

Tickets available for Avenue of Athletes dinner

Tickets are still available for the 32nd Avenue of Athletes awards dinner, to be held on Wednesday, June 13 at the Amherst Pepsi Center, 1615 Amherst Manor Dr. Tickets are \$20 per person. Reservations must be made by 4 p.m., Friday, June 1. Make checks payable to the Town of Amherst. Reservations and tickets are available at the Amherst Recreation Dept. A reception will be held from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. with dinner starting at 6:30 p.m. The event will highlight boys and girls student-athletes in the Town of Amherst. For more information, call 631-7132.

## Plimpton earns more pitching honors

by PATRICK J. NAGY  
Reporter

Chelsea Plimpton can add 100 career wins and New York State all-time strikeout leader to her already unbelievable high school softball resume.

The Williamsville South senior pitcher hit win No. 100 with a 7-0 victory over Hamburg on Monday, May 14 and recorded No. 101 in an 11-0 shutout against Sweet Home on Wednesday, May 16. Plimpton also struck out 12 Sweet Home batters to give her 1,283 career strikeouts, surpassing the previous all-time mark of 1,278 set by Jamesville-Dewitt's Sarah Reed. Only Barb Cook of Susquehanna Valley (117) and Reed (107) has more career victories.

Plimpton said she had no idea she had accomplished either goal.

"My dad (Mark) told me after each game, 'congratulations' and I said 'what?'" said Plimpton, who has only six career losses. "Then he told me."

"It's nice," she added. "If the records happen, they happen but it's only a little piece of it (wants to win a third state title; South won titles with her as starting pitcher in 2004 and 2006)."

Through the James "Ace" Morabito Tournament, Plimpton has 1,331 career strikeouts and 103 career wins.

Plimpton, named All-Western New York Pitcher of the Year as a freshman, sophomore and junior, already has the single-season strikeout state record of 411, which she set last year and is eighth on the list with 293 in 2005. She's also listed in the state record books for career perfect games (nine, tied for first), most perfect games in a season (3, second, 2005), career no-hitters (15, third), most no-hitters in a season (5, tied for third, 2005),



Chelsea Plimpton is the all-time strikeout leader in New York State high school softball. She also has over 100 career wins.

File photo

single-game strikeouts (23, tied for first, 2005; 22, second, 2006), career shutouts (74, second), single-season shutouts (22, second, 2006), lowest single-season ERA (0.10, fifth, 2005; tied for tenth, 0.14, 2006), and lowest career ERA (0.252, fourth through 2006).

### Ms. Perfect

Plimpton always strives for perfection on the mound. Before the Morabito Tournament last weekend, she only walked 37 out of 2,473 career batters. There is no

state record for least amount of career walks but if it was recorded, she'd own it.

"Her accuracy is incredible," said South coach Gerry Gentner. "She looks for perfection. When she strikes out 20 batters, she wants to strike out 21." "When she makes a mistake, she's hard on herself but not rattled," he added. "I've never had a player with that kind of mental strength to just block the play out."

Gentner has been working with Plimpton ever since she and her

father attended one of Gentner's pitching clinics when she was 10.

"She has been fortunate enough to have one pitching instructor in me," said Gentner. "Sometimes kids have a number of different people telling them what to do. Mr. Plimpton stayed out of the way and allowed me to develop Chelsea."

Like how a father argues with his daughter, Gentner and Plimpton have had their differences. Gentner signals catcher Lisa Fronczak what pitch Plimpton should throw and Plimpton shakes off between five to 10 calls a game.

"I disagree with him and he gets mad, but we laugh about it later," said Plimpton.

"We've had some stumbling blocks on a continued basis on what pitch to throw but that's for a pursuit of greatness," said Gentner. "However we've done it, it's worked."

Because Plimpton is fundamentally sound, she can throw an array of pitches (curve, screw, rise, change-up and drop) without the need for a fastball.

"There's no need for a fastball," Plimpton said. "Why throw a fastball when you can throw something better?"

Her favorite pitch to throw is a riseball, which when released, provides backspin and combined with arm and leg strength, causes the ball to rise as it moves to the batter.

"It's the most fun to get people out," she said. "When I'm at the plate and I swing at one, I think, 'why did I swing at that?'"

Plimpton also takes care of her body in the offseason, training twice a week with Chuck Pelitera at the Women's Wellness Center on Hopkins Road.

### Great backup

Plimpton has been great her entire high school career but

she's also had some phenomenal talent around her through the years that have gone on to play at Division I schools including Michelle Fridey (Liberty College) and Dana Carter (University at Buffalo). Those players have helped South to New York State titles in 2004 and 2006, four straight Section VI championships, half of South's 10 consecutive league championships, and a current 59-game win streak over divisional foes.

"I've never played on a weak team," said Plimpton, who will play at Division I - St. John's University in the fall. "I've always felt confident with my team and my coaches that it has allowed me to grow as a pitcher."

### The greatest of all-time?

Plimpton's numbers speak for themselves, but is she the greatest high school pitcher in the history of New York State?

"When you look at the numbers in every category, she's the best ever in Western New York," said Gentner. "Can I say she's the best ever (in the state)? Yes. We know she's the best all-time for strikeouts, and she might be the best control pitcher ever. No one has the whole package like Chelsea."

Plimpton is a little more humble.

"Barb Cook is pretty good too," said Plimpton. "The numbers are nice, but I've had more time starting than everybody else (started last four years, 7-0 as eighth grader). A lot of these girls don't start until their junior year so no I don't think I'm the best pitcher in New York State. I just think I have the best numbers."

Teams are not finished facing a Plimpton. Chelsea's younger sister, Kyle, an eighth-grader, is penciled in as the starting pitcher for the Lady Billies next season.

e-mail: pnagy@beenews.com

## All-Catholics

# Nardin ends Sacred Heart's win streak in track



Sacred Heart's Jenna Piecuch (576) leads the pack in the first leg of the girls' 4x800-meter relay at All-Catholics held on Wednesday, May 16 at John F. Kennedy High School. The Sharks won the 4x800 but finished second overall to Nardin.

Photo by Patrick McPartland  
Purchase color photos at www.BeeNews.com

by PATRICK J. NAGY  
Reporter

The Sacred Heart Academy girls track team's win streak in the Monsignor Martin Association is over.

The Sharks, who haven't lost a Monsignor Martin Association indoor or outdoor track meet since outdoor All-Catholics in 2003, lost to Nardin, 124-121, at this year's All-Catholics, held on Wednesday, May 16 at John F. Kennedy High School.

"It obviously had to end some time," said Sacred Heart coach Rod Sarkovics of the win streak. "Give Nardin all the credit in the world. They came out strong."

Sacred Heart beat Nardin, 68-37, in a dual meet on Thursday, April 26, but was by far the Sharks' toughest competition at All-Catholics. The next closest team was Holy Angels, which finished 84 points behind Sacred Heart with a team score of 37. Nichols (32), St. Mary's of Lancaster (31), Mount St. Mary's (28), Mount Mercy (23), and O'Hara (7) rounded out the team scoring.

"I thought it would be a close meet," said Sarkovics. "I don't think the dual meets gives justice

because once you get to All-Catholics, a team like O'Hara could take points away from you."

Nardin pulled off the upset at All-Catholics because they were stronger in distance events, outscoring Sacred Heart, 36-10. In the 1500-meter run, Nardin's Jill Shea and Maura Fravenhofer went first (5:09.48) and second (5:12.30) and flip-flopped places in the 3000 (Fravenhofer, first, 11:11.86; Shea, second, 11:37.39). Meanwhile, Sacred Heart's Anna Ministero and Emily Tutak took fourth (5:20.23) and fifth (5:40.19), respectively, in the 1500 and Kim Patterson was fourth in the 3000 (11:47.98). Kerry Hurley was originally third in the 3000 but was disqualified for stepping on the line to the outside lane.

"We definitely got hurt in the distance meets," said Sarkovics. "You can't lose as many points as we did in the 1500 and 3000. I just think it was Nardin's day."

Nardin led 114-113 heading into the last event, the 4x100 relay, and won by two-hundredths of a second, 53.65-53.67. Nardin's anchor in the race, Maureen Creighton, leaned the front of her body past Sacred Heart's anchor, Melissa Naab, to win the race. The other members of Sacred Heart's

(Please turn to page 22)