

Calleja wears the crown in big Warrior victory

October 4, 2019



WEAVERVILLE -- Trinity High School named its homecoming king shortly before the start of its varsity football game Friday night. Had the Wolves waited until halftime, Del Norte High quarterback O.J. Calleja might have won the honor.

The senior threw four first-half touchdown passes as the Warriors crushed the Wolves 52-0, giving Del Norte a 6-1 record in non-conference games this season heading into next week's bye.

Calleja completed 10 of 12 passes in the first two quarters, including a pair of scoring strikes to both Caleb Price and Geo Gonzalez. On the evening, Calleja threw for 173 yards, his highest total of the season.

Del Norte's rushing attack was solid as well. Led by Levi Cox-Cooley, the Warriors gained 185 yards on the ground on just 25 carries, good for 7.4 yards per carry.

Cox-Cooley rushed for 129 yards on just six carries, including two touchdowns. It was his fifth time this season Cox-Cooley topped the century mark. Chase Blackburn had just three carries, which produced 45 yards and a score.

Most of the time, Del Norte's front line pushed its defensive counterparts down the field, with first-time starter Chance La Fazio joining Anthony Slayton, Luke King, Tanner Forkner and Sam Schauerman in spoiling the homecoming celebration.

Meanwhile, Del Norte's defense pitched its second shutout of the season, The Warriors forced three turnovers, including two interceptions by sophomore Trevor Freeman. Trinity rushed the ball 20 times for a grand total of just 10 yards.

Of course, Del Norte was expected to win big. Trinity is now 0-5 this season after losing all 10 of its contests last year. The Warriors made sure the Wolves never had any illusions about pulling an upset.

"We wanted to focus on ourselves," said Del Norte Coach Nick White about this team's preparation for the game. "We wanted to take care of business."

That's exactly what the Warriors did. Offensively, Del Norte put together scoring drives all five times it had the ball in the first half. Defensively, the Wolves were stymied every way possible, with Kai Baugh dominating the line of scrimmage over and over.

"We executed," White said, who particularly praised his second unit players. They stepped up and kept the shutout in place in the final quarter. "They came out and performed."

Del Norte also cleaned up its biggest bugaboo this year -- penalties. For the first time, the Warriors were flagged for less than 100 yards in penalty yardage. It also did not turn the ball over.

Finally, the Warriors got another perfect evening from kicker Kenji Adams-Lee. The senior not only converted all seven of his extra point attempts -- he's now 29 of 29 this season -- he also booted a 35-yard field goal, his second of his Warrior career.

With no game next week, Del Norte will do two things: First, heal all the bumps, bruises and sprains that a team will get after seven consecutive weeks of football games. And second, get ready for the high-octane St. Bernard's Crusaders and the start of the three-game Big Four Conference season.

St. Bernard's is now 5-1 after falling Friday for the first time this season to highly regarded Templeton 49-21. The Warriors and the Crusaders will meet at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 18 at Mike Whalen Field.

In junior varsity action Friday, Del Norte dismissed the Wolves 36-8. Giancarlo DeSolenni scored twice for the Warriors, which improved to 5-1 this season. On Thursday, Del Norte will play at home against McKinleyville's junior varsity. Game time will be 6 p.m.