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Lady Celts still third after losses to Saxons, Bulldogs

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

McNary High School junior Madi Hingston accounted for almost half the Lady Celts' points in a 70-46 loss to South Salem High School in varsity basketball Tuesday, Feb. 3.

"As a group it wasn't a very pretty game, but Madi showed the most offensive aggression we've seen from her (against South) and was really a stand-out player for us," said Derick Handley, McNary head coach.

Handley said the team had a one-point lead in the sixth minute of the game, but the Saxons ended the frame with a run and the Celts could never quite catch up after that.

"We had several key players in foul trouble early, including Kaelie Flores, who didn't spend a lot of time on the floor for us," Handley said. "They were able to challenge our shots which limited our ability to get any consistency going on offense."

Flores has been an increasingly important part of the roster on both offense and defense for McNary this season.

After Hingston, Flores was the top scorer for McNary with 13 points; Emma Jones had eight; Sydney Hunter had six; and Jasmine Ernest had four.

Hingston followed up her big night against South by scoring more than half the Celtic points in a 61-54 loss to West Albany High School Friday, Feb. 6. She poured in 23 points, including 5 of 8 from the three-point range.

"We were hoping to pressure their ball handlers a little more with our press and half court defense, but the lack of ball pressure allowed them to limit turnovers. We played pretty sound defense, but with their shooters you can't give them an inch," Handley said. "We had a few turnovers early in the third quarter and they were able to build up a 13-point lead."

The team made it a goal to cut the lead to single digits by the end of the frame. They got



KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald
 McNary's Sean Burrows looks for a way to escape a North Salem High School opponent in a match Thursday, Feb. 5.

Mat men escape Vikings 38-37

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

The McNary High School varsity wrestling team survived a dual meet with North Salem High School by the skin of its teeth Thursday, Feb. 5.

The Celts won 38-37. It came down to a few matches decided by pin rather than decision, said Jason Ebbs, McNary head coach.

"Ryan Edsall is a kid who goes out and competes well for us every week, but he doesn't always come away with the pins. He got one against North Salem and it turned out to be an important one," Ebbs said.

Edsall got the pin in the second round, scoring six points for the team.

"It came down to having the whole team behind me," Edsall said. "We've made a lot of progress in becoming more of a family and it's shown on the mat."

Other winners for the Celts were: Alvarro Venegas, pin in 1:09; Joey Kibbey, pin in 31 seconds; Johnathon Phelps, major decision, 12-3; Carlos Vincent, major decision, 15-7; and Taran Purkey, pin in 59 seconds.

Despite some "oddball" challenges such as a couple of wrestlers not making weight, McNary traveled to a tournament at West Linn High School the next day and won the whole thing.

"We kind of limped into that one, but we're not looking for excuses for why we lost, we want reasons to win," Ebbs said.

The biggest notch in the Celtic belt was taking a win over seventh-ranked West Linn High School. McNary came out on top in a close 36-32 final score.

"On paper, that's not a match we're supposed to win, but the kids found a way," Ebbs said. "For every guy they put on the mat, we had someone who stepped up to the challenge."

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KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald
 Celt Madi Hingston gets a clear look at the hoop from three-point range in the Lady Celts' game with West Salem High School Tuesday, Feb. 10.

Keizer players lead Crusaders to big win

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

Two Keizer students at Salem Academy were pivotal in a win that put an end to the dominance of Blanchet High School in a longtime rivalry last week.

Tim McAvoy and Andrew Werst, both seniors, kept their team in the game in the final minutes en route to a 56-53 win.

"I don't think anybody at the school who remembers the last time we beat them, and all four of our teams won," McAvoy said.

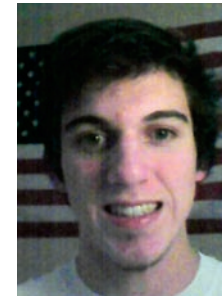
McAvoy went on a baseline drive for two points and hit a trey to put the Crusaders ahead, but the Cavaliers battled back. Werst hustled to grab a loose ball and took it to the hoop. He was fouled and hit both of his free throws to put Salem Academy up by one in the final minute. Crusader Coen Acker put in the final points from the foul line to seal the win.

"It could have been anybody's game and every one of their shots was like a punch in the stomach for me and the whole team," McAvoy said. "But, every shot we made felt like 1,000 points."

McAvoy had 16 points and 11 rebounds for a double-double. The win put Salem Academy

at the top of the 3A PacWest Conference with a 10-1 record.

"Blanchet has always been a great team and it was great to get the win in a really fun game," Werst said.



T. McAvoy



A. Werst

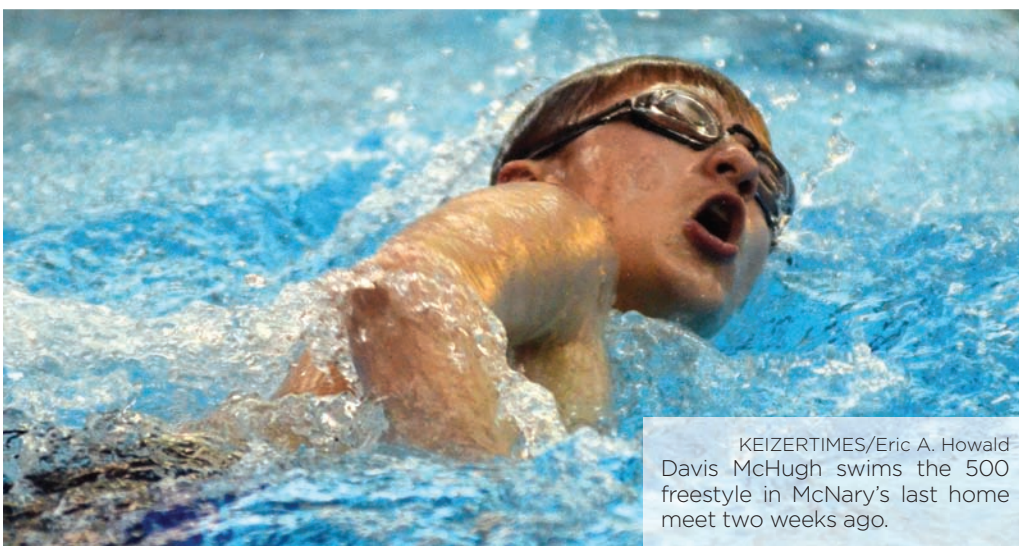
The team's only loss of the season came to Blanchet earlier this season and they have only one game left. The Crusaders take on Chemawa Indian School Friday, Feb. 13, at Chemawa.

Werst credited the Crusaders' tight team bond as the reason for their success this season.

"We have a pretty young team, but the seniors are as close to the freshmen as anyone else," he said.

This season has been a special one for McAvoy. He was benched for his sophomore and junior seasons after dislocating his knees numerous times.

"I've been held back by injuries like that, but the Lord's let me come back to play the game that I love with the people that I love," McAvoy said.



KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald
 Davis McHugh swims the 500 freestyle in McNary's last home meet two weeks ago.

At district, Swimmers on the bubble

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

The McNary High School swimming teams will have a fairly tough row to hoe when they head to the district meet Friday, Feb. 13, in McMinnville. It only proves what a difference a year can make.

"In last year's league I would be certain we had a number of kids headed to the state meet, but with the additions of McMinnville, Forest Grove and West Albany, we

have a lot more swimmers on the bubble," said Casey Lewin, McNary head coach.

There is one advantage that McNary will have, the Celts had their last meet in McMinnville and got the chance to swim in the same pool where district titles will be up for grabs.

"The walls of the pool were a bit different and it was hard to adjust in the meet, but now we know what that will be like," said sophomore Abby

McCoy.

Lewin was thankful that the swimmers will have fewer "excuses" should they perform less than they expect of themselves. Both teams lost to the Grizzlies in the meet Tuesday, Feb. 10, but McMinnville brought a stacked roster of more than 70 student-athletes to the contest.

Outside the pool was also a different experience, said senior Anjelica Glassey.

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