

Varsity Baseball Participants of Putnam County

Nearly 6,000 and Still Counting!

There are over are nearly 6,000 boys that have participated in a varsity baseball game in the history of high school baseball in Putnam County. The names of these players were gathered from several sources - newspapers, high school yearbooks, scorebooks, statistical sheets and the memories of former players.

If a player was mentioned in a preseason newspaper article or a report about a game, he was included. It was easier to find players if the school had a local newspaper. Newspapers that covered their local schools were the Putnam County Vidette, the Continental News-Review, the Leipsic Free Press the Pandora Times, the Gilboa Gazette and the Western County News. Fort Jennings, Ottoville and Miller City did not have a local paper. The Putnam County Sentinel and the Putnam County Gazette did a good job of covering the entire county plus the Ottawa teams.

High school yearbooks were very helpful. I was able to determine many players and years played by this method. Leipsic's first yearbook was in 1911, Columbus Grove's in 1915 and Pandora's in 1921. However, there were only a few yearbooks to be found until 1940. From that year on, more and more yearbooks could be found. Most of them can be found at the local school or the Putnam County Library from the early 1950's to the present.

Scorebooks and statistical sheets were nonexistent previous to 1965. Each year this source information is getting better and being kept at the school for future reference.

I asked through the various Putnam County newspapers for former players to contact me with names and years played. I did hear from a few players, but not nearly as many as I hoped for.

Thus, previous to the 1960's, if a team was not in a yearbook or a newspaper article, their names are lost.

If players are missing, please contact me and I will add them to the compiled names.

There were a few unique features to this project. A player's name was often spelled differently from one year to the next. I found one sir name spelled six different ways: Schumaker, Schumacher, Schomaeker, Schomaker, Shumaker and Shoemaeker. Thus, it is very possible that I have misspelled your name. In contrast to this problem, Schroeder may be pronounced with a long O or A, but it was always spelled the same. It also was the most popular name as over 150 Schroeder boys have played varsity baseball. The most common first name was Robert, over 180 players. The longest sir name belongs to Paul Schwartzengraber who graduated from Continental in 1958. It was also interesting that a few sir names were almost exclusively identified with certain schools; for example, Altenburger, VonSossan and VonLehmden to Fort Jennings, Wannemacher and Schlagbaum to Ottoville and Schimmoeller to both.

I also wanted to determine the graduation year of the players. From the 1970's to the present, this was not a problem. However, it was unusual for a boy to finish high school in the earlier years just as it is very unusual for a boy not to graduate from high school today. If a name is followed by ***, the year stands for the probable senior year of the player, not necessarily the graduation year or the year played.

The numbers of schools have changed dramatically over the years due to consolidation. Thus, some players played for one school and finished their careers at the consolidated school. For example, Blanchard and Pandora consolidated in 1952 to form Pandora-Gilboa. Thus, a player may have played three years for Blanchard and one year at Pandora-Gilboa. I have identified these situations so that you can tell if a player played for two schools.