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Boys roll near-perfect game en route to title



Assistant Coach Scott Miller, Garrett Hughes, Jerome Ricks, Bailey Lee, Tim Kiser, Donovan Grubough, Head Coach Dan Kaplan, Adam Teal, Nick Blythe and Derrick Lucas after winning the district bowling title.



Celt Jesse Gomez tries to prevent Caulin Leach from escaping during the West Albany dual meet.

Celts escape Bulldogs

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

After early matches in McNary High School varsity wrestling meet with West Albany high School Thursday, Jan. 21, the Celts had fallen behind.

The Bulldogs managed a few upsets, but Jason Ebbs, McNary head coach, said the two programs were tough in some of the same weight classes.

"We knew it was going to come down to about five critical matches. If we won those, we were going to win by a lot, but if we lost them it was going to be the other way around," Ebbs said.

Things were looking iffy before senior Blake Gerstner took the mat and won by pin to even the score 24-24.

"I knew I didn't want to get pinned and I was going to fight off my back no matter what," Gerstner said. "I wanted to be part of getting the fire going again for the team."

The Celts took a lead they wouldn't relinquish after McNary's Jesse Gomez pulled off another pin for the team.

"I heard the coach say we needed a pin. That made it stressful, but I knew I had to get it and I wanted to get it," said Gomez. "It was a tough position to be in but I think we held together pretty well."

McNary ended up winning

the dual meet with a score of 47-25.

Other Celtic winners: Joey Kibbey by pin; Jon Phelps by pin; and Isaiah Putnam by pin.

On Jan. 22 and 23, the mat team competed in the annual Reser Tournament of Champions. Junior Sean Burrows took second in the junior varsity division and senior Jon Phelps placed sixth at the varsity level.

"We had five guys still wrestling on day two and four of them had to win their first match to have a shot at placing. Three lost, one won and that was Wyatt Kesler who finished one match away from placing," said Ebbs.

Celts Ricky Vincent and Putnam also finished one match away from placing.

"It was a tough tournament, we lost five matches on day one by three or fewer points in the varsity and those were dealbreakers for us. We have to be able to win those types of matches, especially at the district and state level, to make an impact," Ebbs said.

Two weeks ago, the varsity wrestling team placed fourth out of 20 Oregon 6A teams at the Oregon Classic Jan. 15-16.

While wrestling becomes a mostly individual sport by the time state matches roll around, the Classic is one of the truest

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By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

The McNary High School boys varsity bowling team not only won a district title Sunday, Jan. 24, they bowled a near-perfect game.

"The energy in the entire building changed once they started striking. There were spectators high-fiving each other," said Scott Miller, the team's assistant coach. The event was hosted by Linn Lanes in Lebanon.

Perfect games are a rare enough occurrence, they require a bowler to deliver 12 consecutive strikes that total 300 points when all is said and done.

Competitive high school bowling adds another twist. Five-person teams bowl baker-style meaning the first bowler will bowl frames one and six. The second bowler will bowl

frames two and seven with the fifth bowler bowling frames five and 10.

With Celtics Jerome Ricks, Bailey Lee, Tim Kiser, Donny Grubough and Nick Blythe on the lane, McNary posted a game for the record books.

"We started several games with two or three strikes, but as the streak got longer and longer more and more people were paying attention," said Dan Kaplan, McNary head coach.

In a single game of the semifinals, the Celtics had accumulated 11 strikes plus eight pins on the final ball for a grand total of 298.

"I was jumping up and down after every strike," said Grubough.

"Everybody in the place stopped to watch us," said Kiser. "It was stadium-level loud," added Blythe.

Grubough, Kiser and Blythe

were all named all-stars of the tournament.

The almost-perfect effort was also the final act of a trilogy for McNary in the semifinal rounds. It capped a three-game series that began with scores of 262 and 224.

"It was the most incredible stretch I've ever seen in more than 20 years as a coach," Kaplan said.

The Celtics' road to the semifinals was no bed of roses.

"The first round is 22 games and we did okay. We had a lot of open frames and pins left hanging," said Kaplan.

Grubough said everyone rallied after tough frames to keep it together.

"If somebody had a bad shot, we were all right there telling him it was all right," Grubough said.

By the end of the preliminaries, the McNary team was

second and had claimed a seat in the semifinals. In the semifinals, which consists of 10 games, all scores were reset and the Celts began bowling out of their minds.

At the end of 10 games, McNary was 321 pins ahead of the second place team.

The Celts ended up facing a team from McKay High School in the finals and won easily.

"McKay was intimidated and we bowled 211 our first game to their 138," Kaplan said.

The Celts finished ahead 377-249 for the two finals games.

Blythe, a three-year veteran of the team whose already got several 300 games as a solo performer, said the experience was his most memorable yet.

"It was the most fun I've had in three years, and this is the best team I've ever been part of," Blythe said.

Tops in Seaside



The sixth grade KYBA Celts girls won a Seaside tournament championship last weekend. Players are: Taylor Rubio, Mya Adams, Piper Nelson, Kylie Nepstad, Callie Montgomery, Aubrey Smith, Mya Salinas, Lexi Dalton, Annabelle Brawley. The team is coached by Misty Rubio and Duford Adams.

Girls cage Grizzlies

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

The McNary High School girls varsity basketball team completed its first run through the Greater Valley Conference with a 53-34 win over McMinnville High School Friday, Jan. 22.

The Lady Celts are currently second in the GVC with a record of 7-1. South Salem was the only team to beat the Celts in the first round-robin, but Derick Handley, McNary head coach, doesn't want the team resting on its laurels.

"I really hope that we don't settle. I hope the girls aren't satisfied with taking second in the league because our goals have been much bigger than that the entire season" Handley said.

With games on tap vs. North Salem and Forest Grove high schools before getting another shot at the Saxons, Celt senior Kaelie Flores said it's difficult to not look past the next two games to the one on the horizon.

"We definitely have our eyes on South, but we can't overlook North and Forest Grove. We have to work on ourselves in those games to be ready for (South)," Flores said.

Sophomore Kailey Doust said there are still things for McNary's team to improve upon in the run-up to the South game, which the Celts host Tuesday, Feb. 2.

"Our team defense has been a lot better, but we can get better in our offense and more consistent," Doust said.

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