

Warriors fall to the Wildcats to end memorable season

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Another memorable football season for the Del Norte Warriors concluded on Saturday, as they fell 20-7 at Marin Catholic in the North Coast Section Division-4 playoffs.

After being moved up a division this year because of their recent success in the postseason, the Warriors competed well and followed their lopsided win at Tennyson last week by giving No. 1 seed Marin Catholic all it could handle.

The Del Norte defense was outstanding and held the Wildcats to their lowest points total of the season and to less than half of their season average of 46.4 points a game.

Ultimately, however, the No. 4 team in the entire section proved to be just too strong.

“I thought our kids played amazing,” Del Norte head coach Nick White said. “They gave everything they had. When you play a team like Marin Catholic, everything’s hard.”

The top seeds, who improved to 12-0, will now advance to play No. 3 Cardinal Newman in the NCS championship this weekend, while the Warriors close out their season with a record of 9-2.

“My kids played their hearts out,” White said. “We stepped up to the challenge of playing the top team in Division 4, and not only that, but playing the No. 4 team in the section, and it’s just great to see how our program has grown.”

The season will go down as another successful one for a Del Norte team that is setting the standard in the H-DNL and one that claimed a third consecutive Big 4 championship this fall.

The Warriors followed that with a 50-14 win at Tennyson to kick off the playoffs despite being handed a lower seed than the Hayward school.

White will lose 17 seniors from this team to graduations, all of whom were freshmen when he took over as head coach in 2019.

“Really, really good human beings,” the coach said of the senior class. “They’re great kids, they have a great attitude and they worked extremely hard. I couldn’t be prouder of them.”

One of those seniors, Ethan Thomas, scored his team’s only touchdown of the day on a pick-six early in the second half, his fifth interception of the season.

Senior kicker Daniel Gonzalez added the PAT and the Warriors led 7-6.

It had been a defensive game for much of the first half, with the home team finally breaking the deadlock just seconds before halftime.

After the Warriors took the lead in the third, the Wildcats responded almost immediately, scoring their second TD less than two minutes later.

They would add a third TD before the end of the quarter and that was more than enough for their defense.

All three of Del Norte’s standout running backs were held in check, with RJ Loftin rushing for 66 yards on 11 carries, Giancarlo Desolenni adding 17 yards on 10 carries and Aden Mintonye finishing with 17 yards on eight carries.

“We needed to run the ball a little better than we did, that’s our strength all year, but their defense was the best we’ve played all year,” White said.