

# **Forgotten Heroes:**

## **Edward “Big Ed” Steele**



**by**

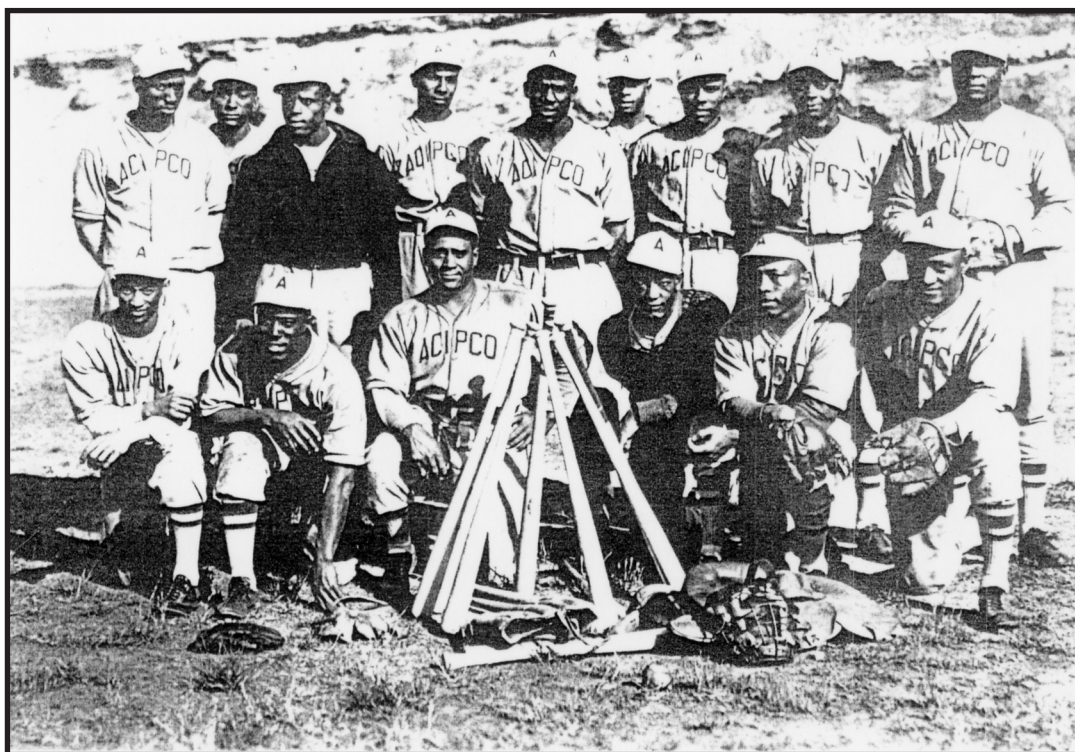
**Center for Negro League Baseball Research**

**Dr. Layton Revel**

**&**

**Luis Munoz**

**Birmingham Industrial League Champions**



**ACIPCO (1938)**  
(Steele – standing fifth from on right)



**ACIPCO (1939)**  
(Steele – back row first on left)

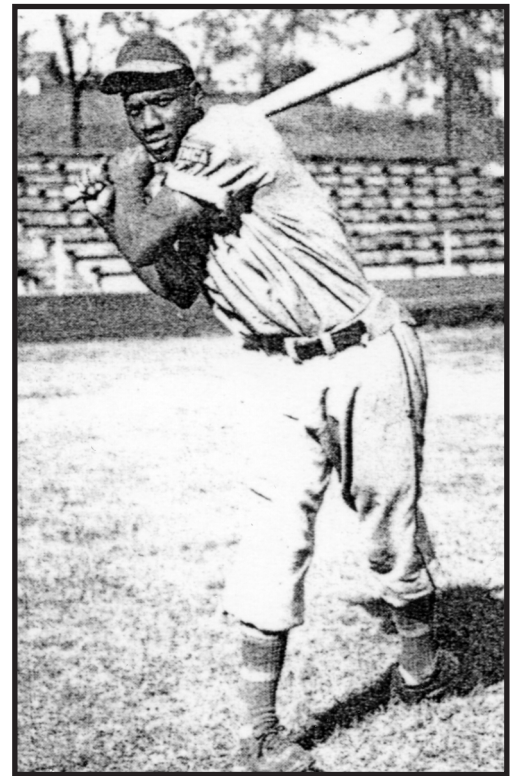


Edward Daniel “Big Ed” or “Stainless” Steele was born in Selma, Alabama on August 8, 1916.

Steele stood 5 feet 10 inches tall and weighed 195 pounds during his playing career. He batted from the left hand side of the plate and threw right handed. He was known as a line drive hitter who hit for both average and power. “Big Ed” was a clutch hitter who could always be counted on to get on base or drive in a run when it was needed. Not only was Ed good at getting on base with his bat but he was also among the Negro American League leaders in getting on base by being hit by a pitch.

Ed Steele was powerfully built and incredibly strong. According to Jake Sanders (Detroit Stars) who played for “Big Ed” in the late 1950’s, “Steele was the strongest man I (Sanders) ever knew.” He also possessed excellent speed for a big man. Steele was proficient at stealing a base and his speed served him well in the outfield.

Defensively, in right field “Big Ed” was exceptional. He had outstanding range and possessed a strong accurate throwing arm. When describing Ed Steele’s ability in the outfield, one reporter said “Steele makes throws that would be waiting for you.”



Edward Steele  
ACIPCO

### **Birmingham Industrial League Career**

Ed Steele’s baseball career began in 1935 when he went to work for the American Cast Iron and Pipe Company (ACIPCO) in Birmingham, Alabama and immediately joined their baseball team. ACIPCO prided themselves on their baseball team and recruited workers who could play championship baseball. Along with the other large companies in the Birmingham area, they played in the Birmingham Industrial League. From the 1920’s through the 1960’s, the Birmingham Industrial League was the strongest semipro league in the country and ACIPCO was the best team in the league during the 1930’s and 1940’s. Prior to Steele joining the team, they had won the league title in six of the preceding seven years from 1928 to 1934. ACIPCO played their home games at Sloss Field and it was not uncommon for them to draw 8,000 to 10,000 fans for a game, especially if they were playing their arch rival, Stockham Valve and Fitting.

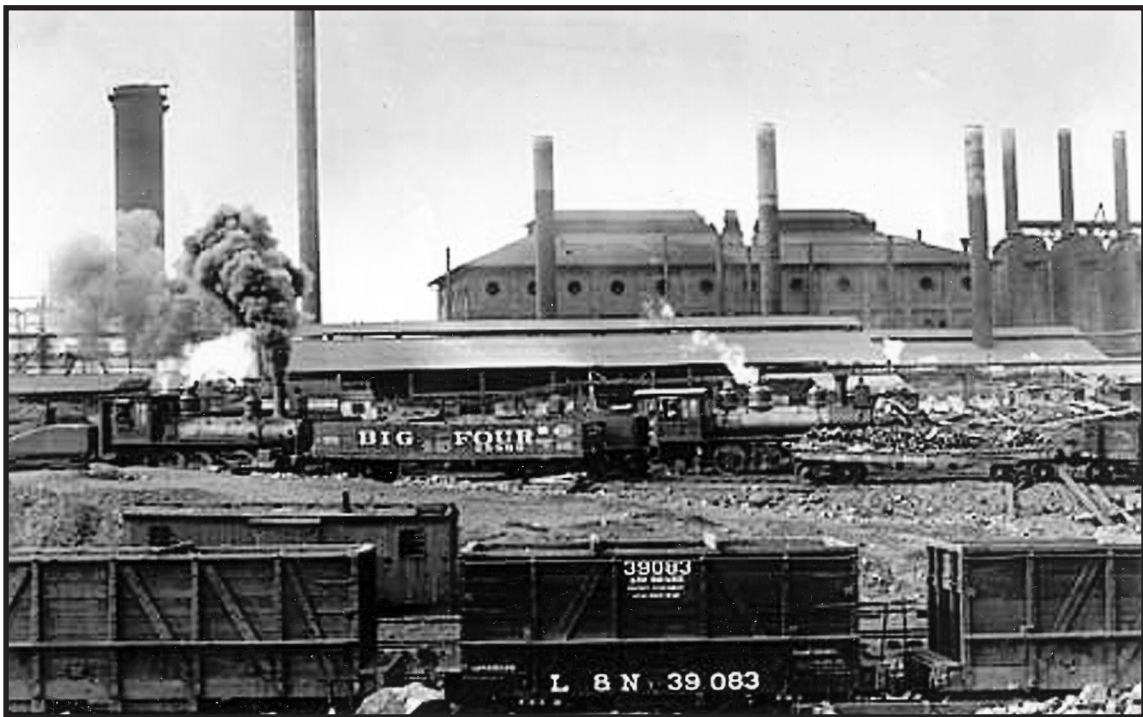
The ACIPCO Pipemen team entered the 1935 season having won five league titles in a row from 1930 through 1934. ACIPCO started the season strong and never looked back. The Pipemen were managed by V.R. Gardner (who was also one of their top pitchers) and had virtually no weakness on the field of play. They had a strong starting line-up that could hit and the best pitching staff in the league. The team’s top pitchers for the 1935 season were Earl Little (18-1), Walter Calhoun (17-0), Carter Gaston (16-2), V.R. Gardner (13-1) and Coleman Forrest (12-0). When the season concluded on September 28<sup>th</sup>, ACIPCO defeated Perfection Mattress and Stockham in back to back games to claim the Birmingham Industrial League title for the sixth season in a row. ACIPCO posted an overall record of 83-5 (.943) for the 1935 baseball season.

The 1936 Birmingham Industrial League season was plagued by injuries all year long for the ACIPCO Pipemen. The team’s regular starting line-up finally came together at the end of the season. To determine the league championship, ACIPCO played the Ensley Giants in a two game series at Rickwood Field. ACIPCO won both games and claimed their seventh consecutive league title.

**American Cast Iron and Pipe Company (ACIPCO)**



**ACIPCO Plant**  
Birmingham, Alabama  
(Late 1930's)



**ACIPCO Plant**  
Birmingham, Alabama  
(Late 1930's)

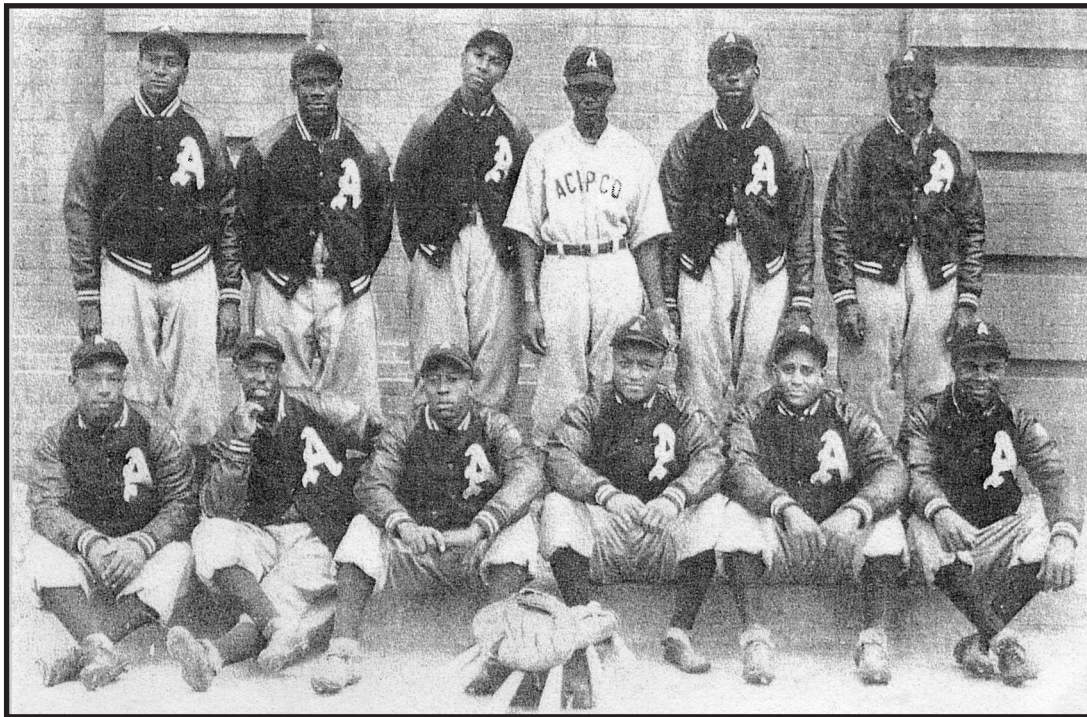


Acipco Colored Baseball Team Wins Industrial League Title Fourth Consecutive Year



**ACIPCO (1937)**  
Birmingham Industrial League Champions  
(Steele – standing second from left)

ACIPCO started the 1937 season with a new manager. Robert Bolden took over the reigns of the team from V.R. Gardner. Bolden inherited a strong line-up that included six players who hit over .300 for the 1937 season. They were Ivory Scott (.419), Artie Wilson (.364), Parker Austin (.356), Ed Steele (.329), James Williams (.323) and Robert Bolden (.304). Unfortunately for Bolden, ACIPCO suffered through their second straight injury plagued season. ACIPCO's starting line-up only appeared in 20 of the 61 games the team played. Even with all the injuries, they played good team baseball throughout the season and finished the year with a record of 45-15-1 (.750) in second place in the final league standings behind Stockham.



**ACIPCO (1938)**  
(Steele – standing second from left)

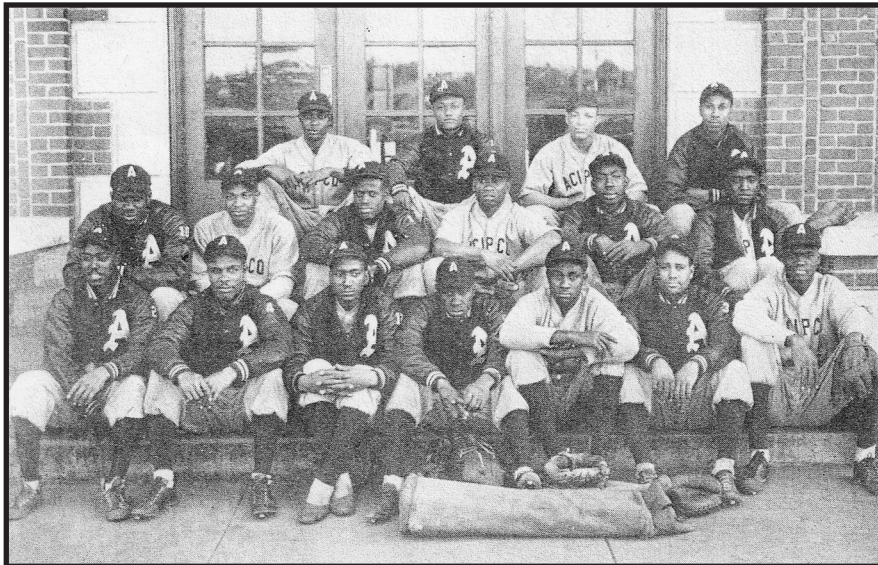
When spring training started on March 14<sup>th</sup> for the 1938 season, “Big Ed” was back in the outfield for ACIPCO and one of their leading hitters. ACIPCO boasted the strongest line-up of hitters in the league. They had eight players in the line-up that hit .333 or better for the 1938 season. These players were Artie Wilson (.419), Waldo Dudley (.390), James Williams (.376), Ed Steele (.375), William Howard (.374), Charlie Woodard (.372), Robert Bolden (.346) and Walter James (.333). The pitching staff, however, struggled all season long. Charlie Woodard (9-3) and



**Birmingham Industrial League**



**ACIPCO Pipemen (1938)**  
(Steele – standing third from left)



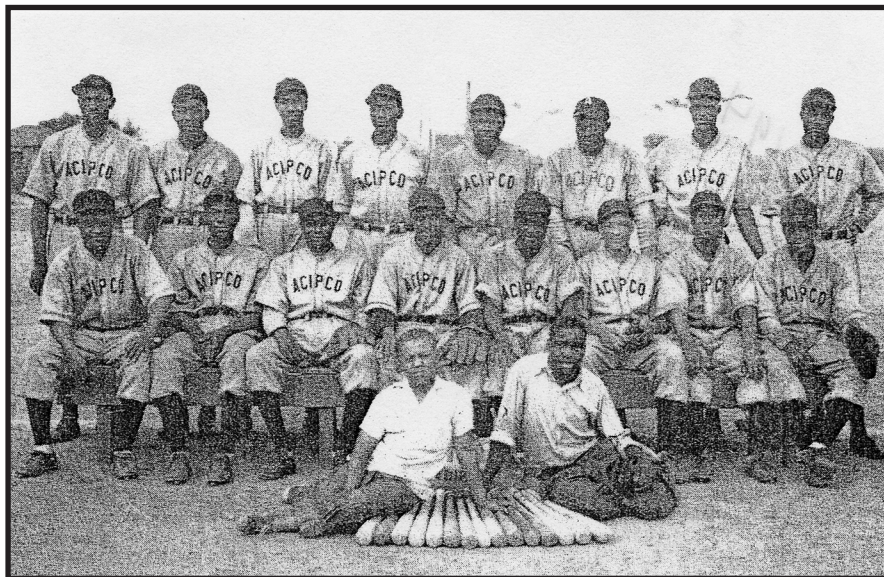
**ACIPCO Pipemen (1938)**  
Birmingham Industrial League Champions  
(Steele – middle row second from left)



Earl Little were the top two pitchers for the season. ACIPCO finished the Birmingham Industrial League season with a record of 14-6 (.700) in league play which left them in second place in the final league standings.

ACIPCO returned to its championship form for the 1939 season. The Pipemen won the Birmingham Industrial League championship over strong rival teams from Stockham, Bessemer and Perfection Mattress. The team was led by the hitting of first year ACIPCO player Lorenzo “Piper” Davis (.450), James Shamburger (.431), Artie Wilson (.411), James Williams (.381) and Ed Steele (.300). The highlight of the season for ACIPCO was a game played on June 3<sup>rd</sup> against Stockham. The game drew over 10,000 fans as the Pipemen downed their arch rivals.

Behind a strong team that included future Negro League players Lorenzo “Piper” Davis, Gready McKinnis, William Powell, Ed Steele and Artie Wilson, the 1940 ACIPCO team won its second straight Birmingham Industrial League (Colored Industrial League) championship. The leading hitters on the team for the 1940 season were Artie Wilson (.398), Piper Davis (.388), James Shamburger (.388), William Howard (.358), James Williams (.345), Waldo Dudley (.337) and Ed Steel (.325). After the regular season had concluded, ACIPCO met a Birmingham Industrial League All Star team in a Labor Day game at Sloss Field. The event drew 12,000 fans to witness ACIPCO take a 9-6 victory over the All Stars.



**ACIPCO (1940)**  
(Steele – standing fourth from right)

When the 1941 Birmingham Industrial League season started on March 17<sup>th</sup>, ACIPCO brought back their same line-up from their championship season the year before. ACIPCO also got the same results that they had the year before and won Birmingham Industrial League championship for the third year in a row. The Pipemen were led by the hitting of Artie Wilson (.446), James Williams (.377), Piper Davis (.352) and Ed Steele (.336). Nathaniel Pollard was the ace of the pitching staff. The key game of the season for ACIPCO occurred on July 26<sup>th</sup> against Stockham at Sloss Field. Behind the hitting of Steele and the pitching of future Negro Leaguer William Powell, ACIPCO prevailed. Over 10,000 fans were on hand for the game.

One of the many highlights of Steele’s career with ACIPCO in the Birmingham Industrial League (BIL) came in 1942 when he hit .470 and finished second to Artie Wilson (.476) for the Birmingham Industrial League batting title. He also helped lead ACIPCO to a BIL championship with an amazing 49-1 (.980) record. This was ACIPCO’s fourth consecutive championship. During the course of the season ACIPCO won an unprecedented 32 consecutive ball games and were undefeated in league play. What made this season even more remarkable was that Stockham

Valve & Fitting and U.S. Steel also had powerhouse teams and at the beginning of the season, both were picked above ACIPCO to win the league title. Besides Steele, ACIPCO had three other starters on the team that also hit over .400 for the season. ACIPCO's .400 hitters for the 1942 season were Artie Wilson (.476 with 4 homeruns), Ed Steele (.470 with 11 homeruns), Lorenzo "Piper" Davis (.451 with 14 homeruns) and Waldo Dudley (.411 with 6 homeruns). Nathaniel Pollard (20-1 with 12 shutouts) and Harry Simpson (13-0 with 4 shutouts) anchored the pitching staff.



**Birmingham Industrial League All Stars (1942)**  
(Steele- standing second on right)

When the 1943 season opened on April 24<sup>th</sup>, "Big Ed" Steele, Piper Davis, Artie Wilson and the other ACIPCO Pipemen picked right up where they had left off at the end of the 1942 season. ACIPCO finished the 1943 season with an overall record of 47-4 (.922) and won their fifth straight Birmingham Industrial League championship. The Pipemen went 14-2 in league play with their only losses coming to Stockham and L & N. Steele had an outstanding season and hit .435 for the 1943 season. Besides Ed Steele there were five other players on the team that would go on to play in the Negro Leagues: Artie Wilson (.559), Lorenzo "Piper" Davis (.411), Herman Bell (.333), Sam Hairston (.313) and Nate Pollard (16-0). Other players that starred for ACIPCO during the 1943 season included: Waldo Dudley (.386), Earl Little (.377 and 13-0 pitching record), Jim Williams (.326) and Harry Simpson (7-1). The 1943 season would be Ed's last year with ACIPCO and he went out in style. "Big Ed" finished second to Artie Wilson for the league batting title and celebrated the seventh Birmingham Industrial League championship title that he helped ACIPCO win.

Ed Steele played nine seasons with ACIPCO from 1935 to 1943 before signing with the Birmingham Black Barons to play on a permanent basis in the Negro American League. Over his career in the Birmingham Industrial League he hit over .400 in his last two seasons and compiled a lifetime career batting average of .363. Behind his strong play in the outfield and his incredible hitting, he helped lead ACIPCO to five straight Birmingham Industrial League championships from 1939 to 1943 and seven championships in his nine years he played for the team.



## Negro League Career

Ed Steele first signed to play for the Birmingham Black Barons in 1941. He was also still playing for the ACIPCO baseball team at the time. Over the next three years (1941-1943), “Big Ed” was a part-time and fill-in player for the Black Barons. He mainly played at the end of the season when the Black Barons were in town or when a regular player was not able to play.

Wingfield Welch, Manager of the Birmingham Black Barons, had a strong hitting team in 1941 that included Lyman Bostock (.442), Lester Lockett (.375), Jesses Douglas (.326) and Paul Hardy (.324). Dan Bankhead (6-1 with 0.97 ERA) and Gread McKinnis (4-1 with 1.67 ERA) were the team’s top pitchers. Birmingham finished the 1941 season in third place in the final league standings behind the second place New Orleans-St. Louis Stars and the “league” champion Kansas City Monarchs.

Welch had a very strong team return for the 1942 season. Birmingham’s top hitters in 1942 were Felix Mc Laurin (.433), Ted Radcliffe (.367), Tommy Sampson (.354), Ducky Davenport (.349) and Bill Bradford (.333). Only one player in the 1942 starting line-up (Leroy Morney - .293) did not hit .300 for the season. Needless to say, the Birmingham Black Barons were a tough line-up to break into. Birmingham’s pitching was all over the place during the 1942 season. Lefty Pipkin (4-0), John Markham (3-0) and Dan Bankhead (3-0) were the team’s best pitchers. Unfortunately the other two starting pitchers, Gread Mc Kinnis (2-5) and Al Gipson (1-4) struggled in league play. The Birmingham Black Barons finished the 1942 season in third place in the Negro American League with a record of 14-10 (.583).

The Birmingham Black Barons finally broke through during the 1943 season. The Barons already had a strong hitting team, but during the 1943 season they also got strong pitching from their starting line-up. The Black Barons’ hitting attack in 1943 was led by Lyman Bostock (.412), Felix Mc Laurin (.406), Lester Lockett (.388), Tommy Sampson (.358) and Lorenzo “Piper” Davis (.348). John Markham (7-2), Gread McKinnis (6-4) and John Huber (3-0) were the team’s top pitchers. The Birmingham Black Barons ended the regular 1943 Negro American League season with a record of 20-14 (.588). They faced the Chicago American Giants in a Play-Off Series to determine which team would play the Homestead Grays of the Negro National League in the Negro League World Series. On John Huber’s one-hit 1-0 victory in game five, the Black Barons defeated the American Giants three games to two to claim the Negro American League



**Birmingham Black Barons**  
(Steele – fourth from right)

championship. Birmingham then faced the Homestead Grays. Steele only played on a limited basis during the series. He was the hero of game seven when he entered the game in the ninth inning because Hoss Walker had been ejected. Three innings later in the bottom of the ninth he knocked in the winning run with two outs to give Birmingham a 1-0 win. The victory tied the series at three games apiece (game two had ended in a 5-5 tie). The Homestead Grays prevailed in game eight to give them a four games to three victory for the Negro League World Series championship. “Big Ed” collected two hits in his five at bats during the series.



**Birmingham Black Barons (1944)**  
(Steele – middle row first on left)

After his strong play at the end of the 1943 season and his clutch hitting in the Negro League World Series, Ed Steele was offered a contract and a starting position in right field for the Black Barons for the 1944 Negro American League season. Steele responded with his starting role and hit .303 with a .472 slugging percentage for the season. His complete statistics for his first full season in the Negro Leagues were as follows:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1944	Birmingham	61	218	47	66	13	8	4	-	9	.303	.472

Other Birmingham players who had good seasons at the plate were Piper Davis (.386), Artie Wilson (.346), Leandy Young (.341) and John Scott (.327). Al Saylor (14-5) and Al Gipson (10-6) were the team’s leading pitchers during the season. The Birmingham Black Barons won both halves of the 1944 Negro American League season. They were 24-9 for the first half of the season and 24-13 for the second half for a season record of 48-22 (.686). They faced the Homestead Grays who were the champions of the Negro National League in the Negro League World Series that began on September 17<sup>th</sup> in Birmingham. Going into the series, the Black Barons were dramatically handicapped because five of their key players (Artie Wilson, Tommy Sampson, John Britton, Pepper Bassett and Leandy Young) were injured in an automobile accident just before the World Series started. Ed Steele was the only Birmingham hitter to have a good series at the plate. “Big Ed” collected seven hits in nineteen at bats for a .369 batting average. In addition to the team’s weak hitting, other than John Huber’s game four shutout, none of the other three



### PLAYING SERIES.

**PITTSBURGH, Sept. 19.** — The fourth game of the Negro world series will be played between the Homestead Grays, current world's Negro champions, and the Birmingham Black Barons at Forbes field, Saturday, Sept. 23 at 4.30 p. m. The series opened last Sunday at Birmingham with the Grays winning 8-3 before 13,000 fans. The second game will be played at New Orleans tonight.

#### Negro League World Series (1944)

Birmingham vs Homestead

Altoona Mirror

09-19-44

Birmingham starters (Al Saylor 0-2 with 6.00 ERA, John Markham 0-1 with 8.00 ERA and Earl Bumpus 0-1 with 9.00 ERA) could handle the Grays hitters. The Black Barons could only manage one victory during the five game series. Their win came in game four when John Huber pitched a 6-0 shutout of the Grays. Homestead was led by the hitting of Josh Gibson (.500), Sam Bankhead (.388) and Buck Leonard (.388). The Grays also got outstanding pitching from Roy Welmaker (2-0 with 2.50 ERA), Ray Brown (1-0 with 0.00 ERA) and Edsall Walker (1-0 with 1.00 ERA). The Homestead Grays won the 1944 Negro League World Series by taking four games to one for the Birmingham Black Barons.

After the 1944 regular season, the Black Barons left Birmingham and barnstormed through the Southwest to California. During their stay in California they played games against the Raimondi's Coast All Stars, Galan All Stars, Major League All Stars and other local teams.

Steele returned to the Black Barons for the 1945 Negro American League season. It was during the 1945 season that "Big Ed" established himself as a star player in the Negro Leagues. Steele got off to a phenomenal start at the beginning of the season. According to an article that appeared in the Racine Journal Times (Racine, WI) on June 6<sup>th</sup>, he was batting .511 at that point in the season and the Black Barons were hitting .303 as a team. "Big Ed" finished the 1945 season with an impressive .352 batting average and a .459 slugging percentage. Besides Steel, the Black Barons got solid hitting from Artie Wilson (.372), Art Pennington (.361), Fred Sheppard (.356), Johnny Britton (.345), Lester Lockett (.305), Jesse Douglas (.304), John Smith (.301), John Bissant (.300), Lorenzo "Piper" Davis (.299) and John Huber (.298). Unfortunately for manager Wingfield Welch his pitching staff struggled all season. Only Jimmy Newberry (5-3) was somewhat consistent during the year.

The Birmingham Black Barons finished in second place in the final 1945 Negro American League standings with a record of 39-30 (.565). The Cleveland Buckeyes led by the pitching of the Jefferson brothers (George - 12-1 and Willie - 10-3) and the hitting of Sam Jethroe (.393) ran away with the league title by posting an unbelievable record of 53-16 (.768).

Like they had done the previous year, the Birmingham Black Barons barnstormed through the Southwest to California after the conclusion of the regular Negro American League season. Birmingham played in the California Winter League and played a significant number of games on an independent schedule basis during the winter of 1945. The Black Barons spent Christmas in Los Angeles and returned back to Alabama in January (1946).

The Birmingham Black Barons had a strong line-up for the 1946 season that included Lyman Bostock (1B), Piper Davis (2B), Artie Wilson (3B) and Ed Steele (OF). The trio of Jimmy Newberry, Jehosie Heard and Ted Radcliffe anchored the Black Barons pitching staff. Steele suffered an injury during the 1946 season that affected his playing time. Birmingham had a good season but finished a distant second place to the Kansas City

Second Official Negro American League  
**BASEBALL**  
Friday Night, June 15  
HORLICK ATHLETIC FIELD  
Gates Open at 7 P. M.  
**Birmingham Black Barons**  
1943 & '44 Negro American League  
Champions  
VERSUS  
**Chicago American Giants**  
ADMISSION: Adults 74c, Tax Incl.  
Children - Under 12 -  
35c, Tax Incl.  
Promoted by Jack Rulle

#### Birmingham vs Chicago

Racine Journal Times

Racine, WI

06-11-45

Monarchs for the Negro American League title. The Black Barons had a season record of 35-25 (.583) to the Kansas City Monarchs record of 43-14 (.754).

After the regular 1946 season, Ed Steele joined the Satchel Paige All Stars for their cross country barnstorming tour against the Bob Feller All Stars. This epic series started on September 29<sup>th</sup> in Pittsburgh (PA) and concluded on October 17<sup>th</sup> in San Diego (CA). The Bob Feller All Stars won the series by taking seven of the twelve games played. After the series with Feller, the Black Barons stayed on the West Coast through December. During their stay in California they played several games against Irish Meusel's All Stars and the Long Beach Service Stars.



**Birmingham Black Barons (1946)**  
(Steele – back row second from left)

The Black Barons lost several key players (Lyman Bostock, Lester Lockett, Fred Sheppard and Ted Radcliffe) going into the 1947 Negro American League season. The Black Barons did return Artie Wilson, Piper Davis, Ed Steele, Johnny Britton and Pepper Bassett to the starting line-up. Bill Powell was the ace of the Black Barons pitching staff in 1947. Birmingham ended the season with a record of 34-26 (.567) which left them in third place in the final Negro League standings behind the second place Kansas City Monarchs (38-22) and the league champion Cleveland Buckeyes (54-23).

Steele joined Satchel Paige, Lorenzo "Piper" Davis, Othello "Chico" Renfroe, Goose Tatum, Jimmy Newberry, Jesse Williams and several other Negro League stars to travel to California after the regular 1947 season to play winter ball. The team was promoted as the Kansas City Royals, Chet Brewer's Stars and Satchel Paige's All Stars. Besides playing local California teams, they played an exhibition series against Bob Feller's All Stars and Ewell Blackwell's All Stars. The series against Feller and Blackwell were played at Wrigley Field in Los Angeles (CA). The series began on October 15<sup>th</sup> and concluded on November 3<sup>rd</sup> with at least six games being played. Of the six box scores that have been found, the Negro League stars won four and lost two.





Edward “Stainless” Steele, Lorenzo “Piper” Davis and Artie Wilson

The 1948 Negro American League season proved to be the best season in the Birmingham Black Barons’ rich history. Steele started the season off in style by hitting the first homerun of the year for the Black Barons. According to the Birmingham World (local African American newspaper), local merchants rewarded “Big Ed” with the following for this accomplishment: a diamond studded watch, seven chicken dinners and a \$ 5.00 cash reward. Birmingham had a strong group of hitters in 1948 that included Artie Wilson (.402), Piper Davis (.353), Alonzo Perry (.325) and Ed Steele (.300). The team also included a young teenager outfielder by the name of Willie Mays. “Big Ed” put up the following numbers in Birmingham’s championship season.

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1948	Birmingham	72	260	71	78	15	5	8	46	10	.300	.488

Jimmy Newberry (14-5) and Alonzo Perry (10-2) led the Black Baron’s pitching staff.

Birmingham finished the season with a record of 57-21 (.731) for one of the best seasons in the team’s history. The final Negro American League standings for the 1948 Negro American League season were as follows:

**Negro American League (1948)**

Team	Won	Lost	Pct	Place
Birmingham Black Barons	57	21	.731	1 <sup>st</sup>
Kansas City Monarchs	41	25	.621	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Cleveland Buckeyes	41	42	.494	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Memphis Red Sox	33	44	.429	4 <sup>th</sup>
Indianapolis Clowns	27	46	.370	5 <sup>th</sup>
Chicago American Giants	27	48	.360	6 <sup>th</sup>

The Birmingham Black Barons won the first half and the Kansas City Monarchs won the second half of the 1948 Negro American League season. The Black Barons beat the Monarchs in a Play-Off Series and faced the Homestead Grays (Negro National League champions) in what would prove to be the last Negro League World Series ever to be played because the Negro National League would fold before the start of the 1949 season. Birmingham was no match for Homestead and went down four games to one in the five game series.

After the 1948 Negro League World Series, Steele joined the Kansas City Royals to play winter ball in California for the third straight year. The team was also billed as the Satchel Paige All Stars. The highlight of their barnstorming tour was a game against the Bob Lemmon All Stars on October 24<sup>th</sup> in Los Angeles. Steele went one for two in the game.



**Birmingham Black Barons (1948)**  
 Negro American League Champions  
 (Steele – seventh from right)

The Negro National League folded after the 1948 season and the Baltimore Elite Giants, New York Cubans and Philadelphia Stars joined the Negro American League. The Newark Eagles were sold and moved to Houston. Before the start of the 1949 season, the Negro American League divided into an Eastern and Western Division. The Birmingham Black Barons played in the Western Division along with the Kansas City Monarchs, Chicago American Giants, Memphis Red Sox and the Houston Eagles.

The Birmingham Black Barons returned basically the same line-up in 1949 that won the Negro American League championship in 1948. The only starting player that Birmingham lost to “organized ball” was Artie Wilson .The Black Barons starting line-up for the 1949 season was:

**Birmingham Black Barons (1949)**

Player	Position	Player	Position
Joe Scott	1B	Willie Mays	OF
Lorenzo “Piper” Davis	2B	Clarence “Pijo” King	OF
Jose Burgos	SS	Jehosie Heard	P
John Britton	3B	Bill Greason	P
Lloyd “Pepper” Bassett	C	Alonzo Perry	P/1B
Ed Steele	OF	Sam Williams	P
Norman Robinson	OF	Bill Powell	P
Jim Zapp	OF	Nat Pollard	P



Unfortunately, the Black Barons couldn't put together the same magic that they had the year before. Ed Steele got off to a good start at the plate in 1949. According to a newspaper article that appeared in the Chester Times (Chester, PA) on June 6<sup>th</sup>, "Big Ed" was leading the Negro American League in hitting with a .396 batting average. Steele couldn't maintain that pace, but did end the season with a .311 batting average with a .432 slugging percentage. Birmingham finished the year in third place in the Western Division of the Negro American League with a record of 45-39 (.536). After the regular season, the Birmingham Black Barons barnstormed against the Jackie Robinson All Stars. The tour was very successful which was evidenced in a game at Rickwood Field in Birmingham when the two teams drew 15,000 fans to the ball game.



**Birmingham Black Barons (1950)**  
(Steele – back row fourth from right)

Before the start of the 1950 season Vic Harris was named the manager of the Black Barons. On opening day, Ed Steele was back in the starting line-up as the team's right fielder. Harris got the Barons playing as a team and they finished the season in second place in the Western Division with a record of 52-25 (.675). The Kansas City Monarchs won the Negro American League with a record of 52-21 (.712). "Big Ed" had another outstanding year putting up the following numbers for the 1950 season.

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1950	Birmingham	71	245	57	75	21	5	4	51	15	.306	.482

Ed Steele was selected as the starting leftfielder for the West squad for the 1950 East-West All Star game. The game was played on August 20<sup>th</sup> at Comiskey Park in Chicago. A crowd of 40,000 was expected for the game, but unfortunately only 24,614 were in the stands to witness the West's 5-3 victory for the East. "Big Ed" had an excellent game. He went 2 for 3, got on base a third time when he was hit by a pitch and drove in one run.

After a strong finish in 1950, Birmingham entered the 1951 Negro American League season with high hopes. Unfortunately, their roster was totally decimated by the loss of Lorenzo "Piper" Davis, Willie Mays, Jose Burgos, Alonzo Perry, Bill Powell, Nat Pollard and Sam Williams. Ed



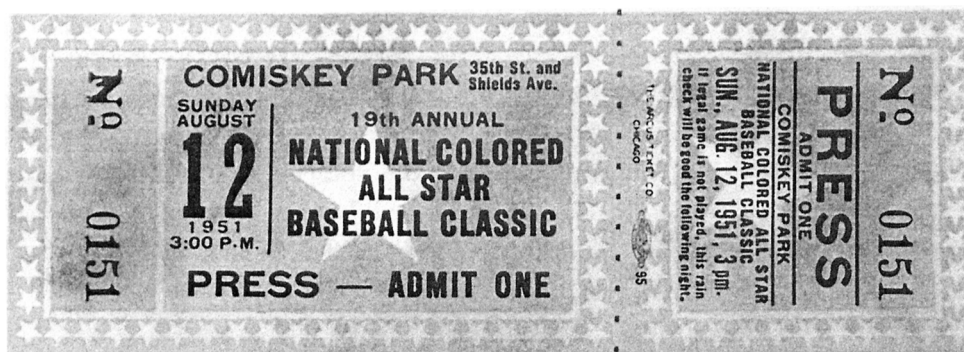
**Birmingham Black Barons (1951)**  
 (Steele – standing second on left)

Steele was Birmingham’s starting right fielder and the team’s leading hitter. His hitting statistics for the 1951 season were:

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1951	Birmingham	-	184	42	68	-	-	5	33	6	.370	-

The Birmingham Black Barons struggled all season and finished the year in last place in the Eastern Division of the Negro American League with a record of 24-40 (.375).

Steele was the leading vote getter (Ed Steele - 10,019 votes, Henry Kimbro - 9,864 and Ben Littles - 8,214) for the East team’s outfielders for the 1951 East-West All Star game. Ed’s triple drove in a key run and he scored a run in the East’s 3-1 win over the West. The game was played on August 12<sup>th</sup> at Comiskey Park in Chicago. The game turned out to be a huge financial disappointment for league officials when there were only 14,161 paid admissions in the announced attendance of 21,312.



**East-West All Star Game Ticket (1951)**



After the 1951 regular season, Ed Steele was signed to play for the Negro American League All Stars to play an exhibition series against Roy Campanella All Stars.

### Steele Signs with Organized Ball

Prior to the 1952 baseball season, "Big Ed" was signed by the Hollywood Stars of the Pacific Coast League. The Stars were part of the Pittsburgh Pirates (National League) organization. Unfortunately for Steele he was 35 years old and past the prime years of his career. Steele started slowly and was plagued with injuries during his short tenure with Hollywood. "Big Ed" struggled at the plate for the first time in his career. After only twenty-two (22) games with the Stars, Steele was hitting a mere .213 (13 for 61) and was sent down to the class "A" Denver Bears of the Western League. "Big Ed" fared somewhat better with the Bears and finished the season with a .254 batting average for Denver. The Denver Bears won the Western League championship with a record of 88-66 (.571).

## Ed Steele May Be WL's Best Clutch Hitter

Don Smith, a personable young man, discussed his favorite subject, the Denver Bears, at Thursday's Royals club meeting. This is as it should be, since Smith is publicity director for Denver's Western League entry.

Smith said Outfielder Ed Steele should develop into the Western League's best clutch hitter. At present Steele is the only player on the Bear roster who is the property of the Pittsburgh Pirates, with whom Denver has a working agreement.

The Bears' publicity chief said Steele wasn't in organized baseball last year. Steele managed the Birmingham Black Barons and hit .352.

"Steele says he would have had an even better batting average if he hadn't had to worry about managing these kids," Smith said.

Smith also reported Outfielder Don Taylor should help Denver, but admitted Outfielder Ken Mapes

"hadn't panned out." Mapes, brother of the Detroit Tigers' CHET Mapes, has been returned to Tulsa, from which he was purchased conditionally.

Smith said the Bears needed to strengthen their catching corps and are in need of a distance hitter.

He also stated that even the Denver was in sixth place on of Thursday, the team was only two games out of first place in the torrid Western League race.

He predicted this year's pennant chase in the Western would be one of the very best and said that every game this summer will be a first place battle. Admitting Denver was in a slump, Smith said the Bears were "very optimistic, not pessimistic," about their chances.

Questioned about Harry Wise of Platteville, the ex-Colorado State star now pitching for Des Moines, Smith said:

"Well, he's beaten us twice in succession. I think he'll stick with Des Moines. With all due respect to a local product, we of the Den-

ver Bears would still like to beat him."

Smith showed a 20-minute film entitled Democracy in Baseball, a semi-historical film which depicted the origin of the game and contained many shots of baseball personalities.

Guests included Charles A. Gregory, new executive vice-president of the First National Bank, and Dr. C. E. Branson of Lincoln, Neb., father-in-law of Carroll Gilbert. Glen Mendonhall, member of the club, was welcomed back.

## WANTED

**PITCHERS—LEFT OR RIGHT  
OUTFIELDERS — LEFT-  
HAND BATTERS**

For Ontario's fastest baseball league.  
Class "B" qualifications.

WRITE OR PHONE

**ERNIE REEVE, Secretary  
GALT TERRIERS**

77 Water Street, South Galt, Ont.

### Steele Moves to Canada

In the late 1940's and early 1950's, Canada was a haven for former Negro League players. Steele along with former Negro Leaguer Gentry Jessup signed with the Galt Terriers of the Intercounty League for the 1953 season. "Big Ed" feasted on Canadian pitching and led the league in homeruns with 14 for the 1953. Jessup led the league in wins with 15. Steele was a starter in the outfield for the Galt Terriers for both the 1953 and 1954 seasons.

# Steele to pilot Detroit Stars

CHICAGO — Ed Steele, former outfielder with the Birmingham Black Barons, has been named manager of the Detroit Stars. Steele succeeds Jesse (Hoss) Walker, who took over the reins at the beginning of the season.

Jake Robinson was named by Owner Ted Rasberry, as pilot during the winter months, but resigned before the team entered spring training at Hot Springs, Ark., late in April.

Steele will play right field in addition to managing the team.

Afro American  
06-14-55

**BASEBALL!**  
GOOSE TATUM'S  
**DETROIT CLOWNS**  
with "Sweetwater" Clifton  
-- VS. --  
**BIRMINGHAM  
BLACK BARONS**  
Official Negro American League Game

THURSDAY  
JULY 17  
8 P. M.

Goose Tatum - Ted Rasberry

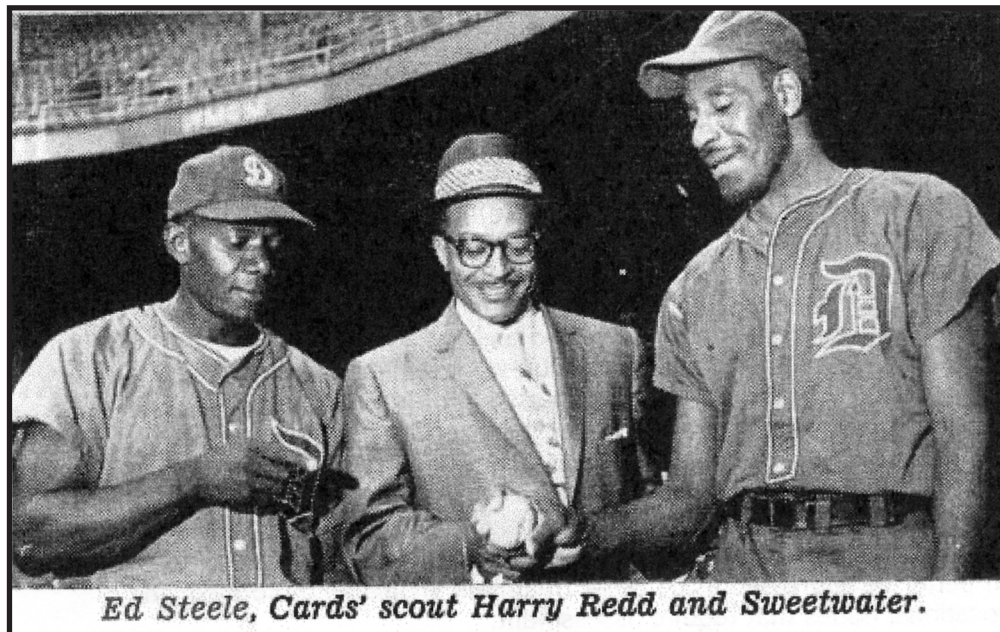
Patton Joe Henry

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The Newark Advocate  
Newark, Ohio  
07-14-58



*Ed Steele, Cards' scout Harry Redd and Sweetwater.*

Jet (Magazine)  
09-4-58



## “Big Ed” Returns to the Negro Leagues

In an attempt to strengthen the Negro American League, Ted Rasberry, the owner of the Kansas City Monarchs, formed the Detroit Stars to play in the league for the 1954 season. After the Stars poor showing (23-31-1) in 1954, Rasberry convinced Steele to return to the Negro Leagues to manage the team.

“Big Ed” managed the Detroit Stars from 1955 to 1957 before Rasberry sold the team to Reece “Goose” Tatum. The team was renamed the Detroit Clowns and Steele was retained as the team’s manager for the 1958 Negro American League season.

The highlight of Steele’s tenure as manager of Detroit was leading the team to a Negro American League title in 1956. According to a newspaper article that appeared in The Holland Evening Sentinel on August 8, 1956 the Detroit Stars had a won lost record of 52-16 (.765) for the season.

The 1958 Negro American League season was Steele’s last in professional baseball. The four remaining Negro League teams (Birmingham Black Barons, Detroit Clowns, Kansas City Monarchs and Memphis Red Sox) had been reduced to playing small market towns. In addition to managing the Detroit Clowns, Steele also put himself in the line-up on an occasional basis. In 1958 at the age of 42 he hit .273 with a .591 slugging percentage for the season. This was the lowest batting average of his career, but in a pitcher dominated season when only two players (John Williams - .357 and Harold Hair - .355) in the league hit over .300, Steele was one of the top hitters on his team and ranked 10<sup>th</sup> among the batting average leaders in the league. The highlight of the season for the Detroit Clowns was a doubleheader that they played in Yankee Stadium in early June.



Detroit Stars (c. 1955)

During his four year tenure as manager with Detroit, Steele was named to manage the East squad in all four East-West All Star games (1955, 1956, 1957 and 1958). The East team lost the 1955 contest by a score of 2-0 and the 1957 game by a score of 8-5. Steele and the East squad rebounded after each loss and won the 1956 and 1958 games by scores of 11-5 and 6-5.

## Managers Named For Negro Stars

CHICAGO (AP)—Homer Curry of the Memphis Red Sox was named to manage the West team in the 24th annual East-West Negro baseball all star game at Comiskey Park, Aug. 12.

Ed Steele of the Detroit Stars was announced to head the East team. Curry will draw players from Memphis and the Kansas City Monarchs and Steele's East team will be comprised of players from Detroit and the Birmingham Black Barons.

Charleston Daily Mail  
07-22-56

Ed Steele managed  
in four East-West  
All Star games.

- 1955
- 1956
- 1957
- 1958

## Pick Managers For Negro Tilt

CHICAGO — (AP) — Homer Curry and Ed Steele, veteran managers in the Negro American Baseball League, Saturday were named pilots of competing squads in the 25th annual East-West All-Star classic.

Curry of the Memphis Red Sox will manage the West team, which won last year's game 11-5. Ed Steele, manager of the Detroit Stars, will pilot the East team. It is the third All-Star managing assignment for Steele and the second for Curry.

The game will be played July 28 in Comiskey Park.

Racine Journal Times Bulletin  
06-30-57

## East Beats West Stars In Big 6th Inning

Manager Ed Steele's East team scored all its runs in the sixth inning to defeat the West 4-3 in the 26th annual All-Star game featuring Negro American Leaguers in Chicago's Comiskey Park. The big blow was a three-run homer by Birmingham Black Barons' outfielder Brown Jackson. East first-baseman Nat (Sweetwater) Clifton played in his first All-Star game since leaving the Detroit Pistons pro basketball team.

Jet Magazine  
09-04-58

By **SAM LACY**

# 20,000 expected at East-West tilt

CHICAGO—A crowd of 20,000 fans is expected to pour through the turnstiles at Comiskey Park here Sunday to witness the 26th annual East-West game. While this number is far short of the 56,000 who saw the 1944 game, it will exceed any crowd that has seen the game since 1950.

Jackie Robinson, former shortstop with the Kansas City Monarchs, will throw out the first ball. Jackie, who played with the Brooklyn Dodgers for 10 years, was signed to a Dodgers contract following the 1945 game.

In previous years one of the contending clubs has gone into this annual baseball classic with a slight edge, either in pitching, hitting or fielding. But the two selections are as equal on paper as is possible.

**WILLIE HARRIS**, Detroit Clown right-hander who has been given the starting assignment by Manager Ed Steele of the East, has compiled a 7-0 record, according to figures released by the Howe News Bureau. At the same time Charles Pride, Memphis Red Sox right-hander who starts for the

West, has a 7-3 record. Harris, who returned to the Detroit Clowns this season after a stint in the armed forces, was the starter in 1956, yielding two hits and no runs over his three-inning toil on the mound.

THE WEST will have the only .300 or better hitter in the starting lineup—John Williams, hard-hitting centerfielder from the Birmingham Black Barons. In the 1956 game Williams smacked a first inning triple with teammates aboard. He collected two of the East's seven hits in the 8 to 5 defeat last year.

In the 1957 game James Banks, Memphis first baseman who paced the Negro American league hitters last season with a hefty .343, blasted a home run in the third inning, singled in the fifth and stole second base. This year Banks, who will start at first for the West, is hitting .227.

But the West will have some power in the bats of Gideon Jarvis, Kansas City Monarch rightfielder; Willie Washington, Monarch third baseman, and Rufus Gipson, Memphis second baseman.

Afro American  
08-19-58



## **California Winter League**

After the conclusion of the 1945 Negro American League season, the Birmingham Black Barons took a team to the West Coast to play in Joe Pirrone's California Winter League. During the California Winter League season that started on September 22<sup>nd</sup> there were two "black" teams (Kansas City Royals and Birmingham Black Barons), three "white" teams (San Diego All Stars, Major League All Stars and the Coast All Stars) and one Latin team (Saltillo Mexican All Stars) that played in the league. The Birmingham Black Barons were led by Ed Steele, Lorenzo "Piper" Davis, John Markham, Gread McKinnis, Ted "Double Duty" Radcliffe, Frank "Groundhog" Thompson and Jim West. Chet Brewer's Kansas City Royals included Jackie Robinson, Ray Neil, Andy Porter, Satchel Paige, Archie Ware, Jesse "Batman" Williams, John Williams and Burnis "Wild Bill" Wright. The Major League All Stars were headed up by Vern Stephens and Vince Di Maggio. The season only lasted seven weeks and newspaper coverage was very limited. Research has not revealed final complete league standings for all games played. The Kansas City Royals, however, were declared the league champions at the end of the season. After the California Winter League season, the Black Barons stayed on the West Coast and played games against the Raimondi All Stars and other local teams. In addition several of the Birmingham players including Ed Steele joined together with players from the Kansas City Royals and played several exhibition games against local teams, military teams, Long Beach Service Stars and Meusel's All Stars. The Birmingham-Kansas City combined all star team played under the following names the Colored All Stars, Eastern Colored All Stars and the Professional Colored All Stars.

Ed Steele returned to California to play winter ball after the regular 1946 season was over. The California Winter League included four teams for the 1946 season which ran from October 6<sup>th</sup> to October 27<sup>th</sup>. There were three "white" teams (Major League All Stars, Major-Minor League All Stars and the Hollywood Stars) and one black team (Kansas City Royals). Steele played for Chet Brewer's Kansas City Royals. Other members of the Royals were Satchel Paige, Sam Hairston, Bill Hoskins, Cowan "Bubba" Hyde, Booker Mc Daniels, Clyde Nelson and Jimmy Newberry. The Kansas City Royals were declared the winners of the 1946 California Winter League season. From limited records that have been found they had a record of 6-3-1 (.667) against league teams. After the California Winter League concluded, the Kansas City Royals then played several exhibition games in Los Angeles (Wrigley Field) and San Diego against the Bob Feller's All Stars.

There was no formal winter league in California in 1947, but Chet Brewer did put together a Kansas City Royals team to barnstorm on the West Coast. Brewer signed "Big Ed" along with players like Piper Davis, Satchel Paige, Jimmy Newberry, John Williams and Jesse "Batman" Williams to play for his team. The Royals played their first game on October 15<sup>th</sup> at Wrigley Field (Los Angeles) and their last game of the tour on November 9<sup>th</sup>. During the Kansas City Royals barnstorming tour, they played exhibition series versus Bob Feller's All Stars, Ewell Blackwell's All Stars, Minor League All Stars, Major-Minor League All Stars, and Bob Lemon's All Stars and the Long Beach Rockets.

## **Life after the Negro Leagues**

Steele returned home to Birmingham after the 1958 Negro American League season had concluded. After retiring from professional baseball, he became a barber in downtown Birmingham on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Edward Steele passed away in February of 1974; he was only 57 years of age. Steele was laid to rest in Birmingham, Alabama.

## Assessing “Big Ed” Steele’s Career

- Steele was an **outstanding hitter**.

Individual box scores were not well reported in newspapers in the mid to late 1940’s and early 1950’s when Ed Steele played in the Negro American League. However all leading Negro League researchers do agree that he was one of the top hitters in Negro League baseball during the years in which he played.

The following chart details research from several Negro League historians on his Negro League yearly batting averages during his career. The difference in totals is that different researchers have different numbers of games analyzed. In addition some researchers only count “league” games, while other researchers combine both “league” and “non-league” games into their totals.

Year	Howe News Bureau	Negro League Research and Authors Group	Larry Lester & Dick Clark	James Riley
1944	.303	.361	.357	.303
1945	.352	.412	.404	.352
1946	-	.333	.333	.277
1947	-	.409	.400	-
1948	.300	.296	.296	.300
1949	.311	-	-	.316
1950	.306	-	-	.306
1951	.370	-	-	-
<b>Career Average</b>	-	<b>.344</b>	<b>.346</b>	-

The best statistics to use are most probably those reported by the Howe News Bureau because they were the “official” statisticians for the Negro American League and Negro National League. These statistics are the ones that were published in the national black newspapers.

Some examples of his outstanding hitting include:

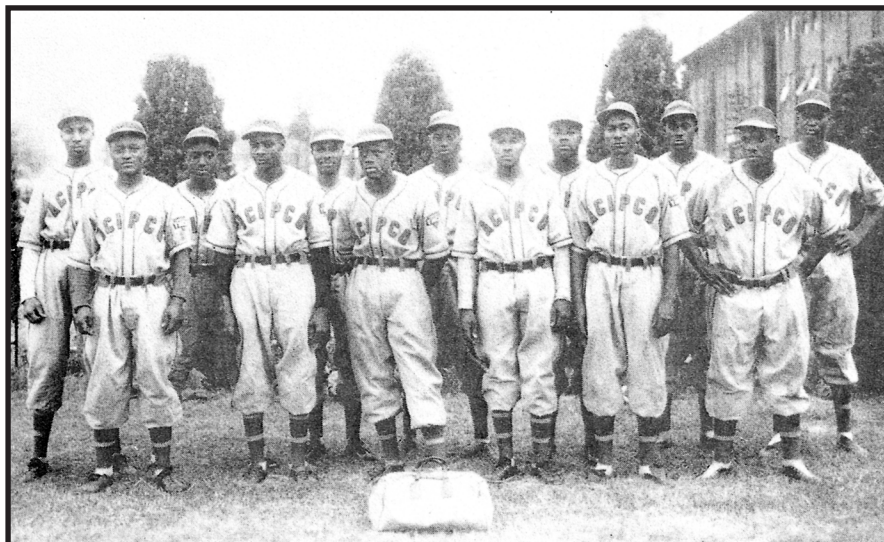
1. Big Ed played nine years in the Birmingham Industrial League and had a .363 career batting average.
2. He also played nine years in the Negro American League and never hit under .300.
3. Research by Larry Lester and Dick Clark indicates that Steele had a .346 career batting average in 298 “official” Negro American League at bats.
4. Research by the Center for Negro League Baseball Research revealed that Ed Steele had a .331 career batting average against all levels of competition.

- We are still **missing a significant portion** of Ed Steele’s **career batting statistics**.

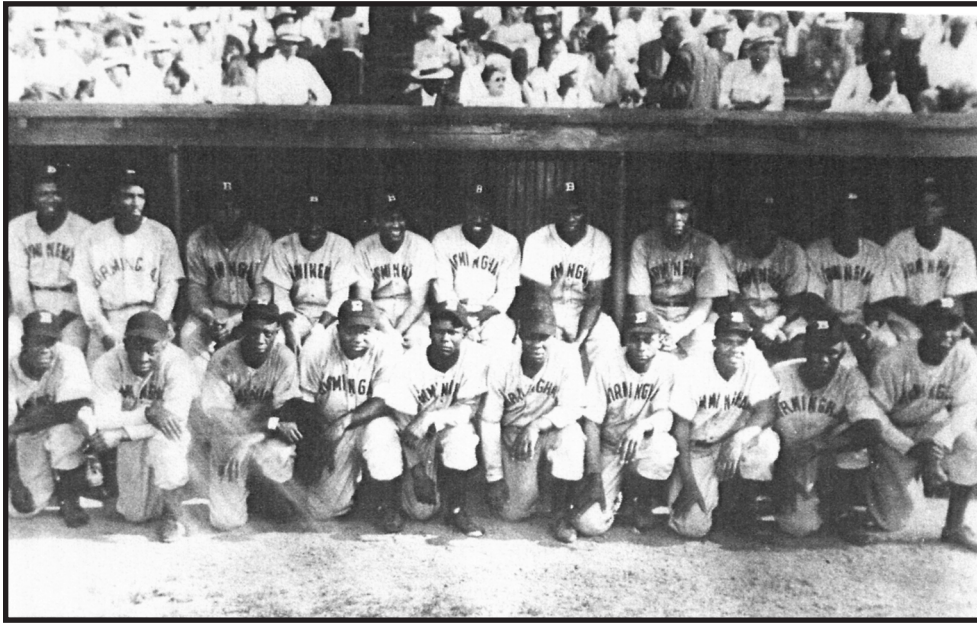
1. All of the game totals, runs, extra base hits, runs batted in, stolen bases and slugging percentage are missing from eight of his nine seasons with ACIPCO.
2. Most of his Negro American League statistics for the 1946 and 1947 seasons are missing.
3. A large percentage of his non-league games in played with the Birmingham Black Barons are still unaccounted for.
4. Most all of his hitting statistics from the three winter seasons he played in California are missing.



5. Over the years Steele barnstormed with several teams after the regular season and very few of these box scores have been uncovered.
  6. Virtually all of his statistics from the two years he played in Canada have not been found.
  7. In addition, “Big Ed” continued to play on an occasional basis when he managed Detroit and most of these numbers are still missing. Further research of these missing statistics should do nothing but enhance the overall career hitting statistics for Steele.
- **Complete ball player.** “Big Ed” could hit for both power and average. He had good speed and exceptional defensive skills in the outfield. He was a complete ball player with virtually no weakness on the field of play.
  - It is important to note that Ed Steele was **extremely late in starting his Negro League career.** He spent the first nine years of his career playing industrial league ball. While the Birmingham Industrial League was highly competitive, it was not the Negro American League. A question that might be asked is that if “Big Ed” had gone straight into the Negro Leagues in 1935 what might his Negro League career looked like and how would it have changed how we look at his career today.
  - Steele was a **team player.** During the regular Negro League baseball season, “Big Ed” really only played for two teams during his career. He played nine seasons for the ACIPCO Pipemen of the Birmingham Industrial League and another nine seasons for the Birmingham Black Barons of the Negro American League. Even when he started managing after his regular playing career was over, he only managed for one organization and that was the Detroit Stars. Ed Steele possessed a team loyalty that was very rare in Negro League baseball.
  - In addition to his exemplary skills as a player, **Ed Steele was also a very good manager.** He managed the Detroit Stars and Detroit Clowns from 1955 to 1958. The highlight of his managerial career was leading the 1956 Detroit Stars to a Negro American League championship. During his four year career as a manager in the Negro American League he managed in three East-West All Star games and was the winning manager in two of them.
  - “Big Ed” was a **winner** over the course of his baseball career. Steele was the member of thirteen (13) championship teams during his career. He played on twelve championship teams and was the manager of another.



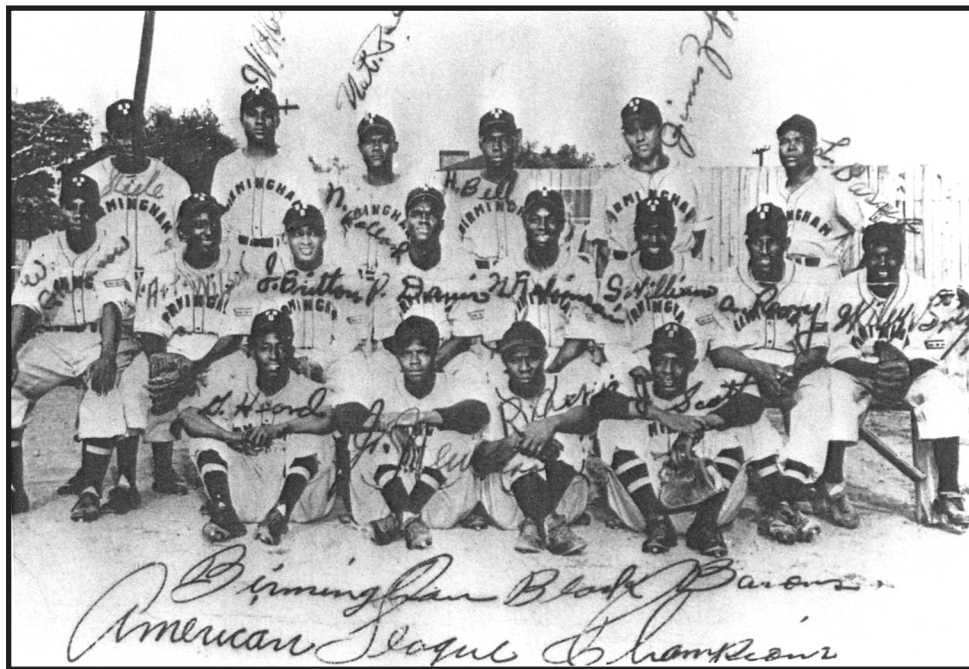
ACIPCO (1941)



**Birmingham Black Barons (1946)**

Back row – left to right (**Alonzo Perry**, Lester Lockett, Lyman Bostock, **Artie Wilson**, John Britton, Tommy Sampson, **Ed Steele**, Pepper Bassett, Herman Bell, Alvin Gipson, **Lorenzo “Piper” Davis**).

Front row – left to right (Freddie Shepard, Unknown, Emanuel Sampson, Unknown, Curtis Hollingsworth, Roosevelt Atkins, William Powell, Jimmy Newberry, Nat Pollard and Jehosie Heard).



**Birmingham Black Barons (1948)**  
**Negro American League Champions**

Back row – left to right (**Ed Steele**, William Powell, Nat Pollard, Herman Bell, Jim Zapp and Pepper Bassett).

Middle row – left to right ( Bill Greason, **Artie Wilson**, John Britton, **Lorenzo “Piper” Davis**, Norman Robinson, Sam Williams, **Alonzo Perry** and Wiley Griggs).

Front row – left to right (Jehosie Heard, Jimmy Newberry, Roosevelt Atkins and Joe Scott)



## Playing Career

### Regular Season:

Year	Team	League
1935-1943	ACIPCO Pipemen	Birmingham Industrial League
1941-1951	Birmingham Black Barons	Negro American League
1952	Hollywood Stars	Pacific Coast League
1952	Denver Bears	Western League
1953-1954	Galt Terriers	Intercounty League (Canada)
1955-1957	Detroit Stars (Manager)	Negro American League
1958	Detroit Clowns (Manager)	Negro American League

### Winter Leagues:

1943	Birmingham Black Barons	NAL Playoff Series vs Chicago American Giants
1943	Birmingham Black Barons	Negro League World Series vs Homestead Grays
1944	Birmingham Black Barons	Negro League World Series vs Homestead Grays
1944	Birmingham Black Barons	Southwest and West Coast Barnstorming Tour
1944	Birmingham Black Barons	Game vs Raimondi's Coast All Stars
1944	Birmingham Black Barons	Game vs Galan All Stars
1944	Birmingham Black Barons	Game vs Major League All Stars
1945	Birmingham Black Barons	Southwest and West Coast Barnstorming Tour
1945	Birmingham Black Barons	California Winter League
1945	Birmingham Black Barons	Game vs Raimondi All Stars
1945	Professional Colored All Stars	West Coast Exhibition Tour
1945	Eastern Colored All Stars	Game vs Irish Meusel's All Stars
1946	Kansas City Royals	California Winter League
1946	Satchel Paige All Stars	Independent
1947	Kansas City Royals	Independent
1947	Kansas City Royals	Series vs Long Beach Rockets
1947	Kansas City Royals	Series vs Bob Feller All Stars
1947	Kansas City Royals	Series vs Ewell Blackwell All Stars
1947	Kansas City Royals	Game vs Bob Lemon's All Stars
1948	Birmingham Black Barons	NAL Playoff Series vs Kansas City Monarchs
1948	Birmingham Black Barons	Negro League World Series vs Homestead Grays
1948	Kansas City Royals	Independent
1948	Satchel Paige All Stars	Barnstorming Tour
1948	Satchel Paige All Stars	Exhibition Game vs Bob Lemmon's All Stars
1949	Birmingham Black Barons	Barnstorming Tour vs Jackie Robinson All Stars
1951	Negro American League All Stars	Series vs Roy Campanella All Stars

# BASEBALL

At Beautiful  
EDGEWATER  
PARK

**TUESDAY, MAY 31 - BIRMINGHAM BARONS**

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1 - DETROIT STARS**

8:15 P. M. - ADMISSION: Adults 65c - Children 25c - Box Seats \$1.00

VS. **AUSCOS**

Detroit Stars vs St. Joseph Auscos

The Herald Press

Saint Joseph, Michigan

05-31-55

### Career Statistics – Hitting (Regular Season – Birmingham Industrial League)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1935	ACIPCO	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.416	-
1936	ACIPCO	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1937	ACIPCO	-	182	-	60	-	-	-	-	-	.329	-
1938	ACIPCO	-	200	59	75	-	-	11	45	-	.375	-
1939	ACIPCO	-	93	-	28	-	-	-	-	-	.300	-
1940	ACIPCO	-	80	-	26	-	-	-	-	-	.325	-
1941	ACIPCO	-	125	-	42	-	-	-	-	-	.336	-
1942	ACIPCO	-	127	-	51	-	-	-	-	-	.470	-
1943	ACIPCO	-	147	-	64	-	-	-	-	-	.435	-
Total		-	954	59	346	-	-	11	45	-	.363	-

### Career Statistics – Hitting (Regular Season – Negro Leagues)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1942	Birmingham	3	8	1	3	0	0	0	3	0	.375	.375
1943	Birmingham	-	5	1	2	0	0	0	-	0	.400	.400
1944	Birmingham	61	218	47	66	13	8	4	-	9	.303	.472
1945	Birmingham	57	196	41	69	10	4	1	27	11	.352	.459
1946	Birmingham	2	6	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	.333	.500
1947	Birmingham	7	25	6	10	2	0	0	4	0	.400	.480
1948	Birmingham	72	260	71	78	15	5	8	46	10	.300	.488
1949	Birmingham	89	315	71	98	17	3	4	43	11	.311	.432
1950	Birmingham	71	245	57	75	21	5	4	51	15	.306	.482
1951	Birmingham	-	184	42	68	-	-	5	33	6	.370	-
1957	Detroit	-	19	7	8	-	-	-	-	-	.421	-
1958	Detroit	17	22	5	6	2	1	1	2	0	.273	.591
Total		379	1503	349	485	81	26	27	210	62	.323	.465

### Career Statistics – Hitting (Negro League World Series)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1943	Birmingham	-	5	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	.400	-
1944	Birmingham	-	19	3	7	3	-	-	-	-	.369	-
Total		-	24	3	9	3	-	-	-	-	.375	-

### Career Statistics – Hitting (East-West All Star Games)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1950	West	1	3	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	.667	.667
1951	East	1	4	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	.250	.750
Total		2	7	1	3	0	1	0	2	0	.429	.714

### Career Statistics – Hitting (Non-League Games)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1945	Birmingham	1	3	2	2	1	0	0	1	0	.667	1.000
1946	Birmingham	1	4	1	1	-	-	-	2	2	.250	-
1947	Birmingham	1	5	2	2	-	-	-	3	-	.400	.400
Total		3	12	5	5	1	-	-	6	2	.417	.500



### Career Statistics – Hitting (Winter League – California)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1947	Kansas City	6	19	-	5	2	0	1	-	-	.263	.526

### Career Statistics – Hitting (Exhibition Series vs Major League All Star Teams)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1946	Paige All Stars	-	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	.250	-
1948	Paige All Stars	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	.500	-
	Total	-	6	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	.333	-

### Career Statistics – Hitting (Regular Season – Minor Leagues)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1952	Hollywood	22	61	11	13	3	0	2	10	1	.213	.361
1952	Denver	47	142	-	36	7	1	0	-	-	.254	.317
	Total	69	203	11	49	10	1	2	10	1	.241	.330

### Career Statistics – Hitting (Regular Season – Canada)

Year	Team	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
1953	Galt	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	-	-	-	-

### Career Hitting Statistics (Totals)

	Games	AB	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SLG
Industrial League	-	954	59	346	-	-	11	45	-	.363	-
Negro League	379	1503	349	485	81	26	27	210	62	.323	.465
Negro World Series	-	24	3	9	3	-	-	-	-	.375	-
East-West All Star Game	2	7	1	3	0	1	0	2	0	.429	.714
Negro Non-League	3	12	5	5	1	-	-	6	2	.417	.500
California	6	19	-	5	2	0	1	-	-	.263	.526
Exhibition Series	-	6	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	.333	-
Minor Leagues	69	203	11	49	10	1	2	10	1	.241	.330
Canada	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	-	-	-	-
Total	459	2728	428	904	97	28	55	273	65	.331	-



**Birmingham Black Barons (1946)**  
(Steele – back row second on right)

**BASEBALL  
SPECIAL**

Wednesday Night  
April 7—8 o'clock

**Armory Field**

LUMBERTON, N. C.

**Asheville Blues**  
Negro Southern League  
Champions

vs

**Birmingham Black  
Barons**  
Member Negro American  
League

Adm.: Adults 75c—Children 50c  
\*(Tax Included)

Birmingham vs Asheville  
Robesonian  
Lumberton, NC  
04-06-48

**Birmingham Wins  
Negro BB Title**

KANSAS CITY, Sept. 24 (AP)—The Birmingham Black Barons won the Negro American League baseball championship last night with a 5-1 victory over the Kansas City Monarchs, taking the playoff series four games to three.

William Greason, Barons righthander, set the Monarchs down with four hits. The Barons pounded 10 hits off Jim La Marque.

Birmingham was winner of the regular season's first half, and the Monarchs topped the second half.

The Barons will meet the Washington Homestead Grays, Negro National League champions, in the first game of their world series here Sunday. The teams will finish the series on their home fields.

The Huronite and The Daily Plainsman  
Huron, South Dakota  
09-24-48

**Name Satchel as  
East-West starter**

CHICAGO (Special) — LeRoy (Satchel) Paige, baseball's "ageless" wonder, will pitch the first three innings for the West team when it meets the East Sunday afternoon, in the Negro American Baseball League's 23rd annual classic, at Comiskey Park.



SATCHEL PAIGE

In event of rain, the game will be played on Monday night, at 8:30 p.m.

Paige got the starting call from John (Buck) O'Neil, of the Kansas City Monarchs, west All-Star pilot, because this slow-shuffling, skinny right-hander has been the classic's greatest drawing power.

Although such great name stars as Jackie Robinson, Roy Campanella, Larry Doby, Crestes Mimoso, Junior Gilliam, Hank Thompson, Gene Baker and Ernie Banks to name just a few, played in this great game, it was Paige who drew the most fans at the gate.

In four previous All-Star appearances, "Satchel" drew nearly 200,000 fans to Comiskey Park.

Opposing Paige on the mound as the East's starter will be the Detroit Stars' Mell Duncan, the Negro American League's only no-hit pitcher thus far this season. Duncan's manager at Detroit, Ed Steele, named his star.

Both All-Star pilots have talent-laden squads, featuring both offensive and defensive ability. For

Manager O'Neil, it will be the popular Monarchs' third straight All-Star effort. His first two were victorious efforts, 5-1 in 1953 and 8-4 last year. The West, in fact will be trying for its fourth straight, also having taken the 1952 event with a 7-6 margin. Steele, who has been doing a fine job with a young club at Detroit, is making his first start in the All-Star, as a pilot. He played in the game as an outfielder, with the Birmingham Barons in 1947.

Steele Named to Manage in East-West All Star Game  
Afro American  
07-30-55

**Jackie Robinson's  
All Stars Win**

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP)—An estimated 15,000 fans last night watched Jackie Robinson's All-Stars defeat the Birmingham Black Barons, 9 to 3, in an exhibition baseball game.

Robinson, star of a cast which includes fellow Brooklyn Dodgers Roy Campanella and Don Newcombe and the Cleveland Indians' Larry Doby, hit a double and beat out a bunt in four trips to the plate.

Doby collected two singles in three trips. He stole home in the four-run first inning which put the Stars ahead to stay.

Campanella had a single in four trips.

Newcombe pitched two hitless innings, the eighth and ninth. He walked one and struck out two.

The Black Barons beat the All-Stars 3-2, in Montgomery the night before.

The Berkshire County Eagle  
Pittsfield, MA  
10-19-49



## Championship Seasons

“Big Ed” Steele was a member of the following thirteen (13) championship teams.

Year	Team	League	Record
1935	ACIPCO	Birmingham Industrial League	83-5 .943
1936	ACIPCO	Birmingham Industrial League	-
1939	ACIPCO	Birmingham Industrial League	-
1940	ACIPCO	Birmingham Industrial League	-
1941	ACIPCO	Birmingham Industrial League	-
1942	ACIPCO	Birmingham Industrial League	49-1 .980
1943	ACIPCO	Birmingham Industrial League	47-4 .922
1943	Birmingham Black Barons	Negro American League	20-14 .588
1944	Birmingham Black Barons	Negro American League	48-22 .686
1946	Kansas City Royals	California Winter League	6-3-1 .667
1948	Birmingham Black Barons	Negro American League	57-21 .731
1952	Denver Bears	Western League	88-66 .571
1956	Detroit Stars	Negro American League	52-16 .765



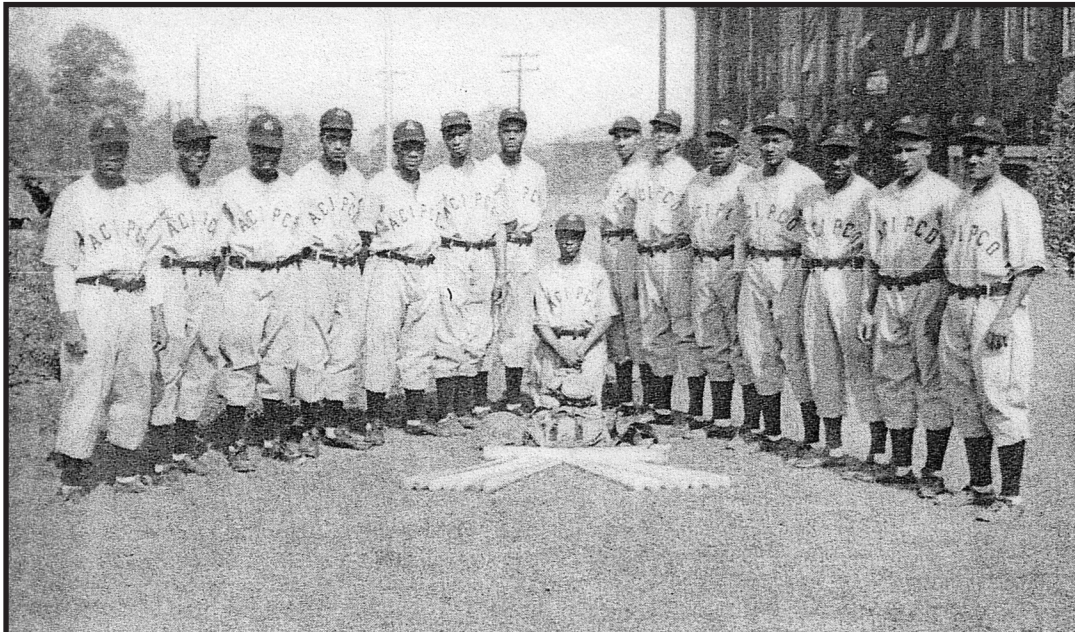
**Ed Steele (Birmingham Black Barons) and Joe Black (Brooklyn Dodgers)**

American Cast Iron and Pipe Company (ACIPCO)



**ACIPCO (1942)**  
Birmingham Industrial League Champions

**Lorenzo “Piper” Davis** (back row fourth from right), **Ed Steele** (back row third from right)  
and **Artie Wilson** (seated fourth from right)



**ACIPCO (1943)**  
Birmingham Industrial League Champions

**Lorenzo “Piper” Davis** (seventh from left), **Ed Steele** (fifth from left) and **Artie Wilson** (third from right)



### **Selected Career Highlights**

- Compiled a career batting average of .363 while playing for ACIPCO in the highly competitive Birmingham Industrial League.
- Hit over .400 for three different seasons (1935 - .416, 1942 - .470 and 1943 - .435) in the Birmingham Industrial League
- Compiled a Negro League career batting average of .323 with a .465 slugging percentage.
- Compiled a career batting average of .331 against all levels of competition.
- Played nine years in the Birmingham Industrial League and hit over .300 every year and played nine years in the Negro American League and hit over .300 every season.
- Hit over .400 twice in the Birmingham Industrial League - .470 (1942) and .435 (1943).
- Along with Lorenzo “Piper” Davis and Artie Wilson, helped lead ACIPCO to seven (7) Birmingham Industrial League championships. Two of their top seasons were 1935 when they went 83-5 (.943) and 1942 when they posted a won-loss record of 49-1 (.980).
- Finished the Negro American League season in 1945 with a .352 batting average.
- Member of the Birmingham Black Barons when they won three Negro American League championships (1943, 1944 and 1948).
- Played in three Negro League World Series (1943, 1944 and 1948).
- Steele was selected to play in two East-West All Star Games (1950 and 1951) and had a career batting average of .429 in the classic.
- In 1951 which was his last season in the Negro American League as a full time player, compiled a batting average of .370 for the season.
- Member of the Kansas City Royals team that won the California Winter League championship in 1946.
- Signed by the Hollywood Stars (Pittsburgh Pirates organization) of the Pacific Coast League. Steele finished the season with the Denver Bears of the Western League.
- Member of the Denver Bears team that won the Western League championship in 1952.
- In his next to last year as a player (1953), he led the Intercounty League (Canada) in homeruns with fourteen (14) for the season.
- Managed the Detroit Stars to a Negro American League championship title in 1956 with a record of 52-16 (.765).
- Managed the East squad in four East-West All Star games (1955, 1956, 1957 and 1958). Compiled a won-loss record of 2-1 in his three managerial appearances in the classic.

**Birmingham Black Barons  
Negro American League Champions (1948)**



**Birmingham Black Barons (1948)**

Back Row – left to right (Ed Steele, Bill Powell, Nat Pollard, Herman Bell, Jim Zapp and Lloyd “Pepper” Bassett)  
 Middle Row – left to right (Bill Greason, Artie Wilson, Jonnie Britton, Lorenzo “Piper” Davis, Norman Robinson,  
 Sam Williams, Alonzo Perry and Wiley Griggs)  
 Front Row – left to right (Jehosie Heard, Jimmy Newberry, Roosevelt Adkins and Joe Scott).



**Birmingham Celebrates Victory over the Kansas City Monarchs Win the Negro American League Title**