Sport Business in the 1960s

the expansion of MLB and the challenges of the AFL and the ABA

Tuesday, March 6, 2012
Major League Baseball

- In 1953, St. Louis was the southernmost and westernmost team in MLB.
- In 1958, the Brooklyn Dodgers moved to Los Angeles and the New York Giants moved to San Francisco.
Major League Baseball

- Between 1960 and 1969 MLB grew from 16 to 26 teams and attendance increased from 19 million to 29 million.

- For most of the 1960s Americans had access to one weekly televised game (Saturday Game of the Week).
American Football League

- American Football League was founded in 1960 and signed half of NFL first round draft picks
- All 10 AFL teams joined 16 teams in NFL with Pittsburgh, Cleveland, and Baltimore moving to new AFC
- AFL-NFL Championship was held Jan. 1967 (later renamed Super Bowl I).
- New York Jets upset of Baltimore Colts in January 1969 established credibility of AFL.
American Football League Innovations

- Cooperative television contract in which revenues were shared by all teams.
- Use of stadium clock for official time
- Use of two-point conversions (introduced in colleges in 1950s)
- More colorful uniforms
American Basketball Association

- The American Basketball Association was founded in 1967
American Basketball Association
Innovations

- Use of three-point baskets
- Use of multi-colored basketballs
- Introduction of the slam dunk contest
- Flashy play (Julius “Dr. J.” Irving and George “Ice Man” Gervin)
Wide World of Sports

- ABC introduced Wide World of Sports hosted by Jim McKay in 1961.

- Originally a weekly 90-minute show, it highlighted sports from around the world and less well known sports. precursor to ESPN, which was founded in 1976.