Members of the Cabrillo women’s volleyball team storm the court after defeating Delta College in the 2013 CCCAA Women’s Volleyball NorCal Regional semifinals at Cabrillo College in Aptos on Tuesday.

Seahawks stay dominant in playoffs, head to state

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APTOS — There was blood in the water, so to speak, as the Cabrillo College women’s volleyball team did what any hungry predator would do. It attacked the weak link.

“Something clicked on our side, that we’ve been working for six months and we’re not going to give up these points,” said Cabrillo freshman defensive specialist Grace Byne. “It was like a switch clicked on.”

Trailing by eight points midway through Game 3 with a berth to the state tournament on the line, the Seahawks relentlessly went after visiting Delta College on their way to a 25-20, 25-16, 25-21 victory.

The Seahawks celebrate after scoring a point against Delta College during the third game at Cabrillo College on Tuesday.

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day in the final of their half of the California Community College Athletic Association NorCal bracket.

The victory assures Cabrillo its third berth to the CCCAA state championships in four years. As the No. 1 seed in NorCal and in the state, Cabrillo will again play against the SoCal No. 3, Cosumnes, at 5 p.m. Saturday at Foothill College in Los Altos Hills. Irvine Valley, the No. 1 seed from the SoCal bracket and the No. 2 in the state, will play the winner of Tuesday’s NorCal match between American River and Fresno City on Saturday. The winners of those two matches will meet at 7 p.m. Saturday at Foothill with the victor moving straight to the championship, scheduled for 3 p.m. Sunday.

If it runs three straight matches, Cabrillo can become the first NorCal team to win the state title in the modern history of the CCCAA championships. The Seahawks were the last NorCal team to win a state title when they took the Small Division championship in 1979, the season before the CCCAA combined the small and large school divisions.

Cabrillo has defeated Delta in the NorCal final each time it has made the state tournament. After missing state last season, though, Cabrillo coach Gabby Houston Neville said she felt relief that her team had again punched their ticket.

“I just wanted to get through this match so bad because I know state is going to be such a grind,” she said.

Indeed, state hasn’t been kind to the Seahawks. They have yet to make it past the first day of the two-day, double-elimination tournament. But those past shortfalls only serve as fuel for this year.

“I definitely think it’s more of motivation,” she said. “We want to show them.”

Cabrillo (25-4) hasn’t needed much to fuel its fire, and Delta (21-6) looked like it might go up in flAMES from the very start. Behind the serve of freshman Kelsie Shaver in a Harbor High product, Cabrillo jumped to a 9-3 start in Game 1. The Mustangs rallied back to behind the serve of setter Shyllyn Show, however, to pull within three at 8-5. But Cabrillo went on another long streak behind the serve of Moody Call, whose second ace of the run gave the Seahawks a 9-point lead, and managed to stretch it to an 11-point lead before closing out the game.

Call and Shaver went on two more long serving streaks to break open an otherwise close Game 2. Call, with Shaver doing damage in the front row, gave Cabrillo a four-point padding and Shaver stretched it to a seven-point lead (22-15) with the help of sophomore outside Orio Morgan and freshman middle Madison Burch in the front row.

Shaver finished with a match-high 17 kills, 30 digs and two aces; while Morgan made 12 kills and Burch added seven with seven blocks.