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## **MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL**

## **2009 ATTENDANCE ANALYSIS**

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## 2009 MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL ATTENDANCE

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# 2009 MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL ATTENDANCE

This report is an analysis of minor league baseball attendance for the 2009 regular season. It includes:

- An overview of key highlights.
- Attendance notes for each league and for individual teams.
- Listing of 2009 total attendance and per game average attendance for every league and team.
- A comparison of 2009 vs. 2008 total attendance. A table shows attendance increases and decreases for all leagues and teams. It also notes the year nearly all current U.S./Canadian minor league stadiums opened. Another page lists the teams with the biggest gains and worst declines in attendance in 2009.
- A feature on the growth of minor league baseball in Major League Baseball markets.
- A section about the tremendous increase in minor league baseball attendance over the past 40 years. Tables show how attendance has grown vs. 1969, 1979, and 1999.

## SOURCES

The Media Relations Department of Minor League Baseball (also known as the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues), provided attendance data for the developmental leagues of Major League Baseball for the years 1994 through 2009. Independent league data is from each league's official web site. Information from individual teams generally came from each team's website. Major League attendance data is from the Major League Baseball Information System.

NAPBL data prior to 1994 is from The Sporting News Official Baseball Guides, and from "Mud Hens and Mavericks" by Judith Blahnik and Phillip S. Schulz (1995 – Viking Penguin). Independent league data prior to 1998 came from the "Independent Baseball Page" website. The websites oursportscentral.com, baseballparks.com, and ballparkdigest.com, plus the "Baseball America Directory," were sources of some information about ballparks.

The raw data was compiled and analyzed by David P. Kronheim, Director of Marketing Research for Number Tamer, which is a marketing research service with clients in the sports industry. David has visited more than 120 minor league stadiums over the past three decades.

**Figures in this report are for regular season games only. Attendance for exhibition, all-star, and post-season games is not included. Baseball's minor leagues follow the current policy of all North American professional sports leagues, which is that official announced attendance is for tickets sold, not for actual in-stadium attendance. It includes 'no-shows,' which are tickets sold, but not used. In addition, minor league announced attendance figures often include fans who are admitted to games for free.**

ATTENTION, ENGLISH TEACHERS: Team names in this report are spelled exactly as they appear in the Information Guide of Minor League Baseball, and on the websites of the independent leagues.

### **NOTE TO LEAGUES, TEAMS, AND MEDIA**

You can download this report, and the 2009 Major League Baseball Attendance Analysis, in PDF form, at [numbertamer.com](http://numbertamer.com). Go to the website's 'Baseball Reports' page for the PDF links to each report.

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## **“WARMING UP” - AN OVERVIEW OF HOW BASEBALL’S MINOR LEAGUES ARE ORGANIZED**

There are two types of ‘leagues’ in minor league baseball. The majority of them are affiliated with Major League Baseball, as part of its player development program, or ‘farm system.’

### **NAPBL LEAGUES**

The National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues (NAPBL), also known as “Minor League Baseball,” is the governing body of those minor leagues which are affiliated with Major League Baseball.

These leagues are divided into five classifications: AAA (International and Pacific Coast Leagues); AA (Eastern, Southern and Texas Leagues); full-season A (California, Carolina, Florida State, Midwest and South Atlantic Leagues); short-season A (New York-Penn and Northwest Leagues); Rookie (Appalachian and Pioneer Leagues). In addition, there is the Mexican League, which is a member of the NAPBL, but whose teams are not affiliated with any Major League teams.

Five additional rookie leagues (Arizona, Gulf Coast, Dominican, Venezuelan, and Mexican Academy) do not charge admission to their games, and are not included in this report.

The AAA, AA, and full-season A teams play a 140-144 game season, starting in early April. Short-season teams in the leagues that charge admission, play 68-76 games, beginning around mid-June. All these leagues conclude their seasons with playoffs in early through mid-September. The Mexican League plays a 110 game schedule starting in late March, and continuing through late July, with playoffs in August.

Each Major League team has one Class AAA farm team, one AA team, two full-season A teams, and at least one short-season team in a league that charges admission.

### **INDEPENDENT LEAGUES**

The independent leagues are not affiliated in any way with Major League Baseball. Their players, managers, and coaches are under contract to their individual leagues or teams. (Uniformed personnel in NAPBL leagues, other than the Mexican League, are under contract to their specific Major League parent teams.) Major League organizations can, and often do, sign independent league players to contracts. Independent leagues were once the rule in minor league baseball. But as the modern Major League farm systems developed, minor leagues began to affiliate with Major League teams, and independent leagues pretty much disappeared.

The current generation of independent leagues began in 1993 with the start of the Northern and the Frontier Leagues. All independent leagues have been through major reorganizations, and in some cases, name changes. The Can-Am League first played in 1995, as the Northeast League. The American Association is a combination of former Northern League and Central League teams. The Central League began as the Texas-Louisiana League in 1994. Numerous other independent leagues were started. Some, such as the Heartland League and the Prairie League, managed to last three seasons. Others were unable to survive even one full season.

In 2009, the 8 independent leagues that operated were the Atlantic, Can-Am, Northern, Frontier, American Association, United Baseball, Golden Baseball, and Continental Leagues. Most of these leagues played 88-96 game schedules. But scheduled season length ranged from 60 games for the Continental League, all the way up to 140 games in the Atlantic League.

**In order to avoid confusion, this report will refer to leagues affiliated with Major League Baseball as “NAPBL Minor Leagues.” Attendance listings and individual league analyses will be kept separate from data from the independent leagues, unless otherwise noted.**

**COMBINED NAPBL MINOR LEAGUES AND INDEPENDENT LEAGUES OVERVIEW****Minor League Baseball Attendance Falls for the First Time in 25 Years**

In 2009, a combination of a bad economy, poor weather, and the H1N1 virus in Mexico, led to the first decline in total Minor League Baseball attendance since 1984.

Combined total attendance for all minor leagues fell 1,966,706 (3.8%) to 49,609,703, with average attendance per date down by 88. Yet this total attendance figure is still the third highest of all time. Major League affiliated leagues (NAPBL) had a 1,619,222 drop in total attendance (3.7%), with average per date down 119. Independent leagues saw a decline of 347,484 (4.2%) in total attendance. But the independent average per date was down by just 5. Major League Baseball had a 6.6% decline in attendance in 2009.

The Mexican League was hit hard, not just by the economy, but by the H1N1 virus, which caused the Mexican government to briefly order that athletic events be played with no spectators in attendance. Mexican League attendance fell by 23.7%, and their average per date was down 1,175.

Excluding the Mexican League, NAPBL total attendance dipped just 1.7%, despite having 101 fewer playing dates in 2009 than in 2008. Average attendance per date, excluding the Mexican League, declined by 26 (0.6%).

Despite the decline in overall attendance, leagues and teams continued to set records in 2009. For the first time, each class AAA team drew at least 300,000. The Midwest League reached an all-time high for the third straight year. Average attendance per date for the International League was the highest any minor league has ever achieved. 5 NAPBL teams moved to new markets, while 2 others opened new ballparks in their existing markets, and those 7 teams combined to post an attendance increase of 59%. 13 individual full-season, and 4 short-season NAPBL teams had their best total attendance ever in 2009. (These do not include teams playing their first season in a particular market.)

Among the independent leagues, 3 teams that moved to new markets posted a combined attendance gain of 104%, and the Golden Baseball League set a new attendance record. 3 independent teams had record highs.

Overall, in 2009, there were 211 fewer dates played at minor league ballparks than in 2008.

**Combined NAPBL and independent league attendance had gone up for 24 straight years – 1985-2008!**

NAPBL attendance had increased every year from 1985 through 1994. From 1995 through 2008, there were 3 years with small declines in NAPBL attendance. But when attendance for independent leagues, the first of which began play in 1993, is added to the NAPBL figures for those years, the combined minor league attendance shows an increase.

**COMBINED NAPBL AND INDEPENDENT LEAGUE ATTENDANCE SINCE 1993**

1993 - 30,754,213	1998 - 39,278,073	2003 - 45,593,730	<b>2008 - 51,576,409</b>
1994 - 35,258,676	1999 - 40,051,268	2004 - 46,445,630	2009 - 49,609,703
1995 - 36,173,433	2000 - 43,229,652	2005 - 48,851,400	
1996 - 36,747,940	2001 - 44,805,777	2006 - 49,268,793	
1997 - 38,227,980	2002 - 45,049,213	2007 - 51,298,733	

Total combined NAPBL Minor League and independent league regular season attendance was an all-time high 51,576,409 in 2008. This was a 0.5% increase from 2007. That increase occurred despite 163 fewer playing dates in 2008 than in 2007.

The 176 NAPBL Minor League teams that charge admission attracted a record high 43,263,740 to their games in 2008. NAPBL teams drew 41,644,518 in 2009. The 8 independent leagues, with 61 teams that played home games, had a total attendance of 8,312,669 in 2008, and these same 8 leagues, again with 61 teams that played home games, drew 7,965,185 in 2009.

**COMBINED NAPBL MINOR LEAGUES AND INDEPENDENT LEAGUES OVERVIEW**

A very wet spring 2009 in much of the U.S. resulted in minor league teams playing a combined 211 fewer home dates in 2009 than in 2008. NAPBL leagues had a total of 95 fewer home dates, while independent leagues had 116 fewer playing dates. The Can-Am League played 104 fewer dates in 2009 than in 2008, as it dropped two teams. The United League had 31 fewer dates, but the Golden Baseball League added 21.

Among NAPBL leagues, bad weather resulted in the number of home dates declining by 15 in the International League, 16 in the Eastern League, 12 in the Southern League, 17 in the Carolina League, 13 in the South Atlantic League, and 26 in the Florida State League.

**# OF HOME DATES**

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NAPBL LEAGUES</u>	<u>NAPBL - EXCL. MEXICAN LEA.</u>	<u>INDEPENDENT LEAGUES</u>
2009	10,269	9,431	2,773
2008	10,364	9,532	2,889
2007	10,303	9,455	3,113
2006	10,305	9,472	2,599
2005	10,369	9,503	2,701
2004	10,067	9,378	2,186
2003	10,119	9,256	2,521
2002	10,354	9,486	2,384
2001	10,382	9,424	2,360

**TEAMS WITH ATTENDANCE GROWTH – 2009 vs. 2008**

In 2009, 171 NAPBL teams played in the same market as in 2008. 57 teams had growth in total attendance in 2009, while exactly double that number declined. In 2008, the number of teams having a gain vs. 2007, and the number showing a decline, was exactly the same. 2007 was the reverse of 2009, with exactly twice as many teams posting a gain vs. 2006, than had a loss.

Average attendance per home date rose for 63 teams in 2009, while 107 recorded a decline, and one had no change. In 2008, average attendance per home date rose for 72 teams and fell for 100 teams. In 2007, average per date was up for 110 teams, fell for 60, and one team had no change.

# NAPBL TEAMS IN SAME MARKETS AS IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR -  
SHOWING TOTAL ATTENDANCE GAIN/LOSS VS. PREVIOUS YEAR

<u>Year</u>	<u># of Teams</u>	<u># With Gain</u>	<u># With Loss</u>	<u># No Change</u>
2009	171	57	114	0
2008	172	86	86	0
2007	171	114	57	0
2006	174	88	86	0
2005	170	98	71	1
2004	169	87	82	0
2003	169	58	111	0
2002	173	84	88	1
2001	169	86	83	0
2000	170	71	99	0
1999	169	64	105	0
1998	164	83	81	0

16 of 55 independent league teams playing in the same market (includes Alexandria, LA, which moved from the United League to the Continental League) as in 2008, had growth in total attendance in 2009. 19 independent teams had gains in average attendance per game.

**TOTAL PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL ATTENDANCE WENT DOWN IN 2009**

Major League Baseball regular season attendance was 73,367,659 in 2009, down 6.6% from 2008. Combined Major League/Minor League attendance in 2009 was 122,977,362. This is down from 130,164,413 in 2008. The all-time record-high combined Major/Minor League total attendance is 130,801,908, set in 2007.

**NAPBL LARGEST GAINS AND DECLINES BY CLASSIFICATION**

By classification, NAPBL teams with the biggest 2009 gains in total attendance were: Columbus, OH (among all AAA teams); Harrisburg, which had the biggest loss among Class AA teams in 2008 (AA); Fort Wayne (full-season A); Vancouver (short-season A); Ogden (Rookie).

By classification, NABPL teams with the worst losses in 2009 were: Scranton/Wilkes Barre, which also had the biggest loss in 2008 (AAA); Altoona (AA); Winston-Salem (full-season A); Oneonta (short-season A); Orem (Rookie).

The above listings do not include Mexican League or independent league teams.

A listing of the individual teams with the biggest attendance gains and losses for 2009 in both the NAPBL and independent leagues can be found on page 7.

**AVERAGE ATTENDANCE PER HOME DATE – NAPBL AND INDEPENDENT LEAGUES**

In 2009, average attendance per home date fell by 119 for NAPBL leagues, and by 5 for the independent leagues, and was down by a combined total of 88 for all minor leagues. The smaller decline in average attendance per date for independent leagues is mainly due to the deletion of teams that drew poorly. In 2008, new records were set for NAPBL average per date, and for the combined NAPBL/independent leagues average per date. The all-time high independent leagues average was achieved in 2004.

**AVERAGE ATTENDANCE PER HOME DATE – 1997-2009 (record highs in bold)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>NAPBL Leagues</b>	<b>Independent Leagues</b>	<b>All Minor Leagues</b>
<b>2009</b>	4,055	2,872	3,804
<b>2008</b>	<b>4,174</b>	2,877	<b>3,892</b>
<b>2007</b>	4,155	2,726	3,824
<b>2006</b>	4,048	2,908	3,818
<b>2005</b>	3,986	2,785	3,738
<b>2004</b>	3,962	<b>3,000</b>	3,791
<b>2003</b>	3,861	2,588	3,579
<b>2002</b>	3,732	2,689	3,537
<b>2001</b>	3,738	2,541	3,516
<b>2000</b>	3,658	2,475	3,445
<b>1999</b>	3,386	2,559	3,258
<b>1998</b>	3,431	2,054	3,167
<b>1997</b>	3,469	N.A.	N.A.

**A NOTE ABOUT THE TERM 'HOME DATE:'**

The term 'average attendance per date' or 'average per opening' is used in baseball, rather than 'average attendance per game.' This is done since baseball teams still play single-admission doubleheaders, two games for one ticket, to make up rainouts. For attendance purposes, single-admission doubleheaders count as one 'date.' Day/night doubleheaders, requiring a separate ticket to each game, count as two separate 'openings' or 'dates.'

**AVERAGE ATTENDANCE PER HOME DATE – NAPBL AND INDEPENDENT LEAGUES**

- Average attendance per date for NAPBL teams fell to 4,055 in 2009, after a record high of 4,174 in 2008.
- **The International League averaged 7,348 per date, likely the highest figure ever for any minor league.**
- **A record for average attendance per home date was also set by Midwest League.** The Florida State League had its best average per date since at least 1993.
- **For the first time since at least 1987, no team's average reached 10,000 per home date.** Sacramento had topped 10,000 per date for 8 straight years from 2000 through 2007. Monterrey (Mexican) did it in 2008.
- Columbus, OH, opened a new ballpark, and averaged 9,526 per home date, the best mark in the minors in 2009. Sacramento and Lehigh Valley also averaged more than 9,000 per date.
- Pawtucket, Louisville, Round Rock, Albuquerque, Frisco, Buffalo, Indianapolis, and Dayton were other teams that averaged 8,000+ per date. So 11 teams drew at least 8,000 per home date in 2009. The number of teams reaching this level was 13 in 2008, 17 in 2007, 13 in 2006, 11 in 2005, 13 in 2004, 12 in both 2003 and 2002, 11 in 2001, 8 in 2000, and only 4 teams in 1999.
- Colorado Springs had the lowest average among Class AAA teams – 4,351.
- Reading, Portland ME, Frisco, and Corpus Christi were the Class AA teams that averaged more than 6,000 per date in 2009. These same 4 teams, plus Springfield, did it in both 2008 and in 2007. These 5 teams, plus Akron, did it in both 2006 and 2005. 7 AA teams averaged 6,000+ in 2004, and 6 AA teams did it in 2003.
- Huntsville, AL had the lowest Class AA average, drawing just 1,514 per date.
- 11 Class A (including short-season) teams topped 5,000 per date in 2009. This level was reached by 12 teams in 2008 and in 2007, 10 in 2006, 11 in 2005, 10 in 2004 and in 2003, 9 in 2002, 10 in 2001, and 6 in 2000.
- **Dayton averaged 8,496 per date to lead Class A for the 10<sup>th</sup> straight year.** Kane County and Lakewood were the other full-season Class A teams who attracted more than 6,000 fans per date.
- Sarasota had the lowest average (528) among all NAPBL teams. Winston-Salem, Burlington IA, Dunedin, Lakeland, and Bakersfield also did not reach the 1,000 per date mark among full-season teams.
- **Brooklyn averaged 7,138 per home date, leading all short-season teams for the 9<sup>th</sup> year in a row.**
- 3 more short-season teams – Aberdeen (6,502), Lowell (5,041), and Staten Island (5,904) topped a 5,000 per date average. Hudson Valley, Tri-City (NY-Penn) and Spokane were the other short-season teams that averaged more than 4,000 per date.
- 10 short-season teams (7 in the Appalachian League), averaged fewer than 1,000 fans per date.
- **Among independent league teams, Winnipeg, of the Northern League, again had the highest average attendance per home date (6,180) in 2009.** The Long Island Ducks (6,014) once more led the Atlantic League. Somerset, St. Paul, and Kansas City were the other independent league teams that averaged more than 5,000 a date. 5 independent teams averaged 5,000+ in 2008, 2004, 2001, and 2000. 7 teams did it in 2007. 6 teams topped 5,000 in both 2006 and 2005, and 4 teams did it in both 2003 and 2002.
- In both 2009 and 2008, there were 6 independent league teams averaging below 1,000 per date. Bay Area, Big Bend, and Texarkana of the Continental League, averaged less than 350 in 2009. Midwest drew 533 per date.
- 7 independent teams averaged below 1,000 per date in 2007. But in 2006, and also in 2004, every independent team averaged at least 1,000. 3 fell below this level in 2005. 15 of the 59 independent league teams (including the Canadian League, which folded in mid-season) were below 1,000 per date in 2003, as were 8 teams in 2002, 9 in both 2001 and 2000, and 5 in 1999.



**BIGGEST GAINS AND WORST DECLINES IN 2009**

## 10 BIGGEST GAINS IN TOTAL ATTENDANCE – 2009 vs. 2008 – NAPBL TEAMS

<b><u>TEAM</u></b>	<b><u>LEAGUE</u></b>	<b><u>2009 ATTENDANCE</u></b>	<b><u>CHANGE vs. 2008</u></b>
Columbus, OH	International	666,797	128,908
Fort Wayne	Midwest	378,529	121,836
Monclova (del Norte)	Mexican	258,020	95,020
Harrisburg, PA	Eastern	228,741	64,559
Wisconsin (Appleton)	Midwest	253,240	62,977
Iowa (Des Moines)	Pacific Coast	536,872	49,524
Puebla	Mexican	202,797	42,506
Lehigh Valley	International	641,335	39,302
Visalia	California	105,405	38,360
Saltillo	Mexican	296,558	34,650

- Saltillo had the biggest decline (241,084) in 2008.

## 10 BIGGEST DECLINES IN TOTAL ATTENDANCE – 2009 vs. 2008 – NAPBL TEAMS

<b><u>TEAM</u></b>	<b><u>LEAGUE</u></b>	<b><u>2009 ATTENDANCE</u></b>	<b><u>CHANGE vs. 2008</u></b>
Monterrey	Mexican	400,310	(258,181)
Laguna	Mexican	191,200	(159,517)
Chihuahua	Mexican	105,121	(144,005)
Yucatan	Mexican	184,908	(140,356)
Scranton-Wilkes Barre	International	358,888	(127,111)
Mexico City	Mexican	181,990	(116,769)
Winston-Salem	Carolina	57,665	(112,398)
Minatitlan	Mexican	113,191	(98,036)
Memphis	Pacific Coast	474,764	(94,408)
Campeche	Mexican	121,129	(88,414)

- Monterrey (up 166,863), Mexico City, Campeche, Yucatan, Chihuahua and Minatitlan ranked #1-6 on the list of ***biggest increases in 2008***.

## 5 BIGGEST GAINS IN TOTAL ATTENDANCE – 2009 vs. 2008 – INDEPENDENT TEAMS

<b><u>TEAM</u></b>	<b><u>LEAGUE</u></b>	<b><u>2009 ATTENDANCE</u></b>	<b><u>CHANGE vs. 2008</u></b>
Edmonton	Golden Baseball	84,813	38,118
Shreveport	American Assn.	86,635	28,660
Quebec	Can-Am	164,009	23,076
El Paso	American Assn.	200,323	17,943
Wichita	American Assn.	161,170	14,762

- Quebec's attendance includes one game played at Trois Rivières that drew 3,017.

## 5 BIGGEST DECLINES IN TOTAL ATTENDANCE – 2009 vs. 2008 – INDEPENDENT TEAMS

<b><u>TEAM</u></b>	<b><u>LEAGUE</u></b>	<b><u>2009 ATTENDANCE</u></b>	<b><u>CHANGE vs. 2008</u></b>
Joliet	Northern	146,258	(38,380)
Amarillo	United Baseball	121,617	(37,715)
Kansas City	Northern	245,625	(35,170)
Amer. Def. of New Hamp.	Can-Am	40,361	(29,634)
Lancaster	Atlantic	314,228	(29,492)

- Amarillo had 7 fewer home dates in 2009 vs. 2008. American Defenders of New Hampshire played in Nashua.

**NAPBL MINOR LEAGUES ATTENDANCE HIGHLIGHTS**

- **Attendance dropped 3.7% in 2009, but in 2008, NAPBL Minor Leagues set yet another new attendance record, and total attendance increased vs. the previous season for the 30<sup>th</sup> time in 34 years.**

**NAPBL MINOR LEAGUE ATTENDANCE SINCE 1969**

1969 - 9,984,263 \$	1980 - 15,541,674 *	1991 - 26,590,096	2002 - 38,639,142
1970 - 10,726,470	1981 - 16,178,790	1992 - 27,180,170	2003 - 39,069,707
1971 - 11,134,084	1982 - 17,637,244	1993 - 30,022,761	2004 - 39,887,755
1972 - 10,986,628	1983 - 18,559,190	1994 - 33,355,199	2005 - 41,333,279
1973 - 10,828,828	1984 - 17,580,299	1995 - 33,126,934	2006 - 41,710,357
1974 - 10,562,452	1985 - 18,380,000	1996 - 33,293,383	2007 - 42,812,812
1975 - 11,021,848	1986 - 18,456,808	1997 - 34,721,716	<b>2008 - 43,263,740</b>
1976 - 11,324,947	1987 - 20,215,564	1998 - 35,427,618	2009 - 41,644,518
1977 - 13,004,297	1988 - 21,659,873	1999 - 35,179,471	
1978 - 13,012,727	1989 - 23,103,593	2000 - 37,647,819	
1979 - 15,304,724 @	1990 - 25,244,569	2001 - 38,808,339	

\$ - Does not include season attendance of 8,817 by one Gulf Coast League team that charged admission.

@ - Includes estimated attendance for Inter-American League which folded during the season.

\* - Figure provided by 1981 Sporting News Official Guide. Mexican League season ended early due to a strike.

Major League Baseball attendance has gone up vs. the previous season in 22 of the past 35 years.

- **NAPBL Minor League attendance dropped in 2009, after 5 straight record-setting seasons. Prior to 2004, the all-time record was 39,640,443, set in 1949, when there were 448 teams in 59 leagues.** In 2009, there were 176 teams in the 15 NAPBL leagues that charge admission to their games. **The last 9 seasons have seen 9 of the 10 highest totals in the 108 year history of the NAPBL minor leagues.**
- Minor league attendance declined very sharply through the 1950's, and most leagues and teams disbanded. By 1964, there were only 20 leagues and 132 teams left. A post World War II low period of NAPBL attendance occurred from 1960 to 1970. During those years, attendance was basically flat – ranging from a low of 9,732,582 in 1962, to a high of 10,726,470 in 1970. Among the causes of the huge drop in minor league attendance during this period were television, Major League expansion, easier access to Major League ballparks, fewer minor league teams, a rise in popularity of other sports, and home air conditioning.
- **2008 average season attendance per team, including short-season leagues, was a record high 245,817.** The average per team fell to 236,617 in 2009. Back in 1949, the 448 teams averaged 88,483. By 1969, the season average per team had fallen to 67,461.
- 3 NAPBL leagues had increases in total attendance in 2009. The Midwest (full-season A) League set a new record for total attendance. The Florida State League had the biggest gain, up 8.4%. The California League had a 5.4% increase. 7 leagues had total attendance increases in 2008, and 13 leagues had gains in 2007.
- 12 NAPBL leagues had losses in total attendance. The Mexican League was down 23.7%. Carolina League attendance dropped 8.1%, while the Southern League had a 7.2% decline.
- 4 leagues had gains in average attendance per home date, led by the Florida State League, up 161. The California League's average per date rose by 123. The New York-Penn League had the same average per date as in 2008. The biggest declines in average per date were in the Mexican League, down 1,175, the Texas League, down 232, and the Southern League, down 201. In 2008, 6 leagues had average per date increases.

GAINS AND LOSSES - A listing of total attendance gains and losses in 2009 vs. 2008 for each NAPBL team and league can be found starting on page 23. This same information for independent league teams starts on page 33.

**THAT'S NOT A 'TYPO'**

The number 42,812,812 may look a bit unusual. But it was the official NAPBL attendance figure for 2007.

**NAPBL MINOR LEAGUES ATTENDANCE HIGHLIGHTS****NEW MARKETS AND NEW BALLPARKS**

7 NAPBL teams listed below opened new ballparks, and/or were relocated in 2009. Attendance fell 6.3% for the 169 NAPBL teams that played in the same ballpark in both 2009 and 2008.

League	2009 City	2009 Attendance	2008 City	2008 Attendance	Chg. vs. 2008
International	Gwinnett Cty.	423,556	Richmond	289,570	133,986
Pacific Coast	Reno	466,606	Tucson	245,121	221,485
Florida State	Port Charlotte	171,314	Vero Beach	47,944	123,370
South Atlantic	Bowling Green	232,987	Columbus, GA	61,290	171,697
Mexican	Reynosa	313,917	Tijuana	230,593	83,324
International	Columbus, OH	666,797	Columbus, OH	537,889	128,908
Midwest	Fort Wayne	378,529	Fort Wayne	256,693	121,836
Total – above teams		2,653,706		1,669,100	984,606
All other NAPBL teams		38,990,812		41,594,640	(2,603,828)

More details about the attendance growth for these teams can be found in the league summaries.

**TOTAL ATTENDANCE HIGHS AND LOWS**

- In both 2009 and 2008, 7 teams drew at least 600,000. 5 teams did it in 2007, 7 in 2006, and 5 in 2005.
- 13 teams topped 500,000 in 2009. The number of teams over 500,000 was 17 in 2008, 18 in 2007, 19 in 2006, 20 in 2005, 16 in 2004, 15 in 2003 and 2002, 14 in 2001, 10 in 2000, 6 in 1999, 9 in 1998, and 10 in 1997.
- Columbus, OH had the best attendance in 2009, drawing 666,797 to their new ballpark. Sacramento finished second, with a final tally of 657,095. Sacramento had led all U.S./Canadian teams in attendance for 9 straight years (2000-2008), and were the top draw in all of the minors 8 times in those 9 years.
- Round Rock drew 626,899 in its 5<sup>th</sup> AAA season, after setting both a Class AA and Texas League record for 5 consecutive years. The Express has drawn more than 625,000 per season in all 10 years of operation.
- Lehigh Valley (Allentown, PA) achieved a team record high of 641,335, and Pawtucket, playing in a park that is 67 years old (it's been upgraded), had the 5<sup>th</sup> best attendance of 2009, topping 625,000.
- Frisco was Class AA leader for the 5<sup>th</sup> straight year.
- Dayton (Midwest), which has sold out every home game in its history, led Class A for the 10<sup>th</sup> year in a row.
- The Brooklyn Cyclones led all short-season teams for the 9<sup>th</sup> consecutive year.
- There were 14 full-season teams that drew under 100,000 in 2009. 8 of these teams play in the Florida State League. The number of full-season teams below 100,000 was 14 in 2008, 13 in 2007, 14 in 2006, 15 in 2005, 18 in 2004, 22 in 2003, 21 in 2002, 20 in 2001, 24 in 2000, and 25 in both 1999 and 1998.
- Colorado Springs (300,185), had the lowest AAA attendance, as for the first time ever, all Class AAA teams drew at least 300,000.
- Huntsville, AL in the Southern League had the lowest AA attendance (93,845).
- Sarasota, once again had the lowest attendance among full-season teams, drawing just 33,788.
- Bristol of the Appalachian (Rookie) League drew 19,390 for the lowest short-season attendance.

**MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL IN MAJOR LEAGUE MARKETS** – Includes Independent League Teams

A big factor in the growth of minor league baseball since 1990 has been its return to areas which have Major League franchises. Now, some of the most successful minor league teams, in terms of attendance, play in the same television markets as Major League clubs. Nearly all have new, or thoroughly rebuilt, ballparks.

Until the 1950's, it was common to find minor league teams near Major League cities. During that decade, increased car ownership, new high-speed roads, and television, made it easier for fans to attend and watch Big League games. The minor league teams in those areas couldn't stay in business. By 1976, the only teams close to Major League cities were Pawtucket, about 40 miles from Boston, Reading, 60 miles from Philadelphia, and San Jose, around 40 miles from San Francisco and Oakland. In the New York City area, an Eastern League team played in Jersey City in 1977 and 1978. That team's combined attendance for those two years was just 88,993.

But starting in the 1990's, more minor league teams began operating near Major League clubs. In 2009, 62 minor league teams played in the same television market as a Major League franchise. Two more teams (Pawtucket and Dayton) are located in non-Major League TV markets, but their ballparks are within about 50 miles of a Major League city. So in 2009, 20 of the 26 Major League TV markets, had a minor league team located either in their TV market, or in a city that is less than 60 miles away, but is officially in a different TV market.

In 1976, Pawtucket, Reading and San Jose drew a combined attendance of 275,641. This was just 2.4% of the total 1976 minor league attendance. In 2009, these same 3 teams, playing in the same ballparks as in 1976, drew a combined 1,297,406. Also in 2009, the 62 minor league teams in Major League markets, plus Pawtucket and Dayton, had a combined attendance of 14,032,529. That was 28.3% of the year's total minor league attendance. It was also 24% higher than the total attendance (11,324,947) for all 141 minor league teams in 1976.

New York, Boston and Philadelphia are Major League markets that have had much recent success with minor league baseball. In 1992, there was only one minor league team in the Boston area (Pawtucket – which is in the Providence TV market), one in the Philadelphia market, and none in New York. In 2009, the New York TV market had 10 teams, including 2 within New York City. Boston had 6 teams, while the Philadelphia market had 5. As the following three tables show, many of these teams have done remarkably well.

New York Area Teams	2009 Attendance	Notes
Lakewood, NJ	429,221	Led South Atlantic League 2001-2007, and 2009
Brooklyn, NY	264,102	Owens the 9 highest short-season team totals
Staten Island, NY	206,635	Record high again in 2009. Up 79% since 2006
Hudson Valley (Fishkill), NY	161,332	Sold out nearly all games since team formed in 1994
Long Island (Central Islip), NY	414,973	Highest total indep. attend. in each of the last 10 years
Somerset (Bridgewater), NJ	355,429	Averaged over 5,000/game every year in their history
Bridgeport, CT	162,121	Attendance cut in half since 1999 high of 342,857
Newark, NJ	163,736	Struggling, despite nice ballpark in Downtown Newark
Sussex (Augusta), NJ	79,663	Very small decline in 2009
New Jersey Jackals (Montclair)	88,858	Second straight drop after a significant gain in 2007
New York Market Total	2,326,070	Overall 0.4% increase in total attendance in 2009

Boston Area Teams	2009 Attendance	Notes
Pawtucket (Providence TV market)	625,561	Drew over 600,000 in 8 of the last 9 years
New Hampshire (Manchester)	386,991	Set record high for the 6 <sup>th</sup> consecutive year in 2009
Lowell, MA	186,522	Record high in 2007, 381 straight sellouts since 1999
Nashua, NH	40,361	Locked out of ballpark. Moves to Pittsfield MA in 2010
Brockton, MA	112,343	Led Can-Am Lea. 2004-07, but down 45% since 2004
Worcester, MA	78,174	Attendance continues to fall. Play at Holy Cross Univ.
Boston Area Total	1,429,952	4.5% drop follows a 10% dip (one less team) in 2008

**MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL IN MAJOR LEAGUE MARKETS** – Includes Independent League Teams

Philadelphia Area Teams	2009 Attendance	Notes
Reading, PA	460,791	Eastern League attendance leader 7 of last 8 years
Wilmington, DE	288,094	Led Carolina Lg. in att. 11 straight years-1998-2008
Lehigh Valley (Allentown, PA)	641,335	3 <sup>rd</sup> best att. in minors. Total of 108 sellouts-2008-09
Trenton, NJ	371,602	AA record 14 straight years of 400,000+ ends in 2009
Camden, NJ	234,519	Small decrease in 2009
Atlantic City, NJ		Can-Am League team did not operate in 2009
Philadelphia Market Total	1,996,341	5 remaining teams 2009 att. was identical with 2008

There have been many success stories in the other 17 Major League markets with minor league teams.

Los Angeles 7 minor league teams... Rancho Cucamonga has led the California League for 17 straight years.

Chicago 5 teams... Kane County has topped 400,000 for 16 consecutive seasons, and been above 500,000 in 6 of the last 9 years... Gary set a team record every year from 2003 to 2007.

San Francisco 1 team... San Jose set a record high in total and average per date attendance in 2009.

Dallas 3 teams... Frisco has led all Class AA teams in attendance for 5 straight years.

Washington 5 teams... Frederick had the best 2009 total in the Carolina League, and always draws well.

Seattle 2 teams... Tacoma achieved its best attendance ever in 2009.

Tampa 5 teams... In 2008, Clearwater had the highest attendance of any Florida State League team since 1990, and set another team record high in 2009.

Minneapolis 1 team... St. Paul has sold out nearly every game since they began play in 1993.

Cleveland 3 teams... Akron has led the Eastern League in attendance 6 times since 1997, and is one of only 6 Class AA teams to ever top 500,000.

St. Louis 2 teams... Gateway set the Frontier League record in 2004 (broken by Southern Illinois in 2007).

Pittsburgh 1 team... Washington, PA has sold out most of the games in its history.

Baltimore 1 team... Aberdeen set a new high in 2008, and is the 2<sup>nd</sup> best draw among short-season teams.

Atlanta 2 teams... Rome has always drawn well. New AAA team in Gwinnett County in 2009.

Houston 1 team... Bay Area team plagued by rainouts and bad attendance.

Kansas City 1 team... Kansas City (KS) set new team record in 2007, and is a top independent league draw.

Detroit 1 team... New team in Frontier League. Also, Toledo (a separate TV market) is about 60 miles from Detroit, and the Mud Hens have surpassed 500,000 for 8 straight years

Cincinnati 2 teams... Dayton (a separate TV market) has topped 570,000 in all 10 years of operation, has a pro baseball record of 704 consecutive sellouts, and is the most successful Class A team ever.

The New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and San Francisco/Oakland TV markets each have two Major League teams. San Diego, Phoenix, Miami, Milwaukee, Denver, and Toronto are the Major League TV markets that did not have any minor league teams in 2009.

**NAPBL INDIVIDUAL LEAGUE AND TEAM HIGHLIGHTS****INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE (AAA)** (14 teams -- 144 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League – 7,097,411 (2008); Team – Buffalo – 1,188,972\* (1991), Buffalo – 743,463 (1998)  
 (\*Buffalo was in the American Association when it set this all-time Minor League record.)

- **Poor weather led to 15 fewer playing dates, and a 1.1% decline in total attendance.**
- **The average attendance per date was up 31 to 7,348, and is probably an all-time minor league high.**
- 4 'same market' teams posted gains in total attendance, while 3 teams had a higher average per date.
- **The Columbus (OH) Clippers moved into a new ballpark and had a record-setting year. Their attendance of 666,797 was the best in all of minor league baseball, and they also had the highest average per date (9,526) of any team. Columbus' total tally was also a team record-high, breaking the old mark of 584,010, set in 1990. Clippers' attendance increased 128,908, which was the biggest gain of 2009 in the minors. Attendance topped 10,000 at 27 games in 2009. It was also the 5<sup>th</sup> straight year that the Clippers have surpassed 500,000. They reached that level every year from 1979 through 1997.**
- **Lehigh Valley (Allentown, PA) had a great second season. The IronPigs (the name comes from 'pig iron' used to make steel) drew 641,335 (3<sup>rd</sup> best in the minors), and averaged 9,162 per date (2<sup>nd</sup> best) in a ballpark with the lowest seating capacity (8,089) of any AAA facility. With standing room and lawn seating, combined 2008 and 2009 attendance exceeded capacity 108 times, and topped 10,000 at 37 games. The IronPigs also had a streak of 26 straight sellouts in 2009.**
- Pawtucket topped 600,000 for the 8<sup>th</sup> time in the last 9 years. This team has come a long way since 1977, when it was bankrupt, and drew only 70,344.

**PAWTUCKET RED SOX ATTENDANCE – 1977, AND 1985-2009**

Year	Attendance	Year	Attendance	Year	Attendance	Year	Attendance
1977	70,344	1991	362,342	1998	475,659	2005	688,421
1985	166,504	1992	372,143	1999	596,624	2006	613,065
1986	186,517	1993	466,428	2000	585,107	2007	611,379
1987	220,838	1994	477,911	2001	647,928	2008	636,788
1988	246,940	1995	486,029	2002	615,540	2009	625,561
1989	271,025	1996	468,930	2003	569,106		
1990	298,050	1997	480,874	2004	657,067		

- Louisville drew 612,525, which was #4 in the league and #6 in the minors. The Bats have topped 610,000 each year since opening a new park in 2000. In 1983, Louisville was the first minor league team to draw one million.
- Rain and poor field conditions resulted in Scranton/Wilkes Barre posting the biggest decline among U.S.-based teams for the second straight year. Attendance fell 94,909 in 2008, and was down 127,111 in 2009. The Yankees played only 58 home dates out of a scheduled 72, and drainage problems caused two home games to be moved to Allentown, and two others to be relocated to Syracuse.
- The Gwinnett Braves moved from Richmond to Buford, GA, 37 miles from Atlanta. They drew 423,556 in 2009, up from 289,570 in 2008, their final season in Richmond.
- 11 teams averaged more than 6,000 per date, while 7 teams surpassed the 500,000 total.
- Toledo topped 500,000 for the 8<sup>th</sup> straight year, and Indianapolis reached 540,000 for the 14<sup>th</sup> year in a row. Charlotte had its 5<sup>th</sup> straight gain, and Syracuse posted its best total since 2002. On the down side, Durham had its smallest attendance since 2000, and Norfolk had its lowest total since their new park opened in 1993.
- From 1988 through 1999, Buffalo led the minor leagues in attendance every year. In 6 seasons (1988-93), Bisons attendance topped one million, including an all-time minor league record 1,188,972 in 1991, when they were in the American Association. That league, (no relation to the independent league of the same name) broke up in 1998, and its teams were placed in either the International or Pacific Coast Leagues.

**NAPBL INDIVIDUAL LEAGUE AND TEAM HIGHLIGHTS****PACIFIC COAST LEAGUE (AAA)** (16 teams -- 144 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League – 7,420,095 (2007); Team – Sacramento - 901,214 (2001)

- Attendance fell 85,970 (1.2%), even though the league had 10 more dates. Average per date was down 135.
- Sacramento had the 2<sup>nd</sup> best minor league attendance, and led the P.C.L. for the 10<sup>th</sup> straight year. But the 2009 total of 657,095 is the smallest in team history. The River Cats led the minors in attendance 8 times from 2000 through 2008.** They've drawn over 7.5 million since starting play in 2000, the quickest any team has ever reached that mark, and they've averaged 10,698 per date in their history. Sacramento has been, in recent years, the largest TV market without a Major League Baseball team. From 1961 through 1973, and again from 1977 through 1999, Sacramento didn't even have a minor league team.

## SACRAMENTO RIVER CATS ATTENDANCE – 2000-2009

Year	Total Attendance	Avg./Date		Year	Total Attendance	Avg./Date
2000	861,808*	12,312*		2005	755,750*	10,497#
2001	901,214*	12,517*		2006	728,227#	10,257#
2002	817,317*	11,512*		2007	710,235*	10,003*
2003	766,326*	10,643#		2008	700,168*	9,725#
2004	751,156*	10,433^		2009	657,095^	9,126

\* - Best in minor leagues    # - Led U.S./Canadian teams    ^ - 2<sup>nd</sup> among U.S./Canadian teams

- The Albuquerque Isotopes drew 602,129, a new team high, and their 7<sup>th</sup> straight year above 560,000.**
- Tacoma set a new record high with a total of 352,450.** Cheney Stadium, which was originally built in 100 days in 1960, using seats and lights from Seals Stadium in San Francisco, is getting a major renovation.
- Memphis, down 94,408, had its lowest attendance (474,764) since 1999. They drew 887,976 in 2000.
- Round Rock drew 626,899, which was 4<sup>th</sup> best total in the minors, and their 10<sup>th</sup> straight year above 625,000.
- Iowa, up 49,524, had the top gain in the P.C.L. They had a game at Chicago's Wrigley Field that drew 16,280.
- The Reno Aces' first year attendance was 466,606. This franchise moved from Tucson, where it drew 245,121 in 2008. Tucson had not topped 300,000 in any season since 1998, and their record high was 317,347 in 1991.
- 4 teams surpassed 500,000 in attendance in 2009, a mark reached by 6 teams in 2008, and 7 teams in 2007.
- Omaha topped 300,000 for the 21<sup>st</sup> consecutive season, and had their highest total since 2000. The Royals hope to have a new ballpark by 2011.
- Colorado Springs followed up a record setting year in 2008, with its second highest total ever in 2009.
- Fresno and Nashville had their lowest total attendance since 2001.
- 5 teams in the league had gains in total attendance. 6 teams posted increases in average per date.
- In 2006, the New Orleans Zephyrs were the first New Orleans pro team to play a full season back home since Hurricane Katrina. Attendance that year was actually up from 2005. In 2009, the Zephyrs drew 362,771. The team's all-time record is 519,584, set in 1998.
- A historic note: In 1946, the San Francisco Seals of the P.C.L. drew a then-minor league record 670,563. That season mark was not topped until 1983, when Louisville drew more than one million. Buffalo holds the current minor league season attendance record of 1,188,972, set in 1991.

**NAPBL INDIVIDUAL LEAGUE AND TEAM HIGHLIGHTS****MEXICAN LEAGUE** (16 teams – 110 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League – 4,591,286 (1979); Team – 989,454 – Monterrey (2006)

- This league does not have any Major League Baseball affiliates, but is an NAPBL Minor League member.
- **The Mexican League was hit hard by the H1N1 epidemic. The government banned spectator attendance at sporting events for a few weeks. This led to a 955,395 (23.7%) decline in total attendance in 2009, and a drop of 1,175 in average per date, by far the worst losses sustained by any NAPBL league.** The league had its smallest total attendance since 2003. Mexican League total attendance grew by more than one million from 2003 through 2008.
- Huge yearly team attendance swings continue to take place in the league. In 2009, teams from the Mexican League posted 7 of the 10 biggest declines, including the 4 worst losses among all NAPBL teams. But the league also had 3 of the 10 biggest increases (see page 7).
- The best example of these wild attendance fluctuations is Monterrey. In 2006, they drew 989,454 in only 55 home dates, an average of 17,990 per date! Those were the top figures in the minors in 2006, and the biggest crowds since Buffalo topped one million in 1993. Sultanes attendance was up 556,293 from 2005, by far the largest increase of any minor league team!
- But in 2007, Monterrey's attendance was sliced in half, falling 497,826, by far the biggest decline in all of professional baseball. The Chicago White Sox, down 273,016, had the largest drop in the Major Leagues.
- In 2008, Monterrey's attendance swung back up. The Sultanes drew 658,491, which was third best in the minors, despite playing just 53 home dates. The gain of 166,863 was by far, the largest of any minor league team. Monterrey averaged 12,424 per home date, and was the only minor league team whose average exceeded 10,000. This team's total attendance has topped 400,000 in every season since at least 1997.
- But it was back down again for Monterrey in 2009. Although the Sultanes led the league, drawing 400,310, they suffered a 258,181 loss from 2008, by far the biggest decline of any minor league team.
- Laguna, Chihuahua, Yucatan, and Mexico City also had declines of at least 100,000 in 2009. Yucatan had its worst attendance since 1998.
- Saltillo also has had huge swings. Attendance fell from 502,992 in 2007, to 261,908 in 2008, a drop of 241,084, which was the worst decrease of any minor league team that year. Until 2008, the Sarape Makers had drawn over 500,000 fans each year since 2000. In 2009, their attendance rose by 34,650.
- A relocated team in Reynosa drew 313,917. This franchise attracted 230,593 in Tijuana in 2008.
- 3 of the 15 teams that played in the same markets as in 2008 had increases in total attendance. 3 teams also posted gains in average attendance per date.
- Puebla had its best total since 2000, and had an increase of 42,506.
- In 2006, Campeche drew just 52,470. By 2008, their attendance increased to 209,543. But in 2009 the Piratas (Pirates) had a decline of 88,414.
- Monclova had the third biggest gain in the minors (95,020), and had their best total since 2001.
- While Mexican League attendance had increased significantly until 2009, this league still has the lowest growth rate of any NAPBL league compared to both 1969 and 1979. Average attendance per team is **down** 16.2% vs. 1979, and is down 22.0% vs. 1969. No other NAPBL league had a *decrease* in average attendance per team vs. 1979 or 1969. The Florida State League has the smallest increase vs. 1979, up 28.9%, and the Appalachian League, up 78.8%, has the smallest gain vs. 1969. Please see the section starting on page 35 for more details about Minor League Baseball's growth in average attendance per team over the past 40 years.



**NAPBL INDIVIDUAL LEAGUE AND TEAM HIGHLIGHTS****EASTERN LEAGUE (AA)** (12 teams -- 142 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League – 3,944,195 (2005); Team – Akron - 522,459 (1999)

- Total attendance fell by 2.0%, but average per date was down by just 3, with 16 fewer dates played in 2009.
- **For the first time in Eastern League history, every team in the league drew more than 200,000.**
- 5 teams saw total attendance rise, and 5 teams also had an increase in average attendance per date.
- **Reading led the league in total attendance for the 7<sup>th</sup> time in the last 8 years. It was also the 9<sup>th</sup> time in the last 10 years that the Phillies have topped 450,000.** This despite the presence of the Lehigh Valley IronPigs in nearby Allentown. (Reading and Allentown have the same ownership.) It has been 25 years of spectacular attendance growth in Reading. (Attendance in the table below for 1996, 1998, and 2000 includes an exhibition game with the parent Philadelphia Phillies.)

## READING PHILLIES ATTENDANCE – 1984-2009

Year	Attendance		Year	Attendance		Year	Attendance		Year	Attendance
1984	67,333		1991	250,610		1998	423,336		2005	469,105
1985	76,819		1992	287,078		1999	448,367		2006	460,216
1986	83,506		1993	313,083		2000	461,848		2007	466,385
1987	100,895		1994	338,249		2001	458,585		2008	436,789
1988	144,107		1995	383,984		2002	486,570		2009	460,791
1989	178,734		1996	384,151		2003	465,717			
1990	204,240		1997	398,182		2004	478,257			

- **New Hampshire (Manchester) drew 386,991, setting a team record for the 6<sup>th</sup> consecutive season. The Fisher Cats also set team records for highest average per date, and for the number of sellouts.**
- Akron had its 5<sup>th</sup> straight decline. 2009 attendance was 316,836, the lowest it has been since the team moved to Akron in 1997. Akron drew 522,459 in 1999 to set the Eastern League record. In 1998 and 1999, the Aeros became only the second Class AA team to draw 500,000 fans in a season. Nashville had done it 4 times (1979-1982). 4 Texas League teams have achieved this level more recently (Round Rock - 2000-2004, Springfield - 2005, Frisco - 2003-2009, and Corpus Christi – 2005-2006).
- Portland had its wettest summer. Yet the Sea Dogs still topped 400,000 for the 6<sup>th</sup> time in the last 7 years, and also had their 7<sup>th</sup> straight year of averaging over 6,000 per date. Despite often awful early season weather, Portland has drawn at least 375,000 per season since 1994, with 425 sellouts in 1,072 dates in their history.
- **It was another record-setting season for New Britain. The Rock Cats drew 366,682, setting an all-time high in total attendance for the 9<sup>th</sup> time in the last 10 years. They also set team records for average per date (5,556), and for the number of sellouts (22). Attendance has more than doubled since the early years of New Britain Stadium, which opened in 1996.**
- Trenton's Class AA record of 14 consecutive seasons of attendance over 400,000 came to an end in 2009.
- Altoona, down 71,028, had the league's biggest drop, and both Altoona and Bowie had their lowest totals ever.
- In 2008, Harrisburg drew 164,182, down 65,059, the 3<sup>rd</sup> worst drop among U.S. teams, and the lowest total attendance in Harrisburg since baseball returned there in 1987. But significant ballpark improvements, to be completed in 2010, led to a 64,559 gain in 2009, the 4<sup>th</sup> best increase among NAPBL teams.
- Connecticut (Norwich) attracted its highest total attendance (203,005) since 2002. But it was not enough to keep that team from moving to Richmond, VA for 2010, where it will be known as the Flying Squirrels. All-time best attendance in Norwich was 281,473 in its first year (1995). Lowest attendance was 158,622 in 2003. The Oneonta Tigers of the short-season New York-Penn League will play in Norwich in 2010.

**NAPBL INDIVIDUAL LEAGUE AND TEAM HIGHLIGHTS****TEXAS LEAGUE (AA)** (8 teams -- 140 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League – 3,129,865 (2008); Team – Round Rock - 689,286 (2004)

- The Texas League followed a record high attendance in 2008, with a 5.3% decline in 2009, with 7 fewer dates.
- **One new high was set in 2009, as for the first time in the Texas League, as many as 7 teams reached 300,000 in attendance.**
- **Average attendance per date fell 232 from the league record of 5,691 set in 2008. The decline in average per date was the worst of any U.S.-based league. However, Texas League average attendance per date is still up 2,060 since 1999.**
- 2 of the 8 teams in the league had increases in total attendance, and 2 teams were up in average per date. Every team had an increase in total attendance in 2008.
- **Frisco drew 553,916 to lead all of Class AA for the 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive year.**
- Tulsa, up 18,956, had largest increase. This team gets a new ballpark in 2010, replacing Drillers Stadium, which opened in 1981. The highest attendance at Drillers Stadium was 351,929 in 1999.
- Corpus Christi attracted 443,628, third-best in Class AA. In 2005, this team replaced Round Rock, which moved to the Class AAA Pacific Coast League. In each of its five years in the Texas League, Round Rock had set a Class AA attendance record, including an all-time high of 689,286 in 2004. The ballpark in Round Rock seats around 10,000, while capacity at Corpus Christi is about 7,500.
- Springfield (MO) had the biggest decline, down 58,402.

**SOUTHERN LEAGUE (AA)** (10 teams -- 140 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League – 2,596,339 (1994); Team – Birmingham (with Michael Jordan) - 467,867 (1994)

- 2009 total attendance fell 176,637 (7.2%) to 2,284,201. The average per date was down 201. The league had 12 fewer playing dates than in 2008.
- Jacksonville had a small loss, but still drew 354,553 to lead the league for the 7<sup>th</sup> consecutive year.
- Tennessee was the only team to post an increase. The Smokies had their highest attendance since 2002, and were also the only team to have an increase in average per date.
- Huntsville (AL) drew just 93,845, the smallest attendance in team history, and also the lowest attendance among Class AA teams in 2009. It was the 6<sup>th</sup> time in the last 7 years that Huntsville did not reach 200,000. This followed 14 consecutive seasons above 200,000. In 2009, the Stars lost 8 home dates to rain. That helped cause attendance to fall 66,235, the biggest decline in the league. The all-time record attendance in Huntsville is 300,810, in 1985, which was the team's first season.
- Birmingham has topped 250,000 for an AA high 22 straight years.
- West Tennessee (Jackson, TN) failed to reach 200,000 for the 7<sup>th</sup> straight year. The Diamond Jaxx had topped 300,000 in their first 3 years of operation (1998-2000).
- The Montgomery Biscuits of the Southern League, Cedar Rapids Kernels in the Midwest League, and Kansas City T-Bones of the Northern League, are the only teams in minor league baseball that are named for food. (Source: 2008 Tampa Bay Rays Media Guide.)

**NAPBL INDIVIDUAL LEAGUE AND TEAM HIGHLIGHTS****CALIFORNIA LEAGUE (FULL-SEASON A)** (10 teams -- 140 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League – 2,061,889 (1997); Team – Rancho Cucamonga - 446,146 (1995)

- Total attendance rose 87,951, the biggest gain of any NAPBL league. It followed 8 declines in the previous 11 years. Average per date rose 123. 6 teams had gains in total attendance, and 6 were up in average per date.
- The Rancho Cucamonga Quakes, whose ballpark, located near the San Andreas Fault, is named 'The Epicenter,' drew 266,773 to lead the league in attendance for the 17<sup>th</sup> straight year. But they did have the largest decline in the league in 2009.
- **San Jose drew 211,054, their 4<sup>th</sup> straight record high in total attendance. They also set a team record for average attendance per date (3,015).**
- **The Modesto Nuts drew 167,722, another team record high.**
- Stockton had a small drop. But the Ports topped 200,000 for the 5<sup>th</sup> straight year. Stockton drew 154,547 in 1947, and 145,804 in 1948, but did not reach 120,000 again until 2005. Attendance in Stockton has more than doubled since a new park opened in 2005.
- Bakersfield drew only 65,656, their smallest total since at least 1984. The High Desert Mavericks had their worst attendance ever. In their first two seasons (1991 and 1992), High Desert was the first California League team to top 200,000, but they have not done it since, and have been below 160,000 for 15 years in a row.
- **What was probably professional baseball's oldest existing season attendance record was broken in 2009. The Visalia Rawhide completed a ballpark renovation, drew a team record high 105,405, and had the biggest increase in the league. The old record of 104,311 was set in 1947.** When Visalia drew 83,452 in 2007, it was that city's best attendance since 1951. In the Major Leagues, the Cincinnati Reds have gone the longest time since setting a team attendance record. Their all-time high was reached in 1976.
- In 1963, the 6 team California League had a total attendance of 128,836, averaging just 21,743 per team, and 333 per home date. San Jose led the league in attendance that year, drawing 34,517

**CAROLINA LEAGUE (FULL-SEASON A)** (8 teams -- 140 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League – 1,816,193 (1995); Team – Durham - 390,486 (1995)

- Bad weather in some places, and Winston-Salem's new ballpark not opening on time, led to an 8.1% decline in total attendance, the largest percentage decline of any U.S. based NAPBL league. Average attendance per date was down 164. The league had 17 fewer playing dates in 2009 than in 2008.
- Frederick led the league in total attendance.
- 9 rainouts ended Wilmington's 11 year streak of leading the league in total attendance, though they did lead in average per date. Until 2009, the Blue Rocks had topped 300,000 every year since starting play in 1993.
- 3 teams had increases in total attendance, but 6 teams were up in average per date.
- A new ballpark for the Winston-Salem Dash was to have opened in 2009. But construction delays and financial problems caused the park's opening to be pushed back to 2010. The team offered refunds to everyone who had purchased tickets for the new ballpark, while they played the 2009 season in old Ernie Shore Field. Total attendance was just 57,665, the smallest attendance by any current team in the Carolina League since Kinston drew 48,845 in 1986. Attendance was down 112,398, the second worst decline among U.S. teams in 2009.
- Lynchburg and Myrtle Beach each had their 2<sup>nd</sup> best total ever. Potomac had its best year at the gate since 2002, despite losing 10 dates to rain.
- Kinston became the first Carolina League team since 1999 to go an entire season without a rainout. The Indians also had their 5<sup>th</sup> straight attendance gain, topping 130,000 for only the 8<sup>th</sup> time in the last 46 years.

**NAPBL INDIVIDUAL LEAGUE AND TEAM HIGHLIGHTS****FLORIDA STATE LEAGUE (FULL-SEASON A)** (12 teams -- 140 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League – 1,133,210 (1997); Team – St. Petersburg - 202,383 (1989)

- The Florida State League is unique as nearly all its teams are operated by their Major League parent clubs.
- There were 26 fewer dates played in this league in 2009. Yet total attendance rose 86,902 (8.4%), and was just 15,847 below the league's record high, which was set in 1997, when the league had two more teams than it had in 2009. The percentage increase was the largest among NAPBL leagues. The relocation of a team from Vero Beach to Port Charlotte was a major factor in this increase.
- Average attendance per date was up 161 to 1,486, the biggest average gain of any NAPBL league, and the highest Florida State League average since at least 1993. But this is still the lowest average per date of any full-season NAPBL league. The short-season Appalachian League averages less.
- **The (Port) Charlotte Stone Crabs played their first season after moving from Vero Beach, and drew a league high 171,314. This was the best total in the Florida State League since St. Petersburg drew 190,146 in 1990, and was achieved despite 10 rainouts.** Vero Beach drew 47,944 in 2008. The Stone Crabs' ballpark originally opened in 1988, and was totally renovated for use as the Spring Training home of the Tampa Bay Rays starting in 2009.
- **Clearwater's 5 year streak of leading the league ended. But the Threshers drew 169,559, setting a team record for the 4<sup>th</sup> straight year.**
- The biggest gain in total attendance was achieved by Tampa, while Daytona had the largest decline.
- Even with the 2009 decline, Daytona still posted its 2<sup>nd</sup> best attendance since baseball returned there in 1993. Their attendance has doubled since 2002.
- Attendance in Fort Myers slipped from the 2008 record high. Nevertheless, since 1998, the Miracle has had the most seasons in the Florida State League (10) with attendance above 100,000.
- 6 teams had increases in total attendance, and 5 were up in average per date.
- Lakeland had its 2<sup>nd</sup> best attendance since 1992.
- Sarasota drew only 33,788, which was the lowest attendance for any full-season NAPBL team, and lower than any short-season team not in the Appalachian League. Their average of 528 per home date was the smallest of any NAPBL team. Three teams in the independent Continental League averaged less. The Sarasota franchise will be renamed the Marauders, and move to the Pittsburgh Pirates Spring Training home in Bradenton for the 2010 season.
- Dunedin didn't do much better than Sarasota, averaging just 585 per date.
- Until losing their team to Port Charlotte in 2009, Vero Beach had been one of the smallest towns to have professional baseball. The all-time attendance record in Vero Beach was 95,300, set in 1991. In 1948, the Brooklyn Dodgers first came to Vero Beach for Spring Training. Dodgertown eventually became not only a baseball facility, but was also used by N.F.L. teams as a training site. Numerous business conferences are held there annually. 2008 was the 61<sup>st</sup> and final year that the Dodgers held Spring Training in Vero Beach. They moved to a new site in Glendale, Arizona in 2009.
- Roger Dean Stadium in Jupiter is the home for both the Palm Beach Cardinals and the Jupiter Hammerheads of the Florida State League. That ballpark is also used as a spring training site by the Florida Marlins and the St. Louis Cardinals. The Marlins and Cardinals Gulf Coast League affiliates also play in the same complex. In a typical year, there are about 30 Major League spring training games, 140 Florida State League regular season games, and 60 Gulf Coast League games scheduled for Jupiter. Pro baseball's busiest facility is also host to minor league spring training, the fall Florida Instructional League, and high school and college games.

**NAPBL INDIVIDUAL LEAGUE AND TEAM HIGHLIGHTS****MIDWEST LEAGUE (FULL-SEASON A)** (14 teams -- 140 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League – 3,629,038 (2009); Team – Dayton - 593,663 (2004)

- **A new ballpark in Fort Wayne helped the Midwest League set a new attendance record for the third year in a row. Attendance rose 26,351 (0.7%), and reached a record high of 3,629,038.** This league first reached one million in attendance in 1982, and topped two million for the first time in 1994.
- **Average attendance per home date was up 16 to a league record 3,890.**
- 5 teams had increases in total attendance, and 7 teams were up in average per date.
- **Dayton led all Class A teams for the 10<sup>th</sup> straight year, as they drew 586,193 in 2009. The Dragons have the 10 highest season attendance totals ever in Class A.**
- **Dayton has sold out all 704 home games they've played, going back to Opening Day 2000. This is the longest sellout streak in pro baseball history!** The Boston Red Sox hold the Major League record of 550 consecutive sellouts of regular season games, a streak still active at the start of the 2010 season. The Portland Trail Blazers of the N.B.A. had 814 consecutive sellouts between 1977 and 1995, which is the longest sellout streak in North American pro sports.
- In 2009, Dayton outdrew every Class AA team, and all but 7 Class AAA teams. Only two teams below Class AAA (Round Rock and Frisco of the AA Texas League) have outdrawn Dayton in a single season since 2000.
- West Michigan had held the record which was broken by Dayton in 2000. The Whitecaps, who play in Comstock Park, a suburb of Grand Rapids, topped 500,000 for five straight years, including 1996, when they drew a then record 547,701. They attracted 356,642 in 2009.
- **Fort Wayne got a new team name, a new ballpark, and then, a new attendance record. The Tincaps (The name honors Johnny Appleseed, who lived in Fort Wayne, and at times, wore a tin cooking pot on his head.) drew 378,529, breaking the record of 318,506, set in 1993, their first season. Attendance was up 121,836, the 2<sup>nd</sup> best increase among NAPBL teams.**
- **The Wisconsin Timber Rattlers drew a record-high 253,240. Their old record was 233,797 in 1996.**
- **Dayton (8,496 in 2009), Kane County (6,154), and West Michigan (5,245), are the only Class A teams to average more than 5,200 per home date in each season from 2000 through 2009.** Fort Wayne and Lansing also averaged more than 5,200 per date in 2009.
- The Quad Cities River Bandits drew 236,401, their highest total since 1995.
- Clinton, a community-owned team, topped 100,000 for the 4<sup>th</sup> straight year. The LumberKings had failed to reach 100,000 for 17 years in a row between 1989 and 2005. The team's attendance record high is 127,251, set in 1988.
- Kane County's attendance has surpassed 400,000 for 16 straight years, and topped 500,000 each year from 2001 through 2006. But attendance fell 72,556 in 2009, the biggest decline in the league. It was the lowest attendance for Kane County since 1993.
- Burlington (IA) and Beloit each failed to draw more than 100,000 in 2009. The all-time record in Burlington is 83,927, achieved in 1994. Beloit drew a team record high 101,127 in 1986, and has not topped 100,000 since then. Despite low attendance, the Burlington Bees and Beloit Snappers are profitable. They're publicly owned, and their ballparks are mainly staffed by volunteers.
- Lake County (Eastlake, OH) and Bowling Green (KY) will move from the South Atlantic League to the Midwest League in 2010. This change is being made to reduce team and umpire travel in the S.A.L.

**NAPBL INDIVIDUAL LEAGUE AND TEAM HIGHLIGHTS****SOUTH ATLANTIC LEAGUE (FULL-SEASON A)** (16 teams -- 140 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League - 3,862,077 (2007); Team – Lakewood – 482,206 (2001)

- 2009 total attendance was down 2.3%, and average per date fell by 38. It was the second decline in a row, following 5 straight record-setting years.
- **Still, since 2000, total attendance in this league is up 89% (1,954,697 to 3,690,958), and average per date is up 64% (2,150 to 3,525).**
- **Lakewood was back on top as attendance leader, drawing 429,221. The BlueClaws have led the league in attendance 8 times in the last 9 years, and hold 9 of the 14 top South Atlantic League season attendance totals. Lexington and Greensboro have the other 5. Lakewood also led the league in average attendance per home date, with a figure of 6,312.**
- Lakewood's total 2009 attendance was higher than all but one Class A team (Dayton), and 3 AA teams (Frisco, Corpus Christi and Reading). The BlueClaws also outdrew 13 Class AAA teams.
- The Greensboro Grasshoppers drew 406,549, and have topped 400,000 in all 5 years at First Horizon Park.
- **Kannapolis had the league's biggest increase, and drew a team record-high 132,342. The old mark was 129,023 in 2001.**
- In 2006, Greenville (SC) got a new park, and posted the biggest total attendance gain by a U.S. based team. 2009 Drive attendance was 335,159, up 219,998 from 2005.
- **Bowling Green (KY) replaced Columbus, GA., and drew 232,987. 2008 attendance in Columbus was just 61,290. The all-time high in Columbus was 133,951 in 1994.**
- The Augusta (GA) GreenJackets had their 2<sup>nd</sup> best attendance ever. This team's name comes from the green jacket that is presented to the winner of The Masters golf tournament, which is held every spring in Augusta.
- Lake County (Eastlake, OH) drew 267,895, but had the biggest loss in the league. The Captains attracted 437,515 in 2003, which was their first season. But their attendance has declined every year since then.
- 3 teams had increases in total attendance. Average per date was up for 4 teams, with Augusta having the exact same average as in 2008.
- For the 5<sup>th</sup> year in a row, Lakewood and Greensboro averaged above 5,000 per home date.
- A great team name in minor league baseball had its worst attendance ever. The Hickory Crawdads drew just 131,414. Hickory's first season was 1993, the year they reached their record high total of 283,727. Lexington and Rome also had the smallest attendance in each team's history.
- This league has achieved some of the biggest increases ever for relocated teams. In their first season (2001), Lakewood drew 482,206, an all-time high for a South Atlantic League team. It was also a 14 fold increase from the 32,641 this franchise attracted in 2000, when it played in Cape Fear, NC. Lake County drew 437,515, in 2003, their first year in Ohio. In 2002, that franchise's attendance was just 52,103 in Columbus, GA.
- The Delmarva Shorebirds had been the league leaders in attendance from their inaugural season in 1996, through 2000. 10 rainouts in 2009 resulted in this team having its lowest attendance ever.
- Bowling Green and Lake County move to the Midwest League in 2010 to save on travel costs.
- In 2002, Charleston, SC set a record when one game had an official attendance of 0. This was a promotion to achieve the lowest attendance ever at any game. A party for fans was held outside the ballpark until after the fifth inning, when the game became official. At that point, fans were admitted free. The old mark for smallest 'crowd' was 1, set by Oakland of the Pacific Coast League on Nov. 8, 1905. Yes, November, and no promotion here. It was a rainy day. The P.C.L. used to have a very long schedule. In 1905, Oakland played 222 games.

**NAPBL INDIVIDUAL LEAGUE AND TEAM HIGHLIGHTS****NEW YORK-PENN LEAGUE (SHORT-SEASON A)** (14 teams -- 76 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League – 1,890,053 (2002); Team – Brooklyn – 317,124 (2002)

- Total attendance went down 1.6%. Average per date was exactly the same as in 2008. The league had 8 fewer playing dates in 2009.
- **Brooklyn drew 264,102, their smallest total ever, but still enough to lead all short-season teams for the 9<sup>th</sup> straight year.** The Cyclones hold the 9 highest total attendance figures for any short-season team. They have surpassed 2.6 million in attendance in team history, reaching that mark faster than any short-season team.
- In 2002, the Cyclones set the short-season record, drawing 317,124, averaging 8,345 per date, and selling out every game. The Cyclones drew 289,382 in 2001, breaking the old New York-Penn League mark set by Mahoning Valley (206,287) in 2000, and the short-season record of 249,995 set by Portland of the Northwest League in 1996.
- **In just 37 home dates in 2009, the Cyclones had a higher total attendance than 45 of 60 full-season Class A teams, 12 of 30 Class AA teams, and 13 of 16 Mexican League teams. All these teams played many more home dates than the Cyclones.**
- Brooklyn averaged 7,138 per date. Just one Class A team (Dayton), one Class AA team (Frisco), and one Mexican League team had a higher average than Brooklyn. In fact, Brooklyn had a higher per date average than 18 of the 30 Class AAA teams. In their 9 year history, the Cyclones have averaged 7,878 per date.
- The Aberdeen IronBirds, who are owned by Cal Ripken Jr., had another great year. They drew 247,061, which was just 775 below the record they set in 2008. They averaged 6,502 per date. The total and average per date figures were second best among short-season teams.
- 4 of the 14 teams in the league had gains in total attendance, and 5 teams saw growth in average per date.
- **Lowell has now sold out every game for 10 straight years, which ties Dayton for the most consecutive sellout seasons.** The Spinners current sellout streak stands at 381 games.
- **Staten Island had the biggest increase in the league. The Yankees drew a team-record high 206,635. Attendance in Staten Island is up 79% since 2006.**
- Hudson Valley topped 4,000 in average per date for the 16<sup>th</sup> consecutive year.
- **Tri-City (Troy, NY) set a team record for the 6<sup>th</sup> straight year, drawing 145,976 in 2009.**
- Oneonta had the biggest decline in the league, drawing just 23,521, their smallest attendance since 1976. They averaged only 692 per date, the lowest of any short-season team. In 2010, Oneonta will be without pro baseball for the first time since 1965, as the Tigers will move to Norwich, CT. The all-time season high in Oneonta was 58,742 in 1990. Lowest attendance was 18,524 in 1967 (Source: Oneonta Daily Star).
- Vermont, Batavia, and Jamestown had their lowest totals since at least 1993.
- Mahoning Valley (Niles, OH) drew 120,755, their smallest total ever. The Scrappers topped 200,000 in both 1999 and 2000, the team's first two seasons.
- Team relocations and new parks have resulted in a significant increase in New York-Penn League attendance in the past 16 years. In 1993, the league's 14 teams drew a total attendance of 708,375, an average of 50,598 per team, and an average of 1,540 per home date. The 2009 attendance total of 1,786,735 is a gain of 152% from 1993. 2009 average attendance per team was 127,624, and the average per home date was 3,595. In 2010, 11 of the 14 teams in this league will play in a ballpark that opened between 1994 and 2006.

**NAPBL INDIVIDUAL LEAGUE AND TEAM HIGHLIGHTS****NORTHWEST LEAGUE (SHORT-SEASON A)** (8 teams -- 76 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League – 1,088,382 (1998); Team – Portland – 249,995 (1996)

- Attendance fell 1.3% in 2009. Average per date was down 50. 3 teams had increases in total attendance, and 3 were also up in average per date. Only one date in the entire league (in Eugene) was lost due to rain.
- Vancouver had the biggest gain, drawing 149,297, its best attendance as a short-season team. In 1988, the Canadians set their all-time record of 386,220, while a member of the full-season Pacific Coast League.
- Spokane led the league for the 10<sup>th</sup> straight year, attracting 174,941, 5<sup>th</sup> best among short-season teams. The Indians have topped 100,000 for 24 straight years. But they had the biggest 2009 loss in the league.
- Eugene played its final year in historic Civic Stadium, and exceeded 100,000 for the 25<sup>th</sup> straight year, the longest such streak by a short-season team. The Emeralds will play at the University of Oregon in 2010.
- **The Tri-City (Pasco, WA) Dust Devils drew 84,198, setting a record high as a Northwest League team for the 3<sup>rd</sup> straight year.** In 1997, Tri-City drew 109,101, in the independent Western Baseball League, which played a longer schedule than the Northwest League does.
- Yakima posted its highest total since 1999, drawing 72,881. The all-time record in Yakima is 133,917 for a full-season team in 1949.

**APPALACHIAN LEAGUE (SHORT-SEASON ROOKIE)** (10 teams -- 68 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League – 442,755 (1993); Team – Danville - 80,539 (1993)

- Total attendance fell 2.2%, and average attendance per date was down 19. This league has small markets, and capacity of its ballparks ranges from 1,500 in Elizabethton to 3,000 in Burlington, NC.
- Greeneville, TN led the league for the 6<sup>th</sup> year in a row, drawing 49,293, an average of 1,450 per date. Danville, Kingsport, and Bluefield were the only other teams who averaged more than 1,000.
- 4 teams had total attendance gains. Bluefield had the largest increase, while Kingsport had the biggest decline. 3 teams had increases in average per date.
- Bristol drew just 19,390, the lowest of any NAPBL team. They also averaged only 718 per date.

**PIONEER LEAGUE (SHORT-SEASON ROOKIE)** (8 teams -- 76 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League – 728,952 (2008); Team – Salt Lake City - 217,263 (1992)

- The league had a 1.0% decline in total attendance, and average per date fell by 16
- 3 of the league's 8 teams had increases in total attendance, with 4 teams posting gains in average per date.
- **Ogden led the league for the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive season, and drew a team record high 146,068. The Owlz also had the best increase in the league.**
- Orem suffered the league biggest decline.
- The Casper Ghosts, named for cartoon character Casper the Friendly Ghost, had their 2<sup>nd</sup> highest attendance of all-time. Missoula also had its 2<sup>nd</sup> best attendance.



# 2009 MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL ATTENDANCE

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TEAM	2009 TOTAL ATTENDANCE	HOME DATES	AVERAGE PER DATE	2008 TOTAL ATTENDANCE	# CHANGE 2009 vs. 2008	BALLPARK OPENED:
<b><u>INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE</u> (AAA)</b>						
Buffalo Bisons	529,789	66	8,027	590,386	(60,597)	1988
Charlotte Knights	320,427	71	4,513	312,290	8,137	1990
Columbus (OH) Clippers	666,797	70	9,526	537,889	128,908	2009
Durham Bulls	488,385	72	6,783	503,636	(15,251)	1995
Gwinnett (GA) Braves*	423,556	71	5,966	289,570	133,986	2009
Indianapolis Indians	549,552	67	8,202	606,166	(56,614)	1996
Lehigh Valley (PA) IronPigs	641,335	70	9,162	602,033	39,302	2008
Louisville Bats	612,525	70	8,750	631,457	(18,932)	2000
Norfolk Tides	387,153	65	5,956	433,767	(46,614)	1993
Pawtucket Red Sox	625,561	70	8,937	636,788	(11,227)	1942
Rochester Red Wings	461,946	70	6,599	490,806	(28,860)	1997
Scranton-Wilkes Barre Yankees	358,888	58	6,188	485,999	(127,111)	1989
Syracuse Chiefs	392,518	65	6,039	392,028	490	1997
Toledo Mud Hens	559,037	70	7,986	584,596	(25,559)	2002
LEAGUE TOTAL	7,017,469	955	7,348	7,097,411	(79,942)	
* Played in Richmond in 2008						
<b><u>PACIFIC COAST LEAGUE</u> (AAA)</b>						
Albuquerque Isotopes	602,129	72	8,363	593,606	8,523	2003
Colorado Springs Sky Sox	300,185	69	4,351	303,048	(2,863)	1988
Fresno Grizzlies	480,627	72	6,675	526,754	(46,127)	2002
Iowa (Des Moines) Cubs	536,872	68	7,895	487,348	49,524	1992
Las Vegas 51s	337,388	71	4,752	374,780	(37,392)	1983
Memphis Redbirds	474,764	68	6,982	569,172	(94,408)	2000
Nashville Sounds	305,434	68	4,492	354,662	(49,228)	1978
New Orleans Zephyrs	362,771	69	5,258	355,395	7,376	1997
Oklahoma (City) RedHawks	397,219	70	5,675	470,140	(72,921)	1998
Omaha Royals	371,046	68	5,457	349,376	21,670	1948
Portland (OR) Beavers	369,580	70	5,280	392,512	(22,932)	1926
Reno Aces*	466,606	72	6,481	245,121	221,485	2009
Round Rock (TX) Express	626,899	72	8,707	668,623	(41,724)	2000
Sacramento River Cats	657,095	72	9,126	700,168	(43,073)	2000
Salt Lake (City) Bees	492,321	68	7,240	500,780	(8,459)	1994
Tacoma Rainiers	352,450	71	4,964	327,871	24,579	1960
* Played in Tucson in 2008						
LEAGUE TOTAL	7,133,386	1,120	6,369	7,219,356	(85,970)	
TOTAL -- CLASS AAA	14,150,855	2,075	6,820	14,316,767	(165,912)	
<b><u>EASTERN LEAGUE</u> (AA)</b>						
Akron Aeros	316,836	68	4,659	342,816	(25,980)	1997
Altoona Curve	275,945	64	4,312	346,973	(71,028)	1999
Binghamton Mets	210,526	67	3,142	220,638	(10,112)	1992
Bowie Baysox	247,660	65	3,810	261,459	(13,799)	1994
Conn. (Norwich) Defenders	203,005	66	3,076	202,004	1,001	1995
Erie SeaWolves	220,909	70	3,156	234,955	(14,046)	1995
Harrisburg Senators	228,741	64	3,574	164,182	64,559	1987
New Britain Rock Cats	366,682	66	5,556	365,756	926	1996
New Hampshire Fisher Cats	386,991	69	5,609	373,227	13,764	2005
Portland (ME) Sea Dogs	404,709	66	6,132	412,403	(7,694)	1994
Reading Phillies	460,791	69	6,678	436,789	24,002	1950
Trenton Thunder	371,602	67	5,546	409,131	(37,529)	1994
LEAGUE TOTAL	3,694,397	801	4,612	3,770,333	(75,936)	

# 2009 MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL ATTENDANCE

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TEAM	2009 TOTAL ATTENDANCE	HOME DATES	AVERAGE PER DATE	2008 TOTAL ATTENDANCE	# CHANGE 2009 vs. 2008	BALLPARK OPENED:
<b><u>SOUTHERN LEAGUE</u> (AA)</b>						
Birmingham Barons	287,185	65	4,418	302,979	(15,794)	1988
Carolina Mudcats	263,175	67	3,928	281,012	(17,837)	1991
Chattanooga Lookouts	224,157	67	3,346	236,639	(12,482)	2000
Huntsville Stars	93,845	62	1,514	160,080	(66,235)	1985
Jacksonville Suns	354,553	69	5,138	364,365	(9,812)	2003
Mississippi (Pearl) Braves	194,795	65	2,997	212,107	(17,312)	2005
Mobile BayBears	209,742	68	3,084	220,821	(11,079)	1997
Montgomery (AL) Biscuits	266,818	66	4,043	292,181	(25,363)	2004
Tennessee (Kodak) Smokies	260,153	68	3,826	250,209	9,944	2000
West TN (Jackson) Diamond Jaxx	129,778	63	2,060	140,445	(10,667)	1998
LEAGUE TOTAL	2,284,201	660	3,461	2,460,838	(176,637)	
<b><u>TEXAS LEAGUE</u> (AA)</b>						
Arkansas (Little Rock) Travelers	346,635	64	5,416	377,997	(31,362)	2007
Corpus Christi Hooks	443,628	69	6,429	479,651	(36,023)	2005
Frisco RoughRiders	553,916	69	8,028	562,166	(8,250)	2003
Midland (TX) RockHounds	282,283	69	4,091	292,563	(10,280)	2002
NW Arkansas Naturals	318,056	66	4,819	358,792	(40,736)	2008
San Antonio Missions	300,669	69	4,358	300,267	402	1994
Springfield (MO) Cardinals	402,618	69	5,835	461,020	(58,402)	2003
Tulsa Drillers	316,365	68	4,652	297,409	18,956	1981
LEAGUE TOTAL	2,964,170	543	5,459	3,129,865	(165,695)	
TOTAL CLASS AA	8,942,768	2,004	4,462	9,361,036	(418,268)	
<b><u>CALIFORNIA LEAGUE</u> (A)</b>						
Bakersfield Blaze	65,656	69	952	67,377	(1,721)	1941
High Desert (Adelanto) Mavericks	112,470	69	1,630	117,594	(5,124)	1991
Inland Empire (S. Bernadi.) 66ers	202,728	70	2,896	183,845	18,883	1996
Lake Elsinore Storm	235,174	68	3,458	224,069	11,105	1994
Lancaster JetHawks	150,970	70	2,157	124,934	26,036	1996
Modesto Nuts	167,722	69	2,431	164,306	3,416	1952
Rancho Cucamonga Quakes	266,773	70	3,811	286,290	(19,517)	1993
San Jose Giants	211,054	70	3,015	183,788	27,266	1942
Stockton Ports	203,327	70	2,905	214,080	(10,753)	2005
Visalia Rawhide	105,405	69	1,528	67,045	38,360	1946
LEAGUE TOTAL	1,721,279	694	2,480	1,633,328	87,951	
<b><u>FLORIDA STATE LEAGUE</u> (A)</b>						
Brevard County Manatees	68,596	58	1,183	66,256	2,340	1994
(Port) Charlotte Stone Crabs*	171,314	60	2,855	47,944	123,370	1988
Clearwater Threshers	169,559	68	2,494	168,637	922	2004
Daytona Beach Cubs	147,921	61	2,425	164,007	(16,086)	1930
Dunedin Blue Jays	35,683	61	585	48,321	(12,638)	1977
Fort Myers Miracle	115,361	66	1,748	124,749	(9,388)	1991
Jupiter Hammerheads	68,741	64	1,074	68,585	156	1998
Lakeland Flying Tigers	49,569	56	885	52,305	(2,736)	1966
Palm Beach Cardinals	68,562	68	1,008	66,073	2,489	1998
St. Lucie Mets	95,598	65	1,471	93,626	1,972	1988
Sarasota Reds	33,788	64	528	43,088	(9,300)	1989
Tampa Yankees	92,671	61	1,519	86,870	5,801	1996
<i>*Played at Vero Beach in 2008</i>						
LEAGUE TOTAL	1,117,363	752	1,486	1,030,461	86,902	

# 2009 MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL ATTENDANCE

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TEAM	2009 TOTAL ATTENDANCE	HOME DATES	AVERAGE PER DATE	2008 TOTAL ATTENDANCE	# CHANGE 2009 vs. 2008	BALLPARK OPENED:
<b><u>CAROLINA LEAGUE (A)</u></b>						
Frederick Keys	293,438	64	4,585	295,656	(2,218)	1990
Kinston Indians	133,049	70	1,901	130,406	2,643	1949
Lynchburg Hillcats	164,328	66	2,490	162,131	2,197	2004
Myrtle Beach Pelicans	238,287	66	3,610	242,397	(4,110)	1999
Potomac Nationals	180,541	60	3,009	177,760	2,781	1984
Salem Red Sox	231,186	67	3,451	235,823	(4,637)	1995
Wilmington (DE) Blue Rocks	288,094	61	4,723	312,375	(24,281)	1993
Winston-Salem Dash	57,665	64	901	169,963	(112,298)	1956
LEAGUE TOTAL	1,586,588	518	3,063	1,726,511	(139,923)	
<b><u>MIDWEST LEAGUE (A)</u></b>						
Beloit Snappers	83,480	66	1,265	82,456	1,024	1982
Burlington (IA) Bees	64,499	68	949	68,313	(3,814)	1947
Cedar Rapids (IA)ernels	169,697	68	2,496	164,568	5,129	2002
Clinton LumberKings	107,665	65	1,656	114,662	(6,997)	1937
Dayton Dragons	586,193	69	8,496	586,417	(224)	2000
Fort Wayne Tin Caps	378,529	70	5,408	256,693	121,836	2009
Great Lakes (Midland, MI) Loons	271,146	67	4,047	299,416	(28,270)	2007
Kane County (IL) Cougars	400,040	65	6,154	472,596	(72,556)	1991
Lansing Lugnuts	346,935	66	5,257	353,571	(6,636)	1996
Peoria Chiefs	219,168	65	3,372	275,673	(56,505)	2002
Quad Cities River Bandits	236,401	64	3,694	207,048	29,353	2004
South Bend Silver Hawks	155,403	64	2,428	163,479	(8,076)	1988
West Michigan Whitecaps	356,642	68	5,245	367,532	(10,890)	1994
Wisconsin Timber Rattlers	253,240	68	3,724	190,263	62,977	1995
LEAGUE TOTAL	3,629,038	933	3,890	3,602,687	26,351	
<b><u>SOUTH ATLANTIC LEAGUE (A)</u></b>						
Asheville Tourists	146,353	62	2,361	175,892	(29,539)	1992
Augusta (GA) GreenJackets	194,437	67	2,902	200,222	(5,785)	1995
<i>Bowling Green (KY) Hot Rods*</i>	232,987	66	3,530	61,290	171,697	2009
Charleston (SC) RiverDogs	268,985	67	4,015	279,606	(10,621)	1997
Delmarva (Salisbury) Shorebirds	214,575	60	3,576	226,754	(12,179)	1996
Greensboro Grasshoppers	406,549	68	5,979	440,787	(34,238)	2005
Greenville (SC) Drive	335,159	69	4,857	349,116	(13,957)	2006
Hagerstown Suns	126,166	59	2,138	137,283	(11,117)	1931
Hickory Crawdads	131,414	69	1,905	133,512	(2,098)	1993
Kannapolis Intimidators	132,342	66	2,005	119,668	12,674	1995
Lake County (OH) Captains	267,895	67	3,998	316,572	(48,677)	2003
Lakewood (NJ) BlueClaws	429,221	68	6,312	425,166	4,055	2001
Lexington (KY) Legends	332,588	67	4,964	370,570	(37,982)	2001
Rome (GA) Braves	183,750	65	2,827	222,168	(38,418)	2003
Savannah Sand Gnats	110,846	64	1,732	105,537	5,309	1941
West Virginia (Charleston) Power	177,691	63	2,820	213,030	(35,339)	2005
<i>*Played in Columbus, GA in 2008</i>						
LEAGUE TOTAL	3,690,958	1,047	3,525	3,777,173	(86,215)	
TOTAL FULL SEASON A	11,745,226	3,944	2,978	11,770,160	(24,934)	

# 2009 MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL ATTENDANCE

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TEAM	2009 TOTAL ATTENDANCE	HOME DATES	AVERAGE PER DATE	2008 TOTAL ATTENDANCE	# CHANGE 2009 vs. 2008	BALLPARK OPENED:
<b><u>NEW YORK-PENN LEAGUE</u></b> (Sh. A)						
Aberdeen IronBirds	247,061	38	6,502	247,836	(775)	2002
Auburn Doubledays	55,804	35	1,594	64,052	(8,248)	1995
Batavia Muckdogs	35,620	37	963	43,167	(7,547)	1996
Brooklyn Cyclones	264,102	37	7,138	265,220	(1,118)	2001
Hudson Valley (NY) Renegades	161,332	35	4,609	150,525	10,807	1994
Jamestown Jammers	45,095	32	1,409	48,070	(2,975)	1941
Lowell Spinners	186,522	37	5,041	194,167	(7,645)	2000
Mahoning Valley (OH) Scrappers	120,755	38	3,178	123,364	(2,609)	1999
Oneonta Tigers	23,521	34	692	39,609	(16,088)	1940
State College Spikes	142,068	36	3,946	153,350	(11,282)	2006
Staten Island Yankees	206,635	35	5,904	189,876	16,759	2001
Tri-City (Troy, NY) ValleyCats	145,976	34	4,293	140,631	5,345	2002
Vermont Lake Monsters	84,114	33	2,549	91,351	(7,237)	1922
Williamsport Crosscutters	68,130	36	1,893	64,227	3,903	1923
LEAGUE TOTAL	1,786,735	497	3,595	1,815,445	(28,710)	
<b><u>NORTHWEST LEAGUE</u></b> (Short A)						
Boise Hawks	103,783	38	2,731	109,082	(5,299)	1989
Eugene Emeralds	125,475	37	3,391	130,069	(4,594)	1938
Everett AquaSox	89,929	38	2,367	95,294	(5,365)	1984
Salem-Keizer (OR) Volcanoes	106,590	38	2,805	112,425	(5,835)	1997
Spokane Indians	174,941	38	4,604	188,982	(14,041)	1958
Tri-City (Pasco, WA) Dust Devils	84,198	38	2,216	82,021	2,177	1995
Vancouver (BC) Canadians	149,297	38	3,929	129,073	20,224	1951
Yakima Bears	72,881	38	1,918	72,207	674	1993
LEAGUE TOTAL	907,094	303	2,994	919,153	(12,059)	
<b><u>APPALACHIAN LEAGUE</u></b> (Rookie)						
Bluefield (WV) Orioles	34,510	33	1,046	29,867	4,643	1939
Bristol (VA) Sox	19,390	27	718	21,696	(2,306)	1969
Burlington (NC) Royals	29,621	31	956	28,196	1,425	1960
Danville (VA) Braves	35,743	33	1,083	39,534	(3,791)	1993
Elizabethton (TN) Twins	27,767	32	868	28,131	(364)	1974
Greeneville (TN) Astros	49,293	34	1,450	51,806	(2,513)	2004
Johnson City (TN) Cardinals	23,639	32	739	21,327	2,312	1956
Kingsport (TN) Mets	33,691	31	1,087	38,589	(4,898)	1995
Princeton (WV) Rays	25,944	28	927	24,233	1,711	1988
Pulaski Mariners	30,526	32	954	33,679	(3,153)	1935
LEAGUE TOTAL	310,124	313	991	317,058	(6,934)	

# 2009 MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL ATTENDANCE

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TEAM	2009 TOTAL ATTENDANCE	HOME DATES	AVERAGE PER DATE	2008 TOTAL ATTENDANCE	# CHANGE 2009 vs. 2008	BALLPARK OPENED:
<b><u>PIONEER LEAGUE</u></b> (Rookie)						
Billings Mustangs	105,173	37	2,843	113,166	(7,993)	2008
Casper Ghosts	56,680	33	1,718	50,580	6,100	2002
Great Falls (MT) Voyagers	103,909	38	2,734	106,831	(2,922)	1956
Helena Brewers	33,478	37	905	35,066	(1,588)	1939
Idaho Falls Chukars	94,674	36	2,630	95,470	(796)	2007
Missoula Osprey	85,034	38	2,238	81,001	4,033	2004
Ogden Raptors	146,068	38	3,844	138,555	7,513	1997
Orem (UT) Owlz	96,926	38	2,551	108,283	(11,357)	2005
LEAGUE TOTAL	721,942	295	2,447	728,952	(7,010)	
TOTAL SHORT A & ROOKIE	3,725,895	1,408	2,646	3,780,608	(54,713)	
<b><u>MEXICAN LEAGUE</u></b>						
Campeche Pirates	121,129	50	2,423	209,543	(88,414)	
Cancun (Quintana Roo) Tigers	148,716	52	2,860	188,464	(39,748)	
Chihuahua Dorados	105,121	52	2,022	249,126	(144,005)	
Laguna Cowboys	191,200	52	3,677	350,717	(159,517)	
Mexico City Red Devils	181,990	54	3,370	298,759	(116,769)	
Minatitlan Oilers	113,191	52	2,177	211,227	(98,036)	
Monclova (del Norte) Steelers	258,020	52	4,962	163,000	95,020	
Monterrey Sultans	400,310	52	7,698	658,491	(258,181)	
Nuevo Laredo Owls	94,610	55	1,720	164,134	(69,524)	
Oaxaca Warriors	205,557	55	3,737	209,984	(4,427)	
Puebla Parrots	202,797	52	3,900	160,291	42,506	
Reynosa Broncos*	313,917	52	6,037	230,593	83,324	
Saltillo Sarape Makers	296,558	54	5,492	261,908	34,650	
Tabasco Cattlemen	108,633	50	2,173	153,232	(44,599)	
Veracruz Aguila Reds	153,117	52	2,945	200,436	(47,319)	
Yucatan Lions	184,908	52	3,556	325,264	(140,356)	
LEAGUE TOTAL	3,079,774	838	3,675	4,035,169	(955,395)	
* Reynosa operated as the Tijuana Colts in 2008						
TOTAL- ALL NAPBL LEAGUES	41,644,518	10,269	4,055	43,263,740	(1,619,222)	

# MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL ATTENDANCE - 2009 vs. 2008

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League	<u>TOTAL ATTENDANCE</u>				<u>AVERAGE PER DATE</u>		
	2009	2008	Change-2009 vs. 2008		2009	2008	# Change 2009 vs. 2008
			#	%			
International	7,017,469	7,097,411	(79,942)	(1.1)	7,348	7,317	31
Pacific Coast	7,133,386	7,219,356	(85,970)	(1.2)	6,369	6,504	(135)
AAA Total	14,150,855	14,316,767	(165,912)	(1.2)	6,820	6,883	(63)
Mexican	3,079,774	4,035,169	(955,395)	(23.7)	3,675	4,850	(1,175)
Eastern	3,694,397	3,770,333	(75,936)	(2.0)	4,612	4,615	(3)
Southern	2,284,201	2,460,838	(176,637)	(7.2)	3,461	3,662	(201)
Texas	2,964,170	3,129,865	(165,695)	(5.3)	5,459	5,691	(232)
AA Total	8,942,768	9,361,036	(418,268)	(4.5)	4,462	4,591	(129)
California	1,721,279	1,633,328	87,951	5.4	2,480	2,357	123
Carolina	1,586,588	1,726,511	(139,923)	(8.1)	3,063	3,227	(164)
Florida State	1,117,363	1,030,461	86,902	8.4	1,486	1,325	161
Midwest	3,629,038	3,602,687	26,351	0.7	3,890	3,874	16
South Atlantic	3,690,958	3,777,173	(86,215)	(2.3)	3,525	3,563	(38)
Full Season A Total	11,745,226	11,770,160	(24,934)	(0.2)	2,978	2,945	33
New York - Penn	1,786,735	1,815,445	(28,710)	(1.6)	3,595	3,595	0
Northwest	907,094	919,153	(12,059)	(1.3)	2,994	3,044	(50)
Appalachian	310,124	317,058	(6,934)	(2.2)	991	1,010	(19)
Pioneer	721,942	728,952	(7,010)	(1.0)	2,447	2,463	(16)
Short Season Total	3,725,895	3,780,608	(54,713)	(1.4)	2,646	2,668	(22)
NAPBL TOTAL	41,644,518	43,263,740	(1,619,222)	(3.7)	4,055	4,174	(119)
Northern	1,220,300	1,289,330	(69,030)	(5.4)	4,421	4,621	(200)
Frontier	1,444,176	1,468,977	(24,801)	(1.7)	2,626	2,600	26
Atlantic	2,160,993	2,208,734	(47,741)	(2.2)	4,054	4,113	(59)
American Association	1,482,214	1,506,665	(24,451)	(1.6)	3,154	3,311	(157)
Golden Baseball	631,109	428,402	202,707	47.3	1,890	1,369	521
Canadian-American	563,208	843,660	(280,452)	(33.2)	2,209	2,350	(141)
United	398,526	503,351	(104,825)	(20.8)	1,837	2,030	(193)
Continental Baseball	64,659	63,550	1,109	1.7	469	478	(9)
Independent Total	7,965,185	8,312,669	(347,484)	(4.2)	2,872	2,877	(5)
GRAND TOTAL	49,609,703	51,576,409	(1,966,706)	(3.8)	3,804	3,892	(88)

Source: National Association of Professional Baseball Clubs, Independent Leagues

**INDEPENDENT LEAGUE HIGHLIGHTS**

- In 2009, there were 8 independent leagues, with 63 teams. Two teams in the Continental Baseball League did not record any home attendance. Midwest of the Frontier League had just a partial home schedule. 62 independent teams operated in 2008, and there were 70 teams in 2007. In both 2006 and 2005, 56 teams played. There were 46 independent league teams in 2004, 62 teams in 2003, 56 teams in 2002, 53 teams in 2001, 50 teams in 2000, and 45 teams in 1999.
- The Can-Am League dropped two teams. The Golden Baseball League added one team, while the Continental Baseball League had two new teams.
- Total independent leagues attendance was 7,965,185, down 4.2%. The combined independent leagues record of 8,485,921 was set in 2007. In 2009, independent leagues played 116 fewer dates than in 2008, and 340 fewer dates than in 2007. The South Coast League disbanded after the 2007 season.
- Combined 2009 average attendance per date for the 8 independent leagues was 2,872. This is down 5 from 2008. The decrease in average is small due to the deletion of teams whose attendance was relatively low. The all-time high average per date for independent leagues is 3,000, set in 2004.
- 55 independent league teams were in the same market in 2009 as in 2008 (Alexandria, LA switched from the United to the Continental League). 16 of them had 2009 gains in total attendance, while 19 of these teams had increases in average attendance per date.
- NOTE ON LEAGUE AND TEAM RECORDS LISTED IN THIS SECTION: The number of teams in each league, and the number of games scheduled, can vary from year to year among independent leagues. This can have a significant impact on league and team totals.

**CAN-AM LEAGUE** (6 teams -- 94 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League – 1,040,107 (2007) 9 home teams; Team – Brockton – 203,094 (2004)

- The league continued to contract. Atlantic City and Ottawa did not operate in 2009. North Shore (Lynn, MA), and New Haven County were dropped after the 2007 season.
- Total attendance was down 33.2% due to the large drop in the number of games. The decline was 8.9% if you only include teams that operated in both 2009 and 2008.
- Average attendance per date was down 141.
- **Quebec City was the only team to achieve a gain in total and average attendance. The Capitales had the 3<sup>rd</sup> best increase among independent teams, and drew a team record high 164,009. That total includes one game at Trois Rivières (Three Rivers), which used to be an Eastern League city.**
- Sussex (NJ) averaged 1,695 per date in 2009. The New Jersey Cardinals, a New York-Penn League team, used to play in Sussex. That team's record high average was 4,652 per date, set in 1995.
- The American Defenders of New Hampshire, who played in Nashua, had the biggest decline in the league in 2009. They had financial difficulties, which resulted in the team getting locked out of their ballpark. This team will play in Pittsfield, MA in 2010, at historic Wahconah Park, which opened in 1919.
- Other than Quebec, every team in this league had its worst attendance ever in 2009.

**INDEPENDENT LEAGUE HIGHLIGHTS****NORTHERN LEAGUE** (6 teams -- 96 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League – 2,189,151 (2005) 12 teams; Team – Winnipeg – 323,141 (2004)

- 2009 total attendance declined 5.4%.
- Average attendance per home date was down 200 from the record high average of 4,621, set in 2008. That was the highest average ever by a modern independent league.
- **Winnipeg led the league in total attendance for the 10<sup>th</sup> straight year. They averaged 6,180 per date, to post the highest average among independent league teams for the 7<sup>th</sup> consecutive season. In 11 years of operation, the Goldeyes have averaged 6,542 per date.**
- 3 teams had increases in total attendance. Average attendance per date was up for 3 teams.
- Fargo had its best attendance since 2002.
- Joliet's attendance was the lowest in team history. It fell 38,380, the biggest loss among independent teams.
- Gary had the best increase in the league, and missed setting a team total attendance record by just 4.
- Two new teams will be added to the Northern League in 2010. Rockford will move from the Frontier League, and a new team, the Lake County Fielders, will play in Zion, IL. The schedule will be expanded to 100 games.

**ATLANTIC LEAGUE** (8 teams -- 140 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League – 2,208,734 (2008) 8 teams; Team – Long Island – 443,142 (2001)

- Total attendance fell 2.2% from the league record high set in 2008. That was the highest attendance ever by a modern (post 1950's) independent league, breaking the record set by the Northern League in 2005.
- Average attendance per date was down 59. The league record is 4,153, which was reached in 2007.
- **For the 10<sup>th</sup> year in a row, the Long Island (Central Islip, NY) Ducks had the highest total attendance of any independent league team, drawing 414,973 in 2009.** They averaged 6,014 per home date. Only Winnipeg of the Northern League had a better average per date among independent teams in 2009. In team history (2000-2009), the Ducks have averaged more than 100% of their ballpark's capacity. Between 2000 and 2005 they sold out 340 of 426 home games.
- Somerset (Bridgewater, NJ) drew 355,429, second best among independent teams. The Patriots have topped 335,000 in all 11 seasons of operation.
- Lancaster's total of 314,228 was the third highest independent team attendance, but the Barnstormers had the biggest decline in the league.
- 3 teams had a total attendance increase. Average per home date was up for 3 teams.
- Southern Maryland (Waldorf) had the largest increase in the league. That team, along with York, is owned by Hall-of-Famer Brooks Robinson.
- Bridgeport had an increase in 2009. But Bluefish attendance has fallen from 342,857 in 1999 to 162,121 in 2009. Part of the cause of this drop may be the arena that opened next to the ballpark. It is home to minor league hockey and college basketball, so the Bluefish have more competition for the sporting events dollar.
- Camden, Long Island, and Lancaster each had their smallest total attendance ever. Newark had its smallest total since their first season (1999) when they only played a partial home schedule.



**INDEPENDENT LEAGUE HIGHLIGHTS****FRONTIER LEAGUE** (12 teams -- 96 game schedule -- Midwest only played a partial home schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League -- 1,503,220 (2007) 12 teams; Team -- Southern Illinois -- 259,392 (2007)

- Total attendance fell 1.7%, but the average per date went up by 26, with 15 fewer dates than in 2008.
- **Since 2001, when this league expanded to 12 teams, total attendance is up 100.8%, and average per date attendance has increased 77.1%.**
- The Southern Illinois (Marion) Miners have led this league in attendance in each of the 3 years they've operated. They had a small decline in 2009, but still were the only Frontier League team to top 200,000. In 2007, they became the first Frontier League team to average over 5,000 per date.
- **Windy City drew 103,129, a team record high, and was the only team with a 2009 total attendance gain.** There were 3 teams with increases in average per date.
- **Lake Erie (Avon, OH) replaced Chillicothe, and drew 153,654.** 2008 attendance in Chillicothe was 67,253. The all-time Frontier League high in Chillicothe was 86,682 in 2006.
- Rockford had the biggest decline in the league. This team goes to the Northern League in 2010.
- For the first time in its 11 year history, River City failed to top 100,000. Their record is 185,333 in 2004.
- Washington, PA, near Pittsburgh, averaged around 100% of their park's capacity from 2003 through 2008.
- The Midwest Sliders will be renamed the Oakland County Cruisers for 2010. They will start the season at Eastern Michigan University's ballpark. Their new home in Waterford, MI will be ready in July.
- A new team in 2010, named the Corn Belters, will play in Normal, IL.

**UNITED LEAGUE** (6 teams -- 80 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League -- 549,014 (2007) 6 teams; Team -- Amarillo -- 159,332 (2008)

- The league had 31 fewer dates, with a shorter schedule. Total attendance was down 20.8%, and average per date declined by 193. All teams had declines in both total attendance and average per date.
- Amarillo drew 121,617, to lead the league again, and was the only team to top 100,000. But the Dillas played 7 fewer dates in 2009, and had a decline of 37,715, which was second worst among independent league teams.
- Coastal Bend (Robstown, TX, near Corpus Christi) replaced Alexandria, LA. They drew 46,084, a decline from the 49,740 the team in Alexandria drew in 2008.

**CONTINENTAL LEAGUE** (6 teams -- 2 only played road games -- 60 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League -- 64,659 (2009); Team -- Alexandria, LA -- 45,727 (2009)

- Total attendance rose 1.7% to a league record high. Two teams were added to the league, but only 4 of the 6 teams recorded any home attendance.
- Alexandria, LA moved from the United League, and drew 45,727, a record high for this league, and about two thirds of the league's recorded attendance in 2009. Alexandria drew 49,740 in the United League in 2008.
- Average attendance per date was down 9 to 469 from the estimated average of 2008.
- Las Cruces, NM gets a team in 2010.

**INDEPENDENT LEAGUE HIGHLIGHTS****AMERICAN ASSOCIATION** (10 teams -- 96 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League – 1,506,665 (2008) 10 teams; Team – St Paul -- 297,834 (2007)

- Total attendance fell 1.6% in 2009 from the record high set in 2008. Average per date was down 157 from the 2008 record high of 3,311.
- **St. Paul drew 267,398, posting the best total in this league for the 4<sup>th</sup> straight year.** Their average per date of 5,689 was the third highest average among independent league teams. Almost all Saints games have been sellouts since this team was founded in 1993. But they had the largest decline in this league in 2009.
- 3 teams had increases in total attendance. 3 teams achieved gains in average attendance per game.
- Shreveport's attendance rose 28,660, the second best gain among independent league teams. They had their best attendance as an independent league team, and their highest total since 2000, when this city was in the Texas League and played a much longer schedule.
- Lincoln and Sioux City each had their lowest attendance ever.
- Pensacola gets a new ballpark in 2011.

**GOLDEN BASEBALL LEAGUE** (9 teams – 82 game schedule)

RECORD HIGHS: League – 631,109 (2009) 9 home teams; Team – Tucson -- 139,149 (2009)

- **The Golden Baseball League added one team, and relocated another in 2009. Total attendance for the 9 team league rose 47.3% to a record high 631,109, compared to the 8 team total in 2008. The average per date was up 521 to a league record high 1,890. The increases in both total and average attendance were by far, the best of any minor league in 2009.**
- The 7 teams that were in this league in both 2008 and 2009 had a combined attendance increase of 4.9%. The combined average per date for those 7 teams was up 175.
- **Tucson replaced Reno, and set a Golden Baseball League season attendance record, drawing 139,149.** The old record in this league was 90,730, set by Yuma in 2005. In 2008, Tucson played in the NAPBL Class AAA Pacific Coast League, with a much longer schedule, and drew 245,121. Their highest attendance in the P.C.L. was 317,347 in 1991. Tucson's average per date in 2009 was 3,662. They averaged 3,552 in 2008.
- Chico drew 89,276, its best total attendance as a Golden League team. They drew 132,052 as a Western League team in 1998.
- Victoria, BC played its first year. Their attendance of 93,691 was the second best ever in this league.
- Edmonton's attendance was up 38,118, the biggest gain among independent league teams in 2009. Like Tucson, Edmonton was once in the P.C.L. Their highest attendance there was 463,684 in 1996.
- Orange County (CA), which plays on the campus of Cal State-Fullerton, drew only 945 per home date.
- 5 teams had increases in total attendance. 5 teams posted gains in average per date.
- Yuma had the biggest decline in the league in 2009, and had its worst attendance ever.
- Two new teams will play in 2010. One will be in Tijuana, Mexico, while the other new team will play on the island of Maui in Hawaii. The Long Beach team will not operate.

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TEAM	2009 TOTAL ATTENDANCE	HOME DATES	AVERAGE PER DATE	2008 TOTAL ATTENDANCE	# CHANGE 2009 vs. 2008	BALLPARK OPENED:
<b><u>CAN-AM LEAGUE</u></b>						
Brockton Rox	112,343	43	2,613	132,785	(20,442)	2002
New Hampshire Amer. Defenders	40,361	35	1,153	69,995	(29,634)	1937
New Jersey Jackals	88,658	41	2,162	103,817	(15,159)	1998
Quebec (City) Capitales	164,009	46	3,565	140,933	23,076	1938
Sussex Skyhawks	79,663	47	1,695	80,500	(837)	1994
Worcester Tornadoes	78,174	43	1,818	90,127	(11,953)	2005
<i>Atlantic City Surf</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>		<i>124,430</i>	<i>-----</i>	<i>1998</i>
<i>Ottawa Rapids</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>		<i>101,073</i>	<i>-----</i>	<i>1993</i>
LEAGUE TOTAL #	563,208	255	2,209	843,660	(280,452)	
<i>Atlantic City and Ottawa did not operate in 2009</i>						
<b><u>NORTHERN LEAGUE</u></b>						
Fargo - Moorhead RedHawks	181,872	47	3,870	177,900	3,972	1996
Gary RailCats	166,334	47	3,539	159,586	6,748	2003
Joliet JackHammers	146,258	45	3,250	184,638	(38,380)	2002
Kansas City (KS) T-Bones	245,625	46	5,340	280,795	(35,170)	2003
Schaumburg (IL) Flyers	202,112	46	4,394	202,013	99	1999
Winnipeg Goldeyes	278,099	45	6,180	284,398	(6,299)	1999
LEAGUE TOTAL	1,220,300	276	4,421	1,289,330	(69,030)	
<b><u>ATLANTIC LEAGUE</u></b>						
Bridgeport Bluefish	162,121	68	2,384	156,429	5,692	1998
Camden Riversharks	234,519	65	3,608	236,526	(2,007)	2001
Lancaster Barnstormers	314,228	67	4,690	343,720	(29,492)	2005
Long Island (Central Islip) Ducks	414,973	69	6,014	416,752	(1,779)	2000
Newark (NJ) Bears	163,736	64	2,558	181,240	(17,504)	1999
Somerset (NJ) Patriots	355,429	67	5,305	347,735	7,694	1999
S. Maryland (Waldorf) Blue Crabs	239,541	66	3,629	226,086	13,455	2008
York Revolution	276,446	67	4,126	300,246	(23,800)	2007
LEAGUE TOTAL	2,160,993	533	4,054	2,208,734	(47,741)	
<b><u>FRONTIER LEAGUE</u></b>						
Evansville Otters	104,829	45	2,330	119,645	(14,816)	1915
Florence (KY) Freedom	102,086	46	2,219	106,707	(4,621)	2004
Gateway (Sauget, IL) Grizzlies	175,720	47	3,739	190,892	(15,172)	2002
Kalamazoo Kings	70,449	48	1,468	83,157	(12,708)	1996
<i>Lake Erie (Avon, OH) Crushers*</i>	<i>153,654</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>3,013</i>	<i>67,253</i>	<i>86,401</i>	<i>1993</i>
<i>Midwest (MI) Sliders@</i>	<i>20,252</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>533</i>	<i>-----</i>	<i>-----</i>	<i>1971</i>
River City (O'Fallon, MO) Rascals	89,776	46	1,952	106,114	(16,338)	1999
Rockford RiverHawks	110,565	41	2,697	138,234	(27,669)	2005
Southern IL (Marion) Miners	209,477	46	4,554	218,191	(8,714)	2007
Traverse City Beach Bums	170,358	48	3,549	193,724	(23,366)	2006
Washington (PA) Wild Things	133,881	48	2,789	154,444	(20,563)	2002
Windy City ThunderBolts	103,129	46	2,242	90,616	12,513	1999
LEAGUE TOTAL	1,444,176	550	2,626	1,468,977	(24,801)	
<i>Lake Erie played in Chillicothe, OH in 2008</i>						
<i>Midwest played a limited home schedule in 2009, all road games in 2008</i>						

# 2009 INDEPENDENT MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL ATTENDANCE

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TEAM	2009 TOTAL ATTENDANCE	HOME DATES	AVERAGE PER DATE	2008 TOTAL ATTENDANCE	# CHANGE 2009 vs. 2008	BALLPARK OPENED:
<b><u>AMERICAN ASSOCIATION</u></b>						
El Paso Diablos	200,323	48	4,173	182,380	17,943	1990
Fort Worth Cats	177,807	48	3,704	185,175	(7,368)	2002
Grand Prairie (TX) Airhogs	141,132	47	3,003	143,627	(2,495)	2008
Lincoln Saltdogs	172,445	47	3,669	182,852	(10,407)	2001
Pensacola Pelicans	71,797	47	1,528	82,999	(11,202)	1991
St. Paul Saints	267,398	47	5,689	286,796	(19,398)	1982
Shreveport-Bossier Captains	86,635	47	1,843	57,975	28,660	1986
Sioux City (IA) Explorers	70,978	48	1,479	87,616	(16,638)	1993
Sioux Falls (SD) Canaries	132,529	45	2,945	150,837	(18,308)	1964
Wichita (KS) Wingnuts	161,170	46	3,504	146,408	14,762	1934
LEAGUE TOTAL	1,482,214	470	3,154	1,506,665	(24,451)	
<b><u>UNITED LEAGUE</u></b>						
Amarillo Dillas	121,617	37	3,287	159,332	(37,715)	1957
<i>Coastal Bend (TX) Thunder*</i>	<i>46,084</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>1,355</i>	<i>49,740</i>	<i>(3,656)</i>	<i>2003</i>
Edinburg Roadrunners	65,046	38	1,712	82,040	(16,994)	2001
Harlingen (Rio G.) White Wings	44,877	36	1,247	65,956	(21,079)	1950
Laredo Broncos	31,628	32	988	45,542	(13,914)	1976
San Angelo Colts	89,274	40	2,232	100,741	(11,467)	2000
<i>*Played in Alexandria, LA in 2008</i>						
LEAGUE TOTAL	398,526	217	1,837	503,351	(104,825)	
<b><u>GOLDEN BASEBALL LEAGUE</u></b>						
Calgary Vipers	54,910	36	1,525	45,686	9,224	1966
Chico Outlaws	89,276	41	2,177	89,164	112	1997
Edmonton Cracker Capitals	84,813	39	2,175	46,695	38,118	1995
Long Beach Armada	54,931	39	1,408	67,255	(12,324)	1958
Orange Cty. (Fullerton) Flyers	28,344	30	945	26,604	1,740	1992
St. George (UT) Roadrunners	44,417	38	1,169	36,732	7,685	1997
<i>Tucson Toros*</i>	<i>139,149</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>3,662</i>	<i>49,367</i>	<i>89,782</i>	<i>1998</i>
<i>Victoria (BC) Seals</i>	<i>93,691</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>2,342</i>	<i>-----</i>	<i>-----</i>	<i>1967</i>
Yuma Scorpions	41,578	33	1,260	66,899	(25,321)	1969
LEAGUE TOTAL	631,109	334	1,890	428,402	202,707	
<i>*Played in Reno in 2008</i>						
<b><u>CONTINENTAL LEAGUE</u></b>						
<i>Alexandria (LA) Aces*</i>	<i>45,727</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>1,203</i>	<i>-----</i>	<i>-----</i>	<i>1949</i>
Bay Area Toros (League City, TX)	2,315	31	75	12,250	(9,935)	
<i>Big Bend (Alpine, TX) Cowboys</i>	<i>11,682</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>344</i>	<i>-----</i>	<i>-----</i>	<i>1947</i>
<i>Coastal Kingfish (Road Team)</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>		<i>-----</i>	<i>-----</i>	
<i>South Louisiana Pipeliners</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>		<i>-----</i>	<i>-----</i>	
Texarkana Gunslingers	4,935	35	141	28,800	(23,865)	
<i>Corpus Christi Beach Dogs</i>				<i>10,500</i>		
<i>McKinney Blue Thunder</i>				<i>12,000</i>		
LEAGUE TOTAL	64,659	138	469	63,550	1,109	
<i>* Played in the United League in 2008</i>						
<i>McKinney and Corpus Christi did not operate in 2009</i>						
GRAND TOTAL						
8 Independent Leagues in 2009	7,965,185	2,773	2,872	8,312,669	(347,484)	

Independent leagues are not affiliated with Major League Baseball, or with the National Association.

Attendance for independent leagues was obtained from league Web sites. Continental League 2008 attendance is estimated.

**ATTENDANCE GROWTH - 2009 vs. 1999, 1979 and 1969**

Minor League Baseball attendance has increased very sharply over the past 4 decades. New ballparks, better marketing and promotion programs, and a perception that minor league baseball offers good entertainment at a reasonable price, have all been contributing factors to this attendance boom.

Tables at the end of this section compare 2009 Major League and Minor League attendance with attendance for the 1969, 1979, and 1999 seasons. Note the sub-total (*in italics*) provided for Class AAA. The American Association teams were moved into either the International or Pacific Coast Leagues after the 1997 season. The sub-total is a more accurate method of comparing AAA attendance between the two periods.

Both the Major and Minor leagues have more teams today than 30 and 40 years ago. So the tables look at average attendance per team for each league, in addition to the comparisons of total season attendance.

**TOTAL ATTENDANCE COMPARISON VS. 1979 AND 1969**

**Attendance for NAPBL Minor Leagues was 41,644,518 in 2009. This is an increase of 172.8% from the 1979 total of 15,265,633, and a gain of 317.1% since 1969, when the NAPBL Minor Leagues attracted 9,984,263. If attendance from the independent leagues is added to the 2009 NAPBL Minor League total, the growth rate since 1979 increases to 225.0%, and the gain from 1969 goes up to 396.9%.**

Combined total 2009 attendance for just the International and Pacific Coast Leagues alone was 41.7% higher than the total attendance for all of Minor League Baseball in 1969.

The Major Leagues drew 73,367,659 in 2009, up 68.5% from 1979, and 169.4% from 1969.

**AVERAGE SEASON ATTENDANCE PER TEAM COMPARISON – VS. 1979 AND 1969**

The 176 NAPBL Minor League teams which charged admission attracted an average of 236,617 fans per team in 2009. The 61 independent league teams who played home games drew an average of 130,577 per team. (Most independent leagues play a shorter schedule than the full-season NAPBL leagues play.) Overall, the average season attendance for these 237 minor league teams was 209,324 in 2009.

In 1979, the 142 NAPBL Minor League teams averaged 107,504 per team. There were no independent leagues in 1979 or in 1969. **So NAPBL Minor League per team attendance is up 120.1% since 1979, and has grown 250.7% since 1969.** In 1969, the 148 NAPBL teams only averaged 67,461 per team.

The 30 Major League teams attracted an average of 2,445,589 per team in 2009. That's a 46.0% increase per team from the 1979 average of 1,675,015, when there were 26 teams, and a 115.6% gain from the 1969 average of 1,134,570 per team. (Major League attendance was down 6.6% in 2009 vs. 2008.) Minor League average attendance has increased at a much faster rate than Major League attendance in the last 30-40 years.

All 15 current NAPBL Minor leagues were in existence in both 1979 and 1969. The South Atlantic League was known as the Western Carolinas League back then. The Mexican League (down 16.2% vs. 1979), the Florida State League (up 28.9%), the Appalachian League (up 44.5%), and the Southern League (up 54.1%), are the only leagues to show a gain of less than 148% in average attendance per team vs. 1979.

Not only did the other 11 leagues achieve an attendance per team increase of at least 148% since 1979, but in 8 leagues, growth more than tripled. Some of the major increases since 1979: Eastern League – 323.6%; Carolina League – 321.4%; New York-Penn League – 327.5%; Midwest League – 326.8%; South Atlantic League (formerly Western Carolinas League) – 298.6%; Northwest League – 325.5%.

Comparing 2009 with 1969 -- 13 leagues have more than doubled their average attendance per team. For 7 leagues, the increase was more than four fold. The Midwest League had the biggest gain, up 535.0%. The South Atlantic League was up 503.7%, with 7 current teams each individually drawing better in 2009, than the entire league did 40 years ago. Eastern League per team attendance rose 382.4% vs. 1969. The Northwest League is up 346.1%, the New York Penn League had a 435.9% increase, and average attendance per team rose 310.9% for the Southern League. The Mexican, down 22.0% vs. 1969, the Appalachian, up 78.8%, and the Florida State, up 140.5%, were the only leagues whose 2009 average attendance per team was not at least triple the 1969 figure.

**ATTENDANCE GROWTH - 2009 vs. 1999, 1979 and 1969****INDIVIDUAL TEAMS**

In 1979, Columbus (OH) had the highest attendance of any Minor League team, drawing 599,544 to newly re-built Cooper Stadium (which had its final season in 2008). In 2009, that attendance figure was surpassed by Columbus, Louisville, Lehigh Valley, Sacramento, Pawtucket, Albuquerque, and Round Rock.

Nashville's attendance was 515,482 in 1979, the first of 4 straight years the Sounds drew 500,000 fans.

But only 2 of the 34 full-season Class A teams attracted more than 100,000 fans in 1979. West Palm Beach drew 125,213, and Greensboro's attendance was 165,596.

In 2009, 48 of the 60 full-season Class A teams, and 16 short-season teams, drew more than 100,000. Greensboro's Class A leading total of 165,596 for 1979 was topped by 34 full-season Class A, and 5 short-season teams in 2009. By the way, in 2009, Greensboro attracted 406,549 to a ballpark that opened in 2005.

In 1969, the Mexico City Reds led all of Minor League Baseball in attendance, drawing 428,548. Among U.S. based teams, Hawaii was the top draw, with a total of 280,477. Only 5 teams below the AAA level topped 100,000. Dallas-Fort Worth, then in the Class AA Texas League, attracted 235,827. No United States based Class A team reached 100,000.

In 2009, Hawaii's 1969 total attendance was topped by 60 NAPBL teams, including all teams in the Texas, International, and Pacific Coast Leagues, and by 3 independent league teams. Hawaii no longer has a team.

Buffalo drew 684,051 to lead all minor league teams in attendance in 1999. That year, 41 of 60 full-season Class A teams, and 12 short-season teams surpassed 100,000. 22 of these teams outdrew Greensboro's 1979 Class A leading figure.

Hawaii's 1969 top U.S. total was surpassed by 47 NAPBL and 2 independent league teams in 1999.

The 30 Class AAA teams averaged 471,695 per team in 2009. This average per team is more than the total attendance for 14 entire leagues, including 6 full-season, U.S. based leagues, in 1969. The 2009 AAA average per team is higher than the total attendance for 7 leagues, including 3 full season leagues, in 1979.

The Class AAA averages per team were: 135,181 in 1969; 179,784 in 1979; and 401,475 in 1999.

The following individual teams drew more fans in 2009 than their entire league drew in 1979 and/or 1969: (Example: Reading drew 460,791 in 2009. In 1979, the Eastern League's total attendance was 436,040.)

Eastern League -- Reading (1979 & 1969); New Hampshire, Portland, ME (1969)

Southern League -- Jacksonville (1969)

Carolina League -- Wilmington, Frederick (1979)

Midwest League -- Dayton (1979 & 1969); Kane County, Fort Wayne (1969)

South Atlantic Lea. -- Greensboro, Lakewood (1979 & 1969);  
Charleston SC, Lake County, Bowling Green, Greenville, Lexington (1969)

NY-Penn League -- Brooklyn, Aberdeen, Staten Island (1969)

Northwest League -- Spokane, Vancouver, Eugene, Salem-Keizer, Boise (1969)

### **A FURTHER COMPARISON WITH 1999**

By 1999, the boom in minor league attendance was underway. Comparing 2009 with 1999 attendance won't have the same dramatic growth as comparisons with 1969 and 1979. But there have been healthy increases.

NAPBL total attendance is up 18.4% from 1999, with the average attendance per date up by 669 (19.8%). There were 176 NAPBL teams in 1999, same as now. 45 independent league teams with home games operated in 1999, compared to 61 in 2009. Total independent leagues attendance is up 63.5% vs. 1999, and their average per date has risen by 313 (12.2%). Combined total attendance for NAPBL and independent leagues is up 23.9% from 1999, and the average per date is up 546 (16.8%). Major League total attendance is up 4.6% from 1999.

2009 average attendance per team was at least 25% higher than in 1999 for 7 NAPBL leagues. The Texas League had the biggest gain, as its average attendance per team rose 65.8%. The Pioneer League had a 58.9% gain, the South Atlantic League was up 57.6%, and the Florida State League achieved a 38.4% increase. The Midwest (30.8%), New York-Penn (30.3%), and the Pacific Coast Leagues (27.2%), were the other leagues whose average per team was up better than 25%.

But 5 NAPBL leagues had a lower average attendance per team in 2009 than they had in 1999. The Northwest League was down 11.2%, and the Appalachian League's average per team declined 6.2%. Full-season leagues with decreases were the Eastern League, down 4.5%, the Carolina league, down 4.0%, and the Southern League, down 2.1%.

### **NEW BALLPARKS**

New ballparks have been a major factor in the growth of minor league attendance. According to the "Baseball America Directory", ballparkdigest.com, and baseballparks.com, 117 of the 160 U.S./Canadian based NAPBL teams play in a park that opened from 1988 to 2009. 84 of these parks have been built since 1995, and 52 of them have opened since 2000. (Palm Beach and Jupiter of the Florida State League share the same facility, so there are 159 U.S./Canadian NAPBL ballparks.) 32 teams play in a park that opened prior to 1970, while the homes of 10 teams were built between 1970 and 1987. Many older parks have been totally refurbished, and bear little resemblance to their original structures.

Among the 59 independent leagues teams for which information is available, 42 parks opened since the start of 1988, (37 since 1995, and 23 since 2000), 13 were built prior to 1970, and 4 opened between 1970 and 1987. Overall, 159 current minor league ballparks have opened since 1988, with 121 of those opening since 1995, and 75 opening since 2000.

### **MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL ATTENDANCE COMPARED TO MINOR LEAGUE HOCKEY ATTENDANCE**

Professional hockey has a system of minor leagues somewhat similar to that of baseball, with some minor league hockey teams being affiliated with teams in the National Hockey League. But while minor league baseball attendance has continued to grow in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, minor league hockey attendance is down.

In the 1998-99 season, there were 109 professional minor league hockey teams in the United States and Canada. In 2008-09, the number of teams was down to 84, and only 78 teams played the full season in 2009-10.

Total regular season minor league hockey attendance fell 35.8% from 19,586,514 in 1998-99, to 12,565,690 in 2008-09, with 25 fewer teams. Average attendance per game dropped 618 from 4,865 in 1998-99, to 4,247 in 2008-09, a decline of 12.7%. On the other hand, National Hockey League total attendance in 2008-09 was up 19.4%, when compared to 1998-99, and the average attendance per game rose 7.5%. Preliminary figures from the 2009-10 season show a 1.2% decline in total minor league hockey attendance, but as a result of fewer teams, average per game was up 3.6%. Preliminary N.H.L. attendance figures for 2009-10 show a 2.3% decline.

Sources: league Web sites; ESPN.com, nhl.com.)

# MAJOR AND MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL ATTENDANCE - 2009 vs. 1979

<u>League</u>	<u>2009</u>			<u>1979</u>			% Chg. in Avg./Team <u>2009 vs. 1979</u>
	<u>Attendance</u>	<u># Teams</u>	<u>Avg./Team</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u># Teams</u>	<u>Avg./Team</u>	
American National	32,239,466	14	2,302,819	22,371,979	14	1,597,999	44.1
	<u>41,128,193</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>2,570,512</u>	<u>21,178,419</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>1,764,868</u>	<u>45.6</u>
MAJORS TOTAL	73,367,659	30	2,445,589	43,550,398	26	1,675,015	46.0
American Assoc.	Teams now in the I.L. & P.C.L.			1,296,740	8	162,093	
International	7,017,469	14	501,248	1,616,151	8	202,019	148.1
Pacific Coast	<u>7,133,386</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>445,837</u>	<u>1,761,487</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>176,149</u>	153.1
<i>Class AAA Total</i>	<i>14,150,855</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>471,695</i>	<i>4,674,378</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>179,784</i>	<i>162.4</i>
Mexican	3,079,774	16	192,486	4,591,286	20	229,564	(16.2)
Eastern	3,694,397	12	307,866	436,040	6	72,673	323.6
Southern	2,284,201	10	228,420	1,482,437	10	148,244	54.1
Texas	2,964,170	8	370,521	826,207	8	103,276	258.8
California	1,721,279	10	172,128	504,487	10	50,449	241.2
Carolina	1,586,588	8	198,324	282,371	6	47,062	321.4
Florida State	1,117,363	12	93,114	722,258	10	72,226	28.9
Midwest	3,629,038	14	259,217	485,915	8	60,739	326.8
South Atlantic *	3,690,958	16	230,685	347,237	6	57,873	298.6
New York-Penn	1,786,735	14	127,624	298,538	10	29,854	327.5
Northwest	907,094	8	113,387	213,163	8	26,645	325.5
Appalachian	310,124	10	31,012	128,735	6	21,456	44.5
Pioneer	<u>721,942</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>90,243</u>	<u>272,581</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>34,073</u>	<u>164.9</u>
NAPBL TOTAL	41,644,518	176	236,617	15,265,633	142	107,504	120.1
Independent Lgs.	7,965,185	61	130,577	0	0	0	-----
GRAND TOTAL	49,609,703	237	209,324	15,265,633	142	107,504	94.7

\* The South Atlantic League was named the Western Carolinas League until 1980.

Independent league totals exclude teams that only played road games.

1979 figures for Inter-American League which folded in mid-season are not included.

Sources: Minor League Baseball (NAPBL), Independent Leagues, Total Baseball - 8th Edition



# MAJOR AND MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL ATTENDANCE - 2009 vs. 1969

League	2009			1969			% Chg. in Avg./Team 2009 vs. 1969
	Attendance	# Teams	Avg./Team	Attendance	# Teams	Avg./Team	
American National	32,239,466	14	2,302,819	12,134,745	12	1,011,229	127.7
	<u>41,128,193</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>2,570,512</u>	<u>15,094,946</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>1,257,912</u>	<u>104.3</u>
MAJORS TOTAL	73,367,659	30	2,445,589	27,229,691	24	1,134,570	115.6
American Assoc.	Teams now in the I.L. & P.C.L.			882,547	6	147,091	
International	7,017,469	14	501,248	1,035,457	8	129,432	287.3
Pacific Coast	<u>7,133,386</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>445,837</u>	<u>1,055,988</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>131,999</u>	237.8
<i>Class AAA Total</i>	<i>14,150,855</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>471,695</i>	<i>2,973,992</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>135,181</i>	<i>248.9</i>
Mexican	3,079,774	16	192,486	1,973,825	8	246,728	(22.0)
Eastern	3,694,397	12	307,866	382,933	6	63,822	382.4
Southern	2,284,201	10	228,420	333,516	6	55,586	310.9
Texas	2,964,170	8	370,521	828,268	8	103,534	257.9
California	1,721,279	10	172,128	369,217	8	46,152	273.0
Carolina	1,586,588	8	198,324	476,856	10	47,686	315.9
Florida State	1,117,363	12	93,114	464,662	12	38,722	140.5
Midwest	3,629,038	14	259,217	367,420	9	40,824	535.0
South Atlantic *	3,690,958	16	230,685	229,290	6	38,215	503.7
New York-Penn	1,786,735	14	127,624	190,519	8	23,815	435.9
Northwest	907,094	8	113,387	101,658	4	25,415	346.1
Appalachian	310,124	10	31,012	138,763	8	17,345	78.8
Pioneer	<u>721,942</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>90,243</u>	<u>180,625</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>25,804</u>	<u>249.7</u>
Northern	-----	----	-----	128,964	6	21,494	-----
Mexican Center	-----	----	-----	356,809	8	44,601	-----
Mexican Northern	-----	----	-----	145,244	6	24,207	-----
Mexican So. East	-----	----	-----	<u>341,702</u>	<u>6</u>	56,950	-----
NAPBL TOTAL	41,644,518	176	236,617	9,984,263	148	67,461	250.7
Independent Lgs.	7,965,185	61	130,577	0	0	0	-----
GRAND TOTAL	49,609,703	237	209,324	9,984,263	148	67,461	210.3

\* The South Atlantic League was named the Western Carolinas League until 1980

In 1969, the Gulf Coast League listed attendance of 8,817, as one team charged admission. It is not included here.

Independent league totals exclude teams that only played road games.

Sources: Minor League Baseball (NAPBL), Independent Leagues, Total Baseball - 8th Edition

# MAJOR AND MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL ATTENDANCE - 2009 vs. 1999

<u>League</u>	<u>2009</u>			<u>1999</u>			% Chg. in Avg./Team <u>2009 vs. 1999</u>
	<u>Attendance</u>	<u># Teams</u>	<u>Avg./Team</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u># Teams</u>	<u>Avg./Team</u>	
American National	32,239,466	14	2,302,819	31,816,532	14	2,272,609	1.3
	<u>41,128,193</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>2,570,512</u>	<u>38,322,848</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>2,395,178</u>	<u>7.3</u>
MAJORS TOTAL	73,367,659	30	2,445,589	70,139,380	30	2,337,979	4.6
American Assoc.	Teams now in the I.L. & P.C.L.			Teams now in the I.L. & P.C.L.			
International	7,017,469	14	501,248	6,437,251	14	459,804	9.0
Pacific Coast	<u>7,133,386</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>445,837</u>	<u>5,606,999</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>350,437</u>	27.2
<i>Class AAA Total</i>	<i>14,150,855</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>471,695</i>	<i>12,044,250</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>401,475</i>	<i>17.5</i>
Mexican	3,079,774	16	192,486	2,875,289	16	179,706	7.1
Eastern	3,694,397	12	307,866	3,868,732	12	322,394	-4.5
Southern	2,284,201	10	228,420	2,332,712	10	233,271	-2.1
Texas	2,964,170	8	370,521	1,787,915	8	223,489	65.8
California	1,721,279	10	172,128	1,675,245	10	167,525	2.7
Carolina	1,586,588	8	198,324	1,652,256	8	206,532	-4.0
Florida State	1,117,363	12	93,114	941,861	14	67,276	38.4
Midwest	3,629,038	14	259,217	2,774,427	14	198,173	30.8
South Atlantic *	3,690,958	16	230,685	2,049,461	14	146,390	57.6
New York-Penn	1,786,735	14	127,624	1,371,054	14	97,932	30.3
Northwest	907,094	8	113,387	1,021,390	8	127,674	-11.2
Appalachian	310,124	10	31,012	330,517	10	33,052	-6.2
Pioneer	<u>721,942</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>90,243</u>	<u>454,362</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>56,795</u>	58.9
NAPBL TOTAL	41,644,518	176	236,617	35,179,471	176	199,883	18.4
Independent Lgs.	7,965,185	61	130,577	4,871,797	44	110,723	17.9
GRAND TOTAL	49,609,703	237	209,324	40,051,268	220	182,051	15.0

\* The South Atlantic League was named the Western Carolinas League until 1980.

Independent league totals exclude teams that only played road games.

Sources: Minor League Baseball (NAPBL), Independent Leagues, Major League Baseball Information System