

Good time on the gridiron

July 24, 2019



The annual Del Norte Youth Football camp was back last week for three days of football Monday through Wednesday at Del Norte High School.

The high school coaches were in charge of the schedule, but most of the coaching was done by about 20 Del Norte varsity and junior varsity players during the week.

“We had about 22 kids come out. We would love to have more next year,” said Del Norte varsity football head coach Nick White. “The best part about the camp is that the kids come out and have fun. We are teaching them what we teach the high school kids. The high school kids are actually the coaches out here. So I kind of guide them in direction of what we are going to be doing, but the high school kids take control of the drills.”

It wasn’t that long ago that the high school coaches were in the same shoes as the campers.

“I always went to this camp — I think I maybe missed it once.,” said senior Anthony Slayton. “This camp is definitely beneficial. You get to just be with your friends and play football.”

White said the main goal of the camp was just to get the kids out, and enjoy the sport.

“We just want to teach them the basic fundamentals and to get them to play football and have fun,” White said. “It is pretty simple. There isn’t a lot of expectation with it besides getting the kids out here and wanting them to play football in the future. So we are keeping it fun.”

At the same time, the high school players get the chance to look at the game from a little bit different perspective.

“They are coaching what we coach them, so now they are owning what they have been coached,” White said. “That is the best part of it. When we start, it makes them realize what they are doing right and what they are doing wrong. So it brings a different aspect into the team, which is cool.”

For Slayton, it was a possible glimpse into his future.

“It was very different but it was definitely cool, just to see how it would be to coach,” he said. “I think coaching would be fun to do when I get older, so it was definitely a different experience.”

One of the biggest things that Slayton said he learned about coaching was that sometimes you have to be assertive.

“You have to have lots of leadership,” he said. “You can’t be quiet about things, you kind of have to lay the law sometimes. It was definitely a cool and fun experience.”

For White, he said he enjoyed hearing his players teaching the kids in almost the exact same way that the high school staff instructs them.

“They are coaching the technique that we are doing — using the same words as the coaches use,” White said. “So it’s pretty cool that they are picking that all up. The seniors who have been here know what the camp is all about, so are the ones who really step up into that leadership role.”

But the main goal of the camp is to develop a sense of camaraderie amongst the campers and a love for the game. White said both aspects were evident on the very first day.

“We were playing ultimate football, one team was down by three touchdowns and they came back and ended up winning,” White said. “So the coaches, the kids, everybody was jumping up and down and cheering. So the highlight for me was everybody just cheering and having fun together.”