The Detroit Stars were founded in 1919 by Tenny Blount with the help of Rube Foster, owner and manager of the Chicago American Giants. The team immediately established themselves as one of the most powerful teams in the West, and would continue to be a force through its active years.

In 1920, the Stars became a charter member of the Negro National League (NNL). The mainstays of the Detroit Stars during the 1920s were Hall of Fame center fielder Norman “Turkey” Stearnes, who ranks among the all-time Negro league leaders in nearly every batting category; Hall of Fame pitcher Andy Cooper, a workhorse southpaw; pitcher Bill Holland; and first baseman Wesley, who led the league in home runs twice and batting average once.

After the collapse of the Negro National League at the end of 1931, the original Stars baseball team disbanded. They were replaced in 1932 by the Detroit Wolves of the East–West League.