

Warriors' girls soccer coach fired

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Ashley Herrera was fired Oct. 1 as head coach of the Del Norte High School girls soccer team, four games into the 2019 season.

Assistant coach Brent Coble agreed to take over the reins for the remainder of the season.

The Warriors were winless in Humboldt-Del Norte Division play, with an 0-3 record and a 1-4 record overall, this season under Herrera, who was in her second year as head coach.

Herrera told The Triplicate that the high school's athletic director, Robert Hadfield, fired her because of a conflict with her employment at another job.

Hadfield did not respond to multiple requests for comment before The Triplicate's deadline.

"He knew I had another job, the girls knew, there had been zero concern over the other job," Herrera said.

Herrera has worked off and on as a behavioral intervention specialist at the school district since 2009. She has also worked as a server at SeaQuake the last three years and admits missing a few Fridays because of her work there.

But, Herrera said, she fears the firing may be retaliatory, as it comes in the wake of two incidents. Soccer team members addressed their concerns Sept. 12 to the Del Norte Unified School District's Board of Trustees about how the upper soccer field's condition had been causing injuries.

And, Herrera said, she forfeited the game on Sept. 28 because several players were a no-call, no-show for the prior practice. "It's standard district-wide policy, contacting the coach, letting you know what's going on. I only had one or two subs on the bench.

"I can't exhaust those eight players on the field. If one gets hurt, it could be season-ending. My number-one concern is safety," Herrera said.

She said Hadfield approached her before the start of the following practice Oct. 1 at the soccer field and fired her. "There was no warning. I thought it was done unprofessionally, to walk up to me at practice, when I'm about to explain the forfeit to the girls.

"He pulled me out of practice to let me go, in front of all to see. He could have not done it there. He could have called me and let me know," Herrera said.

The girls team has won three straight under Coble since Herrera's termination, including 2-1 over McKinleyville on Oct. 9, 4-0 over St. Bernard's Oct. 5, and 5-0 over South Fork on Oct. 2.

"Overall, they've accepted the situation, taken it well," Coble told The Triplicate of the players' reaction.

Coble, 28, was promoted after two years as an assistant on the team. He is a physical education teacher at Crescent Elk Middle School.

Coble said he has prior experience as goalie coach at Chico State University and in private lessons.

"I agreed to take on the new responsibility, to do it with the best of my ability. I asked the girls what their needs were and have tried to make the best of the experience as possible."