Del Norte Triplicate

SPORTS

Del Norte seniors look to close out strong on the mats

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It’s been another impressive winter on the wrestlings mats for the Del Norte Warriors, as they look to make some noise in the upcoming postseason.

Seniors Colton Schaad and Curtis Bartley, in particular, are enjoying outstanding seasons, and the two team leaders will be hoping to defend the individual North Coast Section championships they won as juniors and make a deep run at the state tournament.

Schaad came into February as the No. 13 ranked wrestler in all of California at 165 pounds, according to CalGrappler.com, while Bartley is ranked just two spots back at No. 15 in the 138-pound division.

The impressive duo are part of a very talented senior class of eight, who were honored by the school at a recent league dual match, and many of whom will be continuing their wrestling careers on the college mats after graduation later this year.

Before the season, Bartley committed to wrestle at North Idaho College, one of the top Junior College programs in the nation, with eyes on taking his talents to an NCAA Division-I program after his time there.

Schaad, meanwhile, has not yet committed to a college team, but as you would expect from a defending NCS champion he is receiving plenty of interest from multiple schools.

The senior standout says he is looking for the right fit for his wrestling and academic ambitions, and he intends on pursuing a degree in civil engineering.

The 4.0 GPA student recently received the prestigious Army Reserve National Scholar Athlete Award at the Tim Brown Memorial tournament in Sacramento.

Schaad was one of just seven award recipients out of a pool of 850 eligible wrestlers and this is the second time he has received the prestigious honor.

“Colton has been honored by this award on two different occasions,” his father and head coach Clinton Schaad said. “I am extremely proud of him as both his coach and his father.”

Colton Schaad also recently was named Big 4 co-Defensive MVP in football after a big season at linebacker, where he helped lead the Warriors to a fifth straight conference championship.

In addition to Colton Schaad and Bartley, the senior class of wrestlers also includes James Gensaw Jr., Alex Osborne. Ben Weiland, Braydan Johnson, Brandon Starcher and Aaron Burger.

Both Gensaw and Osborne also plan on wrestling in college.

Gensaw, who is a 3.75 GPA student-athlete, has already committed his future to the Cal Poly Humboldt wrestling team, which began competing again for the first time in 33 years this winter, and he plans to become a physical therapist.

Osborne, who has a 3.5 GPA, is still weighing his college options, with plans on becoming an athletic trainer.

Weiland, meanwhile, plans on becoming a firefighter after high school, while Johnson is looking to attend a trade school and become an electrician, and Starcher says he will join the Air Force after graduation.

Burger, who has a 3.0 GPA, plans to join the Marines and eventually become a firefighter.

Before any of that, however, the eight hard-woking and ambitious seniors and their teammates still have business to take care of on the high school mats.

The Warriors are the defending H-DNL champions after a dominating performance in 2024 that saw them claim five individual champions and four runners-up in the 14 weight classes.

Colton Schaad, Bartley and Chulhs Bates are all two-time defending league champs in their weight divisions, while Johnson also won a league title last year at 175 pounds.

The league championships will take place at Arcata High School on Feb. 15, with the NCS championships a week later, followed by the California Interscholastic Federation state championship tournament at the Mechanics Bank Arena in Bakersfield, beginning on Feb. 27 and running for three days.

Photo, from left to right (pretty sure), James Gensaw Jr., Curtis Bartley, Colton Schaad, Alex Osborne, Ben Weiland, Braydan Johnson, Brandon Starcher and Aaron Burger

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