

= Youngstown Ohio Works =

The Youngstown Ohio Works baseball team was a minor league club that was known for winning the premier championship of the Ohio ? Pennsylvania League in 1905 , and for launching the professional career of pitcher Roy Castleton a year later . A training ground for several players and officials who later established careers in Major League Baseball , the team proved a formidable regional competitor and also won the 1906 league championship .

During its brief span of activity , the Ohio Works team faced challenges that reflected common difficulties within the Ohio ? Pennsylvania League , including weak financial support for teams . Following a dispute over funding , the team 's owners sold the club to outside investors , just a few months before the opening of the 1907 season .

The club 's strong record and regional visibility spurred the growth of amateur and minor league baseball in the Youngstown area , and the community 's minor league teams produced notable players throughout the first half of the 20th century . In the late 1990s , this tradition was rekindled , with the establishment of the Mahoning Valley Scrappers , a minor league team based in neighboring Niles , Ohio .

= = Formation and league championship = =

The Ohio Works team was organized in Youngstown , in 1902 , under the sponsorship of Joseph A. McDonald , superintendent of the Ohio Works of the Carnegie Steel Company . In 1905 , the club joined the Class C Division , Ohio ? Pennsylvania League , which was founded that year in Akron , Ohio , by veteran ballplayer Charlie Morton . The league 's Ohio members included clubs from Akron , Barberton , Bucyrus , Canton , Kent , Lima , Massillon , Mount Vernon , Newark , Niles , Steubenville , Washington , Wooster , Youngstown , and Zanesville , while Pennsylvania was initially represented by teams from Braddock , Butler , Homestead , and Sharon . Within the first two weeks of the season , clubs from Lancaster and McKeesport also joined the league . Only eight of the original 21 participating clubs finished the 1905 season , however . These included clubs from Akron , Homestead , Lancaster , Newark , Niles , Sharon , Youngstown , and Zanesville . The name , " Youngstown Ohio Works " , became officially associated with the Youngstown team when it joined the Ohio ? Pennsylvania League . From the outset , the Youngstown ball club was managed by ex @-@ major leaguer Marty Hogan , a former outfielder for the Cincinnati Reds and St. Louis Browns .

The team opened the 1905 season with an unexpected 4 ? 1 loss to the Canton Protectives , inspiring a local newspaper to comment that the Youngstown team made " as many errors as hits while Canton fielded almost perfectly and hit opportunely " . The Ohio Works club gained steam , however , and began to win games . On May 11 , 1905 , the Youngstown team garnered controversy when The Akron Times @-@ Democrat reported that the Ohio Works ' sponsors provided player salaries that nearly doubled those offered by other clubs in the Ohio ? Pennsylvania League . In a report on the outcry in Akron , The Youngstown Daily Vindicator warned that , " if the Youngstown backers keep adding and force the other clubs to add to the salaries , it is a question of only a short time until independent baseball will be an impossibility " . The newspaper article concluded that the large salaries provided by the Ohio Works 's sponsors placed a special burden on teams based in " smaller cities " .

Competition among league participants was intense , and games were often raucous affairs . On July 16 , 1905 , a riot broke out during a contest with a team in neighboring Niles , Ohio . According to a newspaper account , the trouble began when two female fans became involved in a " hair @-@ pulling fight " . At one point , two " well @-@ known men " were arrested for " taking an umbrella from a woman and breaking it after she had been annoying them with it " . Finally , dozens of fans swarmed into the field , where they " pushed around the umpire and interfered with the defensive play of the Youngstown fielders " .

In September 1905 , the Youngstown Ohio Works won the first league championship , though sources disagree on the club 's final record . This confusion may be due to the disorganized nature

of the new league , with its sprawling roster of teams . According to the Spalding Guide ( 1906 ) , " The failure to furnish official reports was probably due to the clubs being new to a league " . Baseball researcher Jim Holl summarizes the varied accounts as follows : " The Reach Guide ( 1906 ) credits Youngstown with an 84 ? 32 won ? lost record where the Spalding Guide of the same year list a 90 ? 35 record . The Encyclopedia of Minor League Baseball ( 1993 ) tells a third story , giving Youngstown an 88 ? 35 mark " . Despite this uncertainty over the club 's record , its championship status was not in dispute , and the team became popularly known as " the Champs " . This moniker , however , was not officially connected to a Youngstown @-@ based ball club until 1907 , when it became the legal name of the Ohio Works ' local successors .

= = Final season = =

By the outset of the 1906 season , the Ohio ? Pennsylvania League had trimmed down to a more manageable eight teams . Departing teams included franchises from Barberton , Braddock , Bucyrus , Butler , Canton , Homestead , Kent , Lima , Massillon , McKeesport , Mount Vernon , Niles , Steubenville , Washington , and Wooster . At the same time , the league attracted new teams from New Castle , Pennsylvania , and Mansfield , Ohio .

The Ohio Works team opened with 16 players , three of whom had been part of the club during the 1905 season . The team 's lineup included William J. Maloney of Bradford , Kentucky ; Will M. Thomas of Morristown , Pennsylvania ; Tommy Thomas of Piqua , Ohio ; Lee Fohl of Allegheny , Pennsylvania ; Louis Schettler of Pittsburgh , Pennsylvania ; " Dotty " Freck of Columbus , Ohio ; A. C. McClintock of Columbus ; Roy Castleton of Salt Lake City , Utah ; Lewis Groh of Rochester , New York ; John Kennedy of Youngstown , Charles Crouse of Detroit , Michigan ; Roy Chase of Andover , Ohio ; Forrester J. Dressner of Garrettsville , Pennsylvania ; Harry Schwartz of Cleveland , Ohio ; and Roy Gould of Middlesex , Pennsylvania . Other players associated with the club during the 1906 season were Edward Hilley , Curley Blount , and Charles McCloskey .

The Youngstown club kicked off the 1906 season with an exhibition game against a Cleveland team , emerging as victors in a close contest of 3 ? 4 . " Up till the closing minutes it looked like the visiting team , the Cleveland Leaders , would stow the contest away in their bat @-@ bags and leave the field on top " , the Vindicator reported . " The finish was exciting , and 400 fanatics who took chances on pneumonia had a chance to warm up and go home in good spirits . " . The paper stated that , at the top of the first inning , the Cleveland team was leading by one point , when " the Youngstown gentlemen got busy in the most approved style " . According to the Vindicator , Ohio Works player Curley Blount " stepped in front of a slow pitched ball and was sent to third " , while A. C. McClintock " stole second with all hands asleep " . At this point , the paper added , " [ Charles ] McCloskey took another base hit and Blount and McClintock scored " . The Vindicator 's summary of the game called attention to pitcher Roy Castleton , " who struck out all three batters in the tenth and got one in the ninth " . The paper described McClintock and McCloskey ( the " two Macs " ) as the Youngstown club 's " star hitters " .

Early in the season , as the Ohio Works team prepared for a second game with the Zanesville Moguls ( close rivals in the 1905 championship games ) , the club manager , Hogan , spoke confidently on their chances of capturing the league pennant . " If the boys go through the season as they are playing now , we will have no trouble winning out " , he said to a reporter with The Youngstown Daily Vindicator . " Our pitchers are in good condition and are holding the opposing batsmen to few hits . It is the pitching staff that has saved many a game for us . We have no .350 batters on the club , but any man on it is liable to step in and break up a game " . A local newspaper confirmed Hogan 's assessment of the team , observing that only one player , outfielder Will Thomas , had worked up a batting average of .306 . Nevertheless , as Hogan predicted , the team defeated the Moguls , with a final score of 11 ? 8 . The game 's highlights included the pitching of " Long John " Kennedy , who kept the Moguls to seven hits , and the batting of Edward Hilley , who " unloosened a drive to middle field that permitted him to go all the way around " .

Hogan 's overall confidence in the club was rewarded . The Youngstown team closed the season with an 84 ? 53 record and won its second consecutive Ohio ? Pennsylvania League championship .

The star of the Ohio Works team was a gangling , left @-@ handed pitcher named Roy Castleton , a Utah native who went on to pitch for the New York Highlanders and Cincinnati Reds . On August 17 , 1906 , Castleton gained national recognition when he pitched a perfect game against rival Akron , shutting them out at 4 ? 0 . With Castleton 's assistance , the Youngstown Ohio Works claimed its third consecutive Ohio state pennant , a prize distinct from the league championship .

= = Dissolution = =

In the wake of the Ohio Works ' second league championship , steps were taken to incorporate the club . Sporting Life noted in December 1906 that the team 's backers , Joseph and Thomas McDonald ( superintendent and assistant superintendent , respectively , of the Ohio Works of the Carnegie Steel Company ) were compelled to invite additional investors because of planned ( and costly ) improvements at the steel plant . " The incorporators of the club will be Thomas McDonald , Joseph McDonald , Thomas Carr , Thomas Carter and Marty Hogan " , the paper stated . " Manager Hogan will be given even more control of the team next season than he has had . Heretofore he has had the entire control of the team and transacted most of the business " .

At some point , however , disagreements over funding evidently arose between the McDonald brothers and Hogan . On February 18 , 1907 , the Zanesville Signal reported that Hogan had received permission from " the Messrs. McDonald " ( Joseph and Thomas ) to negotiate a \$ 3 @,@ 000 deal for the sale of the team , including its players , to a group of Zanesville investors . The following day , Hogan was quoted as saying , " Youngstown couldn 't or didn 't raise enough money to cover a sparrow 's blanket " . The ball club manager 's evident frustration during this period was reflected in comments published in The Youngstown Daily Vindicator almost a week after the team 's sale . When questioned on his widely publicized decision to resign as manager of the Youngstown club before the opening of the 1907 season , Hogan reportedly said that he had received " the short end of the deal " . No reference was made to the club 's sale .

The former Ohio Works manager was apparently not the only observer to suggest that Joseph McDonald engaged in " unsportsmanlike tactics " . A feature story , that appeared in The Youngstown Daily Vindicator in 1920 , stated that McDonald took deliberate steps in 1907 to replace the Ohio Works team with a more seasoned club from Homestead , Pennsylvania . The new club became known officially as the " Youngstown Champs " . Rumors of McDonald 's supposed strategy apparently angered local baseball fans . According to the 1920 feature article , the Youngstown media highlighted the Champs ' unexpected loss to the amateur Rayen Athletics in 1907 . At this point , however , McDonald 's relationship with the club was less direct . According to Sporting Life , the Youngstown franchise had been " declared forfeit " in early 1907 , on the recommendation of the Akron club ; it was subsequently " awarded " to a recently established baseball company . " This was only a formality to make legal the actions taken by Magnate [ Joseph ] McDonald when they turned over the old franchise to the newly organized company in Youngstown " , the paper reported . In any event , the Youngstown Champs went on to win the Ohio ? Pennsylvania League championship .

Meanwhile , former Ohio Works players in Zanesville quickly regained their momentum . In March 1907 , the new club was admitted into the Pennsylvania ? Ohio ? Maryland League , a Division D league . By the close of the 1907 season , the club had seized the championship of the eight @-@ team P @-@ O @-@ M league . In 1908 , Hogan 's final season as manager , the team was christened as the Zanesville Infants and joined the Central League . Further research is needed to determine the Zanesville Infants ' league ranking at the close of the 1908 season , but available information shows that the team neither won the championship nor placed as a runner @-@ up .

With the exception of a few notable figures , the progress of former Ohio Works players is difficult to track . After leaving the club at the end of the 1906 season , Roy Castleton went on to pitch for the New York Highlanders and Cincinnati Reds . Lee Fohl , another noteworthy alumnus , managed the Cleveland Indians between 1915 and 1919 . Fohl later served as manager of the St. Louis Browns and Boston Red Sox . Although Fohl was often criticized as a manager , sports journalist John J. Ward ( writing in August 1924 ) credited him , to a large extent , for the early successes of the Red

Sox , an underdog that briefly challenged the New York Yankees and Washington Senators before slipping to seventh place in the eight @-@ team American League . Former major leaguer Billy Phyle , who played for the Ohio Works team during the 1905 season , went on to the St. Louis Cardinals in 1906 . A fourth ex @-@ team member , Louis Schettler , played for the Philadelphia Phillies during the 1910 season . Schettler ( a Pittsburgh native ) eventually settled in Youngstown , where he died in 1960 .

Much is known about the subsequent career of the team 's ex @-@ manager . In 1909 , Marty Hogan moved to Lancaster , Pennsylvania , where he signed future Hall of Fame pitcher Stan Coveleski to his first professional contract . In 1909 , the Lancaster Red Roses worked up a 75 @-@ 39 record , seizing the championship of the Tri @-@ State League . As Spalding 's Baseball Guide ( 1910 ) reported : " Lancaster , under manager Marty Hogan , won its first pennant in the league , and the top rung of the ladder was only gained by the hardest kind of fighting " . Hogan went on to manage clubs in Zanesville and Fond du Lac , Wisconsin . In 1913 , during a stint in Zanesville , the manager signed pitcher Sam Jones to his first professional contract . In the mid @-@ 1910s , Hogan permanently resettled in Youngstown , where he died in 1923 , several months after being injured in an automobile accident .

= = Legacy = =

The Youngstown Ohio Works team not only gave several members a " shot " at the major leagues , but it also played an indirect role in launching the career of Hall of Fame umpire Billy Evans . On September 1 , 1903 , Evans , a reporter at The Youngstown Daily Vindicator , was assigned to cover a game between the Ohio Works and the Homestead Library Athletic Club that was held in Youngstown . Evans took his first step toward a legendary career when club manager Hogan offered him \$ 15 to fill an umpire vacancy . ( In 1905 , Evans received a major career boost from Youngstown native Jimmy McAleer , who recommended Evans to the American League . )

The story of the Ohio Works team proved to be an early chapter in Youngstown 's long history of amateur and minor league baseball . In the 1930s and 1940s , the city was a frequent host of the National Amateur Baseball Federation ( NABF ) championship . NABF officials praised the community for the condition of its sandlot baseball diamonds , which they rated as among the best in the country . During the first half of the 20th century , Youngstown @-@ based teams provided experience and exposure to future major league players such as Everett Scott , Floyd Baker , and Johnny Kucab . Today , the Youngstown ? Warren area is home base to the Mahoning Valley Scrappers , a minor league team that competes in the Class A New York ? Penn League .