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Professional baseball player Andrew Vidinha

By [Hank Soboleski](http://www.thegardenisland.com/author/hank-soboleski/) — Island History (<http://www.thegardenisland.com/author/hank-soboleski/>) | Sunday, March 4, 2018, 12:05 a.m.

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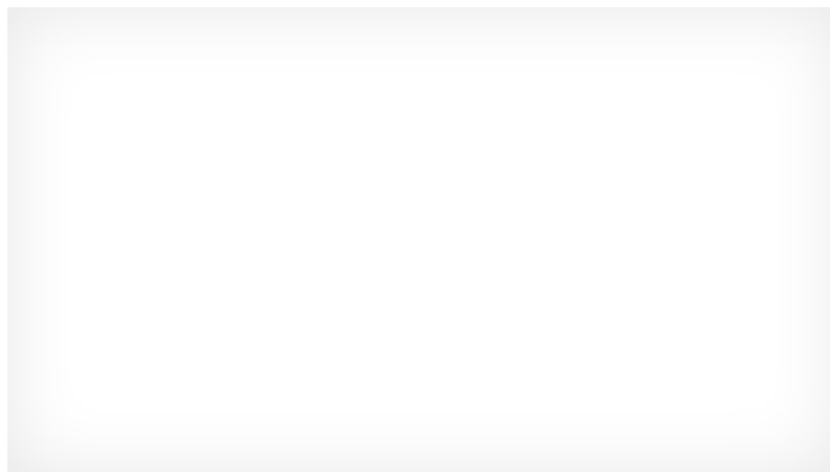
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Born at Grove Farm, Kauai, the son of Joseph and Virginia Vidinha, and raised in Kekaha, Andrew Vidinha (1929-2007) was the first ball player from Kauai to receive a professional baseball contract.

He led the Waimea High School baseball team in batting in 1946 and 1947 as a pitcher and catcher, batting .400 in 1947, and was known for hitting a long, hard ball, an accurate throwing arm and speed on the bases.

ADVERTISING



Following his graduation in 1947, he competed in the five-game, second annual "On to Brooklyn" classic played at Honolulu Stadium in June, featuring two competing teams — the Kunihisa All-Stars and the Whaley All-Stars — comprised of the finest teenage baseball players in the Territory.

In that series, he played catcher and pitcher for the defeated Kunihisa All-Stars, batted .417, was the winning pitcher in game four, while giving up five hits, and was selected the outstanding player of the series, thus becoming "Hawaii's Boy Baseball Player of the Year."

His selection earned him a spot, representing Hawaii, on the World All-Stars team, along with 19 other amateur ball players from many cities in the United States, Canada and Cuba that would play the Brooklyn Eagle All-Stars, made up of 20 sandlotters from Brooklyn, New York, in a three-game "Brooklyn Against the World" series at Ebbets Field, Brooklyn, in August.

Vidinha's World All-Stars beat the Brooklyn Eagle All-Stars two games to one, with Vidinha knocking out a pinch single in the first game — and Brooklyn Dodgers scouts, impressed by his performance, offered him a professional contract that he signed in February 1948.



During the 1948 season, he played ball in the Dodgers minor league organization as a catcher on the Santa Barbara Dodgers and Idaho Falls Russetts teams, batting a combined .245 average.

At season's end, he came home to Kauai, decided not to return to the Mainland in 1949, and joined Kekaha Sugar Co., where he eventually became a supervisor.

Professional ball player Andrew Vidinha and his wife, Norma Vidinha, had four children: Burt, Brian, Erleen and Jayneen.

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