

've lived in the shadow of the KU goal posts at 947% Illinois since I was one year old in 1907.

The first gridiron for KU was at 1400 Mass. St. in a large pasture now the location of the Central Junior High. The first game played there was in 1890 with Baker U. of Baldwin, and KU lost 9 to 22.

A better place was needed to play and closer to the University and a man by the name of McCock deeded 12% acres to KU for a field directly north, down the hill from Mt. Oread. McCock field was bounded on the west by Maine Street, on the east by Illinois, with Alabama hitting in the center.

Down through the years of football played at McCock Field there had been many serious

injuries to players and two fatalities. One happened on the final play of the game between KU and Doane College of Crete, Neb., on November 14, 1896.

The KU fullback crashed over the goal line for a touchdown and was tackled by Bert Serf of Doane and in the collision, Serf was knocked over backward, fell on his head and never moved again. He had suffered a brain concussion and died that night at the Eldridge Hotel where the team was staying.

His body was prepared for burial and on Sunday evening the Doane team walked slowly behind the horse-drawn hearse as it headed down east on 7th St. toward the

Santa Fe Depot. Had Serf been wearing a modern day helmet, he would probably have been dazed. But 80 years ago the helmet consisted of soft leather with an inside padded cushion.

The other athlete fatality at McCock Field was on May 18, 1920 and the writer was there at age 13. The death was the result of a KU baseball player colliding with a 16-pound shotput ball. It hit him directly over the heart as he was chasing a foul ball during a baseball game. Hubert C. Wesley of Bancroft, Ks. was the victim. I still can vividly recall when the shot hit him--it sounded like someone breaking an orange crate with a large hammer. He was hit directly over the heart, smashing the rib cage, and death was instant.

Personnel now include Ed Dutton,



# Right over the plate-

The first time I heard of beep baseball was in early March 1976. I was very much interested since I used to play ball when I was a kid, before I was blinded in Korea. I was listening to a magazine called Feeling Sports, when mention was made about beep baseball. I contacted Sherry Hokansen, who was in charge of the Division of the Handicapped in the library, and asked her to get me more information on beep baseball. She came through with all kinds of facts and told me to make contact with the Telephone Pioneers in my community since they were the equipment suppliers. I contacted them and was on my way to organize a team.

I started calling around in town to find out who lived here that was blind, and finally came up with a couple of names. My first contact was Gary Marshall, who had played professional ball with the Houston Astro's farm system 11 years ago and then was in an automobile accident and lost all his vision He was hesitant about the idea but said that he would give it a try. I then contacted Chuck Hallenback, a Psychology professor at the University of Kansas, and he said that he was not sports-minded, but would give it a try. I contacted others, but not much luck so we decided to just go out and practice and maybe get some sighted players and put blindfolds on them. Ed Dutton, one of my instructors here at K.U. said that he would help as a player assistant and we also got Harlin Harber to work with us. We got KLWN to make announcements that we had a team forming and that we needed players and we also got some front page coverage by the Journal World newspaper, which eventually went nationwide. I received a phone call from Jesse Layton, who said that he was blind and that he was 55 years old and that he would like to try out for the team and I then told him he was already on the team. He said that he did not know if he could be good at it, but I said that we wanted him to be on our team.

We had a team meeting in April and there were five blind persons and three sighted persons. We were in business. In the beginning, it was very frustrating for everyone. Hitting and

fielding were both very difficult but we kept practicing and got better. Gary Marshall would go home and have his wife, Fran, pitch to him in order for him to get better with hitting and after a while he really became very good in both hitting and fielding. Jesse bought himself a ball and would stand in his yard and throw it up on the roof, pick up a bat, and try to hit it when it came off the roof. He did the same thing with fielding. I felt that this kind of desire was bound to make us a good team. It was decided at the meeting that we would be called the Roadrunners.

Our first major game was to be held on July 4th as part of the Bicentennial festival at South Park. We had between 200 and 250 spectators watching the game, which showed us that the local interest was there. We played that game against the Lawrence F.O.P. and we lost six to five. It was a close game but it was a good game. We lost our second game to the Douglas County Amateur Club by a score of twelve to ten. We were still in good hopes that we would win a game. We then played the Breakfast Optimists and we won that game by a score of fifteen to one and we won every game after that for the rest of the season. We even won our rematches with the F.O.P. and the amateur radio club.

We joined the National Beep Baseball Association in late July and were selected as an alternate team for the National Invitational Tournament which was

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played at St. Paul, Minnesota, in September. There was one of the teams that was undecided on whether or not they would be able to attend, but they finally felt that they could afford it and went. Gary and I went to the tournament for two reasons. First, to invite the tournament here to Lawrence next year, and second was to evaluate our own team by watching others play the game. We were successful in both. We felt that we were somewhat competitive but were glad to have one more year to prove ourselves. We went with letters of support from our town and were accepted as the site for next year's tournament. We are now in the process of raising about \$7,500 for the tournament but feel that we will not have much of a problem in doing it because our town is really behind us completely.

At the tournament we found out that there were other teams with the same name as ours and since we were entered into the association we decided to change our team name. The new name decided on was Quantrill's Raiders, since that name best represents our town and there is no likelihood of anyone else using that name within the association.

We now have six blind persons on our team and at least one or two more possibilities as well as three sighted players along with our pitcher, and also our catcher.

the manager, who is an associate professor in Social Welfare here at K.U. and also wants to be coach for the San Francisco '49ers someday, Tom Allison, who is our pitcher, used to play for the Washington Redskins until his knees went out, Louis Bixeman, catcher and fielder when needed, is a fifth grade teacher, and Dennis Quinn, who is a Captain in the army, studying the Russian language here at the University, is another one of our sighted substitute players. Our blind players include Gary Marshall who has a degree in Social Welfare and in teaching, Dr. Charles Hallenbach, who is in the Psychology department at K.U. and says this is his most favorite team since this is the only team he has ever played on. Jesse Layton, who is employed at Kresges, running the cafeteria, Joe Guiterrez, who is a student at K.U. and who, while coming to practice one day, ran into a parked car, was taken to the hospital for stitches, asked the doctor to please hurry because he had to make it to ball practice. The doctor advised him to forget it for that day. Tammy Johnson, who is 17, recently joined our team and is thoroughly enjoying herself and myself, Charles V. Vassallo, who is the off-field captain and spokesman for the team, who is having one heck of a good time with the whole thing.





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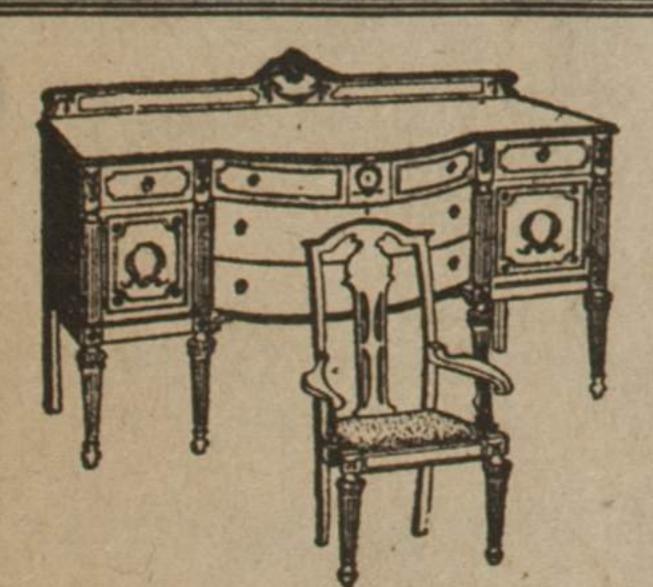
Saturday, January 22, 1977 Lawrence High School 9:30-5:30

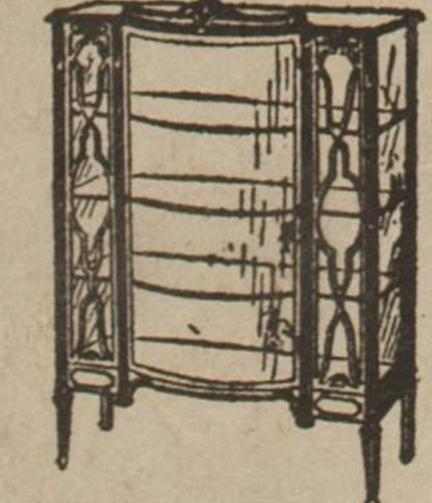
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