

Lady Celts strike fear in hearts of leading 5A team

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

Even a low point during the winter break was something of a high point for the McNary High School girls varsity basketball team.

During a winter break tournament in Bend, the Lady Celts started off with a 45-35 win over Willamette High School, the defending 5A champions. It set up a game with the current 5A leaders, De La Salle High School, which the Celts lost 61-49.

"We don't like talking about moral victories, but De La Salle's closest game of the season before us was a 37-point victory," said Derick Handley, McNary head coach. "We gave them a scare and it came down to a 12-point run that spanned the first and second quarters."

The Celts outscored Knights in the second half, an almost unheard of feat against the Portland team. A De La Salle player who drained three four treys in the first half didn't make a shot in the second half.

"It was one of our better games and we had a lot of energy and effort even when their lead went to 20 points," said McNary's Jaylene Montano.

In the win over Willamette, Handley said it was Montano and junior Vanessa Hayes who helped spark the team to a win. Neither player had seen significant times at that point in the season, but injuries to two starters, Emma Jones and Madie Rohl, have opened up both players' opportunities.

"Both of them gained a lot of confidence in that game and then Jaylene came out a week later with an even better game against Sandy (High School)," Handley said.

Junior Madi Hingston led the team with 13 points, Kaelie Flores had nine; Kailey Doult put up six points; and Jasmine Ernest, Sydney Hunter and Hayes had four points apiece.



KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald
Jaylene Montano, a McNary sophomore, gets a wide-and-clear shot at the hoop in the Sandy game Friday, Jan. 2.

McNary also suffered a painfully close 37-35 loss to Milwaukee High School at the Bend tournament.

The Lady Celts returned to McNary Friday, Jan. 2 for the game with Sandy. The Celts outshot the Pioneers 26-8 in the first frame, but a pair of second quarter runs helped Pio team cut the lead to six points.

"Our intensity was up in the first quarter, but then we started to lose it and we got it

back in the second half," said Kailey Doult, a freshman.

In the second half, McNary locked down on ball possession and shot out the lights en route to a 78-57 win.

"We ended the game with seven turnovers and five of those came in the first half so we really took care of the ball," Handley said. "Once we broke their press we were really aggressive even though they were sitting in their zone.

We attacked the hoop, made plays easier for teammates and finally got some shots to fall."

Handley credited Flores with gains that have helped open up the Celtics inside game.

"She's getting comfortable with the idea of being a post and a guard and she's getting more consistent for us. Her effort on defense has really been improving and the other kids are starting to notice," Handley said.

The Celts were neck-deep in preparation for a game with perennial rivals South Salem High School Tuesday, Jan. 6.

"We need to show them how fast we are and get a lot of fast breaks. They have three really good players that we'll have to shut down," Doult said.

"The key is to keep being confident and aggressive," Montano added. "We have to give it our all and never give up in every game."

WRESTLE: JV Celts clean up at Cali tournament

(Continued from Page 12) of a team atmosphere than anyone else. We had everyone right there next to the mat with us. It actually felt better than wrestling here in Oregon because they didn't know us and we didn't know them. Everything felt like more of a fight," said Celt Noah Townsend, who took first in the consolation bracket at 170 pounds.

Purkey said he spent time studying Venegas' style and that helped him to the win in California.

"Alvarro takes more shots than the rest of us and he gets more takedowns. I focused on doing that and I only did one breakdown the entire finals match," Purkey said.

A number of other wrestlers placed high on the board. Jonathon Phelps took third place with a 7-0 decision; Wyatt Kessler took third place

with a first-round pin; Sean Burrows made it to the third place match before succumbing in a tech fall; Blake Gerstner made it to the third place match before getting pinned in the second round; and Vincent took fifth with a major decision.

"Everything felt like more of a fight."

— Noah Townsend

The Celts hosted McKay and West Salem high schools in a three-way dual meet Thursday past press time and were headed

to the Don York Invitational at Cleveland High School this weekend.

"Don York is a practice for our regional tournament. All of our kids go into the same pool and there's no JV and varsity. We tell the younger ones, 'You're not a JV kid, you're a wrestler that beats other teams' varsity wrestlers.' That's what we're doing again this year," Ebbs said.

Softball clinic at Linfield

The Linfield College softball program is conducting two instructional All-Skills Fastpitch clinics for girls ages 8 to 18 on Jan. 17 and 31.

All clinic instruction will be provided by Wildcat coaches and players. The Cats were the 2007 and 2011 NCAA Division III National Champions.

Each clinic will stress the skills and fundamentals that are necessary to be successful at any level of competition. Skills covered will include hitting, bunting, baserunning, and fundamental defensive play for infield and outfield. There will also be time for pitchers and catchers to learn from the Wildcat coaches and pitching staff.

For girls ages 13 to 18, both clinics will also feature a guest speaker who will be speaking about developing success skills on and off the softball field and

a question and answer session will follow.

Cost is \$40 for campers ages 8 to 12 and \$60 for campers ages 13 to 18. Camp times are 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 10 a.m. to

4 p.m., respectively.

For more information, contact Linfield Assistant Head Coach Staci Doucette by e-mail at sdoucet@linfield.edu or call 360-989-5340.

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