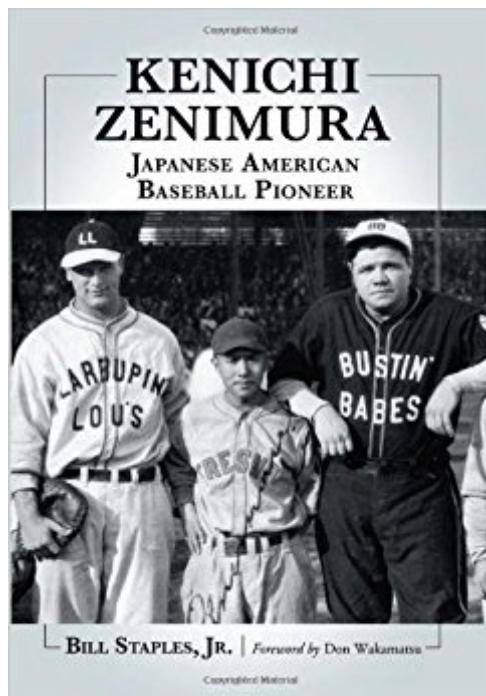


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# Kenichi Zenimura, Japanese American Baseball Pioneer



## Synopsis

While the story of the Negro Leagues has been well documented, few baseball fans know about the Japanese American Nisei Leagues, or of their most influential figure, Kenichi Zenimura (1900-1968). A talented player who excelled at all nine positions, Zenimura was also a respected manager and would become the Japanese American community's baseball ambassador. He worked tirelessly to promote the game at home and abroad, leading goodwill trips to Asia, helping to negotiate tours of Japan by Negro League All-Stars and Babe Ruth, and establishing a 32-team league behind the barbed wire of Arizona's Gila River Internment Camp during World War II. This first biography of the "Father of Japanese-American Baseball" delivers a thorough and fascinating account of Zenimura's life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Through this solid research, Staples creates a remarkably detailed chronology of Zeni's life...invaluable...an enjoyable biography of one of the most overlooked stars of American baseball."--Nine "Hopefully [this book] helps transform a long-neglected chapter of baseball history into a well-chronicled saga for fans of all races, creeds and colors to appreciate."--Don Wakamatsu, first Asian American manager in major league history. "One of the great untold stories of our American pastime, and essential for any baseball faithful."--Kerry Yo Nakagawa, historian, filmmaker and founder of the Nisei Baseball Research Project. "Staples utilizes twenty-first century technology to root out the most obscure facts about his subjects. A groundbreaking effort."--William

F. McNeil, award-winning author of Baseball's Other All-Stars.

Bill Staples, Jr., is a member of the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR), a board member of the Nisei Baseball Research Project, and a past speaker at the Cooperstown Symposium on Baseball and American Culture at the National Baseball Hall of Fame. He lives in Chandler, Arizona.

More than just a baseball book, it reveals lot of history of the Japanese American community in first half of the 20th Century which I thought I knew very well.

By the early twentieth century, baseball was truly the national pastime. It was played throughout North America by nearly all ethnic groups and races. Often these groups played in isolation--segregated by race. Since the 1970s, many have helped preserve the memories of African American and Hispanic baseball, but the history of Asian baseball leagues still are relatively unknown. In Kenichi Zenimura: Japanese American Baseball Pioneer, Bill Staples Jr. does a masterful job researching Japanese American baseball in California and in the internment camps during World War 2. Recently, the Society of American Baseball Research (SABR) has recognized Staples' outstanding work by awarding him the 2012 Sporting News/ SABR Baseball Research Award for this fine book. Staples focuses on Zenimura, often called the father of Japanese American baseball, from his birth in Japan, youth in Hawaii, move to Fresno, forced relocation to Gila River Camp, and return to Fresno. Through Zenimura's eventful life, readers learn about Japanese-American baseball and also life as an Asian minority in California. Staples has provided us with an enjoyable biography of one of the most overlooked stars of American baseball. Thanks to Bill Staples, Kenichi Zenimura can now take his deserved place among America's great baseball heroes.

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