

March 1898

Minor Musings

March 21

Preliminary discussions are held at a meeting in Anderson, Indiana, to form a new baseball minor league in the state's natural gas belt towns of Alexandria, Anderson, Elwood, Kokomo, Marion and Muncie ... stock options to help pay for the team's expenses are in the process of being finalized ... an agreement to limit each team's monthly salary to \$600 is agreed upon and a four-month league schedule will be arranged at the next scheduled league meeting on March 31.

The genesis of this particular league comes as a result of the construction of the Gas Belt Electric Railway line, which connects the six cities and will result in reduced travel costs for the teams.

The proposed league fails to get organized in time for the 1898 season, but it does compete (with different towns) in 1899.

March 22

Officers of a proposed Ohio State League meet in Massillon, Ohio, to complete league membership ... owners of the Canton, Coshocton, Massillon, Salem and Wheeling franchises post the guarantee fee of \$150 while representatives from Barberton say that they will pay the fee within a week ... a per game guarantee of \$30 for the visiting team is agreed upon and team salary is limited to \$500 per month.

Barberton fails to post its guarantee and the league opens a 120-game schedule as a five-team circuit on May 15 ... Zanesville is added after the start of the season but before the Clay Diggers can play a game Coshocton withdraws ... Salem throws in the towel on June 3 and two days later the league disbands, citing financial problems caused by inclement weather and poor patronage ... 17 games were played before the league ceases operations.

At a league meeting, Atlantic League officials refuse to adopt the Brush resolution against "rowdyism" ... team representatives see the resolution as being too arbitrary ... it is decided to give the umpire the authority to suspend a player for two days for violation of any of the rules ... in addition, a suspended player will forfeit his salary during suspension.

March 23

Arrangements are in the process of being finalized for the formation of a minor league in Mexico ... towns being mentioned for inclusion are Saltillo, Monterey, San Luis Potosi and Tampico ... the Monterey owners have already put together a roster comprised primarily of American-born players.

Plans for a Cumberland Valley League in Maryland are postponed with the withdrawal of Hagerstown ... two weeks later a union of the Cumberland Valley League and the Central Pennsylvania League ... it is noted the combination of the two leagues is regarded as one of the "boldest and best" ever attempted in the region.