Lloyd, John Henry

(b. April 15/25, 1884, Palatka, Fla., U.S.--d. March 19, 1964/65, Atlantic City, N.J.), American baseball player and manager in the Negro leagues, considered one of the greatest shortstops in the game.

Lloyd's well-traveled Negro league career began in 1905, when he was a catcher for the Macon Acmes. He played second base for the Cuban X-Giants the following year. For the bulk of his career, Lloyd played shortstop and was often compared to Honus Wagner, the star shortstop of the Pittsburgh Pirates of Major League Baseball.

Later in his career, Lloyd moved back to second base and then to first base. Although he played during the deadball era of baseball, when home runs were rare, he was one of the best long-ball hitters of the day. Additionally, he was a skilled bunter, had good bat control, and could run the bases well. Playing winter baseball in Cuba, Lloyd and his Havana Reds excelled against the Detroit Tigers and the Philadelphia Athletics of the major leagues. In 1910 he batted .500 against the Tigers in 12 games.

Lloyd became a player-manager in 1911, often staying only one season with a team. With the New York Lincoln Giants in 1930, he played in the first Negro league game at Yankee Stadium in New York City against the Baltimore Black Sox. During his career Lloyd played with about a dozen Negro league teams, including the Brooklyn Royal Giants, the Philadelphia Hilldales, and the Atlantic City Bacharach Giants. The left-handed hitter, who was called "Pop" in his later years, finished with a Negro league batting average of about .350. In Cuba, where he was known as el Cuchara ("the Shovel"), he hit over .320.

Lloyd retired to Atlantic City, N.J., where he was active in Little League baseball. In 1949 the city named a baseball stadium for him. Lloyd was posthumously inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1977.