

Local baseball leagues trying to fill in blanks for missing records

COLUMN By LARRY A. HICKS *The York Dispatch*
Article Last Updated: 09/06/2007 07:02:10 AM EDT

At the conclusion of the Susquehanna Baseball League season, some unknown fan took it upon himself (or herself) to post a list on the York Township team's Web site regarding all of the league's regular-season champions.

It's an interesting list.

But it was incomplete by nine seasons. The contributor apparently didn't know -- and York Township's John Woltman is too young to remember -- who won the Susquehanna League championships in 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1965, 1966, 1967 and 1968.

You'd think there would be league statistical records somewhere that would fill in those gaps, but maybe not, since the league's statistician, Steve Kline, is only now trying to create a year-by-year record of individual player statistics beginning in 1955.

The Central League's unofficial historian, Jim May, is trying to do the same thing. Which is refreshing, I must say. And not just because those completed records -- 52 years for the Susquehanna League and 76 years for the Central League -- would be of interest to former and present-day players, fans and league officials.

What we're talking about here are the two leagues' historical records. If people who identify with those leagues don't take responsibility (and an interest) in preserving the history of the two leagues, then who else will?

Probably no one. And that would be a real shame.

So it's good news that someone with an interest in the Susquehanna League has taken this important first step in creating a complete list of league champions. Because, thanks to that person's efforts, we are reminded that Conrads has more league championships than any other team -- 15. You'll recall that Conrads pretty much dominated the league for the entire decade of the 1970s, winning every year from 1969 through 1980, except for 1978, when Seven Valleys took its only league crown.

York Township is next with 10 regular-season titles, nearly all from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s. Hallam is third on the list with seven championships, followed by Felton (three) and Red Lion (two). Seven teams have won the championship once. But those records will change once we fill in the blanks of the nine missing years. It could be, for example, that Conrads was the class of the league during the decade of the 1960s, too. If we learn they won championships in all of those years, it would give them a total of 24. But that's just guessing at this point.

So anyone who knows for certain is invited to update the list by sending an e-mail to Woltman on the York Township Web site, or sending the information to me, and I'll pass it on to Woltman. And if no one is able to volunteer the information, I'll jump into this newspaper's microfilm file to see if I can help out. While we're at it, we should do the same for the Susquehanna League playoff championships. The only years of which Woltman is certain are those when York Township was the playoff champ -- that would be 1985, 1987, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1996, 1997, 2001, 2002, 2005 and 2006. And, of course, 2007, which was won by Red Lion. So there are quite a few holes to fill on that list, as well.

Any knowledgeable fans or former players out there who can help us out?

Sports columns by Larry A. Hicks, Dispatch columnist, run every Thursday. Reach him by e-mail at:
lhicks@yorkdispatch.com.