

Kinmundy Little League Ball Park

By Wilma Vandever

My husband, Herbert Vandever, enjoyed sports and was always interested in working with the youth so decided to investigate to see if he could start a Little League ball club which consisted of four or five teams. I can't remember which. We named them Red – White – Blue –Green. They wore tee shirts of their team's color.

Using our tractor and other machinery, we made a ball diamond at the Grade School at the east edge of town. He was the manager and umpire, and I was the scorekeeper. The moles kept making tunnels under the ground ruining the ball diamond. He spent several days around 11:00 o'clock quietly sitting on a folding chair as that's when they would make their tunnels searching for grub worms. When they'd start making their tunnels, he'd quietly slip up and shove a spade in the ground behind them and dig them out. When they got in the daylight, they couldn't see and were easy to catch. Lois Alderson, one of the cooks at the Grade School, kept wondering what he was doing out in the middle of the field sitting on a chair not moving—just sitting there. It probably did look odd to see a farmer in the middle of the morning sitting quietly on a folding chair as though he didn't have a worry in the world. When she saw him, she asked what he was doing. Said curiosity got the best of her.

We played on that diamond a few years. The Little League ball games were so successful it was decided to make a bigger and nicer one west of town along Route 37.

Herbert spent many a day and many a week using our tractor, disk, harrow, drag and bush hog mower making a smooth and level ball diamond, also keeping the outfield mowed all summer. He used the tractor posthole digger digging all the holes for the light poles and setting the poles in the ground. He then had the local welder, Don Rogerson, make a long iron rod around 40 feet or longer with a bucket on the end which we attached to the front of the tractor. Jim Davis climbed into the bucket, the one man brave enough to do so. Herbert, on the tractor, lifted Jim up to each pole and put light bulbs into each socket. Cecil Harvey also helped a lot, as did a few others.

Instead of it being just the boys of Kinmundy, like at the first ball diamond east of town, different teams from surrounding towns played against the Kinmundy boys. Herbert was also manager and umpire at the new diamond. When necessary, he'd use the tractor and drag to smooth the diamond again.

He thoroughly enjoyed working with the youth teaching them good sportsmanship whether they won or lost. The boys all respected him and were so interested in learning how to get along with everyone while enjoying a good clean sport. He loved each one in their different abilities while watching them grow. He was the manager for several years.

The town stood behind the boys cheering them on. We always had a good turn out at each game, and everyone enjoyed watching and visiting with one another.