

Experienced Warriors expected to compete for the Big 4 and more

August 26, 2022



An experienced Del Norte Warriors team will kick off the new football season at home against Kelseyville under the lights on Friday night.

Head coach Nick White has 18 seniors on the roster, including a core group in either their third or fourth year on varsity, and expectations will be high once again for a team that finished 10-2 last year and made it all the way to the North Coast Section Division-5 championship game.

“It’s been a part of our program,” White said of the high expectations and winning culture. “The kids expect to compete every single game and they play hard, and that puts us in position to go for a league championship or an NCS championship if we get that lucky. Hopefully we’ll be in the mix this year.”

Returning Big 4 Offensive MVP RJ Loftin will be expected to play a key role in the challenge for the league title.

The senior standout first broke into the varsity roster as a freshman and has continued to grow in stature at running back and linebacker since then.

Lineman Jacob Dane also broke into the varsity team as a freshman and will be expected to anchor the trenches once again in his senior campaign.

Quarterback/cornerback Cooper Maxwell, meanwhile, is another experienced player in his third year on the varsity roster, as are linebacker/running back Giancarlo Desolenni and receiver/safety Brody Mattz.

“We have a lot of seniors and all of them are stepping up and pushing the tempo in practice,” said White, who had 35 players show up for the summer sessions. “It’s been a great offseason, and the thing I’m looking for now is to see how that hard work pays off. Now it’s time for payoff.”

The fourth-year head coach doesn’t expect any easy games on what he describes as a challenging schedule.

“It’s not an easy schedule at all,” White said. “I wanted to get us some challenges and we were able to do that.”

After opening at home to Kelseyville, the Del Norte players will make an overnight trip to the Bay Area to play Piedmont before traveling to play South Medford, a school of close to 2,000 students.

The schedule also includes a home game against West Valley and a trip to McKinleyville, as well as two games against Eureka.

The Big 4 kicks off in late October, with back-to-back road games in Eureka, against the Loggers and St. Bernard’s, and the Warriors will close out the regular season at home to Fortuna on Nov. 4.

And once again White is expecting a tough league campaign.

“Everybody’s so talented and the coaching is so good up here, and I think everybody has a chance at the league title,” he said. “We’re just hoping to put ourselves in a position to win.”

The head coach also likes the mix of experience and younger players on this year’s roster and how they have been working together during preseason practice.

“It’s been going good,” the coach said. “We’ve definitely got a good mix of seniors and juniors and they’re gelling really well. Practice has been great. We’ve been doing what we needed to do in practice.”

The younger players on this roster will also be expected to play key roles after the Del Norte JVs finished 10-0 last season.

Friday night’s varsity game is set for 7:30 p.m.

