

Cardinal's Traverso²⁰⁰² looks ahead

Monday wasn't a day of doom and despair on the Farm, Matt Traverso was saying.

Stanford firing football coach Walt Harris can be viewed as a new beginning, the tight end and team leader from Christian Brothers High School insisted.

"The mood here is a mood of moving forward, looking ahead," Traverso said. "Sometimes things run its course, and you make a change. We can definitely get it going here again.

"There's no place like Stanford. I have total faith in our athletic department (to hire the right coach). And we have the players here to be successful again, with all the veterans coming back. We need to be healthy, but we'll be (motivated)."

Traverso includes himself in that observation. The senior hardly played this season because of a bad shoulder in what was supposed to be an NFL showcase campaign. Traverso is filing paperwork to petition for a sixth season of eligibility.

"I feel I really want to finish business here," Traverso said. "I want to finish strong."

Two other Sacramento-area players with starting experience at Stanford will return next season: fullback Emeka Nnoli (Natomas) and defensive lineman Matt Kopa (Elk Grove).

- Joe Davidson