

Back Mountain National and Back Mountain American square off in the winners bracket final of the D16 tourney



Despite the loss, Zack Dirsa pitched well for American.

Play Ball!



FOR THE POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

An large crowd watched the two Back Mountain teams square off in the playoffs.

It's always a special time. No matter if it's in the first round, the losers bracket, or the championship game, the community always comes together when Back Mountain National and Back Mountain American square off in a District 16 Little League tournament game.

The stakes happened to be high this time around when the teams recently met in the winners bracket final at the W.W. Kubis Memorial Field on Church Street in Dallas. National came out on top, posting a 3-0 win against their counterparts in front of an overflow crowd. It was one of National's six wins on its way to capturing the district title.

National pitcher Marc Noyalis made the game even more memorable, firing a no-hitter while striking out 14. At one point, the 5-foot-8 Noyalis struck out seven consecutive batters. He also helped his own cause with a two-run home run.

And American's Zach Dirsa pitched well despite the loss.

"We knew this wasn't going to be a 10-run game," National manager Scott Jenkins told the Times Leader after the game. "Zach Dirsa pitched his butt off. We were lucky to get three runs."

American was ousted from the double-elimination tournament in its next game, a 9-5 setback against Newport Township, to finish third.

With nearly 30 teams from throughout the Wyoming Valley competing, having two teams from the same league compete in the winners bracket final is quite an accomplishment. This was only the third time it has happened since the double-elimination format was started in the 1980s.



Members of Back Mountain National celebrate their 3-0 win against Back Mountain American in the winners bracket final of the District 16 Little League tournament.



National's Josh Ryan slides safely into home under American catcher Brandon Harding.

Brian Wise, left, and Brandon Roberts stand in the American dugout following the game.



National's Spencer Youngman slides safely ahead of the tag by American third baseman Brandon Roberts.

PHOTOS BY CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK