

Shelbyville Dragon Baseball

The local history of the sport.

The beginning of the twentieth century brought many changes to the United States along with many new traditions and pastimes. One pastime that is still enjoyed today by many Americans is baseball. And even though baseball has been around for over 100 years, the game is still the same - nine men on the field dressed the same in uniform, and wearing a glove to catch a baseball. Every team has a coach and every game has an umpire.



Shelbyville's baseball origin dates back to late 1948 when the high school's student body consisted of approximately 160 students and 20 boys played the game. Mr. H.J. Johnson, the high school principal, and Coach E.C. Crisp coached Shelbyville's first team. On game day after lunch, high school students and teachers rode buses to Kaufman Field, a cow pasture owned by Mr. George Kaufman located five miles from the school. The baseball team carried shovels to clean up the manure off the field, and when a batter hit a long foul ball down the right field line, it landed in a swampy pond. Students and teachers sat on the ground and cheered for the Dragons, considering they used Mr. Kaufman's old water well as the concession stand. School spirit was at an all-time high. The Dragons continued to play baseball like this until 1961 when the team, coached by Bobby Collins, advanced to the Area Tournament, which at

that time was the highest place a team could advance.

Years later, in 1984-85, the Shelbyville Dragons, coached by Bill Cummings, began to play baseball for U.I.L. competition. Strict rules had to be observed and records had to be kept accurately in order to remain an eligible team. The Dragons had a rocky start as they did not win a single game that year. The next year the Dragons improved their record to 12-12 but did not win district.

In 1987, the Dragons, coached by Jerry Reed, went 18-7 that year and advanced to Area in the district and BI-district playoffs despite the fact that the team had to practice in a pasture in East Liberty community seven miles from Shelbyville. In 1988 the Dragons again coached by Jerry Reed and assisted by Michael Floyd won 4-1 against Pottsville in the Semi-Finals of the State Tournament and then won 11-1 against Blanco in the Finals to win the state title. That year, they dominated their district and season with a season record of 25 - 7. Coach Reed was named 22A Coach of the Year both years.

The community, supporting the Dragons tremendously, attended out-of-town games and putting up posters that said "All the way to state in 88". This really encouraged the players and evidently helped inspire the team to victory. Then, in 1989, the Dragons made the trip to State playoffs again and took 2nd place. Joe Daw, who played pitcher, set two state records during the playoff games that year. He set the record for most strikeouts (17) and most homeruns in a state playoff game (1). He



still holds those records today. In 1990, 1991, and 1992 (coached by Skip Humphrey), the Dragons were district champs and advanced to Regional, but all three years they were defeated.



Brad Hughes, Matt Matthews, Brent Hughes, Mickey Miller, Ronnie Belrose, Tommy Stansberry, Chris Cox, Michael Taylor, Joe Daw, Jim Daw, Richard Grissom, Chris Ratcliff, and Brian Powell.
