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**Madeline “Maddy” English Collection,  
1940-2003, undated**  
(Part of the Kathleen Bertrand and Linda Lundin,  
Honoring Women in Sports Collection)  
(MSS-049.01.10)

*Finding Aid Compiled by  
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## **Maddy English**

### **Biographical Sketch**

Madeline "Maddy" English was born in 1925 and grew up in Everett, MA. Lacking opportunities to participate in local sports while growing up, in 1939 at age 14 she joined a traveling Massachusetts softball team that played summer exhibition games. This experience also gave her initial exposure as an up-and-coming athlete. Not restricted to one sport, English was also successful in track and field as a young athlete. In 1941, at age 16, she participated in the women's USA Outdoor Track and Field Championship. Early U.S. women track stars, such as Stella Walsh and Babe Didrikson, had a history of participating in this prestigious event with Didrikson holding the record in 1941 for one of the events English participated in, the baseball throw. English also participated in the 50-meter run at this event.

In 1943 the All-American Girls Soft Ball League was created by Philip K. Wrigley, owner of Major League Baseball's Chicago Cubs, in response to MLB rosters being decimated by the draft during World War II which was creating a loss of revenue. English was invited for a tryout at Chicago's Wrigley Field. By the time the tryouts were finished English was selected as one of the sixty original league players and assigned to the Racine Belles. The league would change its name to the All-American Professional Girls Baseball League (AAGPBL) after the inaugural season.

English would go on to play eight seasons for the Racine Belles, the entire history of the team's existence in Racine as they would disband after the 1950 season. During this time Racine won two league championships, including the league's first championship in 1943. English was Racine's third baseman during her years in the league. Her jersey number was 16 during her career and she was selected to three all-star teams.

After the 1950 season the Racine Belles disbanded and moved to Battle Creek, MI and became the Battle Creek Belles. Rather than go to Battle Creek to continue playing for the Belles, who controlled their player's rights, English along with four of her teammates jumped to another league to play, the National Girls Baseball League (NGBL). Similar to English, three of these teammates had played for Racine from 1943-1950: Joanne Winter, Sophie Kurys, and Edythe (Perlick) Keating. As a result, all five players were banned from ever playing in the AAGPBL again. In early 1952 a new president of the AAGPBL reversed this decision. Maddy English was offered a contract that matched her NGBL salary. Only Sophie Kurys would return to the AAGPBL briefly before going back to the NGBL. English would play in the NGBL for the Chicago Music Maids and the Parichy Bloomer Girls until 1954 when the league ended. After she regained amateur status she would go on to create, manage, and play for the Caggiano All Star Softball Club out of Lynn, MA.

While actively participating in athletics, English did not lose sight of getting an education. She received a B.S. in Education in 1957 and a Master's in Education in 1962, both from Boston University. She would go on to spend her entire career in education in the Everett, MA public school system both as a classroom and physical education teacher and later as a guidance counselor, all the while stressing the significance of girls and young women participating in athletics. She retired from teaching in 1984. She was thought so highly of that in 2003 the city of

Everett named a new school the “Madeline English School” in her honor, becoming the first public building in Everett to be named after a prominent woman.

English was heavily involved with the AAGPBL’s efforts to remain active in keeping the memory of the league alive. The first league reunion took place in 1982. Momentum to promote and increase awareness of the league’s history continued, culminating in the league being inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, NY in 1988. With the release of the 1992 movie, *A League of Their Own*, interest in the league increased.

Madeline “Maddy” English passed away on August 24, 2004 at the age of 79.

### Scope and Content Note

The Maddy English Collection is part of the *Kathleen Bertrand and Linda Lundin, Honoring Women in Sports Collection*. The material in the collection was collected and/or created by Maddy English and kept in her family until donation with the aid of Kathleen Bertrand and Linda Lundin. It consists of three series.

Series 1, *Maddy English’s Softball and Baseball Career*, makes up the bulk of the collection and is broken down into four subseries. Subseries 1, *The AAGPBL Years and Earlier*, focuses on paper-based content pertaining to English and the teams she played for beginning with her high school years and covering her years playing for Racine from 1943-1950. Scrapbooks in this subseries contain news clippings, original AAGPBL photographs, league ephemera, and more. Also in this subseries is correspondence and other items from the 1947 AAGPBL touring trip to Havana, Cuba. Subseries 2 covers the other leagues English played in after she was finished playing for the All-Americans. This includes material from her time playing in the National Girls Baseball League (NGBL). Subseries 3 contains ephemera from the AAGPBL that was not created by English, such as team yearbooks for the Racine Belles. Subseries 4 consists of original artifacts worn and used by English during her AAGPBL years, including her original uniform, hat, glove, and cleats.

Series 2 contains material on the AAGPBL beginning with the first league reunion in 1982 and after. Information on some of the other players in the league can be found, as well as correspondence.

Series 3 is made up of personal material belonging to English such as diplomas, correspondence from fans, and photographs of her being inducted into regional hall of fame organizations and other award ceremonies.

Series 4 has two boxes, one containing oversize material pertaining to English’s AAGPBL years and the other containing video and audio material such as interviews of English and other players.

Related collections include the numerous collections that make up the *Kathleen Bertrand and Linda Lundin, Honoring Women in Sports Collection*. Other women’s baseball and softball

collections include: the [Mary Pratt Collection](#) (AAGPBL), the [All-American Girls Professional Baseball League Collection](#), the [Joanne "Jo" Winter Collection](#) (English's teammate while playing for Racine), the [Margaret "Marge" Russo Collection](#), the [Helen Delores Nunamaker Collection](#), the Edith Dennison Bloomer Girl Collection, the [Bertha Levi Collection](#), and more.

## **Maddy English Box and Folder List**

### **Series 1: Maddy English's Softball and Baseball Career, bulk 1940-1958**

#### **Subseries 1: The AAGPBL Years and Earlier, bulk 1940-1950**

##### **Box 1 Scrapbooks**

- Scrapbook 1: News clippings involving Maddy English while in high school playing softball for the Everett Angels Girls Team and the Boston Olympets, also random loose news clippings from an assortment of years, bulk 1940-1942.
- Scrapbook 2: Loose page scrapbook contained in specially designed box of approximately 325 photographs depicting Racine Belles players both playing and practicing, and the players in day-to-day life when not in uniform, 1943-1947.
- Scrapbook 3: Scrapbook with wooden cover documenting the Racine Belles during 1943. Includes team schedule, postcards, news clippings, telegrams from English to her parents about traveling to first spring training and making the team, league ephemera, league memos on rules. Contains a few pages of news clippings from 1945-1947, 1943, 1945-1947.

##### **Box 2 Folder**

1. USA Outdoor Track and Field Championship (women), list of athletes by event; includes the names of Maddy English, Stella Walsh, Betsy Jochum, and Babe Didrikson Zaharias, 1941
2. Racine Belles roster of players, 1943
3. Racine Belles team photographs for each year (players identified on most), 1944-1948, 1950
4. Loose photographs from a scrapbook of English and her Racine teammates, 1944, 1946, 1950
5. Well-known AAGPBL image of English with color added, c. 1944
6. Photographs of English while playing for Racine, c. 1945
7. News clipping of English making the first AAGPBL all-star game, 1946
8. "All American Girls Baseball League 1947," contains 1946 league stats and all-time records, and photographs of all stars that includes English, 1947
9. Maddy English's AAGPBL contract for 1947, 1947
10. Detailed letters from English while on a AAGPBL touring trip in Havana, Cuba to her parents in Everett, MA, May 1947
11. Bulletin to AAGPBL players about the Florida Winter League, Oct. 6, 1947

12. Bulletin to AAGPBL players announcing a Mexican Tour, Oct. 14, 1947; Bulletin to AAGPBL players announcing the cancellation of the Mexican Tour, includes itinerary for a South American Trip, Oct. 23, 1947
13. Team and group photos of AAGPBL touring trip to Havana, Cuba, 1947
14. AAGPBL program for tour in Cuba and a menu, 1947
15. Non-baseball photos from AAGPBL touring trip to Havana, Cuba (includes photos of May Day Celebration), 1947
16. Maquette etching of Maddy English in comic book style and copies newsprint where it was used, 1947
17. Documents pertaining to transportation of English to AAGPBL spring training, 1948, 1950
18. AAGPBL card listing teams in the league and a photograph of English in card, 1948; photograph of English holding the card, 1987
19. AAGPBL ticket stub, English's player stadium entry card, and Racine game schedules, 1949-1950
20. Two telegrams, one from 1948 explaining English was being fined \$10 for "unbecoming conduct to umpire"; one from 1950 explaining she was being fined \$10 for pushing an umpire; and a letter probably written by a teammate from 1950 mocking the "cruelty of umpires" and how English should treat them, 1948, 1950
21. Maddy English baseball card, c. 1989

### **Subseries 2: The National Girls Baseball League (NGBL) and Other Leagues, 1951-1958**

22. English's pay/tax information for playing for the Parichy Bloomer Girls, 1951
23. Correspondence and contracts about lifting the ban on those who left the AAGPBL for the "Chicago League", the NGBL, including English, Joanne Winter, and Sophie Kurys, Jan.-April 1952
24. Correspondence and contract for English for the Chicago Music Maids of the NGBL, April 1952
25. Photographs of English while playing for the Chicago Music Maids of the NGBL; includes photo of English, Winter, Kurys, Trezza, and Perlick, 1952
26. Two International Girls Baseball League, Inc. contracts for English, 1952-1953
27. Photographs of English while playing for the Parichy Bloomer Girls, 1953
28. "National Soft Ball Congress of America" general rules and more, 1954
29. Letter to English about her request for reinstatement to amateur status, Jan. 12, 1956
30. Application for team registration for the Caggiano All Star Softball Club (Lynn, MA) with English as manager, 1958
31. Photographs of Caggiano All Star Team featuring English, 1958

### **Subseries 3: AAGPBL Ephemera, 1943-1950**

#### **Box 3 Folder**

1. Sheet music for "The Belles March (Dedicated to the Racine team of the All American Girls Professional Soft Ball League)," by Dr. J.M. Albino, c. 1944
2. Three AAGPBL game programs, 1943, c. 1944, 1950

3. "All-American Girls Soft Ball League Official Playing Rules," cover inscribed and signed by ten AAGPBL players, c. 1943
4. AAGPBL Rockford Girls' Professional Ball Club Official Program, 1944
5. "An Ode to the Racine 'Belles'" by player Anna Mae Hutchinson, undated
6. Merry Christmas foldout picture booklet sent by Racine Belles president to English, 1945
7. Merry Christmas foldout picture booklet sent by Racine Belles president to English, 1946
8. Three "Tops in Girls Sports" advertising programs for the AAGPBL with Maddy English on one cover, 1946-1948
9. Souvenir program for the AAGPBL, 1947
10. Official 1950 AAGPBL schedule, 1950
11. Racine Belles yearbook, 1944
12. Racine Belles yearbook, 1945
13. Racine Belles yearbook, 1946
14. Racine Belles yearbook, 1947
15. Racine Belles yearbook, 1948
16. Racine Belles yearbook, 1949
17. "1948 Major League Baseball Facts and Figures," back section and back page dedicated to AAGPBL, 1948

#### **Subseries 4: AAGPBL Artifacts, 1940s**

##### **Box 4**

(box designed with images and other material pertaining to Maddy English)

- Maddy English's game worn baseball cleats
- Maddy English's game used baseball glove and ball

##### **Box 5**

- Maddy English's original game worn Racine Belles baseball hat

##### **Textile Storage**

- Maddy English's original game worn Racine Belles uniform, number 16 on back, with belt

#### **Series 2: AAGPBL Post-1982, 1982-2002, undated**

##### **Box 6**

##### **Folder**

1. First AAGPBL reunion program, signed by keynote speaker Patty Berg, 1982
2. Letter from Betty "Mae" Trezza to English, includes write-ups on Trezza and the AAGPBL, 1988
3. Correspondence, ephemera, and scheduling material for AAGPBL events at Cooperstown Baseball Hall of Fame, 1988, 2002
4. AAGPBL reunion program, signed by seven players, 1991
5. League reunion photographs, 1993, 2000

6. Poem from Joanne Winter to Maddy English, 1995
7. Letter from Sophie Kurys to Maddy English about Joanne Winter's memorial service, includes memorial program and news clipping, October 1996
8. "The Legendary Ladies of Baseball" event in California; includes photograph of players and etchings of Dottie Kamenshek, Marge Wenzell, Peppa Davis, and Lefty Hohlmayer, 1994
9. Write-ups by Jim Sargent of AAGPBL players Helen "Gig" Smith and Jean Faut, 1996
10. Publications containing write-ups by Jim Sargent on AAGPBL players Sophie Kurys and Edie (Perlick) Keating, 1997
11. Signed photograph of Sophie Kurys, undated
12. Signed photograph and baseball card by Helen "Nickie" Fox to English, undated
13. Photograph of English signed by Bobby Doerr of the Boston Red Sox, undated
14. Photograph of AAGPBL exhibit at Cooperstown, undated
15. "A League of Their Own" publicity photos of Geena Davis and Madonna, 1992

### **Series 3: Personal Material (mostly non-AAGPBL), 1944-2003**

#### **Box 7**

##### **Folder**

1. English's diplomas from Boston University and varsity letter certificates from the Posse School Athletic Association, 1944-1946, 1957-1958, 1962
2. English's transcripts from the Baroness Rose Posse School of Physical Education and Physiotherapy, Inc., 1944-1947
3. Photographs of English with Johnny Bench, Joe Morgan (manager), Dave Cowens, Mary Pratt, etc., 1958, 1993-1994, undated
4. Reproduced photo of many Hall of Fame MLB players as older men, includes Jimmy Foxx and Mickey Cochrane, c. 1960
5. Program and photos – The E Club of Everett, Ninth Annual Scholarship and Awards Dinner, 1981
6. News clipping and photograph of English, Pat Courtney, Mary Pratt, and Pat Brown at a Red Sox ceremony honoring their induction into the Baseball Hall of Fame, 1990
7. Women's Sports Foundation certificate and photograph, 1990
8. "Fortune 50" newsletter containing write-up of English, 1993
9. Letter and ephemera from Massachusetts Archives and Commonwealth Museum that involved English, 1993
10. Maddy English and the New England Sports Museum, 1993
11. Letters from a 4<sup>th</sup> grade class to English, 1997
12. Boston University Hall of Fame program, Maddy English inducted, 1997
13. Photograph of English and letter from the Women's Sports Fund Awards Dinner and New Fund's Women's Sports Award Reception, 1998
14. Boston University correspondence, 1999
15. Brochure and information on the naming of the Madeline English School, 2003



**Series 4: Oversize Material and Media, 1943-1945, 1987-2000, undated****Oversized Material****Box 8****Folder**

1. Bud Pelosi drawing/maquette of Maddy English, "Everett's Contribution to Professional Softball," and a newspaper containing the drawing and write up of English, maquette undated, newspaper 1992
2. Drawing of Maddy English in Music Maids uniform, undated
3. Reproduction photograph of English (on foam board) used for AAGPBL promotion, undated
4. Poster advertising celebrity softball game, Ventura N.H.L. All Stars vs. Melrose Rames, undated
5. Cooperstown poster containing four AAGPBL autographs, 1988
6. Newspapers and clippings containing articles on either Maddy English, the AAGPBL, or the movie *A League of Their Own*, 1943-1945, 1987-1998

**Audio and Video Media****Box 9**

- VHS – *When Diamonds Were a Girl's Best Friend* directed by J. Taylor
- VHS – AAGPBL reunion at Myrtle Beach, 1997
- VHS – Maddy English and Mary Pratt interview, March 1997
- VHS – AAGPBL, 2 parts, June 10, 1997
- VHS – Live on Tape, produced by Ron Cox, contains segments with Maddy English, August 20, 1996
- VHS – Barnes & Noble Autograph Signing by Sophie 'The Flash' Kurys, Betty "Moe" Trezza and Maddy English, in Wisconsin, August 27, 2000
- VHS – Maddy English and Mary Pratt interview, January 21, 1997
- VHS – AAGPBL at Cooperstown, Nov. 3-5, 1988 (Copy for Maddy English from Jo Winter, March 1989), 1988
- VHS – Interviews with Maddy English and Mary Pratt; AAGPBL documentary, 1993
- Cassette Tapes – interview with Maddy English from WEEI Boston in two parts on two tapes, undated