

Track and field team stacks roster with upperclassmen



File

Celt Cambrian Partridge hurls the discus in competition during a 2015 dual meet. Frank Gauntz, McNary head coach, has high hopes for Partridge after putting in a lot of off-season work.

By ERIC A. HOWALD Of the Keizertimes

The McNary High School track and field teams return for the 2016 season Friday, April 1, at the Titan Track Classic at West Salem High School.

The first event is 3 p.m. Unlike other teams, such as baseball and softball, that have been sent scurrying to the gym for practice on rainy days, the track and field team has been outside rain or shine.

The new turf field has made it possible.

Head coach Frank Gauntz said the team is benefitting from large junior and senior classes returning for another year.

"We have good numbers this season and we've got the most seniors that I've had since becoming coach of the team," Gauntz said. "It's not just a lot of freshman which is what we usually get."

Senior Dani Duran said having more hands on deck in regard to upperclassmen is making for lighter work overall.

"It helps having more experience so everyone knows what they're doing and more people for the younger kids to ask when they have questions," Duran said.

The Celts graduated one of their top sprinters last year, Kyle Torres, but his shoes are being filled by senior Anthony Nguyen. Nguyen sat out his junior year with injury, but ran the 100 meter in 11 seconds as a sophomore and took second at the district tournament.

"I'm hoping for a state

title in the 100 meter this year, but we've also got some stacked relay teams and I think we've got state potential," Nguyen said.

For the girls, Duran is anchoring relays and shooting to improve on her finishes in the sprints after some narrow misses at the Greater Valley Conference tournament last spring.

"I want to get a personal record in the 400, I'm hoping to get down to around 56 seconds," Duran said.

Duran finished second in the 200 and 400 meter district races as a junior and was part of a 4x400 relay team that finished third.

Gauntz said he was also eager to see how junior Cambrian Partridge fares in the discus this season.

"She's put in a lot of work in the off season and I think it's going to pay off for her in a big way," Gauntz said.

Other notable returners for the boys include junior Brendan Van Voorhis, second place finisher at the last district meet in the 400 meter;

senior Antoine Wilder in the hurdling events, he placed fourth in the 110 and 300 hurdles at district last year; and senior Austin Brown in the 400 meter and as a member of the relay teams.

For the girls, junior Alyssa Looney was a contender in the 100 meter at the GVC meet in 2015; sophomore Kailey Doult took second in the 800; and Sydney Hunter is expected to return to lead the 4x400 relay team.

While the season has yet to begin in earnest, Nguyen said the team was already showing strength of character.

"We have good, strong bonds, even with the young kids who are coming in for their first season. They're following our lead," Nguyen said.

Changes aplenty for Monster Cookie Ride

By CRAIG MURPHY Of the Keizertimes

Sometimes big anniversaries are the perfect time to introduce changes.

Such is the case with the Monster Cookie Metric Century Bicycle Ride, the premier spring event for the Salem Bicycle Club. The 40th anniversary event is coming up April 24, starting at the state Capitol Mall in Salem, to Champoeg State Park and back to Salem.

Keizer's Hersch Sangster started the event with family, including wife Mary Ann and brother John. Sangster is still heavily involved with running and promoting the event, assisting Larry Miles.

One of the changes regards looks. A T-shirt commemorating the 40th anniversary of the event is still available, while there is also a jersey that was designed by Colorado-based Primal specifically for the event.

"The shirt is a new design," Sangster said. "These have always been cotton. Now we're going to a sports-tec style, designed by a local designer."

Sangster is even more excited about the jersey. The event is rated as the third biggest bike ride in Oregon. Primal makes jerseys for the two biggest events and Sangster said the company was eager to work with Monster Cookie.

"They were great to work with," Sangster said. "We've never done a jersey before. There's a real monster cookie on the back. We're selling those as part of the registration."

Sangster said good cycling jerseys typically cost between \$80 and \$120. By contrast, this one is \$50.

"The jerseys have been sell-



Submitted

A photo from the early days of the Monster Cookie Ride. The annual event is celebrating 40 years next month.

ing like hotcakes," he said.

Another change has been in food vendors. While there will still be all the cookies riders could want – a natural given the event's name and history – Scott White and K's Catering will provide food, while EZ Orchards will be providing fresh fruits.

"We wanted to go to a healthier food venue, so we're working with EZ Orchard," Sangster said. "We will never go away from cookies, though."

New this year is an activity planned at Champoeg, while there are also new sponsors in AAA and Tour du Cure.

Sangster and Miles have been ahead of schedule this year as far as getting the necessary permits in place.

"From a government perspective, we could run it tomorrow," Sangster said.

One thing that hasn't changed is the reception riders get. That's especially true with Keizer Police Department offi-

cers that help keep streets clear.

"The Keizer Police Department officers have been literally sweethearts to work with over the years," Sangster said. "The guys love doing the duty so much, the chief has to do special scheduling."

Registration is \$25 in advance, or \$30 the day of. Lunches are available for \$7.50, with t-shirts \$15 and the jerseys \$50. All riders must wear a helmet (not provided). Registration can be done online at www.salembicycleclub.org, by calling Miles at 503-580-5927 or by e-mailing cookie@salembicycleclub.org.

"It's amazing we're on year 40," Sangster said. "There were 12 people the first year. Our family felt sorry for us. We kicked in \$20 each to make it work. When we first talked about doing this mom said, 'You know, boys, people will always show up if there is food.' She was right. It has grown each year."

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