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Celts rebound after tough losses

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

McNary High School's varsity baseball team had a rough start to its week April 19, enduring a 7-5 loss to South Salem High School in the seventh inning. Fortunately, it did get better.

"We had a good start and ended on a bad note against South, but we really bounced back and showed what we are made of deep inside by the end of the week," said Celt Josiah Gilbert.

In the South game, McNary's Collin Young hit a three-RBI triple in the first inning. Young crossed the plate on a hit by Trent Van Cleave that ended with the latter being thrown out at first. The Celts held on to that 4-0 lead, with Gilbert on the mound, for the next five innings.

In the top of the seventh, the wheels came off on the Keizer team. The Saxons took advantage of walks, errors and a struck batter to run up a 7-4 lead. McNary's Matthew Ismay finally took over on the mound and allowed the team to make its last stand at the dish.

Ismay scored the final run of the game on an error by South, but that was all the Celts could

Baseball camp April 30

The McNary High School baseball program is hosting a Future Celtics Camp Saturday, April 30, for students in fourth through eighth grade.

The cost of the camp is \$25 and registration can be completed on-site at the Celtic baseball field. Check-in starts at noon and the camp runs from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Campers should bring a glove and bat, if they have one, and wear a long sleeve shirt, sweats or baseball pants, a baseball hat and cleats. In the case of inclement weather, the camp will be held in the McNary gym and tennis shoes will be required.

muster for the 7-5 final.

"We felt like we took a punch to the gut. It was hard to swallow, but we didn't make the plays we needed to end that game," said Larry Keeker, McNary head coach.



KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald
Celt Collin Wentworth winds up a pitch in the game with Sprague High School Friday, April 22. Wentworth and fellow sophomore Carl Rumbaugh kept the Keizer team in the game long enough to pull out a 4-3 win.

Keeker said the team had a better game the next day, April 20, as McNary traveled to meet McMinnville High School. The contest resulted in another loss, 4-2, but McNary

handled the Grizzlies' pressure better.

One McMinnville run in the first and two more in the fourth gave the team a 3-0 head start. McNary notched

a run in the top of the sixth when Matt Aguilar scored on a hit by Young, but McMinnville answered with one of its own in the bottom of the frame. McNary scored again in the

top of the seventh when Joshua Benson scored on a double by Brendan Frizelle, but the next batter flied out to end the game.

Please see CELTS, Page A



KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald
McNary's Jannicke Martin returns a volley in doubles competition during a match last week.

Spirited Lady Celts find success in small gains

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

Improvement is measured in inches, not miles, for most endeavors worth pursuing. Of course, knowing that doesn't make it any easier to persevere through the tough times.

Fortunately, the Lady Celts of the McNary High School varsity tennis team are working hard to approach recent struggles with the right attitude.

"When we started the season, we had a lot of freshmen and a lot of seniors and there was an age gap, but we've grown into a nice little family," said Celt Jannicke Martin, a foreign exchange student from Hamburg, Germany.

Senior Ivon Villasenor-Ortiz said the gains on the court are most evident in the moments that aren't readily apparent to onlookers.

"This is my first year and, when I started, I had trouble hitting the ball back and forth across the net eight times, now I can do even more. But it's because we've all improved that I'm able to do that," Villasenor-Ortiz said.

With only three weeks left in the season, Garrett Jensen, McNary head coach, is hoping to see more of the game strategy implemented

on the court.

"They're getting to that point where they know they should be hitting the ball to the person at the net in a doubles defensive shot, but now it's a matter of getting them to do it in a live game," Jensen said.

Sophomore Hannah Childress remains the team's standout. After taking fourth in doubles at the state tournament last year, Childress has emerged as one of the more dominant singles players in the Greater Valley Conference.

Childress is still working on building the confidence she set out to establish at the beginning of the season, Jensen said.

"She has a good offensive game, but we're still working on getting her defensive game at the same level," Jensen said.

Of the newcomers to the sport this season, Jensen said Katherine Perez and Tayler Walker have shown some of the greatest improvement since the beginning of the season.

"They're playing doubles together for the team now and it's been a complete turnaround for both of them since the first day of the season," he said.

Please see TENNIS, Page A10

Boys tennis hits winning combo at No. 1 doubles

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

The McNary High School boys varsity tennis team is enduring one of those dreaded rebuilding years.

In the Keizer team's past three Greater Valley Conference contests, the Celts have won only two matches, both of them in the No. 1 doubles slot.

Senior Johnny Trinh and partner Mats Schiefer, a junior, beat the top doubles teams from Sprague and South Salem high schools in recent weeks.

Trinh and Schiefer beat the Olys in straight sets of 6-2 on Tuesday, April 19 and took down the Saxons with set scores of 6-4, 6-7 and 7-5 on Thursday, April 21.

"It's been good for them and it's helped boost the morale of the team," said Lisa Reid, McNary head coach.

While match wins are proving difficult for McNary, improvement has shown in other ways, Reid said.

"Everybody is getting in more games than they did in the first time around with the same teams," Reid said.

That effort was on display in the doubles matches of the West Salem contest. The teams of Adrien Valle and Alan Torres and Pablo Barrera and Izayah Hall both won at



KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald
Celt Johnny Trinh returns a volley in competition with Sprague High School. Trinh and his partner Mats Schiefer have won two of their first three matches as a doubles team.

least five points. Abram Lepresh and Adam Graneto won four. In singles competition, Chance Crosby put up a fight at No. 4 singles, but Titan Reid Morrison pulled out the win with set scores of 7-5 and 6-2.

McNary lost some of its more seasoned players to graduation last year. This time around Trinh is the team's only senior and rest of the varsity roster includes four juniors, two sophomores and

three freshmen.

Among the newcomers, Reid said Graneto is showing a lot of potential.

"Adam has been out here really working hard and he's been really flexible playing singles and doubles. That's hard to do for any player," Reid said. "On the whole, they've kept their heads up even with the struggles and that will help them in the future, especially if they keep playing in the off-season."

Celt softball still tied for 3rd

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

The McNary High School varsity softball team was expected to face Sprague High School Friday, April 22, for third place heading into the last lap of the Greater Valley Conference.

Unfortunately for the Lady Celts, a loss to McMinnville High School the game prior now has McNary and the Grizzlies tied for third with records of 5-3.

"McMinnville was a tough loss for us, but the thing that kept us going was our team bond,

which is outrageous this year," said Celt Hannah Carr. "Even during bad games, and no matter the score or inning, we can rely on each other and none of us get down about the bad things."

The Celtics' week started by finishing a game with McKay High School with a 24-0 win Monday, April 18. The next day, McNary jumped out to an early lead over South Salem High School and piled on as the game unfolded to win 13-2.

Please see SOFTBALL, Page A10