

# British (and American) Attempts to Launch Baseball in the U.K. 1889-1924

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This paper analyses the British response to the tours and exhibition matches played in the United Kingdom by leading American baseball teams in 1879, 1889, 1914 and 1924. In particular it looks at the attempt to promote a baseball league based on the English Football (soccer) League in the 1890s and accounts for its failure to become an established spectator sport. It notes the persistence of baseball as a minority participation sport especially in the North of England and asks how it was able to survive and how far it was boosted by the influx of American servicemen in the two world wars. It also determines whether the efforts made by US baseball entrepreneurs like A.G. Spalding to spread the game were serious ones, and it explores in particular the cultural resistance to this 'foreign' import.