

# Saving baseball during world war ii

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Baseball was a big sport back in 1930-1940's. The sport was only young guys who were also needed in World War II. Nobody could win the war without them and baseball couldn't be played without them. That was until Phillip K. Wrigley came up with a brilliant idea. He was worried about baseball because he was the owner of the Chicago Cubs. That's when he came up with the idea of young ladies playing baseball. Some things changed in the game but women taking over baseball helped Americans be able to focus on something other than war. " From 1943 to 1954 " Americans Past Time" was played in skirts. "

Women normally took the jobs of men that work in the factory but now could also play baseball for them. The All American Girl Softball/Baseball League (AAGS/BL) began in the summer of 1943. When it first started it was a mix between baseball and softball, known as hardball. But the outfits were nowhere close to being the same. The ladies playing had to remain dressed like a lady, meaning they wore short skirts. Most of the families that had girls that played were looked down upon. Since the game was called hardball many things changed. The ball was twelve inches and was pitched underhand style.

Also the diamond was seventy-two feet in between bases. They tried to keep it as similar as they could to baseball. They did get paid to play though. Because of money reasons Wrigley had to find a way to keep all the cities close together. It came down to four cities, South Bend, Indiana; Kenosha, Wisconsin; Racine, Wisconsin; and Rockford, Illinois. Even though women could play softball it was not as popular as men's baseball. Everyone was

very interested in watching baseball, so when it would have to come to an end many were devastated.

When women started playing in the AAGBL it was the number one way for Americans to focus on something other than war. Each year more and more fans came out to support either their favorite team or the team from which city they lived. It peaked in 1948, when the ten-team league drew almost a million fans. It even spawned a rival, the National Girls Baseball League. The All Americans Girls Baseball League had a bad ending however. When the war was over and the guys returned home they wanted to play baseball again. The popularity went back to watching guys play and that's when the AAGBL came to an end in 1954.

Even though it was only played eleven years the young ladies that played helped so many people while having fun. If they would not have played, Americans would of have to focus way too much on World War II. Once the league ended it was almost as if it never happened. Many of the girls were looked down upon because of them playing so they never really talked about it. Everyone "forgot" about it, until one woman stepped forward in showing who they were at this time. The baseball hall of fame wanted to add some of the women's baseball but since everyone kept it a secret about the league they didn't have anything.

Dottie Collins was the most famous pitcher in the league. She talked to the person setting up the place and said, " I think I could have pitched a doubleheader overhand, too," she said. " I don't think it would be that hard. Nowadays, the men can't do it, but hell, they can't do nothin'." The big sport of baseball from guys playing to girls then back to guys had such a big

impact on Americans. If the ladies wouldn't have played, Americans would of had to focus way too much on World War II that was going on. All the changes the game had it was still and always will be Americas Past Time.