

## Del Norte notebook ...

September 18, 2019



Another blowout -- After a bit of a slow start, Del Norte wore out Petaluma last Friday night, capturing a 49-7 victory on the Trojans' home field. The Warriors are 4-0 this season; Petaluma, 1-3.

Was over when -- On the opening drive of the third quarter and Del Norte leading 21-0, Chase Blackburn weaved, dodged and motored his way into the end zone from 41 yards out. That's the same distance as Blackburn scored from against La Salle Prep on Sept. 13.

Bring the heat -- Game-time temperatures were in the mid-80s, which matched Del Norte's defensive intensity, broiling Petaluma's offense. Trojan quarterback Jack Hartman had little, if any, time to throw, completing just one of six passes for minus-one yard. Petaluma did a little better running the ball -- 81 yards on 24 carries -- but 45 of those yards came on a single play long after the game was decided.

Balancing act -- Del Norte's rushing game was its usual potent self, gaining 369 yards on 38 carries, an average of almost 10 yards per carry. But what was even more impressive was the fact that the Warriors had four different backs each gain 75 yards or more -- Kobe Mitchell (112 yards), Levi Cox-Cooley (105), Geo Gonzalez (77 on just three carries) and Blackburn (75).

Cashing-in Kaleb -- Del Norte is using 6-foot-5 wide receiver Kaleb Price as more of a weapon, especially in or near the red zone. The junior caught three passes Friday, including a 22-yard TD thrown by O.J. Calleja. Price now has a touchdown reception in each of the past three games.

Turnovers and wins -- Del Norte has now gone four games in a row without losing a fumble or throwing an interception, a remarkable statistic. Meanwhile, the Warriors' defense has produced seven turnovers. Del Norte recovered a fumble on Petaluma's first play from scrimmage and turned that into a touchdown two minutes later.

Penalty problems -- Another game, another 100-plus yards in penalties against the Warriors. That's four games in a row, something coach Nick White says his team has to "clean up." But he's pleased with the physical way his team is playing, saying officials may not be used to seeing a team that blocks as hard as the Warriors.

Another great start -- For the second year in a row, Del Norte is perfect through its first four games. This year's Warriors would match last year's start with a win over Mazama. Del Norte also started 5-0 in 2011 (finishing 7-4), and in 2007 (finishing 11-1, losing in the N-C-S Section semifinals).

Interesting Big Four -- Along with Del Norte's win, it was an interesting weekend for the other conference teams. Eureka broke into the win column, beating winless Montgomery High in Santa Rosa 32-7. Fortuna fell to 1-3 when it lost to nearby rival Ferndale 13-7. It was the first time in seven years the Huskies have lost the Milk Can Bowl.

St. Bernard's on pace -- Like Del Norte, St. Bernard's moved to 4-0 Friday, beating La Salle Prep 43-41 in Milwaukie, Oregon. That's the same La Salle Prep team Del Norte defeated in Crescent City a week earlier 41-7. The Crusaders needed a couple of big defensive plays in the final minutes to secure the victory.

Other foes -- Moreau Catholic is now 2-2 after beating Middletown 41-27. Yreka got its first win of the year, stopping Mount Shasta 20-15. Trinity Valley had a bye.

Next up -- It's another long road trip for the Warriors, who'll go to Klamath Falls on Friday to take on the 2-0 Mazama Vikings. Game time will be 7 p.m.

Familiar foe -- This is the fourth year in a row the Warriors and Vikings have met, with Mazama claiming the first two games -- 22-16 in Crescent City in 2016, 32-0 in Klamath Falls in 2017 -- and Del Norte winning last year at home, 28-7.

JVs undefeated -- Del Norte had no problem with Petaluma, winning 47-7 in junior varsity play. R.J. Loftin had a trio of touchdowns, two on TD passes from Connor Price, while Caleb Dodson had two scores. The JV Warriors are now 3-0, with Loftin accounting for eight touchdowns.