

Celt boys win, warm up slowly in Grizzlies' Furnace

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

From the outset of a varsity basketball game with McMinnville High School, it was clear that McNary High School's 15-2 team was still getting used to drawing out the best game from every opponent.

"We came out and just let their shooters shoot," said Harry Cavell, a McNary junior. "We need to start listening to the scouting reports because there's been multiple games where we know there's a shooter or a slasher and they've just killed us with stuff we knew they were going to do."

Despite cramped quarters in the McMinnville gym, dubbed The Furnace, McNary put together a strong second half to win 55-38.

It was the Grizzlies' three-point specialist Joey Chapman who McNary had the most difficulty containing in the first half. Chapman kept McMinnville ahead of the Celtics for nearly five minutes at the start of the game.

A three-pointer by Cole Thomas pulled the Celtics ahead 8-6 for the first time in at 2:45 in the first frame. Thomas would prove to be McNary's most consistent shooter of the night. He went 3 for 3 from the field, 1 for 1 from three-point range and 2 for 2 from the foul line for a total of nine points.

McNary trailed by a point at the end of the first quarter, but finished the half up 18-17. In what's become something of a trend, the Celtics came out of the locker room more finely tuned.

"Down the stretch, we played better defense and kept their shooters contained. We got in the middle, got good cuts inside and did better execution-wise," Thomas said.

McMinnville tied the game 21-21 at 4:15 in the



KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald
Celt Devon Dunagan leaps between a pair of Grizzly defenders in the game Friday, Jan. 23.

third frame, but McNary responded with an eight-point run. The Celtics capped the period with an alley-oop from Thomas to Tregg Peterson at the buzzer, putting the Keizer team up 31-23.

The Grizzlies threatened again early in the fourth period, drawing to within two points of McNary, but the Celtics got tougher on defense and gradually pulled away. McNary had taken control of the game with a 10-point lead going into the final minutes by frustrating the McMinnville defense and getting to the foul line.

"Offensively, we had trouble getting into our stuff, but we got to the line and got to the hoop and got fouled late in the game," Cavell said.

Cavell led Celtic scoring with 15 points; Peterson put in 14; Trent Van Cleave had seven; Mathew Ismay had six; and Devon Dunagan had four points.

While the team lacked consistency in execution, Head Coach Ryan Kirch said the boys are doing a admirable job of maintaining level heads.

"They are confident. They're not arrogant, but there hasn't been a time when I've seen them lose their mental composure. There are times when I'd like to see them get a little more angry, but I don't think their attitude is faltering," Kirch said. "We've had to win games in a lot of different ways and that's good. At this point, the mental aspect is the biggest thing for us."

TURF: New field able to handle 10x the usage

(Continued from Page 1)
In addition to lines for football, the field surface will include lines for boys and girls lacrosse. While that portion of the project was uncertain in planning stages, it is now a certainty.

"It gives that those teams an opportunity to play at home, and we need the lacrosse community's support as well," McNutt said. Lacrosse is still a club sport at the school, but the boys team has had only one home game in four years due to the constraints of the grass field.

McNutt said the usage of the field will likely skyrocket upon completion. Whereas a

natural grass might only sustain 160 uses a year, an artificial turf field could be used 10 times as often. Most importantly, it gives the school itself more opportunities for outdoor activities in physical education and other classes.

"In sports at Sprague, we've also seen it cut down on the number of knee injuries and concussions due to the soft surface," McNutt said.

The school district now possesses equipment for turf field upkeep, which should help avoid the rapid aging that West Salem's field experienced.

As the start date nears, there are still some outstand-

ing needs. Organizers still need about \$150,000 in cash as well as in-kind donations of rock and concrete work, drainage work and drainage pipe, trucking for removal of the existing field and fuel for those vehicles.

McNutt said a gofundme.com account is being worked on for accepting financial donations online.

For financial donations, contact Ted Anagnos at tedanagnos@comcast.net or Ron Richards, McNary athletic director, at 503-399-3238 or richards_ron@salkeiz.k12.or.us. Contact McNutt at bmfamins@comcast.net to discuss in-kind donations.

New Volcanoes manager in town Feb. 6

The new manager of the Salem-Keizer Volcanoes will be the featured guest at its annual Winter Sports Banquet Friday, Feb. 6.

Kyle Haines, 32, was drafted by the Giants in 2004 and spent part of his rookie season playing shortstop for the Volcanoes. The event

begins at 6 p.m. with a social hour and sports memorabilia silent auction followed by dinner at 7 p.m.

Individual tickets start at \$35, couples are \$60 and tables of eight (or seven plus a special guest) are \$225.



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