Del Norte Triplicate

SPORTS

Del Norte seniors receive all-league recognition in basketball

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For the second straight year, Del Norte senior Lyon Rigden has been named to the Big 5 all-league team in boys basketball.

The three-sport standout was one of four Del Norte boys who received all-league recognition, along with teammates Michael Webster, Aidan Rice and Ryan O’Laughlin who each received an honorable mention.

All four seniors played key roles for the team this year, as the Warriors closed out 15-12 and made it to the quarterfinals of the North Coast Section Division-5 playoffs, before barely falling 71-69 in double-overtime to Sonoma Valley.

Rigden, who played soccer for Del Norte in the fall and is competing in track and field this spring, was a force once again for the Warriors on the basketball courts this winter.

“I thought he showed great leadership,” Del Norte head coach Cris Rice said. “He’s a very physical player, one of our best defensive players, and he was a real leader on the court.”

The senior, whom the coach described as “a great teammate,” averaged 13 points a game in league play.

“He could take the ball to the hoop,” Cris Rice added. “He was very good at attacking the basket and finding teammates. He was a very efficient player for us.”

He was also tasked with guarding the opposing team’s best player every night in league play and he always rose to the challenge.

Webster, meanwhile, also had an outstanding season for the team and led the Warriors in scoring with 16 points a game in league play.

This is the second straight year he received an all-league honorable mention.

“He was very good for us on offense. He was our leading scorer,” Cris Race said of Webster, who is considering continuing his playing career on the college courts after graduation this year. “He was pretty exciting at times and we were very proud of him.”

When his teammates were struggling, it was often Webster who ignited them.

“He was a spark plug,” the head coach said. “He would get us going at times.”

Aidan Rice, meanwhile, was the team’s starting point guard and helped set his teammates up for success.

“He’s an intelligent basketball player,” head coach and father Cris Rice said of the multi-sport senior, who also was named to the all-league team in football this past fall. “He distributed the ball well and he was a very good on-ball defender.”

The team captain, who also plays baseball, is likely to continue his sports career on the baseball fields in college.

“He was a team leader. He did his job,” the head coach added. “He definitely got his teammates involved. He was a dynamic passer.”

O’Laughlin, meanwhile, was “very efficient offensively” for this year’s team, according to the coach.

“He could shoot,” Cris Rice said of Laughlin, who is also considering continuing his playing career at the JC level. “He was a very efficient scorer. He probably had the highest shooting percentage on our team.”

But that’s not all O’Laughlin brought to the table.

“He was often asked to guard the other team’s bigs,” the head coach said. “Players that were bigger and stronger than him, and he did his job. I was very proud of Ryan. Ryan had some big moments for us.”

O’Laughlin also led the Warriors in rebounding.

“I think all four of them had big seasons,” Cris Rice added. “Those four were big leaders on our team this season and we’re going to miss them.”

After looking good during the December tournament schedule, the Warriors struggled in league play and finished a disappointing 2-6 in the Big 5.

But they rediscovered their groove in the postseason and defeated Justin-Siena 43-34 in their opening NCS game before barely falling to Sonoma Valley.

“It was a tale of three seasons for us,” Cris Rice said. “But we’re looking forward to next year and seeing some of the younger guys stepping up.”

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