

Fortuna's Sarah Johnson named Big 5 MVP

Neil Tarpey/The Times-Standard

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Although her volleyball team did not finish first among the league's top three, the coaches selected her as the Most Valuable Player.

The 2010 Humboldt-Del Norte Big 5 MVP is Sarah Johnson, the outstanding senior libero from fourth-place Fortuna.

Huskies' head coach Kristina Barnum praised Johnson -- who played four years on Fortuna's varsity, the last three as a starter -- for her all-around skills.

"Probably the best thing I could say about Sarah is that she's consistent," said Barnum. "There's a lot of flashy hitters in the league, but Sarah always had an answer for that. She anchored our defense."

In addition to Johnson's stellar defensive work, Barnum noted her skilled passing, sharp knowledge of the game and positive attitude.

"Everything starts with the pass, and she understood how important it was to get her job done. Her work from the back row really helped her teammates," said Barnum.

"Her court experience helped her read what was happening, and she had an excellent attitude."

In addition to Johnson, three players from first-place McKinleyville were also named to the all-league team released Monday.

Seniors Kaila Johnson and Jocelyn Grondalski and junior Amanda Kunst earned all-league honors for the Panthers.

McKinleyville's championship season halted Del Norte High's phenomenal streak of 21 consecutive Big 5 titles.

Del Norte, who finished second this year, placed senior

Vanesa Alexander and junior Keirstyn Anderson on the all-league squad.

Eureka, which took third in league, had junior Tess Armstrong and senior Carli McFarland on the team, along with senior Julie Leong from Arcata, who finished fifth.

In the Little 5, Southern Trinity, the league champions, had three players on the all-league team.

Southern Trinity junior Hayley LaVasseur was named the Most Valuable Player, and she was joined on the all-league team by senior Warrior teammates Mercy Grimes and Desiree Powell.

The Warriors made it to the semifinals of the North Coast Section Division 6 playoffs, before being ousted by top-seeded and eventual NCS D-6 champion Anderson Valley. Southern Trinity was the only team to win a game against Anderson Valley.

The other six players on the Little 5 all-league team were South Fork's junior Miranda Storre and sophomore Shasta Carr, Ferndale senior Amber Earley, St. Bernard senior Gillian Bryson, and two Hoopa Valley seniors, Ashley Masten and Sara Lewis.

2010 Humboldt-Del Norte Prep Volleyball

Big 5 All-League Selections

Sarah Johnson, Fortuna, Most Valuable Player

Kaila Johnson, McKinleyville

Jocelyn Grondalski, McKinleyville

Amanda Kunst, McKinleyville

Vanesa Alexandre, Del Norte

Keirstyn Anderson, Del Norte

Tess Armstrong, Eureka

Carli McFarland, Eureka

Julie Leong, Arcata

Big 5 Honorable Mention Selections

Kellie McDonald, McKinleyville

Tara Rowland, McKinleyville

Brilynn Welch, Del Norte

Kristyn Rook, Del Norte

Jamie Olson, Eureka

Sarah Armstrong, Eureka

Little 5 All-League Selections

Hayley LaVasseur, Southern Trinity, Most Valuable Player

Mercy Grimes, Southern Trinity

Desiree Powell, Southern Trinity

Miranda Storre, South Fork

Shasta Carr, South Fork

Amber Earley, Ferndale

Gillian Bryson, St. Bernard's

Ashley Masten, Hoopa Valley

Sara Lewis, Hoopa Valley

Little 5 Honorable Mention Selections

Kaitlynn Miller, South Fork

Breanna Miller, South Fork

Taylor Reed, St. Bernard's

Macy Matilton, Hoopa Valley

Crissy Robbins, Hoopa Valley

Darian Ferris, Hoopa Valley