by most ball players standards, but this was significantly below his career average and overall capabilities.

In 1957, Al would make another move, this time going to the Amarillo Gold Sox of the Western League. The Amarillo Gold Sox were an independent club with no Major League affiliation. They did, however, have an informal working relationship with the Sacramento Solons of the Pacific Coast League

Pinkston found a home in Amarillo and responded with two outstanding seasons in 1957 and 1958. His batting statistics at Amarillo for the Gold Sox were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1957	Amarillo	141	554	104	206	41	6	23	133	2	.372	.592
1958	Amarillo	148	606	114	204	44	5	24	126	3	.337	.545

Al Pinkston's impact on his new team was evidenced in their home opener of the season that was played on May 5th in Amarillo, Texas. After winning four of their first six games on the road, expectations were high for the 3,264 Gold Sox fans that had come to the Sunday doubleheader. Besides being their home opener, this was also the first game ever played in their new \$ 375,000 Potter County Stadium. The Amarillo Gold Sox were down 6-0 to the Pueblo Dodgers going into the bottom of the ninth inning. The Gold Sox rallied back to bring the score to within one run. With two men on base, Alfred Pinkston hit a towering homerun over the centerfield fence to give Amarillo an 8 to 6 win over Pueblo. Of the five hits in game one of the scheduled doubleheader, three of them belonged to Pinkston. Al also led his team to a 2 to 1 victory the second game of the doubleheader. Alfred Pinkston was an immediate hero and fan favorite in Amarillo.

The Gold Sox had an excellent hitting team and finished the 1957 season with an even .300 team batting average. Al Pinkston led the team in hitting with a .372 batting average and finished second in the Western League batting title race. He lost the batting title by two points to Sammy Miley of Lincoln who hit .374. Al did lead the Western League in runs batting in with 133 and his slugging percentage of .592 average was the second best in the Western League for the 1957 season. Amarillo's starting pitching rotation for the 1957 season was outstanding and included the following four pitchers: Hugh Blanton (20-9), Kenneth Yoke (20-8), Gerald Speck (11-7) and Fred Besana (10-3). The Amarillo Gold Sox finished the 1957 Western League season with a record of 97-57 (.630). They were just one game behind the Lincoln Chiefs (98-56) for the Western League title.



Amarillo Gold Sox
(1957-1958)

When the 1958 season opened, Pinkston was back in the starting line-up for the Gold Sox playing in the outfield. Pinkston had another outstanding year for Amarillo in 1958. He led the Western League in hits (204), doubles (44), total bases (330), slugging percentage (.545) and runs batted in (126). Al also led the Gold Sox in homeruns (24) and his batting average of .337 was the second best on the team, right behind Dixie Upright's .343. Hugh Blanton (20-6) was the ace of the pitching staff and finished with his second straight twenty win season. The Amarillo Gold Sox

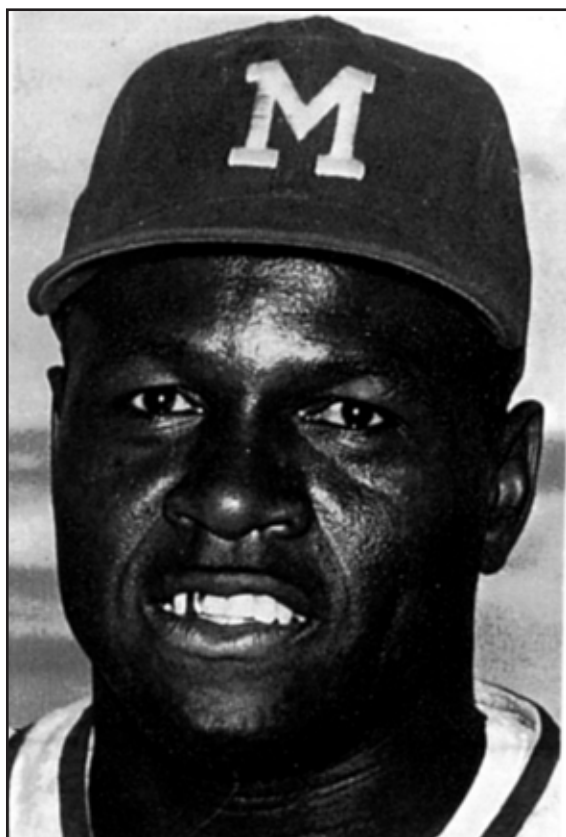
had another good season in 1958 but for the second straight year finished in second place in the final league standings. They had a record of 84-63 (.571) and were three games behind the Colorado Sky Sox (87-60).

Before the 1958 season was over, the owners of the Gold Sox had an offer from the Baltimore Orioles to join their Minor League system. The deal called for Amarillo to join the Texas League as a Baltimore farm team. Unfortunately for the 1958 Gold Sox players, the Orioles already had players within their own organization to fill out Amarillo's Texas League roster. When the season was over the best players were sold to other clubs. In February of 1959, Pinkston's contract was sold to the Portland Beavers of the Pacific Coast League. Portland immediately turned around two weeks later and sold Al to the Mexico City Red Devils of the Mexican League.

A Minor League Career in the United States of Which to be Proud

Over his career in Minor League baseball in the United States, Alfred Pinkston put up excellent numbers. He was a consistent .300 hitter. He hit .331 at Williamsport, .360 at Savannah, .300 at Columbus, .372 first season in Amarillo and .337 his last season there. But when promoted to Triple A ball, he was evidently not impressive enough to be given much of a chance. Pinkston hit well (.300) in his only full season (1955) at Triple A, even though he was given limited playing time. Pinkston's career statistics in the Minor Leagues in the United States were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1953	Ottawa	45	101	9	20	6	0	1	9	0	.198	.287
1953	Williamsport	70	278	47	92	15	4	10	47	5	.331	.522
1954	Savannah	136	500	100	180	33	4	27	102	9	.360	.604
1955	Columbus	71	227	38	68	13	2	8	34	1	.300	.480
1956	Columbus	12	22	1	4	1	0	0	1	0	.182	.227
1956	Columbia Jacksonville	77	263	36	77	15	4	4	31	2	.293	.426
1957	Amarillo	141	554	104	206	41	6	23	133	2	.372	.592
1958	Amarillo	148	606	114	204	44	5	24	126	3	.337	.545
Totals		700	2551	449	851	168	25	97	483	22	.334	.533



Pinkston Goes to Mexico

Pinkston's play in the Western League had attracted the Mexican League scouts. After the Mexico City Diablos Rojos (Red Devils) purchased his contract from Portland, Pinkston was signed to play for them for their 1959 Mexican League season.

At the time he signed to play in Mexico, Alfred Pinkston was already 42 years of age. Most players of his age had long been retired. Age wasn't a factor for Pinkston in Mexico, as he won four straight Mexican League batting titles in his first four seasons in Mexico (1959 - .369, 1960 - .397, 1961 - .374 and 1962 - .381).

In Mexico City Pinkston joined fellow former Negro League players Alonzo Perry and Marvin Williams who also played with the Red Devils in 1959. They were the only players on the team to hit over .300 for the season. Pinkston led the league with a .369 batting average, Perry hit .333 and Williams batted .310 with a league leading 109 runs batted in. Al Pinkston also led the league in hits (197) and doubles (34).

During the season Al Pinkston put together a 31 game hitting streak that fell just four games short of the Mexican League record. The complete batting statistics for the trio of Pinkston, Perry and Williams for the 1959 Mexico City Red Devils is as follows:

	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
Al Pinkston	140	534	114	197	34	11	13	97	7	.369	.547
Alonzo Perry	127	459	93	153	29	9	12	94	7	.333	.514
Marvin Williams	109	378	76	117	14	2	29	109	1	.310	.587



Alfred Pinkston and Alonzo Perry
Mexico City Red Devils (1959)

Pitching, however, was the downfall of the Red Devils in 1959. Karl Drews (16-8) and Francisco “Panchillo” Ramirez (17-12) anchored the pitching staff for Mexico City. Former Negro League pitchers Alberto Osorio (6-2 with a 2.95 ERA) and Marion “Sugar” Cain (4-8) also pitched for the Red Devils during the season. The Mexico City Red Devils finished the season in third place in the Mexican League with a record of 74-72 (.507). They were ten games behind Poza Rico (84-62) who won the league title.

Team owners convinced Pinkston to return to Mexico for the 1960 season. Unfortunately both Perry and Williams did not return. Al had another great season at the plate. He led the league in batting average (.397), hits (225) and runs batted in (144). His 144 runs batted in broke Josh Gibson’s Mexican League record for RBI’s. Jamie “El Loco” Abad (.357) and Tony Washington were the team’s next two best hitters. Francisco “Panchillo” Ramirez (17-13) and Karl Drews (10-8) were the team’s top two pitchers. In the two seasons that Pinkston played for the Mexico City Red Devils, the biggest problem the team faced was instability in leadership. The team had four different managers in the 1959 and 1960 seasons. The Red Devils finished the 1960 season with a losing record of 69-77 (.473). The Mexico City Tigres won the Mexican League title with a record of 77-66 (.538)

Alfred Pinkston – Mexican League All Star

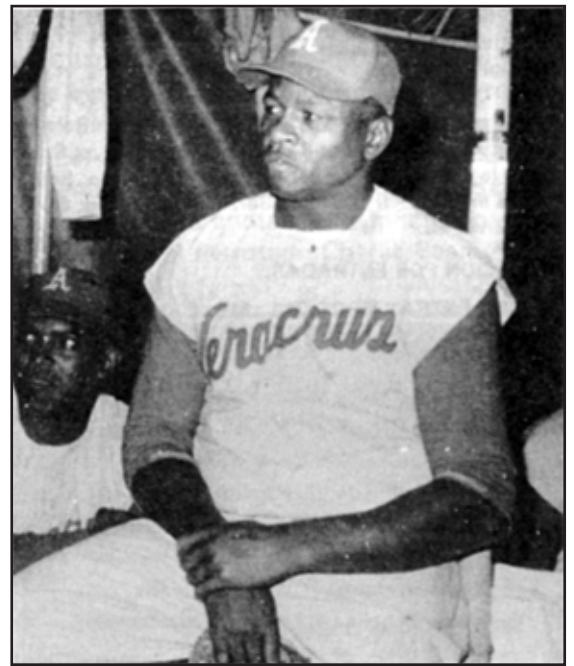


Mexican All Star Team vs Texas League All Star Team (1959)
Pinkston Slams out another Hit



Mexican League All Star Team (1961)
(Pinkston – standing fifth from left)

In 1961, Al Pinkston was traded to the Vera Cruz Aguilas (Eagles) before the start of the season and led them to a Mexican League championship that same year. The trade enraged Mexico City fans because it sent Pinkston, the best player in Mexico, to Vera Cruz for Miguel Fernandez who was a career .286 hitter. Vera Cruz was managed by Latin great Santos Amaro. Al Pinkston produced at the plate as he had always done and led the league in hitting for the third straight year with a .374 batting average. The other leading hitters for Vera Cruz were Asdrubal Baro (.340), Miguel "Pilo" Gaspar (.330), Pablo Bernard (.290) and Mario Ariosa (.280). Santos Amaro got balanced hitting and pitching from his team during the season. Five Aguilas pitchers won at least ten games each during the season. Vera Cruz finished the season with a record of 77-57 (.575) to claim the league title over Puebla (73-61).



Vera Cruz (1961-1965)

Pinkston returned to Mexico in 1962 to play for Santos Amaro and help Vera Cruz defend its Mexican League title. Pinkston continued his hot hitting throughout the 1962 season and won his unprecedented fourth straight batting title with a .381 batting average. Al also led the league in hits with 172. His complete statistics for the 1962 season were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1962	Vera Cruz	123	451	75	172	33	8	8	87	5	.381	.543

Asdrubal Baro (.312) and Mario Ariosa (.281) also pitched in on the offensive side for Vera Cruz. Ramon Arano Bravo (17-6 with a 2.60 ERA) was the ace of the pitching staff. Vera Cruz went 69-61 (.531) and finished the season runner-up to the Monterrey Sultanes (77-53) for the league title.

After another outstanding season in Mexico in 1962, Al was contacted by the Cleveland Indians of the American League about signing and was invited to the Indians spring training for the 1963 season. These plans went by the wayside when Al suffered a multiple fracture of his elbow in late 1962. The Indians withdrew their offer and Pinkston returned to Vera Cruz for the 1963 season.

Recovering from what could have been a career ending injury, playing on two bad knees and being 45 years of age dramatically affected Pinkston at the start of the 1963 Mexican League season. He started the season seeking his fifth straight batting title but got off to a slow start. In early May he was hitting .313 and ranked 18th among the league's top hitters. His slow start did not deter him and only made him more determined to produce offensively. By mid-June he had raised his average to 8th place in the league and by mid-July he was in 5th place. By the end of July he was in 2nd place, 21 points behind Vincinio "Chico" Garcia and by mid-August he had cut the deficit to just 13 points. Then by the closing days of the season he overtook Garcia and was leading the league. Pinkston's bid for a fifth straight batting title, however, came up just short when he broke his hand and missed the last week of the season. With an idle Pinkston sitting on the bench, Garcia got two hits to move ahead of Al by the miniscule margin of .0004. Garcia then chose to sit out the last two games of the season to ensure that he would win the batting championship. Even though he did not win the batting title, Al Pinkston still batted .368, hit 20 homeruns, drove in 91 runs and compiled a slugging percentage of .612 for the season. He accomplished all of this in only 113 games.

As a team Vera Cruz got good hitting during the 1963 season. Mario Flores (.375) and Asdrubal Baro (.301) joined Pinkston as the team's leading hitters. Unfortunately for manager Santos Amaro, he didn't get any pitching during then season. Danny Hayling (10-15) had the best season among a very weak pitching staff. Vera Cruz finished the season in next to last place (6th out of 7 teams) in the Mexican League with a record of 56-76 (.424). Puebla won the championship with an impressive record of 80-52 (.606).

Vera Cruz team owners made major changes before the start of the 1964 baseball season. Santos Amaro was replaced as manager by Wilfredo Calvino and numerous roster changes were made. Calvino seemed to breathe new life and enthusiasm into the team. Resigning Al Pinkston was a major component for Calvino in rebuilding a winning tradition in Vera Cruz. Pinkston did not disappoint team owners and his new manager in their confidence in him. Pinkston led the team in hitting during the season with a .364 batting average and finished in second place for the Mexican League batting title just behind Hector Espino (.371). Four other Vera Cruz players hit over .300 for the season. They were Mario Ariosa (.327), Witty Quintana (.320), Hilario Salinas (.310) and Rene Friol (.304). Alberto Osorio (15-5 with 2.56 ERA) was the ace of the pitching staff. With Calvino at the helm, the team went from 56-76 (.424) under Amaro in 1963 to 78-62 (.557) in 1964. Vera Cruz finished the season in third place one game behind Puebla (79-61) and four games behind the Mexico City Rojos (82-58).



Alfred Pinkston, Jiqui Moreno and Harry "Suitcase" Simpson
Mexican League All Stars (1964)

The 1965 season was Pinkston's last in Mexico and his last as a professional baseball player. In 1965 Pinkston played in his 15th season of Minor League baseball and was 47 years old. Alfred Pinkston ended his career in style. He led his team in hitting with a .345 batting average. The only other two Aguilas players to hit over .300 for the year were Mario Ariosa (.317) and Jesus Bustamante (.312). Danny Hayling (15-12), Luis Malpica Saenz (13-10) and Alberto Osorio (11-14) made up the starting pitching rotation. The Vera Cruz line-up struggled all season and finished the season with a losing record of 65-75 (.464) which put them in sixth place in the eight-team Mexican League.

Hall of Fame Career in Mexico

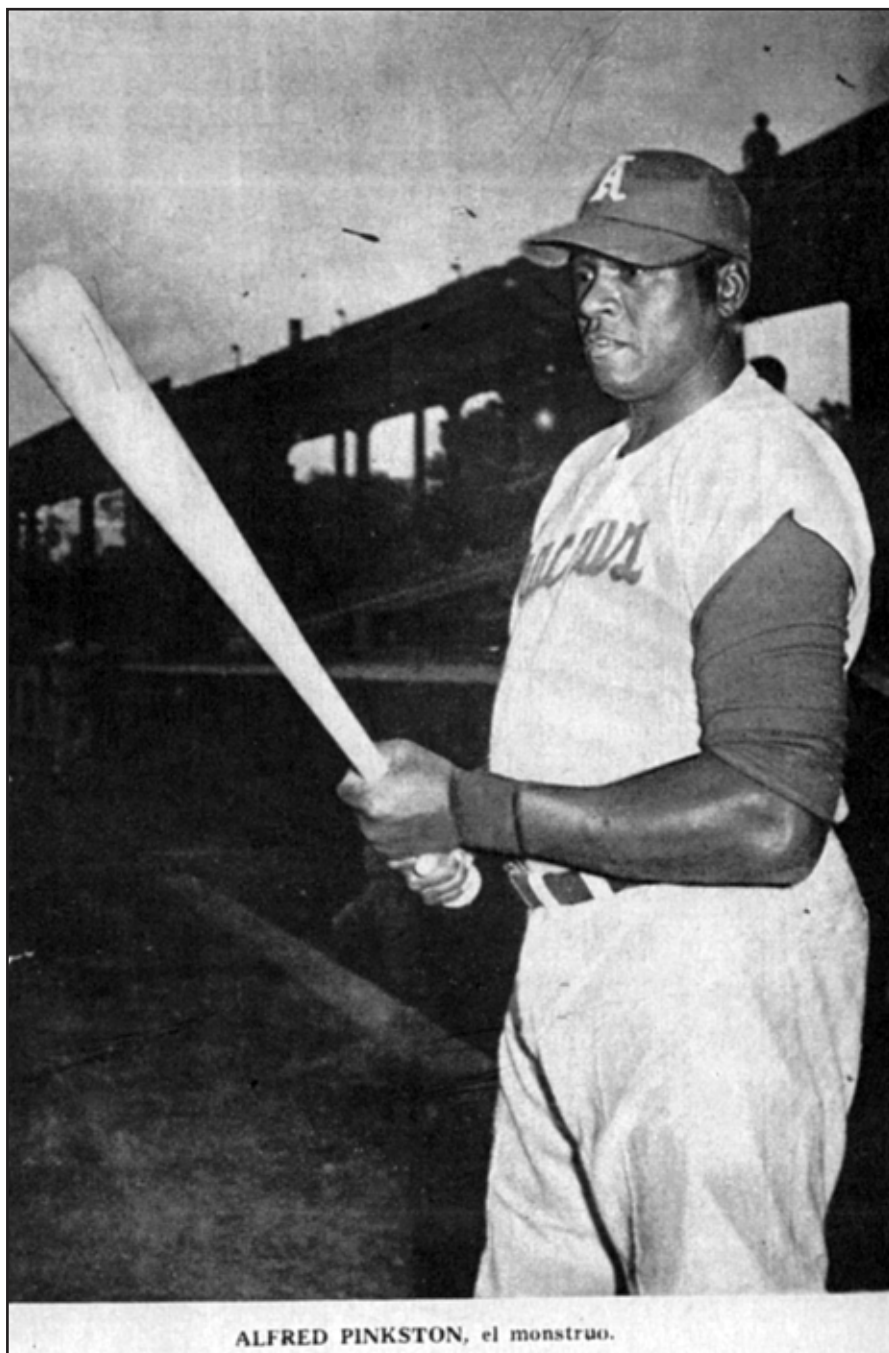
Pinkston retired from the Mexican League after the 1965 season at the age of 48 with a career batting average of .372. His career batting average is a record that still stands today. Pinkston's career batting statistics in Mexico were:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1959	Mexico City	140	534	114	197	34	11	13	97	7	.369	.547
1960	Mexico City	138	567	110	225	41	11	26	144	4	.397	.646
1961	Vera Cruz	109	406	79	152	26	4	13	86	4	.374	.554
1962	Vera Cruz	123	451	75	172	33	8	8	87	5	.381	.543
1963	Vera Cruz	113	394	61	145	34	1	20	91	1	.368	.612
1964	Vera Cruz	136	475	86	173	32	5	17	89	0	.364	.560
1965	Vera Cruz	120	406	49	140	27	0	11	65	0	.345	.493
Totals		879	3233	574	1204	227	40	108	659	21	.372	.568

During his seven year career in Mexico, Alfred Pinkston was selected to the Mexican League All-Star team every season except his last year in the league. Al compiled a career batting average of .452 with a .581 slugging percentage in his eleven (11) Mexican League All-Star games. His complete hitting statistics for his Mexican League All-Star career are as follows:

Games	11
At Bats	31
Runs	11
Hits	14
Doubles	2
Triples	0
Homeruns	1
Runs Batted In	5
Stolen Bases	-
Batting Average	.452
Slugging Percent	.581

Alfred Pinkston set numerous hitting records during his career in Mexico. Some of them are as follows: most runs batted in for a season (144), most base hits in a season (225), most total bases in a season (366), most homeruns in a game (3), most runs batted in for one game (6) and most years leading in hits (3).



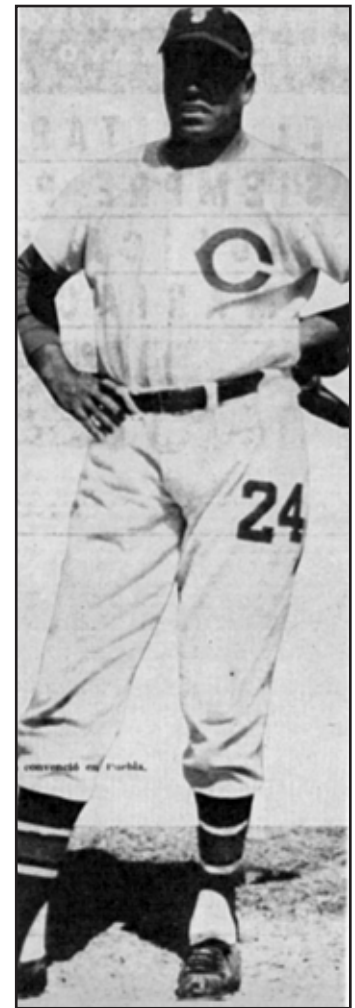
ALFRED PINKSTON, el monstruo.

Winter League Baseball

Like most other ball players of his time, Pinkston had to have a job in the winter off-season. Winter baseball in Latin America provided an answer for him. Al Pinkston made his first trip to Latin America in 1956 when he signed to play for Cerveza Balboa for the 1956-57 Panamanian League season. Cerveza Balboa was managed by Negro Leaguer Leon Kellman. The Panamanian season was hard fought and the championship went down to the final day of the season. Cerveza Balboa (16-14) narrowly edged out Chesterfield (15-15) and Carta Vieja (14-16) for the league title. Their victory earned them a trip to the Caribbean World Series that was held in Havana, Cuba. Led by the pitching of Winston Brown, Cerveza Balboa finished in second place with a record of 3-3 just behind the Mariano Tigres (4-2) for the Caribbean World Series title.

According to Archie Braithwaite, who was a teammate of Pinkston's in both Canada and Panama, Al Pinkston made several trips over the years to play baseball in Panama but these statistics are not available.

After the 1959 regular Mexican League season was over, Pinkston stayed in Mexico to play baseball for the 1959-60 winter league season with the Puebla Camoterros of the Liga Veracruzana. Al was selected to the Liga Veracruzana All Star team for the 1959-60 season.



Puebla Camoterros
(1959-60)



Unknown Pericos Player and Al Pinkston
Puebla Camoterros (1959-60)

Al Pinkston returned to Latin America in 1961 to play for the Marlboro Smokers. When the Panamanian League disbanded after the 1960 season, Marlboro played in the Nicaraguan Professional Baseball League. Pinkston led the Marlboro Smokers to a Nicaraguan League championship during the 1961-62 winter league season. Their Nicaraguan championship earned the Smokers a place in the Inter-American Series which had replaced the Caribbean World Series. Pinkston was named to the tournament all-star squad for the 1962 Inter-American Series.

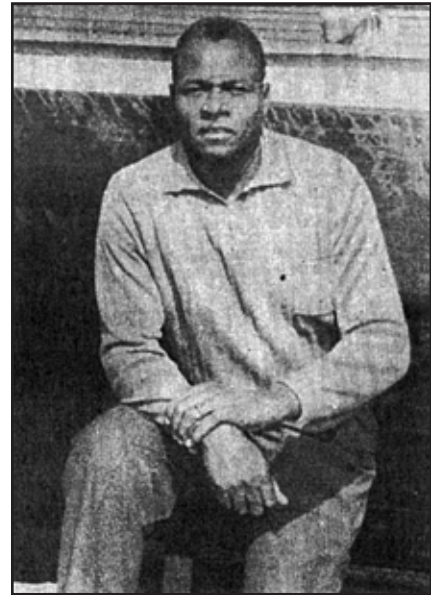
The following winter league season of 1962-63, Al played baseball back in Mexico for the Minatitlan Petroleros of the Liga Veracruzana. His manager in Mexico was former Memphis Red Sox and Brooklyn Dodgers pitcher Dan Bankhead. Pinkston's winter league season in Mexico was cut short when he crashed into a wall in the outfield and broke his arm in two places.

Passing of a Legend

After Al retired from baseball, he returned home to New Orleans and went back to his job as a long shore man on the Mississippi River or the “River” as locals called it. Pinkston also worked as a carpenter, electrician’s helper and plumber’s helper from time to time. He would, however, make one more appearance in a baseball uniform in 1969 when he joined his son Alfred Jr. to play for the New Orleans Red Sox of the New Orleans City League. Alfred Jr. went on to play college baseball at Southern University and later became a coach in the New Orleans area.

His accomplishments in baseball in Mexico were formally recognized in 1974 when he was inducted into the Mexican Baseball Hall of Fame. In 1977 he was also inducted into the National Black Sports Hall of Fame.

Alfred Charles Pinkston suffered a heart attack and passed away on March 18, 1981 at Parkview Memorial Hospital in Fort Wayne, Indiana and was buried in his adopted hometown of New Orleans, Louisiana.



Alfred Charles Pinkston
1917-1981

Alfred C. Pinkston

Services will be at 11 a.m. Saturday in McKee Street Church of God for Alfred C. Pinkston, 63, of 2404 Otsego Drive, who came to Fort Wayne four weeks ago from New Orleans. He died at 1 a.m. Wednesday in Parkview Memorial Hospital, where he was a patient two days. He was a World War II veteran.

Surviving are his wife, Velma; two daughters, Nancy Sutton of New Orleans, and Mary Alice Hope of Detroit; two sons, Charles of Cincinnati, and Alfred Jr. of New Orleans; four sisters, Fannie Lowery, Ola Mae Massey, Florine Goodson and Janie G. Hunt, all of Fort Wayne; and three brothers, Eddie, in Connecticut, Levi of Detroit, and Jacob of Fort Wayne.

Friends may call from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday at Michaux Funeral Home. Interment will be in New Orleans.

Alfred Charles Pinkston – Obituary
Times Picayune
New Orleans, LA
03-26-81

Assessing Al Pinkston's Career

It is important to take the following into consideration when evaluating Al Pinkston's career.

- Al Pinkston was a **pure hitter** his entire baseball career which spanned from 1947 to 1965. Al started his professional career on a fulltime basis with the New Orleans Creoles of the Negro Southern League and hit over .300 in each of his four seasons with the team from 1947 to 1950. According to newspaper reports he hit .389 in 1949 and .380 in 1950. He entered "organized" ball in 1951 and retired after the 1965 season. Pinkston hit .301 in his first season in "organized" ball with Farnham and fifteen (15) years later, Al batted .345 for Vera Cruz of the Mexican League in 1965.

He batted over .300 for 17 of the 19 seasons that he played professional baseball on a fulltime basis. His only two seasons when he did not hit .300 were 1953 when he batted .296 and 1956 when he hit .284.

Pinkston put up the following numbers for his career in "organized" baseball:

Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1827	6729	1193	2368	461	75	250	1335	82	.352	.554

- Pinkston **hit for both average and power**. Al had a career batting average of .352 in "organized" ball. He won six (6) batting titles (1952 - .360, 1954 - .360, 1959 - .369, 1960 - .397, 1961 - .374 and 1962 - .381) and came in second for the league batting title on four other occasions (1953 - .331, 1957 - .372, 1963 - .368 and 1964 .364). Only one other player (Smead Jolley) in the history of Minor League baseball besides Al Pinkston has six batting titles. He led his league in thirty-three (33) offensive categories over his career. Al was also a power hitter who hit 250 homeruns in "organized" ball and compiled a career slugging percentage of .554.
- Pinkston's **productivity at the plate over the age of 40** is better than any other professional baseball player who ever played the game. He seemed to be like a fine wine that only got better with age. In the nine seasons he played after the age of 40, he hit for a .367 batting average and a slugging percentage of .567. He retired at the age of 48 with a .345 batting average in his final season in professional baseball.

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1957	Amarillo	141	554	104	206	41	6	23	133	2	.372	.592
1958	Amarillo	148	606	114	204	44	5	24	126	3	.337	.545
1959	Mexico City	140	534	114	197	34	11	13	97	7	.369	.547
1960	Mexico City	138	567	110	225	41	11	26	144	4	.397	.646
1961	Vera Cruz	109	406	79	152	26	4	13	86	4	.374	.554
1962	Vera Cruz	123	451	75	172	33	8	8	87	5	.381	.543
1963	Vera Cruz	113	394	61	145	34	1	20	91	1	.368	.612
1964	Vera Cruz	136	475	86	173	32	5	17	89	0	.364	.560
1965	Vera Cruz	120	406	49	140	27	0	11	65	0	.345	.493
Totals		1168	4393	792	1614	312	51	155	918	26	.367	.567

- Al Pinkston **drove in runs**. In 1827 games in "organized" ball, Pinkston drove in 1335 runs. During his career he won five runs batted in titles: 1952 (121), 1954 (102), 1957 (133), 1958 (126) and 1960 (144). Over his 15 year career in "organized" baseball he averaged playing 122 games per year and averaged 89 runs batted in per season. If he had averaged 150 games per season this could have resulted in 109 runs batted in per season.
- Alfred Pinkston **dominated play** everywhere he played. Over his career he **won at least thirty-three (33) offensive- hitting titles**. The number thirty-three is qualified because we do not have complete statistics from the Negro Southern League or the leagues where he played winter baseball.

- Pinkston was an **all-star caliber player almost everywhere he played**. Our research has identified thirteen (13) different all-star teams to which Al Pinkston was selected during his career in “organized” baseball. It is still unclear if the Negro Southern League even named an all-star team at the end of the season because we have never uncovered any mention of a Negro Southern Association All Star team in the newspapers of the day. In addition there are still several leagues and years when he played in “organized” ball for which we are still trying to locate an all-star team listing. Years and leagues for which we have identified that Al Pinkston was selected to the league’s all-star team are as follows:

League	Year (s)
North-South All Star Game	1949
Canadian Provincial League	1952
South Atlantic League	1954
Western League	1957 and 1958
Liga Veracruzana	1959-60
Mexican League	1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963 and 1964
Inter-American Series	1962

In eleven (11) Mexican League All-Star games Pinkston batted .452 (14 for 31) with a .581 slugging percentage.

- Al Pinkston’s hitting helped lead **seven different teams to league championships**.

Year	Team	League
1948	New Orleans Creoles	Negro Southern League
1949	New Orleans Creoles	Negro Texas League
1952	St. Hyacinthe Athletics	Canadian Provincial League
1956	Jacksonville Braves	South Atlantic League
1957	Cerveza Balboa	Panamanian League
1961	Vera Cruz Aguilas	Mexican League
1961-62	Marlboro Smokers	Nicaraguan League

- We are **missing several years of hitting statistics**. Al played his first season in 1936. The first year we have complete statistics for him is 1951. Taking into consideration that he served approximately three to four years in the military during World War II, we are still missing 10 or 11 seasons of statistics. We also know Al played several seasons of winter league ball in Panama and Mexico. We do not have any of those numbers. If you project out these missing seasons, Pinkston’s career numbers might look as follows: 3,000 to 4,000 hits, 350 to 400 homeruns and 2,000+ runs batted.
- Starting in the mid 1950’s, Pinkston was **plagued by injuries**. His first knee injury occurred before the start of the 1953 season. When he finally made it up to Triple A with Columbus in 1955 and was hitting the ball well, he suffered from multiple injuries that limited his playing time during the entire season. Knee problems are also referenced in the Amarillo newspaper when he played for the Gold Sox in 1957. Al seriously injured his hand and wrist in 1959. In 1962 when the Cleveland Indians were interested in signing him he broke his elbow in two places playing winter ball in Mexico. Lastly, a broken in hand in 1963 cost him a fifth batting title in Mexico.
- It is important to note that Al Pinkston **did not enter professional baseball on a fulltime basis until he was 30 years old**. By thirty, most players would already have had ten years into their careers when Al just got started. These could have been the most productive years of his baseball career.

It is easy to sum up Al Pinkston’s baseball career. He was simply a **“great hitter.”** He may have been the “greatest” hitter to have never played in the Major Leagues.

Pinkston in Mexico



Pinkston Scores Winning Run in Mexican League All Star Game



Aldo Salvent and Alfred Pinkston
Mexican League Hitting Rivals

Playing Career

Year	Team	League	Major – Minor League Affiliation
1936	St. Louis Stars	Negro National League	
1947	New Orleans Creoles	Negro Southern Association	
1948	Cleveland Buckeyes	Negro American League (Spring Training)	
1948	New Orleans Creoles	Negro Southern Association	
1949	New Orleans Creoles	Negro Texas League	
1949	New Orleans Creoles	Barnstorming Tour of Canada	
1950	New Orleans Creoles	Negro Southern League	
1950	New Orleans Creoles	Barnstorming Tour of Canada	
1951	Farnham Pirates	Canadian Provincial League	
1952	St. Hyacinthe Athletics	Canadian Provincial League	Philadelphia Athletics
1953	Ottawa Athletics	International League	Philadelphia Athletics
1953	Williamsport Athletics	Eastern League	Philadelphia Athletics
1954	Savannah Athletics	South Atlantic League	Philadelphia Athletics
1955-1956	Columbus Jets	International League	Kansas City Athletics
1956	Columbia Gems	South Atlantic League	Kansas City Athletics
1956	Jacksonville Braves	South Atlantic League	Milwaukee Braves
1957	Amarillo Gold Sox	Western League	Sacramento Solons (PCL)
1958	Amarillo Gold Sox	Western League	
1959-1960	Mexico City Red Devils	Mexican League	
1961-1965	Vera Cruz Aguilas	Mexican League	

- Alfred Pinkston was also part of the Minneapolis Millers (1952) and Portland Beavers organizations but never played for either team.

Winter Leagues

1948	Negro All Stars	Game vs Jackie Robinson All Stars
1949	New Orleans Creoles	Series vs Jackie Robinson All Stars
1949	New Orleans Creoles	Game vs Satchel Paige All Stars
1956-57	Cerveza Balboa	Panamanian Professional Baseball League
1957	Cerveza Balboa	Caribbean World Series (Havana, Cuba)
1959-60	Puebla Camoteros	Liga Invernal Veracruzana
1961-62	Marlboro Smokers	Nicaraguan Professional Baseball League
1962	Marlboro Smokers	Inter-American Series
1962-63	Minatitlan Petroleros	Liga Veracruzana



Minatitlan Petroleros (1962-63)
(Pinkston - back row fourth from right)

Alfred Pinkston in the Negro Leagues

Pinkston, Creole catcher, boosted the score to 9-5 with an eighth inning homer, and the Buds finished the scoring in the last of that inning on Young's third single, a stolen base and Leach's second hit. The box score:

New Orleans		Benton Harbor	
Ab	H	O	A
Horne, ss	5	1	0
Favors, lb	5	2	6
Brown, 3b	3	2	1
Armour, cf	4	0	1
Pinkston, lf-c	4	3	5
Terral, c-1f	4	2	4
Mets, 2b	4	0	5
Andres, rf	4	1	1
Williams, p	1	0	1
Crew, p	0	0	0
Smith, p	2	0	0
Holly	1	0	0

Totals ... 37 11 24 5 Totals ... 39 11 27 9
 *Batted for Smith in ninth.

Score by Innings:

New Orleans 010 100 210-- 3
 Benton Harbor 305 000 21x--10

Runs—Terral, Pinkston 2, Horne, Smith.

Todhunter, Phipps 2, Jabb, Fuchs, Young

2, Leach 2, Felderman, Soderlind, Errors—

Horne 2, Pinkston 2, Smith, Todhunter.

Runs Batted In—Brown 2, Pinkston, Ter-

rel, Decker 2, Fuchs 3, Young 2, Leach 2.

Home Runs—Fuchs, Pinkston. Two Base

Hits — Pinkston 2, Decker, Todhunter.

Stolen Bases—Favors, Terrel, Decker, Tod-

hunter, Phipps, Young. Left on Bases—

Creoles 8; Benton Harbor, 16. Strike Outs—

By Williams 2, Smith 5, Soderlind 13.

Bases on Balls—Williams 1, Smith 2, Soder-

lind 1. Hits—OF Williams 7 for 7 runs in

2 1 3 Innings, off Crew 4 for 6 runs in

2 3 Innings, off Smith 4 for 3 runs in 3

Innings. Passed Ball—Pinkston.

Umpires—Lamb and McGary.

Time of Game—2 hours, 4 minutes.

BASEBALL AT
this week **COPELAND PARK**

Tuesday, 8:15 p. m.—VFW vs. Merchants
 Wednesday, 8:15 p. m.—La Crosse vs. Newburgs
 Thursday, 8:15 p. m.—Onoska vs. AFL

Admission, Each Game:
 Men 50c, Women and Students 25c, Children 10c
 (All prices include tax.)

EXHIBITION GAMES
FRIDAY, 8:15 P. M.

NEW ORLEANS CREOLES
 Southern Negro League 1949 Champions
 vs.
ALL-STARs

Admission: Adults 75c, Children 25c.
 (Prices include tax.)



New Orleans Creoles vs All Stars
La Crosse Tribune
 La Crosse, WI
 07-31-50

New Orleans vs Benton Harbor
 Pinkston Goes 3 for 4
 Homerun and 2 Doubles

Benton Harbor News Palladium
 Benton Harbor, MI
 07-13-48

BASEBALL
NEW ORLEANS CREOLES
 vs. **ELMWOOD GIANTS**

TUES. & WED. AUGUST 9 & 10

OSBORNE STADIUM 8 p.m.

Admission: Adults 75c & 1.00; Children 25c

New Orleans Creoles vs Elmwood Giants
Winnipeg Free Press
 Winnipeg, Manitoba
 08-09-49

BASEBALL
SPECIAL ATTRACTION

Return Engagement of

New Orleans Council Bluffs
CREOLES vs. **RAINBOWS**

2 SENSATIONAL GIRL PLAYERS

Ina Lou Spaulding, newly acquired 2nd baseman for the
 RAINBOWS . . . against "Tony" Stone of the New Orleans
 CREOLES.

MONDAY, 8:15 P. M., LEGION PARK

New Orleans Creoles vs Council Bluffs Rainbows
 Game Featured Two Women Players

Council Bluffs Nonpariel
 Council Bluffs, IA
 07-23-50

Career Statistics – Hitting (Negro League – Regular Season)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1947	New Orleans	-	-	-	-	-	-	23	-	-	-	-
1948	New Orleans	No records available										
1949	New Orleans	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	-	-	.385	-
1950	New Orleans	-	-	-	-	-	-	42	-	-	.380	-

Career Statistics – Hitting (Non-League Games - Regular Season)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1948	New Orleans	1	4	2	3	2	0	1	1	-	.750	3.000
1949	New Orleans	3	13	1	6	1	4	1	3	-	.462	1.286
1950	New Orleans	8	30	10	14	1	-	4	7	-	.467	.900
	Total	12	47	14	23	4	4	6	11	-	.489	1.128

Career Statistics – Hitting (“Organized Ball” – Regular Season)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1951	Farnham	123	465	67	140	32	6	15	72	21	.301	.492
1952	St. Hyacinthe	125	480	103	173	34	4	30	121	18	.360	.635
1953	Ottawa	45	101	9	20	6	0	1	9	0	.198	.287
1953	Williamsport	70	278	47	92	15	4	10	47	5	.331	.522
1954	Savannah	136	500	100	180	33	4	27	102	9	.360	.604
1955	Columbus	71	227	38	68	13	2	8	34	1	.300	.480
1956	Columbus	12	22	1	4	1	0	0	1	0	.182	.227
1956	Columbia	77	263	36	77	15	4	4	31	2	.293	.426
	Jacksonville											
1957	Amarillo	141	554	104	206	41	6	23	133	2	.372	.592
1958	Amarillo	148	606	114	204	44	5	24	126	3	.337	.545
1959	Mexico City	140	534	114	197	34	11	13	97	7	.369	.547
1960	Mexico City	138	567	110	225	41	11	26	144	4	.397	.646
1961	Vera Cruz	109	406	79	152	26	4	13	86	4	.374	.554
1962	Vera Cruz	123	451	75	172	33	8	8	87	5	.381	.543
1963	Vera Cruz	113	394	61	145	34	1	20	91	1	.368	.612
1964	Vera Cruz	136	475	86	173	32	5	17	89	0	.364	.560
1965	Vera Cruz	120	406	49	140	27	0	11	65	0	.345	.493
Totals	Canada	248	945	170	313	66	10	45	193	39	.331	.565
	Minors	700	2551	449	851	168	25	97	483	22	.334	.533
	Mexico	879	3233	574	1204	227	40	108	659	21	.372	.568
	Totals	1827	6729	1193	2368	461	75	250	1335	82	.352	.554

Career Statistics – Hitting (Mexican League All-Star Games)

Year	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1959-1965	11	31	11	14	2	0	1	5	-	.452	.581

Al Pinkston – Mexico City Red Devils



Al Pinkston – 1960 Mexico City Red Devils
Pinkston on Bench waiting to Hit



Al Pinkston – 1960 Mexico City Red Devils
Game Winning Homerun

Batting and League Leader Titles

Category	Year	League	Number
Batting Average	1952	Canadian Provincial League	.360
	1954	South Atlantic League	.360
	1959	Mexican League	.369
	1960	Mexican League	.397
	1961	Mexican League	.374
	1962	Mexican League	.381
Slugging Percentage	1952	Canadian Provincial League	.635
	1953	Eastern League	.522
	1954	South Atlantic League	.604
	1960	Mexican League	.646
	1961	Mexican League	.554
	1963	Mexican League	.612
Base Hits	1954	South Atlantic League	180
	1958	Western League	204
	1959	Mexican League	197
	1960	Mexican League	225
	1962	Mexican League	172
Total Bases	1952	Canadian Provincial League	305
	1954	South Atlantic League	302
	1958	Western League	330
	1959	Mexican League	292
	1960	Mexican League	366
Runs Scored	1959	Mexican League	114
Doubles	1951	Canadian Provincial League	32
	1958	Western League	44
	1959	Mexican League	34
Homeruns	1947	Negro Southern League	23
	1952	Canadian Provincial League	30
Runs Batted In (RBI)	1952	Canadian Provincial League	121
	1954	South Atlantic League	102
	1957	Western League	133
	1958	Western League	126
	1960	Mexican League	144



Alfred Pinkston
Mexico City Reds (1959-1960)

Latin Baseball Hero

Alfred Pinkston in Mexico



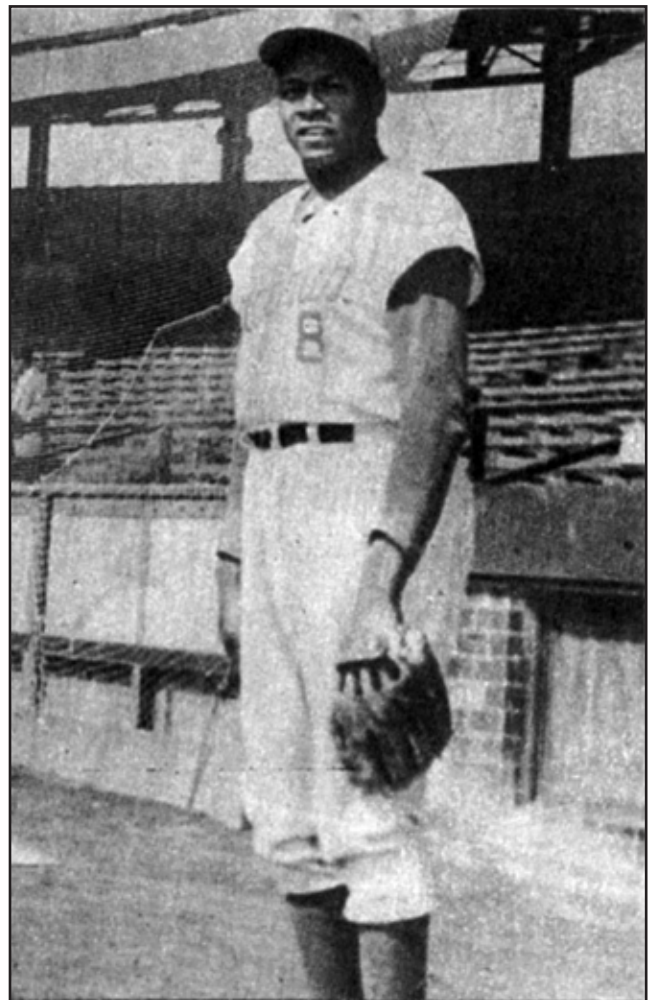
Al Pinkston – Vera Cruz
1961-1965



Al Pinkston – Mexico City Red Devils
Even Injuries could not hold Pinkston Back



Alfred Pinkston
Mexico City



Al Pinkston
Minatitlan (Mexico)
(1962-63)

Selected Career Highlights

- Compiled a career batting average of .352 and a slugging average of .554 in regular season play in “organized” baseball.
- Won the Canadian Provincial League Triple Crown in 1952 with 30 homeruns, 121 runs batted in and a .360 batting average.
- Won six Minor League Batting Titles: 1952 (.360), 1954 (.360), 1959 (.369), 1960 (.397), 1961 (.374) and 1962 (.381). Came in runner-up for the “league” batting title four times (1953 - .331, 1957 - .372, 1963 - .368 and 1964 - .364).
- Compiled the highest career batting average (.372) in Mexican League history.
- Played nine seasons of professional baseball after the age of 40 and compiled the following statistics:

Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1168	4393	792	1614	312	51	155	918	26	.367	.567

- Selected to the South Atlantic League All Star team in 1954.
- Established a South Atlantic League record in 1954 by hitting in 36 consecutive games
- Selected to the Western League All Star team in 1957 and 1958.
- Six time Mexican League All Star team: 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963 and 1964.
- Played in eleven Mexican League All Star games and batted .452 (14 for 31).
- Won five runs batted in titles: 1952 (121), 1954 (102), 1957 (133), 1958 (126) and 1960 (144) in four different leagues.
- Won thirty-three (33) offensive-hitting titles over his professional career.
- In 1952 led the St. Hyacinthe Athletics to a Canadian Provincial League championship.
- Member of the Jacksonville Braves team that won the South Atlantic League title in 1956.
- Member of the Cerveza Balboa team that won the Panamanian League title in 1957 and went on to play in the Caribbean World Series
- Liga Veracruzana All Star Team: 1959-60.
- Led the Vera Cruz Agulias to a Mexican League championship in 1961.
- Inter-American Series All Star Team (1962)
- Mexican Baseball Hall of Fame (1974).
- National Black Sports Hall of Fame (1977).



**Memo Garibay, Felipe Montemayor
and Alfred Pinkston**

editora
MEXICO

\$1.50

Super Hit

EL BEISBOL A LA SEMANA

ALDO SALVENT
Y
AL PINKSTON

