

Collection Number

BA MSS 17

Title

American League Base Ball Club of New York Records

Inclusive Dates

1913-1950

Abstract

Records of the American League Base Ball Club of New York and its minor league affiliates, consists almost exclusively of business and financial records, some of which date back to the earliest days of the Yankees organization. This unique collection provides information about the business and financial practices of a highly successful professional sports organization over a period of almost forty years. The collection consists of bound volumes including ledgers, cash books, trial balances, insurance policies, contract record books, contract record file cards, vouchers and invoices, journals, and other business records. The teams with the strongest coverage in the collection are the New York Yankees, Newark Bears, and Norfolk Tars. The collection also includes Yankee Stadium diaries from 1936, 1938, and 1940, which document fan injuries, ejections, and arrests at the stadium. Among the topics covered in the collection are: player salaries, including major players such as Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, and Joe DiMaggio; player transactions, including payments on the purchase of Babe Ruth's contract from the Boston Red Sox in 1919; gate receipts, both home and away; general business practices; advertising and promotions; concessions; scouting expenses; and travel expenses. Also of interest in the collection is a small amount of material on the Negro Leagues. The Kansas City, Newark, New York, and Norfolk series have documentation on the use of ballparks for the play of Negro Leagues games, including dates, team names, and rent paid.

Provenance

Donated by the American League Base Ball Club of New York in 1955 and 1970. Records arranged and described by Jonathan Nelson in January 2002.

Access

By appointment during regular business hours, email research@baseballhall.org. Available on microfilm.

Separations

Yankee Stadium ticket stubs from 1936, 1938, and 1940 have been separated to the Museum Collections Department.

Preferred Citation

American League Base Ball Club of New York, Records 1913-1950, National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, New York.

Grants: CL-10021-01 (IMLS)

Historical Background

The club that became the New York Yankees began as the Baltimore Orioles in 1901. American League President Ban Johnson wanted a club in New York and, after outmaneuvering the politically influential New York Giants, who did not want a competing team, Johnson moved the Orioles to New York in 1903. The team was known as the Highlanders after their move because of the high land on which their park was built. The team that would be a powerhouse during much of the twentieth century did not do well during its first ten years in New York, seriously contending for the pennant during only one season. In 1914, Colonel Jacob Ruppert and Tillinghast Huston purchased the team, now called the Yankees. This collection dates from the beginning of the Ruppert era. In December 1919 the Yankees paid a then record \$125,000 to the Boston Red Sox for Babe Ruth, which is documented in the collection. During the next thirty years, with stars like Ruth, Joe DiMaggio, Lou Gehrig, “Lefty” Gomez, and Waite Hoyt, the Yankees became the dominant team in the American League. In addition to purchasing the contracts of star players, another key component of the Yankees success was the maintenance of an extensive farm system beginning in the early 1930s. The Yankees minor league affiliates documented in this collection are the Akron Yankees, Binghamton Triplets, Chambersburg Young Yanks, Kansas City Blues, Newark Bears, Norfolk Tars, and Springfield Rifles.

Sources

National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum. [Research File]: New York Yankees 1889-1967. Cooperstown, NY: National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, 2002.
Pepe, Phil. *The Yankees: An Authorized History of the New York Yankees*. Dallas, TX: Taylor Pub. Co., 1995.

Scope and Content

The records of the American League Base Ball Club of New York are divided into nine series corresponding to the eight organizations covered in the collection, with one series for material covering a variety of teams. The nine series are **Akron Yankees, Binghamton Triplets, Chambersburg Young Yanks, Kansas City Blues, Newark Bears, New York Yankees, Norfolk Tars, Springfield Rifles, and Various Minor League Teams.**

Akron Yankees (1935-1940) consists of four volumes: cash disbursements, general ledger, journal, and trial balance. Among the topics covered in the series are player and management salaries, player transactions with other teams, gate receipts, and expenses for equipment, travel, scouting, and stadium maintenance.

Binghamton Triplets (1932-1941) is comprised of five volumes, cash disbursements, cash receipts, journal, ledger, and trial balance. Topics covered in the series include player and management salaries; league payments; player transactions; scouting, training, and travel expenses; and money spent on entertainment and promotion at the ballpark.

Chambersburg Young Yanks (1929) consists of the bound articles of incorporation volume and several other documents relating to the incorporation of the team; both the team and the Blue Ridge League ceased to exist after the 1930 season.

Kansas City Blues (1938-1943) consists of three volumes: cash disbursements, general ledger, and journal. The series covers player salaries and transactions; gate receipts, both home and away; sign painting and advertising at the ballpark; and equipment, scout, and trainer expenses. Of particular interest in this series are entries in the general ledger showing stadium rental to the Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro League Baseball League from 1938 through 1942, including a Monarchs vs. Bob Feller exhibition game. Since the stadium rental is variable this apparently reflects differing levels of game attendance. The opposing teams are not noted.

Newark Bears (1925-1941) is comprised of twenty volumes: account book; cash disbursements; general ledgers; journals; road accounts; trial balances; and a volume with vouchers, cash receipts, and cash disbursements combined. Other volumes in the series include ledgers and accounts for East Realty Co., George Weiss, and Jamaica Oval Co., which were apparently involved in the operation of the Newark club. A 1926 real estate appraisal for land and structures owned by the club is also included. The series covers player salaries and transactions; promotional expenses, including music, cigars, and liquor; income from football and soccer games played in the stadium; presents for sports writers; travel expenses; and gate receipts. This series also has some information about Negro League games played in the Newark stadium. Among the games noted in the 1932-1936 general ledger are those between the Baltimore Black Sox and Hilldale (East-West League), and between the House of David and the Royal Giants (Eastern Colored League).

New York Yankees (1913-1950) is the largest series in the collection and consists of forty-two volumes and other documents covering all aspects of club operation. The bulk of the Yankees material is from 1915 through 1945. The Yankees series includes, cash accounts, cash books, cash disbursements, daily and general ledgers, journals, petty cash books, players ledgers, players contract record books, players insurance policies, vouchers and invoices, road account books, and Jacob Ruppert's private ledger.

Included among the many subjects covered in this series are: player salaries, including such high-profile players as Joe DiMaggio, Lou Gehrig, "Lefty" Gomez, and Babe Ruth; player transactions, including the 1919 purchase of Babe Ruth's contract from the Boston Red Sox; income from other stadium uses, including football games, soccer games, motorcycle races, and boxing matches; World Series receipts and expenses; home and away gate receipts; small loans to sports writers such as Ford Frick and Damon Runyon; special taxes assessed during World War I and World War II; team travel expenses, including those for Mrs. Ruth when she traveled with the team; doctor bills for Joe DiMaggio and "Lefty" Grove; travel expenses for Lou Gehrig and others for Lou Gehrig Appreciation Day; casting the bronze plaque for Jacob Ruppert's Yankee Stadium monument; and Yankee Stadium construction and renovation. The yearly players contract record books detail salaries, bonuses, and movement in the minor league system

from 1917 through 1940 with only 1931 missing. The players contract record cards are organized by player name and cover 1915 through 1944. For example, the contract records show that Babe Ruth received the \$10,000 owed under his Boston Red Sox contract plus an additional \$10,000, whereas Lou Gehrig received a contract of only \$400 during his first look with the major league club. Also included are the Yankees' World Series account checkbook (1938-1942), and Yankee Stadium diaries from 1936, 1938, and 1940. The stadium diaries document events at Yankee stadium including fan injuries; fan ejections, mainly for drunkenness and gambling; and fan arrests, mainly for accepting bets on stadium property. The Negro Leagues are briefly documented in this series with scattered references in the cash books and ledgers to Negro League games throughout the 1930s, including information about renting Yankee Stadium for a 1930 "Negro League Championship Games" between the Lincoln Giants and the Homestead Grays.

Norfolk Tars (1934-1950) consists of twenty volumes and other documents, including cash disbursements, cash received, journals, ledgers, vouchers and invoices, players assignment papers, players ledgers, and trial balances. Also included is a ledger for team executive H. P. Dawson's special account. This series covers player salaries, including a young Yogi Berra in 1943; player transactions; league assessments; home and away game receipts; team travel and equipment; and scouting expense. A large number of vouchers and invoices document club finances from 1946 through 1950. The cash receipts book also includes references to stadium rentals by barnstorming Negro Leagues teams such as the St. Louis Stars, Pittsburgh Crawfords, Newark Eagles, New York Cubans, Knoxville Grays, and Little Rock Travelers.

Springfield Rifles (1932) consists of volumes covering cash received and trial balances for the 1932 season prior to the Eastern League's dissolution on July 17, 1932. The limited material in this series covers player salaries and transactions, gate receipts, and team travel expenses.

Various Minor League Teams (1928-1936) consists of two volumes with information about team salaries from a variety of Yankees farm teams, including Akron, Binghamton, Newark, and Wheeling. Hall of Fame players Walter Johnson and Tris Speaker are among the minor league managers noted in the 1928-1933 volume. Also included is a short list of players and their salaries from a variety of Yankees minor league teams, but the purpose of this list is unknown.

Container List

Box Folder Volume

Akron Yankees (C Middle Atlantic League)

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1 | Cash disbursements, 1935-1938 |
| 2 | General ledger, 1935-1937 |
| 3 | Journal, 1935-1937 |
| 4 | Trial balance, 1935-1940 |

Binghamton Triplets (A New York-Pennsylvania League)

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 5 | Cash disbursements, 1936-1939 |
|---|-------------------------------|

		6	Cash received, 1932-1941
			Journal
		7	1932-1937
1	1		1932-1937, loose papers
		8	Ledger, 1933-1938
		9	Trial balance, 1932-1938
			Chambersburg Young Yanks (D Blue Ridge League)
		99	Articles of incorporation, 1929
1	2		Incorporation documents, 1929
			Kansas City Blues (AA American Association)
		10	Cash disbursements, 1938-1939
			General ledger
		11	1938-1943
1	3		1938-1943, loose papers
		12	Journal, 1938-1940
			Newark Bears (AA International League)
		13	Account book, 1925-1926
			Cash disbursements
		14	1925
		15	1932-1934
1	4		1932-1934, loose papers
oversize box	1 folder 2		1932-1934, loose papers
		16	1934-1937
1	5		1934-1937, loose papers
		17	1937-1939
1	6		1937-1939, loose papers
			East Realty Co.
		18	General ledger, 1932-1940
1	7		General ledger, 1932-1940, loose papers
			General ledger
		19	1927-1928
		20	1928-1931
		21	1932-1936
1	8		1932-1936, loose papers
		22	George Weiss, special account, 1933-1945
			Jamaica Oval Co.
		23	Income & expense, 1925
1	9		Income & expense, 1925, loose papers
			Journal
		24	1927-1931
1	10		1927-1931, loose papers
		25	1932-1936
1	11		1932-1936, loose papers
		26	Real estate appraisal, 1926
			Road account
		27	1933-1941

1	12	1933-1941, loose papers
		Trial balance
	28	1926-1927
	29	1932-1934
1	13	1932-1934, loose papers
	30	1936-1937
1	14	1936-1937, loose papers
	31	1938-1940
1	15	1938-1940, loose papers
	32	Vouchers, cash receipts, cash disbursements, 1929-1931

New York Yankees (American League)

		Financial Records
		Cash accounts
	33	1937-1940
	34	1941-1945
		Cash book
	35	1915-1921
1	16	1915-1921, loose papers
	36	1921-1924
1	17	1921-1924, loose papers
		Cash book
	37	1925-1927
	38	1928-1930
	39	1930-1933
1	18	1930-1933, loose papers
	40	1933-1936
	41	1936-1939
	42	1939-1943
	43	1940-1945
	44	Cash disbursements, 1949-1950
		Check book, World Series account
	45	1938-1942
1	19	1938-1942, loose papers
	46	Daily ledger, 1931-1935
		General ledger
	47	1913-1914
1	20	1913-1914, loose papers
	48	1915-1922
	49	1923-1927
	50	1928-1932
1	21	1928-1932, loose papers
	51	1933-1937
	52	1938-1940
	53	1943-1945
1	22	Insurance policies, 1928-1940
		Journal

		54	1915-1919
1	23		1915-1919, loose papers
		55	1919-1923
1	24		1919-1923, loose papers
		56	1927-1931
		57	1936-1940
		58	1940-1941
			Petty cash
		59	1915-1922
		60	1922-1926
		61	1927-1931
		62	1931-1933
			Players contract record books
		125	1915-1919 Added 6/30/2011 not microfilmed
		126	1920-1930 Added 6/30/2011 not microfilmed
		101-114	1917-1930
		115-123	1932-1940
		127-133	1941-1947 added 6/30/2011 not microfilmed
		124	Players contract record card file, 1915-1944
1	25		Players contract record card file, loose papers, 1934
			Players ledger
		63	1913-1914
1	26		1913-1914, loose papers
		64	1915-1920
		65	1921-1928
1	27		1921-1928, loose papers
		66	1929-1933
		66a	1934-1942 Added 5/13/2013 not microfilmed
			Private ledger
		67	1923-1937
1	28		1923-1937, loose papers
			Road account
		68	1922-1927
		69	1931-1935
		70	1941-1947
1	29		1941-1947, loose papers
		71	Trial balance, 1928-1933
		71a	Stock Certificate Book Added 5/13/2013 not microfilmed
			1935-1941
			Vouchers and invoices
			General
1	30		September 1939-December 1939
1	31		January 1940-April 1940
2	1		April 1940
2	2		May 1940-June 1940

			Road account
2	3		June 1939-February 1940
2	4		March 1940-June 1940
			Stadium diaries
		72	1936
2	5		1936, loose papers
		73	1938
2	6		1938, loose papers
		74	1940
2	7		1940, loose papers

Norfolk Tars (B Piedmont League)

2	8		Assignment papers, July 1944-December 1944
			Cash disbursements
		75	1934-1937
		76	1937-1939
		77	1939-1941

Norfolk Tars

			Cash disbursements, continued
		78	1941-1942
		79	1942-1943
		80	1944-1945
		81	1945
		82	Cash received, 1943-1945
			H. P. Dawson, special account
		83	1934-1938
		84	1939
			Journal
		85	1934-1937
3	1		1934-1937, loose papers
		86	1937-1941
			Ledger
		87	1934-1937
3	2		1934-1937, loose papers
		88	1938-1944
3	3		1938-1944, loose papers
		89	1945
			Players ledger
		90	1936-1942
3	4		1936-1942, loose papers
		91	1943-1945
			Special account vouchers
3	5		1944
3	6		1945

			Trial balance
		92	1935-1939
		93	1940-1943
		94	1944-1945
			Vouchers and invoices
3	7		December 1945-July 1946
3	8		August 1946-January 1947
4	1		June 1948-August 1948
4	2		September 1948-December 1948
4	3		January 1950-April 1950
4	4		May 1950-June 1950

Springfield Rifles (A Eastern League)

	95	Cash received, 1932
	96	Trial balance, 1932

Various Minor League Teams

			Players' payroll
		97	1928-1933
4	5		1928-1933, loose papers
		98	1934-1936
4	6		1934-1936, loose papers
		100	Players record book, 1935-1939