

of all the ballpark's nooks and crannies.

At one time, Cardines Field was in danger of being torn down to be replaced by, of all things, a parking lot. Fortunately, the city came to its senses. Ron MacDonald organized the "Friends of Cardines Foundation" to spare the old park from extinction. With every year, there's another improvement. A lighting system, a new concession stand, a bathroom, bleachers, and a locker room have recently been added.

Baseball Backgrounder

The southern Rhode Island city is known for its sports. The city's most famous sporting event was the America's Cup. The Britannia silver metal trophy is emblematic of yachting greatness. From 1930 until 1983, the New York Yacht Club reigned over its home port, Newport. It seemed that the United States' 130-year reign of sailing supremacy would never end. But in 1983, *Australia II* took the America's Cup, defeating *Liberty*. The United States has subsequently retaken the cup, but the great competition has never returned to Newport.

Despite the loss, Newport still has a sporting life. The Newport Casino is the home of the Tennis Hall of Fame and an annual professional tournament. Recently, the Newport Country Club hosted the annual United States Open

Ladies Golf Tournament. And, of course, there's always world-class polo. There's nothing like spending a sunny Sunday afternoon at the polo matches and enjoying a scrumptious cucumber sandwich or two. Matches take place at the Glen Farm, which is six miles north of downtown Newport. Teams from all over the world come to town to play polo.

For more pedestrian tastes, there's always been baseball. Like many other New England communities, Newport has a rich baseball tradition. The first organized games were played at Morton Park and Freebody Park. At the turn of the century, Newport had a franchise in the old New England league. Occasionally, major-league teams would take a short detour to play a game for local fans. The city was a little too small and the leisure activities too diverse to support minor-league baseball.

Newport has one of the oldest amateur baseball leagues in the country, the George L. Donnelly Sunset League. Since opening day in 1919, local men have been getting together to play some good old-fashioned hardball at Cardines Field. During World War II, many former major leaguers played in the Sunset League. Bob Feller, Phil Rizzuto, and Yogi Berra are some the Sunset League's most prominent alumni. Games between the Twilight League's All-Stars and famous Negro League teams, like the Baltimore Elite Giants, Boston Royal

About Newport

Newport has an important place in United States history. It was originally founded as a refuge from religious intolerance. Just three years after Portsmouth's founding, a group led by William Coddington and Nicholas Eaton decided to strike out on their own and move south to the tip of Aquidneck Island. They founded a small fishing and farming village at present-day Newport.

The city has always had a close connection with the United States Navy. Besides being the former residence of Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry, it has been a port-of-call for the Atlantic and the home of the U.S. Naval War College

On September 12, 1953, Newport hosted what many have considered the social event of the century—the wedding of John Fitzgerald Kennedy and Jacqueline Bouvier. Kennedy lived at Hammersmith Farm, and the couple was married in St. Mary's Church. Newport has another presidential claim: Dwight Eisenhower's "summer White House" was at Fort Adams.

[back to top](#)