

1898-1899 Menke Mattoon Teams

PLAYERS

Players who went on to the Majors:

Luther “Dummy” Taylor – 1900-08 New York Nat’l team

Roy Brashear – 1899 St. Louis Nat’l (3 games); 1903 Phil Nat’l

“Del” George Elmer Howard – 1905-09 Pitt. Nat’l; Boston Nat’l; Chicago Nat’l teams

“Pug” Justin Titus Bennett – 1906-07 St. Louis Nat’l

“Nick” Conrad Powell Carter – 1908 Phil. Amer.

“Bob” Robert K. Wicker – 1901-06 St. Louis Nat’l; Chicago Nat’l; Cincinnati Nat’l

James T. “Deacon” McGuire (maybe, but unlikely it’s the same person)

Weldon Henley – 1903-07 Phil. Amer.; Brooklyn Nat’l

Harry Spratt – 1911-12 Bost. Nat’l

The 1904-8 Mattoon newspaper occasionally mentioned that Cy Young had played here, but I can find no evidence of this, though a Charles Young pitched here starting 6/24/1899 who had come from Bloomington Western Association team.

Organized: Oct. 29, 1897 announced in paper a syndicate to provide a well equipped ball park: F. M. Menke, John Hamilton & Samuel Owings. Dec. 24, 1897 announced in paper a stock company will be organized. Dec. 16, 1898 it is announced Mattoon will be in a League next year – Illinois – Indiana League. Increased the capital stock in May 1899. Feb. 2, 1900 H. J. Raffer, superintendent of the Street Car Co. got a letter from Ind. – Ill. League listing Mattoon as a member. There was no nickname for this club that shows up repeatedly in the paper. It seems it was simply called the Mattoon team.

1898 City Directory Listing: Base Ball – Athletic Park Club, Inc.

President & Attorney	Bryan H. Tivnen (Lawyer at 1720 Wabash)
Vice President	Seth R. Evans
Secretary rms. Virginia Bldg.	Frank Robinson (bookkeeper at Andrews Bros. Lumber)
Treasurer Virginia Bldg.	Samuel M. Owings (clerk at Mattoon Bank) rms.
Manager 1413 Charleston)	Francis M. Menke (owns The Café Restaurant, 1413 Charleston)

Where: Ball park in the south part of town w/ “elegant diamond, an 8” fence and first class grandstand”; in June 1898 Grandstand is moved to north end of park where shade is better; March 1899 grandstand moved west 200 yards; Owings & Menke had land laid out in town lots which they are selling on Nov. 10 designating it Park Place at 18th Street and Oak Street.

Club office was at 1715 Broadway

Players: 1898

Elmer Howard – Left Field & Short Stop (Kenney, IL)

“Pug” Bennett – 3rd Base & Center Field (Instructor of physical culture at college in Asheville, N.C.)

Roy Brashear – 2nd Base (Vintoo, IA)

Bowman – Center Field & Left Field

King (Capt. End of season) – 2nd & 3rd Bases

Jack Wilkinson – Catcher

James Murphy – Short Stop (Welmingen, OH)

Capt. George A. Wolford – 1st Base & Catcher (Rochester, IL was given position on Big 4)

Wicker – Pitcher

Luther “Dummy” Taylor – Pitcher & Right or Left Field (deaf mute from Baldwin, KS)

Ben South – 3rd Base (Welmingen, OH)

Lon Dodds – Right Field (Mattoon?)

Will Swallow – Catcher & 1st Base (Mattoon; on & off team)

P. Lipe – Short Stop (released in June)

O. Lipe – Center Field

Sequest – 2nd Base

Brownie Gharrett – Center Field (Mattoon)

Spratt – 3rd Base

Henley – Pitcher (released)

Merrick – Right Field (deaf mute; release in June)

Sloane – Pitcher & Right or Center Field

Legriss – Right Field & Pitcher

Price – 1st Base

1899

South (Capt.) – 1st Base

Murphy – 2nd Base

Bennett – 3rd Base (from N.C.)

Carter – Left Field (from N.C., protégé of Bennett)

Bowman – Center Field

George Wolford – Right & Left Field

Wilkinson – Catcher

Taylor – Pitcher

Wicker – Pitcher

Gilmore – Catcher (Mattoon)

Wicker – Pitcher

Howard – Short Stop

Brownie Gharrett – (Mattoon)

Roy Brashear – 1st Base

Jack Wilkinson – Catcher (Mattoon, works for P.D. & E.)

Charles Young – 2nd Base, Pitcher

McGuire – Pitcher & Catcher

Baird – 3rd Base (late replacement)

McCarthy – 1st Base (late replacement)

GAME NOTES

Admission: 1898 - \$.25 men, \$.15 women, \$.05 children; Grandstand \$.15 men, women free

Game Time: 3:30 p.m. weekdays, some Saturdays and Sundays

Notes: 1898

Women got to sit farthest from the bleachers; Ladies attend fairly well early in season.

600 people came to a Sunday game in June, 700 largest crowd reported.

Bad umpiring was an issue

Did not draw big crowds at first; stores were asked to close from 3-6 p.m. for opening day

The field must have been rough, came on July 1 "ball lost in tall weeds"

While they played ball on Sundays, there were large signs asking for less noise posted at the park.

Sept. 9th announced no Sunday games!

Players were paid \$7.50 for 2hrs. performance.

1898 season was not a financial success.

1899

Residents of Richmond Addition petition City Council to stop Sunday base ball on June 9 paper.

Umpiring not good

Tailors vs. Barbers benefit game to buy new suits for the pro team on July 16.

Early on seemed to be lots of hand injuries.

Sept. 8: there is talk of a new league with several Illinois cities, but "There is no reason for concealing the fact that the game has not been patronized sufficiently in this city during the past two seasons to warrant Mattoon going into another league as a plain business venture with the expectation on the part of the backers of the club ending the season with any money to the good. We do not wish to be taken as saying that Mattoon will not be in the league if one is organized for the lovers of the game in this city are lovers of the game pure and simple without any hope or expectation of profit an if aa league is organized Mattoon will, in all probablility, be in it with a team as good or better even than the one that has been making such a sturdy chase for the pennant this season. It is difficult to understand why the game has not paid here for it has been played in its most attractive form and lovers of the sport have seen as good and as interesting contests as few minor cities have an opportunity to see."

Mattoon was always in the first or second place ranking in the League. They played 72 games, won 50 and had a percentage of .694.

Sept. 13, Menke had a dinner for the members of the ball team at his restaurant.

Nov. 5, 1899 Pennant was given to Danville at a meeting held in Danville

SCHEDULE

Season: 1898

Practice began in mid to late April; Started May 3, 1898 with pre-season; regular season started June 15; Last game Sept. 30.

Lincoln vs. Mattoon (2 days cancelled due to wet ground)

Mattoon vs. Lincoln (2 days)

Mattoon vs. Hillsboro (1 day)

Mattoon vs. Bloomer Girls (1 day, cancelled due to rain)

Mattoon vs. Danville (double header, 1 day)

Mattoon vs. Marion Banks (2 days)

Evansville Egyptians vs. Mattoon

Mattoon vs. Lincoln (2 days)

Taylorville vs. Mattoon (Sun.)

Mattoon vs. Clinton (2 days)

Mattoon vs. Page Fence Giants of Chicago (1 day cancelled)

Mattoon vs. Chicago Union (African Americans, 2 days)

Lincoln vs. Mattoon

El Paso vs. Mattoon

Mattoon vs. Danville Coal Miners (2 days)

Lincoln vs. Mattoon

Terre Haute vs. Mattoon

Mattoon (referred to as broomcorn farmers) vs. Lincoln (2 days)

Clay County vs. Mattoon

Mattoon vs. Chicago Union (African Americans, 1 day)

Springfield vs. Mattoon (Sun.)

Casey vs. Mattoon (1 day)

Mattoon vs. Casey (1 day)

Mattoon vs. Mt. Olive (1 day)

Mattoon vs. Sporting News (in St. Louis, 1 day)

Mattoon vs. Detroit League Players (1 day)

Kansas City, KS vs. Mattoon (1 day)

Mattoon vs. Sporting News (1 day 1000 attend)

Mattoon vs. Danville Coal Miners (2 days)

Mattoon vs. Lincoln (2 days, Sun.)

Mattoon vs. Kansas (doubleheader 1 day)

Evansville vs. Mattoon

Mattoon vs. Chicago Dearborns (cancelled, never showed)

Mattoon vs. Sporting News

Mattoon vs. Peoria

Mattoon (referred to as broomcorn cutters) vs. St. Louis Rough Riders (Leaguers)

Lincoln vs. Mattoon at Mt. Pulaski

Mattoon vs. Consumers from St. Louis (1 day)

St. Louis Browns vs. Mattoon (1 day)

Lincoln vs. Mattoon

Mattoon vs. Page Fence Giants of Chicago (African Americans 1 day)

Kenney vs. Mattoon

Mattoon vs. Chicago Unions (African American 2 days)

Mattoon vs. Indianapolis (1 day)

Season: 1899

Season began May 28 (Sun.), 1899; ended Sept. 11th

May 28 & 29 Mattoon vs. Peoria (Opening Day)

June 1 Mattoon vs. Terre Haute (1 day)

June 4 Mattoon vs Pekin (cancelled due to other team not coming)

Mattoon vs. Effingham (wore clean white flannel suits & gymnasium shoes)

June 8 Mattoon vs. Columbia Giants (Chicago African American team 2 days)

June 11 Sporting News vs. Mattoon (Excursion ad in paper)

Bef. June 16 Mattoon vs. Danville (Opening League play)

Non-home games unknown location

June 23 & 24 Muncie at Mattoon (2 days)

June 28 Mattoon vs. Kokomo (1 day)

July 1 & 2 Mattoon at Bloomington (2 days)

July 4 & 5 Terre Haute at Mattoon (2 days, T.H. refused to play second game on Tues.)

July 6 & 7 Danville at Mattoon (2 days)

July 8 & 9 Wabash at Mattoon (best attendance so far – Sun.)

July 11 & 12 Mattoon at Terre Haute

July 13 & 14 Bloomington, IN at Mattoon (Muncie team is defunct)

July 15 & 16 Crawfordsville at Mattoon (15th was Ladies Day – all ladies admitted free)

July 17 & 18 Mattoon at Bloomington (17th cancelled?, no game listed)

July 19 & 20 Mattoon at Crawfordsville

July 21 & 22 Mattoon at Terre Haute (maybe at Mattoon)

July 23 & 24 Wabash at Mattoon (24th cancelled due to rain)

July 25 & 26 Danville at Mattoon

July 27 & 28 Mattoon at Wabash

July 29 & 30 Crawfordsville at Mattoon

July 31 Terre Haute vs. Mattoon at West End Park in Champaign as exhibition

Aug. 2 Terre Haute at Mattoon (game in Arcola, played exhibition game in a.m.)

Aug. 3 & 4 Mattoon at Crawfordsville

Aug. 5 & 6 Mattoon at Danville

Aug. 7 & 8 Mattoon at Bloomington

Aug. 9 & 10 Bloomington at Mattoon (in Kansas as part of Harvest Home Fest)

Aug. 11 & 12 Crawfordsville at Mattoon

Aug. 13 & 14 Mattoon at Terre Haute (no mention in paper dates were 18 & 19 in paper)

Aug. 15 & 16 Mattoon at Wabash (no mention in paper)

Aug. 17 & 18 Danville at Mattoon

Aug. 19 & 20 Terre Haute at Mattoon

Aug. 21 & 22 Mattoon at Crawfordsville

Aug. 23 & 24, 25 Danville at Mattoon (played in Paris for Mid Summer Carnival)

Aug. 26, 27 & 28 Mattoon at Danville

Aug. 29, 30 & 31 Crawfordsville at Mattoon (31st cancelled due to rain)

Sept. 1, 2 & 3 Mattoon at Bloomington

Sept. 4 & 5, 6 Mattoon at Wabash (4th doubleheader)

Sept. 7, 8 & 9 Bloomington at Mattoon (Wabash drawn out of league)

Sept. 10 & 11 Mattoon at Terre Haute (two games planned for 11th, second was forfeited by T.H.)