

= Amanda Clement =

Amanda E. Clement (March 20 , 1888 ? July 20 , 1971) was the first woman paid to umpire a baseball game , and may have also been the first woman to referee a high school basketball game . Clement served as an umpire on a regular basis for six years , and served occasionally for several decades afterwards . An accomplished athlete in multiple disciplines , Clement competed in baseball , basketball , track , gymnastics , and tennis , and has been attributed world records in shot put , sprinting , hurdling , and baseball .

= = Early life and umpiring career = =

Amanda Clement was born in Hudson , South Dakota , then part of the Dakota Territory , on March 20 , 1888 to Harriet Clement , one of the original settlers of Eden , South Dakota , and her husband , who died when Amanda was very young . In 1904 Clement traveled to Hawarden , Iowa to watch her brother Hank pitch in a semi @-@ professional game . The umpire for the amateur game taking place before Hank 's did not show , and Hank suggested that Amanda , who had played baseball with her brothers and was knowledgeable about the game , serve as the umpire . In so doing , Clement became the first woman paid to umpire a baseball game . Her performance was so well received that she was hired to umpire further semi @-@ professional games .

Clement 's umpiring career lasted six years , during which she officiated games in North Dakota , South Dakota , Minnesota , Iowa , and Nebraska . Unlike in modern games , during Clement 's time games only had one umpire , who stood behind the pitcher and was responsible for calling strikes and balls , whether balls were fair or foul , and whether runners reached bases safely . Despite the danger umpires faced during this era Clement was treated respectfully by both players and fans , and became respected for her serious style and because she was insusceptible to bribery . Her popularity was so high that baseball marketers emphasized her officiating of games to bring in crowds . In 1906 Clement wrote an editorial for the Cincinnati Enquirer arguing that women made better umpires than men because men would not speak abusively towards female umpires . She would repeat this idea in interviews with other newspapers . Clement , a Congregationalist , refused to umpire on Sundays and stayed in the homes of clergymen while umpiring on the road .

Clement earned between \$ 15 to \$ 25 per game , which she used to fund her college education , attending Yankton College for two years followed by two years at University of Nebraska . While at Yankton , she refereed high school basketball games , possibly the first woman to do so , captained the college 's women 's basketball team , ran track , was a gymnast , and was by her own approximation the state 's best tennis player .

A number of additional accomplishments in sports have been attributed to Clement , but cannot be confirmed because of poor record keeping at the time . These claims include winning tennis championships in Iowa and South Dakota and setting world records in shot put , sprinting , hurdling , and baseball , where it is claimed that Clement threw a baseball 275 feet .

= = After umpiring = =

Although Clement spent only six years serving as an umpire on a regular basis , she continued to serve intermittently until her forties . Following her time as a regularly serving umpire , Amanda Clement spent several years teaching physical education at the University of Wyoming , the Jamestown , North Dakota high school , and other schools in North Dakota and South Dakota . Clement also managed several Y.W.C.A.s , including one in LaCrosse , Wisconsin . Clement also served as the coach of Hudson Independent basketball team , organized tennis tournaments , and served as a newspaper reporter , police matron , typesetter , justice of the peace , and as the city assessor for the town of Hudson . In 1929 Clement moved back to South Dakota to care for her mother , who was ill . Following her mother 's death in 1934 , Clement moved to Sioux Falls , South Dakota where she spent twenty @-@ five years as a social worker before retiring in 1966 . Clement died in Sioux Falls on July 20 , 1971 .

