

A Schott From The Bleachers

Little Pels Were Here in 1912

by

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As New Orleans prepares to host a new ball club in the recently formed Gulf States League, I am reminded of a little known fact concerning our city's baseball history.

Back in 1912 we had two teams represented in organized ball, the Pelicans of the Southern Association and the Little Pels of the Cotton States League. Official baseball guides do not record this fact because after 24 games the New Orleans Cotton States League franchise was transferred to Yazoo City and all records listed show the Mississippi city as the complete entry for 1912.

But it's all there on the pages of the New Orleans *Daily Picayune* which gave excellent coverage of the Cotton States League. The April 11, 1912 headlines stated:

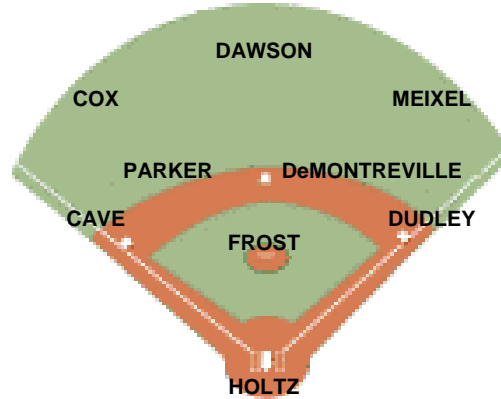
COTTON STATES LEAGUE SEASON OPENS TODAY WITH NEW ORLEANS AT VICKSBURG

The Little Pels, also referred to as the Pelicanettes and the Pellets, opened in Vicksburg and lost to the "Hill Billies," 10 – 6, with Jack Frost, New Orleans pitcher, sustaining the defeat. The club went on to play a total of 24 games, relinquishing the franchise to Yazoo City after the game of May 8th, which the New Orleans club won, 6 – 4. Here's the way the standings looked in the newspaper on Thursday, May 9, 1912:

Team	Won	Lost	Pct.
Vicksburg	13	8	.619
New Orleans	14	9	.609
Meridian	12	11	.522
Jackson	11	11	.500
Hattiesburg	10	10	.500
Greenwood	5	16	.238

The game of May 2nd was discounted in the standings due to a rainout after four and two-thirds innings, although a complete box score appears in the *Daily Picayune*.

Gene Demontreville, an ex-major league player and former Southern Association Pelican star, was the playing manager of the Little Pels. The opening game at Vicksburg on April 11th looked like this:



The club played only five games at home against Meridian on April 15th and a double-header on April 17th; and against Jackson on April 25th and 26th. The next home series was played at Yazoo City in order to determine if the fans there would support a Cotton States entry, and the response was favorable enough to justify the franchise shift.

The finest game played was on April 26th when New Orleans defeated Jackson, 1 – 0, as Jack Frost pitched a one-hitter. In the 24-game set, Frost shows a record of six games won and three lost.

The club hit a total of four home runs, Cox, Steele, Meixel, and Dawson being the producers.

Interesting is the fact that A.J. Heinemann, while holding office as the New Orleans (Southern Association) secretary, was instrumental in promoting the Cotton States League venture. He and his associates sponsored the Little Pels. Such dual baseball interests would not be allowed today.

The president of the Cotton States League in 1912 was a gentleman named Arthur Lewis, and the nicknames of the clubs were:

City	Nickname
Vicksburg	<i>Hill Billies</i>
Greenwood	<i>Scouts</i>
Hattiesburg	<i>Timberjacks</i>
Meridian	<i>Metropolitans</i>
Jackson	<i>Lawmakers</i>