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Morrow records 19 strikeouts in one-hitter on Senior Night

BY BOB LIEPA | SPORTS EDITOR

The Ks were wild; Julia Morrow was

Seniors shined Saturday night when the Riverhead High School softball team celebrated Senior Night in style. None, however, shined brighter than the pitcher, Morrow, who registered a career-high 19 strikeouts in her onehit, 9-0 shutout of the William Floyd Colonials in the non-league game at Stotzky Memorial Park.

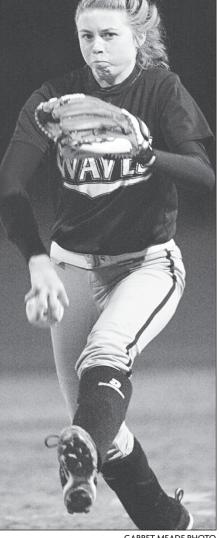
"It's my senior game," said Morrow, who received updates on her strikeout count during the game from one of the assistant coaches, John Maloney. "I wanted to do good and I wanted to win. I put everything out there."

Bob Fox said it was the most strikeouts thrown in a game by a Riverhead pitcher in his 10 years as the team's coach. It topped the 17 strikeouts Morrow registered earlier this season against the Half Hollow Hills East Thunderbirds.

The only William Floyd hit of the night came on the game's first at-bat. Jeanette Harvey cracked a lined single to center field. Morrow, who raised her record to 6-3, did not concede a hit the rest of the way. The right-hander, who is headed for Central Connecticut, allowed three walks as she was supported by errorless defense in the field.

Another senior, catcher Kara Vonatzski, drove in Riverhead's first four runs, the first two coming on an in-the-park home run that she clocked into the left-center-field gap for her second homer of the season. She also had a pair of run-scoring singles.

"She's a five-tool player," said Fox, whose team also produced a 5-0 League IV win over the Deer Park Falcons on Monday.



GARRET MEADE PHOTO

Riverhead senior pitcher Julia Morrow recorded a career-high 19 strikeouts in her one-hit shutout of William Floyd.

Riverhead's seven seniors, all of whom are regular starters, were introduced prior to the game along with their parents. In addition to Morrow and Vonatzski, fellow seniors Ali Barthalt, Emily Commins, Colleen Dougherty, Yvonne McKay and Kelly Zilnicki took their places on the field while it drizzled during the pregame ceremony.

Commins is the senior senior, the only five-year varsity player on the team. "Five years, it's a long time," she said. "I never thought this day would

How good is this senior class?

"Let's just say Riverhead is going to be losing a lot" on graduation day, said Vonatzski.

Except for a few drops here and there, the rain held off once the game started. Although it was cool, with temperatures

pitcher makes

her night.

in the 40s, the night air was A senior calm. The conditions seemed to suit Morrow Senior Night just fine.

Morrow struck out the last six bat-

ters she faced. All 12 of the Colonials who stepped to the plate struck out at least once. Morrow fanned five batters twice and one three times. Her final pitch count was 119 pitches, 76

of which were strikes.
"Crazy," Vonatzski said when Morrow's 19 strikeouts were mentioned. "She was so on today. Her curveball was really, really on today."

Riverhead (7-3, 6-3) took a 4-0 lead into the sixth inning when it erupted for a five-run rally that started with a stand-up triple by Kelly Zilnicki and featured a two-run double by Commins as well as run-scoring singles by Emily Groneman, Beth Zilnicki and Morrow. All five of those runs scored with two out. The inning finally ended when center fielder Kim Migliara made a nice sliding catch of a ball hit by Barthalt to shallow center.

Riverhead's leadoff hitter, Dougherty, went 2 for 2 with a walk, a sacrifice bunt, three runs scored and two stolen bases.

The Blue Waves evidently like playing at Stotzky Memorial Park, where they have a 4-0 career record, three of those wins coming against William Floyd (5-5, 5-4 League I).

Although this latest triumph at Stoky could give Riverhead a boost in terms of playoff seeding, it was significant in another sense to the seven seniors.

"It's really important to us," Morrow said. "Of course, it's not the last game of the season, but it's like our night."

bliepa@timesreview.com

Read all about it THE NEWS REVIEW.

SCHEDULE

BASEBALL

Monday, April 26

Bishop McGann-Mercy at Southold, Jean W. Cochran Park, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, April 27

Riverhead at Copiague, 4:30 p.m.; Smithtown Christian at Bishop McGann-Mercy, 4:30 p.m.

Bishop McGann-Mercy at Smithtown Christian, 4:30

BOYS LACROSSE

Friday, April 23

Commack at Riverhead, 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 27

North Babylon at Riverhead, 4 p.m.

BOYS TENNIS

Tuesday, April 27 Southold/Greenport at Riverhead, 4 p.m.

BOYS TRACK AND FIELD

Port Jefferson and The Ross School/Pierson at Bishop McGann-Mercy, 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 28

Riverhead at Walt Whitman, 3:30 p.m.

GIRLS GOLF

Thursday, April 22

Longwood at Riverhead, Cherry Creek Golf Links, 3:30

Wednesday, April 28

Riverhead at Mount Sinai, Hamlet Willow Creek Golf & Country Club, 3:30 p.m.

GIRLS TRACK AND FIELD

Monday, April 26

Bishop McGann-Mercy and The Ross School/Pierson at Port Jefferson, 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 27

Walt Whitman at Riverhead, 4 p.m.

North Babylon at Riverhead, 4:30 p.m.; Southampton at Bishop McGann-Mercy, Stotzky Memorial Park, 4:30

Friday, April 23

Bishop McGann-Mercy at Port Jefferson, 11 a.m.

Tuesday, April 27

Bishop McGann-Mercy at Babylon, Memorial Grade School, 4:30 p.m.; Riverhead at Newfield, 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 28

Mount Sinai at Bishop McGann-Mercy, Stotzky Memorial Park, 4 p.m.