

# Royal Scots stun Celtics in 10-7 win

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Of the Keizertimes

There was a single moment in the McNary High School varsity football team's 10-7 loss to the McKay High School Royal Scots that seemed emblematic of the night as a whole.

With 3:23 to go in the third quarter, McNary had just recovered a Royal Scot fumble at the one-yard line. It was the second time in less than four minutes that a Celtic drive was beginning buried near the end zone.

After coming up empty on two running attempts, Celt Brady Sparks broke through for a three-yard gain to bring up third-and-seven. On the next play, McNary quarterback Trent Van Cleave kept the ball and made a break for it along the near sideline. He was taken down hard and was slow to get up — Van Cleave had already spent a good portion of the night getting beat up trying to run the ball. The first thing he did once he was standing was turn to see if he'd made the first down and dis-

covered he was a yard short. His shoulders visibly slumped as he handed the ball to the referee and the Celts punted on fourth-and-one. That same sense of defeat seemed to hang over the Celtics for the rest of the game.

"We didn't make the plays that presented themselves and they did. Defensively we made the plays when we absolutely had to, but it wasn't what I would call the best defensive game we've had," said Jeff Auvinen, McNary head coach.

It was a night of frustration for the Celtics as the Royal Scots emerged with a win in the rivalry for the first time since 2009.

"We prepared all week, but we got to the game and it felt like we didn't have it together," said Hayden Sader, a McNary senior.

McNary's night on the gridiron began much better than it ended. The Celts had possession of the ball first and made a 13-play drive up the field from their own 35-yard line, mostly with Sparks working the run game.



Celt Josiah Gilbert makes a leaping interception during the game with McKay High School Friday, Sept. 25.

On the penultimate play of the drive, McNary's Brodie Nepstad reeled in a catch that brought up third-and-inches close to the one-yard line. Sparks punched through on the next play for a touchdown. An extra point by Gustavo Villalvazo made the score 7-0.

After a tough defensive stand, McNary took back possession of the ball near midfield and drove back to the Royal Scot red zone. The Keizer team stalled out and opted for a field goal attempt from the 21-yard line. A bobbed snap left Nepstad short on time. He picked up the ball and ran to the outside of the pack for a "Hail Mary." He nearly connected with Celt Hayden Sader in the end zone, but one of the Scots made a perfectly-timed leap and swatted away the pass.

McKay kept its next drive alive with a faked punt. The Salem team nearly notched a touchdown, but Celt Bobby Botta tripped the running

back inside the McNary 15-yard line. A big tackle by Celts Shawn Snyder and Brendan Van Voorhis kept the Scots off kilter, but a field goal attempt succeeded, making the score 7-3.

"Everyone did their own job on defense like we've been

doing in practice. Everyone was more excited on defense and, when they stopped us, we were eager to get it right back," said Celt LaCroix Hill.

Three failed drives later, McKay was in possession with 3:47 left on the clock and took its time running the ball

back to McNary's nine-yard line bringing up first-and-goal with 19 seconds left in the half. A five-yard Celtic penalty gave the Royal Scots a shorter distance to close and they ran for a touchdown to make the score 10-7 going into halftime.

Coming out of halftime, Celtics Kolby Barker, Jon Anderson, Snyder and Marc Baiza made tackles to slow down a powerful Royal Scot drive. McNary's Josiah Gilbert came up with an interception at the one-yard line, but was immediately swarmed and brought down.

"We didn't communicate very well, especially on the pass coverage, and that's something we have control of and can make better," Snyder said.

Van Cleave made a wily 41-yard run to give McNary breathing room at their own 42-yard line, but the Celts lost 20 yards on a high snap and sack by the Scots. McKay came up with an interception on the next play. The Royal Scot drive ended on the Celt one-yard line with a fumble that McNary recovered. That play brought up Van Cleave's momentum-crushing shortfall.

Late in the fourth quarter, McNary got one more chance to tie the game with a 31-yard field goal attempt, but it fell short of the mark.

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