



Mamie “Peanut” Johnson

Mamie was one of three women to play in the Negro Leagues along with Connie Morgan and Toni Stone. Johnson played professional baseball for three seasons, from 1953 to 1955, with the Indianapolis Clowns. During her career, she won 33 games and lost 8. Her batting average ranged from .262 to .284. Of this opportunity, she exclaimed, "Just to know that you were among some of the best male ball players that ever picked up the bat, made all of my baseball moments great moments."

When she left her native South Carolina to pursue her college education in 1943, she refused to let anyone or anything interfere with her love of playing baseball. She practiced while pursuing her studies at New York University.

At the time, amateur and professional baseball teams were segregated. When she was 17 years old, Johnson was rejected as a team member by the White Female Baseball League. This unfair treatment and prejudice became her personal victory. She proclaimed, "If I had played with white girls, I would have been just another player, but now I am somebody who has done something that no other woman has done."

In 1953, Bish Tyson, a former player with the Negro League, observed Johnson practicing on a field in Washington, D.C. He was overwhelmed by her athletic abilities. He maintained that she was a great player and suggested that she play professional baseball. He introduced her to Bunny Downs, Manager of the Indianapolis Clowns. After one tryout, Mamie made the team.



While pitching her first game with the Clowns, a batter on the opposing team yelled to her, "What makes you think you can strike a batter out? Why, you aren't any larger than a peanut!" Mamie never said a word, but the batter soon found out what she could do! 1 - 2 - 3 - OUT! From that day, the 100 pound baseball player had the nickname "Peanut".

Mamie enjoys sharing the stories of the Negro Leagues and the legends that played therein. And she loves to meet her legions of fans.

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