



Clarence R. Brandt Class of 2023

Clarence was raised on a dairy farm in Durham, CA, along with five brothers and two sisters. He attended Durham High School where he excelled in football and baseball. Upon graduation he was contacted by the Sacramento Solons, a Triple A team and member of the Pacific Coast League, to pitch for them. He was also offered a scholarship to play football at Oregon State University, but his father declined for him, saying he was needed on the farm to pitch hay and milk cows.

He started his career as a railroad carman, as the Sacramento Northern Railroad needed a pitcher for their baseball team. He later was employed by the Western Pacific Railroad, also pitching for them and relocating to Oroville in 1941. In Oroville, he played on softball teams and in 1948, became player/coach for the Oroville semi-pro Oroville Nuggets. He also coached youth sports in Oroville and recruited a group of young boys to compete in a recreation league.

Clarence loved kids and felt that through sports, he could help them learn lessons that would lead them to happier and more productive lives. With a calm, yet commanding voice, he demanded and received respect from his players and became known as Mr. Brandt or Mr. B.

Gary Nolan, Oroville's most successful Major League Baseball player, says that his most fun baseball days came from his days playing with Mr. Brandt and his beloved Indian Little League team. Other Oroville boys who, under the guidance of Clarence, went on to play professional baseball were Kevin Brown, Dave Hudgens, Jim Lauer, Stephen Campbell and Clarence's grandson Nick Brandt. Players who returned to Oroville to coach were Jim Lauer and Scott Johnson.

In the early 1950's, Clarence, along with Sheriff Larry Gillick, Bob Dugger and Jim Cluff, were the key coaches behind the formation of Oroville Little League. Painted on the back of the bleachers at the ball park on Wyandotte Avenue was ***"From the small acorn the mighty oak grows"***. Clarence spent 43 years volunteering his time to Oroville Little League. Over the years the league produced all-star teams that went to regional playoffs in three of the first five years and came within one game of making it to the World Series in Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

Specific accomplishments of Clarence include:

- 1934-40, played in the Chico Twilight Baseball League.
- 1956, named Good Neighbor of the Year by Oroville JC's, commending him for years of unpaid service to the community.
- 1956, Named Man of the Year by the Oroville Chamber of Commerce for doing more than anyone, ***"to develop and foster our overall recreation programs than any other non-professional person in the community."***
- 1989, Inducted into the Northern California Old Timers Sports Association Hall of Fame.
- Member of the Ten Gallon Club for donating blood during World War II. His blood was used to save the life of a serviceman on Iwo Jima. An article and photograph appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle.
- Served 12 years on the Board of Directors, Feather River Recreation and Parks District.
- Served as Cub Scout Troop Master, Grange member, and Railway Carman's Union member.
- Transported Oroville High School baseball players to away games, volunteering his time for several years, driving the school bus.
- Coached Oroville's Catholic Youth Organization basketball team that played teams from Gridley, Chico and Sacramento.

Today, the Little League Field at 3rd and Mitchell Streets is named Brandt Field in honor of Clarence Brandt!

Clarence passed away on November 17, 2001 at age 88. He and Louise, his wife of 67 years, had four children, five grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren, each of who went through Oroville High School. His great-grandson Tyler is currently a teacher and coach at Las Plumas High School.