

Talking about Cecil and Virgil got me to thinking about more of my childhood. Maybe a lot of you didn't know that Uncle Dee was as close to a professional baseball player we ever had in Coalfire, to the best of my knowledge anyway. He was a darn good pitcher and Cecil and I caught him, mainly because there was no one else around stupid enough to try. He had a knuckle ball that jumped worse than a Mexican jumping bean. I mean really. It would just float and while floating it moved up and down. We would get our glove positioned to catch the ball and about the time it got to your glove it would jump again and time and time again it went over my glove and hit me in the forehead. I tried for years to emulate his knuckle ball and even thought he showed Cecil and me how it throw it, we never mastered it. I don't know about Cecil, but over the years I have thrown maybe three knuckle ball that Uncle Dee would have been proud of.... Anyway, the men were playing one afternoon over in a pasture just east of Mr. Mcshan's mansion, I think it is grown up now, but at the time folks would gather over there to make a Saturday or Sunday afternoon of baseball. Once, Uncle Dee was on third in a close game. The batter hit a ball to shallow left, Uncle Dee tagged and was on his way home and he could run pretty fast. Well, the fielder threw the ball hard to the catcher, but Uncle Dee's head got in the way. It caught Uncle Dee in the back of the head. He made a couple of more steps after it hit him and then he scored, sliding head first into home. I don't remember who won the game and I don't remember anyone else who was playing, but in my mind's eye, I can still see Uncle Dee making that slide into home plate....He was the real deal...A great Uncle....You know, I really did have a good childhood thanks to a bunch of great folks that cared about children, and invested a lot of time in them...We had no money, but we certainly were not poor....I think several of you will agree with me on that...[1](#)

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