Del Norte Triplicate

SPORTS

Del Norte’s Curtis and Nunez named co-MVPs of the Big 5

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Del Norte High seniors McKenna Curtis and Lili Nunez have been named co-MVPs of the Big 5 in volleyball after leading the Warriors to another memorable season.

And they were far from the only Del Norte girls included in the All-Big 5 selections.

In fact, all 11 players on this year’s roster received all-league recognition after a dominating league campaign for the champions.

The Warriors were a perfect 8-0 in league play and did not drop a set on their way to a second straight league pennant, which is believed to be the program’s 30th all time.

Curtis and Nunez led the way and both standouts played a pivotal role for the team, helping to set the tone for their teammates back in the preseason.

“Both of these girls led the team through their performance and consistent mental game,” Del Norte head coach Meagan Curtis said. “Lili set balls that most others wouldn’t even try to set with their hands. Her hard work led to more offensive opportunities for our hitters.

“McKenna led our offense and was unstoppable throughout league play.”

The dynamic duo were also among the most consistent players in this year’s Big 5.

“We could depend on both of them to perform in every match,” the head coach added.

Curtis will continue her volleyball career at the collegiate level after graduation in 2024 and is considering her options after a recent recruiting trip to several of the top community college programs in California.

Nunez, meanwhile, will likely have plenty of options herself and is also a standout basketball player and one of the best javelin throwers in the state.

Their teammates also were honored at the recent end-of-season league meeting and team banquet.

Fellow seniors Reece White and Breann Winingham each also played pivotal roles for the undefeated league champions and both were named to the all-league first team.

Teammates Bliss Blackburn, Ava O’Reilley, Lauren Stutes, Khloe Smith, Tsinte Steinruck, Ariana Stansbury and Carlee Harper all received an all-league honorable mention.

According to the head coach, the entire team did an outstanding job preparing for the season, which laid the foundation for the Warriors success.

In particular, their work in the weight room during the summer months impressed their coaches.

Longtime Del Norte coach Pablo Lorenzi, who served as an assistant coach with the team this fall, described this year’s roster as the best weight-room team he’s ever seen during his time at Del Norte.

After clinching the league championship and celebrating their five seniors before the regular-season finale, the Warriors received the No. 7 seed for the North Coast Section Division-4 playoffs.

They opened the postseason with a straight sets win over Fort Bragg before barely falling in the second round to Justin-Siena in an exciting five sets match.

The Del Norte senior class included Curtis, Nunez, White, Winingham and O’Reilley.