

Del Norte Notebook (playoff edition) . . .

November 12, 2019



Postseason awaits - Del Norte will take on Alhambra High of Martinez in the opening round of the North Coast Section Division 5 football playoffs. Kickoff will be at 7 p.m. at Mike Whalen Field.

Season success - The Warriors' regular season was capped with a 48-19 whipping of rival Eureka on Nov. 1, giving Del Norte the Big Four Conference championship. The Warriors finished with a 9-1 record, losing only to Mazama in Klamath Falls, 21-14.

Familiar place - Del Norte and the postseason are old friends. The Warriors have made the playoffs in 14 of the past 17 seasons, missing only in 2017, 2012 and 2009.

Opening success - The Warriors have been good in opening-round games of the playoffs in recent years. After a first-round bye last season, Del Norte defeated Justin-Sienna High 37-21. The Warriors won in the first round in 2016 (over John Swett), in 2014 (over Lower Lake) and in 2013 (Justin-Sienna).

Homecooking - Del Norte has won four of its past six playoff games at Mike Whalen Field.

Foe ahead? - If Del Norte advances to the postseason, it would face the winner of Friday's Moreau Catholic-Miramonte game. Del Norte opened the season with a 20-19 victory over Moreau Catholic in a game played in Hayward. Moreau Catholic is the bracket's No. 3 seed.

Humboldt-Del Norte - Three Big Four Conference teams advanced to the postseason. Along with Del Norte, Fortuna advanced, earning the No. 8 seed in Division 5. The Huskies travel to No. 1 seed Encinal on Friday. In Division 6, St. Bernard's is the No. 2 seed. It will play at home Saturday afternoon against Ygnacio Valley. Other regional teams include Arcata, which is an eighth seed and takes on top-seeded J.F. Kennedy, and in Division 7, Ferndale is a No. 2 seed.

As for Alhambra - The Bulldogs have had success getting to the postseason, advancing now six seasons in a row. However, Alhambra has lost in the first round in each of the past three years. It is worth noting that the Bulldogs have played in a higher division than Del Norte.

Playoff foes - Five of Del Norte's nine opponents advanced to the postseason this year. Along with Fortuna, St. Bernard's and Moreau Catholic, the two Oregon teams Del Norte played advanced. However, both lost in the first round of the Oregon State Athletics Association playoffs: Underdog La Salle Prep lost to Silverton 55-7, while second-seeded Mazama was shocked by Tillamook 19-14.

Balanced scoring - No recent Del Norte team has had the balanced scoring this year's edition produced. Seven players have 30 or more points, led by Kobe Mitchell (78), Levi Cox-Cooley (72), Chase Blackburn (54), Kenji Adams-Lee (42), Geo Gonzalez (36), and Kaleb Price and O.J. Calleja (30 each).

Pick party - Del Norte now has 11 interceptions for the year. That compares to just seven last season, three in 2017, and seven in 2015. This year's total does pale in comparison to the 2014 Warrior defense, which had 21 picks in 12 games, including eight by Steven Maready alone.