

Sports

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LA CAÑADA STARTING PITCHER Holly Stoner allowed just four hits to topple Monrovia on Friday.

Stoner's gem propels La Cañada

BY CHARLES RICH

LA CAÑADA — With the tying run at the plate in the top of the seventh inning and one out, Holly Stoner didn't rattle inside the circle.

The La Cañada High sophomore starting pitcher looked at the target set up by catcher Taryn Harris and stayed focused. A few pitches later, she got two pop ups in the infield to complete a dominant performance to propel La Cañada

Softball: **Sophomore pitcher scatters four hits in complete game to help Spartans prevail, 4-1, in league game against Monrovia.**

to a 4-1 Rio Hondo League home victory against rival Monrovia.

"I just tried to make some good pitches to get those outs," said Stoner, a right-hander who struck out seven and scattered four hits to spur La Cañada (14-6, 7-1 in league) to a three-game sweep of the season series against Monrovia (9-11, 4-4). "I felt comfortable out there the whole

time and they have a good hitting team.

"I just tried to get ahead of the hitters by keeping them off-balance. It was a strong effort by the entire team."

The Spartans, who won the league championship by one game over Monrovia last season, came into Friday's contest fresh off a 9-4 road win against the Wildcats on Tuesday. Friday's

victory kept the Spartans tied for first place with Temple City atop the Rio Hondo League standings.

La Cañada scored two runs in the first inning Friday to back Stoner.

Maddy Reilly scored on a wild pitch to make it 1-0. The Spartans extended the lead to 2-0 on a run-scoring single by Harris that

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brought home Megan Reilly. Harris finished with a team-high three hits.

"When I got up, I just tried to have some consistent at-bats," Harris said. "I wanted to have a good game offensively."

Monrovia sliced the deficit to 2-1 in the third on a fielder's choice by Hunter Alvarez.

After Stoner retired the side in order in the fourth, she received a nice over-the-shoulder catch in deep center field by Maddy Reilly to start the fifth. Harris then

threw out a Monrovia runner at second to end the inning.

Abby Au of La Cañada ended an 11-pitch at-bat with an RBI single to score Gillian Arnold to make it 3-1 in the bottom of the fifth. A sacrifice fly to right by Arnold brought in Megan Reilly to close out the scoring in the sixth.

"We worked in the bullpen before the game and she felt good during warm-ups," Harris said. "She kept hitting her spots throughout the game."

La Cañada first-year Coach Chuck Gunter said Stoner did a good job of holding Monrovia at bay.

"They have some very good hitters and Holly made some quality pitches and got some quick outs," Gunter said. "It's encouraging when she can do those things."

"I also thought we had some good at-bats, especially the one by Abby. That at-bat just seemed to pick the team up."

The Spartans finished with nine hits, including three from Au.

Monrovia pitcher Britney Lopez struck out seven in going the distance.

The Spartans have four league games remaining, two with South Pasadena and two with Temple City.



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LA CAÑADA'S MADDY REILLY scores on a wild pitch in the first inning in a Rio Hondo League home contest Friday.

Friday night's game was also La Cañada's annual Strike Out Cancer fundraiser. The Spartans and Wildcats wore customized shirts in honor of cancer awareness. The squads partnered with Burbank-based ChangeWorks. The organization is geared to collect and donate money to families who have members stricken with the disease. Donations were collected throughout Friday's contest and items were raffled off in the middle of the fifth inning.

"It's for a great cause," Gunter said.

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