

All-star game all knotted up

Participants' opinions vary on management of the local all-star game.

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Windsor's Luke Keeney, left, slides safely back into first as Glen Rock's Dan Rhodes pulls in the throw Saturday. (Daily Record/Sunday News - Kate Penn)

Mount Wolf pitcher Adam "Hornet" Hoff wasn't attempting to be clairvoyant Saturday night when he suggested the outcome of the annual townball all-star game should mean something significant.

"Why not follow what Major League Baseball does, and give the winning league home-field advantage in the county championship series," Hoff said, a good hour before the 7:05 p.m. start.

"That's a good idea," seconded Terry Golden, Jacobus' manager. "Are you sure Hornet came up with it?"

Sure enough, 3 hours and 37 minutes later - as the Central and Susquehanna League all-stars failed to break a 6-6 tie - the game was called after the 12th inning because of curfew regulations at Red Lion's Horn Field. Horn Field prohibits the start of a new



Windsor's Nate Neumann gets ready to tag out Southern's Matt Austin during the Central League vs. Susquehanna League All-Star game at Horn Field. The game ended in a 6-6 tie. (Daily Record/Sunday News - Kate Penn)

inning after 10:45 p.m.

It was 10:42 p.m. when the game ended after the Susquehanna Leaguers failed to score in the bottom of the frame.

Hoff's answer was originally in response to the question: Does the townball all-star game have the same meaning today as it did a generation ago?

In recent seasons, it seems more and more players selected for the game use the break as a time to rest or get away - and choose not to participate.

Despite the perception, a universal response came back from the players and coaches who were in attendance Saturday night: Yes, it is still an honor to be named, and no, the game has not lost its luster.

Jason Seitz of Hallam was appearing in his ninth straight all-star game. "It's an honor to be here, and I love it," Seitz said. "I'm having a good enough year to be voted on. And I love this kind of stuff.

"I hear some guys had backed out this year, but like I said, I live for this, and a lot of the guys here do, too, and I don't think it's diminished at all."

It was big day for Seitz's Hallam teammate, Phil Jeanmenne, who was named to his sixth squad.

"Today's my 44th birthday," Jeanmenne said. "I was planning on having a party, but I decided to have it here with my summertime friends. You're not going to diminish the quality of the baseball because a few of the bigger names aren't here."

Certainly no one was more honored to be a part of Saturday night's festivities than Brad Chambers, the former Mount Wolf, York Yankees and York Township manager.

Despite being a two-time winner of the Colonial Tournament as a skipper (1998 Yankees, 2006 Wolves), Chambers found himself on the outside looking in after Mount Wolf hired local legend Keith Wentz to run the club after last season.

Chambers was invited by Glen Rock manager Kim McCullough, the Central League manager, to be an assistant coach.

"It means very much to me," Chambers said. "When Kim became the manager, the first thing he did was call me." But Chambers served up some contradictory thoughts on the relevancy of the all-star game today.

"It's surprising because Kim's been on the phone all week, begging guys to play and fill spots," Chambers said. "Guys who were voted on the team backed out, and Kim's scrounging for guys, and that's not the way it should be. If you're playing in the league, you should be honored to be on an all-star team. That's just the way I feel."

The way the two leagues fought on the diamond, you'd have to find in favor of Chambers' assessment. Both teams played to exhaustion, and both played to win. Tim Frisch of Glen Rock pitched four scoreless innings. Jimi Nomikos of Conrads took one on the shin for the Susquehanna Leaguers. So did teammate Nick Root, who caught a pitch on the ankle.

There were cuts, bumps and bruises.

"Can't fault my players," a tired McCullough said after the marathon evening concluded with no result. "They played their hearts out."