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The McNary 4x400 relay team, Austin Brown, Brendan Van Voorhis, Anthony Nguyen and Levi Timmons, was invited to take part in an exhibition race at the IAAF Indoor World Championships Sunday, March 20.

McNary relay team hits world stage in PDX

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

The track and field season is barely under-way, but the McNary High School boys 4x400 relay started things off in a big way.

The team – comprised of seniors Anthony Nguyen and Austin Brown, junior Brendan Van Voorhis and sophomore Levi Timmons – took part in an exhibition race at the International Association of Athletics Federations' World Indoor Championships held in Portland March 17-20.

"It's a pretty cool experience just to be on the track with those great runners," said Van Voorhis. "A big stage like this one is going to be pretty comparable to state."

The Celtic team was picked for the honor by a special selection committee based on performances from the 2015 outdoor season and 2016 indoor season. They were also slotted in the finale race, the boys invitational, that featured teams from Washington, Idaho and Oregon.

"It's good exposure for us and our school. It's a way to get our names and the name of our school out there," said Nguyen. "It also gives us a big edge to have that high-level competition this early in the season."

The Celtics lost their anchor, Kyle Torres, to graduation last June, but Nguyen is returning after a standout sophomore season that saw him finish second in the Greater Valley Conference meet 100 meter in 2014. Van Voorhis has served time on both the 4x100 and 4x400 team, Brown is a veteran of the 4x100 and Timmons is an up-and-comer from the junior

varsity team after a strong freshman season.

"It's cool because watching them run last year was inspiring," Timmons said. "My goal is just to keep up with them this year and improve individually as well."

In a pool of mostly individualized competitions the relays stand out for the team effort required.

"It's different from other events because you have other people relying on you, but that pressure pushes us to get better and make sure that we're doing what we need to be doing," Brown said.

The Celtics finished fourth in the race with a time of 3:34.

Kelley Borresen, the Celtics' relay coach, said the invitation to the World Indoor Championships was a credit to the way the program has bred success over time in both boys and girls relays.

"Each year, everyone on those teams has been willing to add to their training. By this time in the year, they're lifting weights every morning and spent time running in the off-season. They have become a group of leaders for the program as a whole, and they do a great job of including the younger kids in the training and lifting them up," Borresen said. "Being selected for the race is a nice way to recognize the effort and level that our athletes have trained at."

While it's a bit early to be talking about the season yet to unfold, Borresen has high hopes.

"With the work they've put in, they are in a good position to compete at a high level," she said.

Rocky start for Lady Celts on the diamond



KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald

ABOVE: Celt Nadia Witt makes a beeline for third base in the game with Franklin High School. BELOW: Nicole Duran makes a play at third after cutting off a line drive.



The McNary High School varsity softball team is off to a rougher-than-hoped start this season. After four games, the Lady Celts' record is 1-3.

The team's first game of the season, against Medford High School Wednesday, March 16, ended in a 15-5 loss after five innings. In 2015, McNary dominated the Black Tornadoes in the first round of the state playoff tournament.

The Celtics scored three runs in the first frame, but North Medford answered with six of its own and never looked back. Celt Nadia Witt had a home run and Kinsey McNaught had a triple in the outing.

McNary hosted Franklin High School Friday, March 18, and led the game 2-1 until the seventh inning when the Quakers put together two runs and took the win.

At a spring break tournament that began Monday, March 21, the Celtics split their first two games. St. Helens High School edged the Keizer team 5-4 in the first game, but McNary pummeled Springfield High School 22-0 later the same day.

Celts rack up all-GVC honors

The McNary High School varsity basketball teams were awash in accolades after Greater Valley Conference coaches made their annual all-conference selections.

On the boys' side of things, senior Harry Cavell was named player of the year, junior Matthew Ismay was co-defender of the year, and Cam McCormick was named the league's assistant coach of the year.

Cavell was named to the first team all-conference; Ismay was named to the second team all-conference alongside senior Trent Van Cleave; and honorable mentions went to juniors Adam Harvey, Cade Goff and Easton Neitzel.

In the Lady Celts' program, Head Coach Derick Handley was named co-head coach of the year and sophomore Kailey Doult was picked as the league's first-ever defender of the year.

Senior Madi Hingston and junior Sydney Hunter were selected for the first team; seniors Reina Strand and Kaelie Flores earned second-team picks; and Doult was an honorable mention.

Keizer man makes good on the draw



On the Wild Side

by G.I. Wilson

You may find Ray Wurdinger practicing his draw at his Pacific Crest Archery shop. Or, he could be filling out raffle tickets hoping to draw one of the big game lottery hunts. Either way, he has experienced his share of success.

Enter into a conversation with Wurdinger on hunting and his face lights up like the proverbial kid in a candy store. You know you are listening to a person who has a passion for the hunt, and a respect for the animals he pursues. A person who enjoys the thrill and challenges of the chase.

Wurdinger has hunted from Alaska south.

He is not only a bow hunter. He hunts with rifle and muzzle loader.

He is also an accomplished guide.

Probably the luckiest draw he has ever made was drawing an Access and Habitat sheep tag. It is the most coveted tag

in Oregon. A once in a lifetime tag.

"I was driving through town thinking about that sheep tag," he muses. "Somebody's going to win that tag. Why not give it a try?"

He purchased 24 tags for \$200. Odds for drawing the tag were bleak. There were 7500 applicants.

"I remember, I was sitting in an easy chair," he explains. "Actually, I was resting up from a minor injury, when the phone rang. A friend from Baker City had seen where I drew the tag."

Excitement builds over the next couple of months as Wurdinger assembles a team for scouting and preparation for the hunt.

Listening to Wurdinger's account of the hunt gave me goose bumps. His vivid descriptions make me see and sense the thrill of the hunt.

Sheep live in hostile country. A physical challenge for



Submitted

Ray Wurdinger and his wife in the center along with the rest of the team.

man. To give you an idea, to get the ram out, they started at 4:30 a.m., and got back to camp at 4:30 a.m. the next morning.

Wurdinger had his state record. The old record was 177. His ram record was 185-3/8.

It was refreshing to talk with Wurdinger about hunting. He is a goal-oriented

hunter. He sets a goal for a specific species and sticks to it. His goal for the sheep hunt was to set the state record with a bow.

Wurdinger shares some of his philosophy:

"A lot of people don't realize it's not that you were not successful in the hunt, you just didn't find the

animal you were looking for."

"It's not about killing something, it's about making choices."

"Hunters get too excited and stray from their goal. Stick to the goal."

Practice to new archers:

Practice and more practice. Know your limits. There Please see DRAW, Page 12