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Celtic baseball wins 2 of 3, sets up playoff push

By **ERIC A. HOWALD**
Of the Keizertimes

The McNary High School varsity baseball team's rematch with West Albany High School Saturday, April 30, turned out much better than the first time around.

The Celts won 1-0 after losing to the same team 10-0 in the first round robin of the Greater Valley Conference.

"Losing to them twice was going to make it difficult for us to have a shot at the playoffs, so that was an important game for this team," said Larry Keeker, McNary head coach.

Some difficulties executing the small-ball game were the only thing that kept the Celts from running up the score

even higher, Keeker added.

McNary junior Matthew Ismay handled starting duties on the mound and went six-and-a-third innings, allowing only four hits.

"He did a really good job of throwing a lot of strikes and the defense played with only one error behind him," Keeker said.

The game wasn't settled until the seventh inning. Celt Trent Van Cleave took first after being hit by a pitch. Josiah Gilbert reached first on an error by the second baseman, but McNary's next two batters struck out, bringing up senior Matt Aguilar.

Please see BASEBALL, Page A11



McNary's Callista Srofe slides into first base after getting caught off the bag in the game with West Salem High School Wednesday, April 27.

MHS alumni basketball tourney kicks off May 14

By **ERIC A. HOWALD**
Of the Keizertimes

For its first time out, a planned boys varsity basketball tournament may not be as big as its organizers would hope, but they're in it for the long haul.

"One of the things that we've tried to do is honor the tradition of the program a little more, this is one way for us to do that," said Ryan Kirch, head coach of the program. "It might be a little on the small side this first year, but we have a program in a one-horse town and I thought it would be a great opportunity to bring back guys to reconnect with the program and players we have now."

The tournament is open to any former McNary boys basketball player and is planned

for Saturday and Sunday, May 14 and 15. Exact times have yet to be decided, but Kirch said the plan is to play some round-robin pick-up games on Saturday at McNary followed by a barbecue and then host a tournament based on the results of the pick-up games on Sunday.

Celt alums who would like to play are encouraged to email Michael Miller at mcnyalummi@gmail.com. Miller is also reaching out to former Celts via social media. Teams will likely be formed based on the years the athletes played for McNary.

While similar tournaments at other schools serve as fundraisers for the basketball program — with participants paying to play — Kirch said that isn't the case for this one.

Please see TOURNEY, Page A11



Lady Celts deal Bulldogs their first GVC loss

By **ERIC A. HOWALD**
Of the Keizertimes

When the McNary High School varsity softball team met West Albany High School Friday, April 29, the Bulldogs were undefeated in the Greater Valley Conference.

That wasn't the case after the game. The Lady Celts won 4-3.

"That was one of our best defensive games of the season," said Madisen Oliver, a McNary senior.

McNary piled up three runs in the second inning with Haley Ebner scoring Sabella Alfaro on a single to left field. Oliver hit a triple to right field scoring Ebner and Nadia Witt.

West Albany scored on an RBI-double in the bottom of the frame.

The Celts' Kinsey McNaught added the team's

final run with an RBI-single scoring Nicole Duran.

West Albany scored two runs on the Celts' only error of the game in the bottom of the fifth for the 4-3 final.

Freshman Faith Danner pitched the complete game with 17 first-pitch strikes and two strikeouts.

"We've had a lot of errors this season, but we had a big talk about making sure we're communicating and knowing where the plays are," said Duran.

Prior to the West Albany game, McNary picked up a 16-0 win over North Salem High School and lost to West Salem High School 5-3.

While the loss means the Titans have swept the Celts this season, it was a much more contested battle this time around. The first time the teams

met, West Salem pounded out an 11-5 win.

McNary was trailing 5-0 when it rallied for three runs in the bottom of the fifth. Duran scored on an error, Callista Srofe scored on a single by Ebner and Alfaro scored on a single by Witt.

The Titans picked up one run on an error, but Kevin Wise, McNary head coach, said the team's biggest growth this season has been learning to regroup after errors.

"The girls are getting comfortable in their roles and along with that they have a new level of comfort with each other. They're starting to talk a little better and part of that is cutting down on errors," he said.

McNary started out its 16-0 rout of the Vikings swinging

for the fences, but it was only after they focused on putting the ball in play that the home runs started piling up. The Lady Celts had four in the game, two by Oliver and one each for Witt and Danner.

"The entire team did a good job of stringing together hits when we needed them and coming in clutch," said Duran.

Witt's three-run homer came in the second inning; Danner's solo shot arrived in the third; Oliver had two-run home runs in the fifth and sixth innings.

Oliver said her big week was the result of putting in extra time hitting after school each day.

"I've been trying to hit at least 100 balls every day and it's carried over to the games," she said.



After surgery, Celt Riley Hays is missing his junior season as a McNary baseball pitcher, but a better-than-hoped-for recovery, and a big goal, might see him return to the mound this summer.

McNary's rubber band man

Junior on the mend after surgery threatened to cut short career

By **ERIC A. HOWALD**
Of the Keizertimes

There's some news we don't want to get, for Celt Riley Hays some of his worst news to date came on his 17th birthday.

Riley, a junior at McNary

High School, had undergone surgery for a stress fracture in his elbow 10 days before his birthday last year and was back in the doctor's office for a check-up.

"They took the staples out, got the splint off and the phy-

sician's assistant was taking a look at it when I asked how soon I would be able to throw again," Riley said.

Throwing again mattered. When he was seven, Riley had found a home on the mound of a baseball diamond and has been working to hone his skills ever since. It was in no small part thanks to the influence of his dad, Kyle.

Please see HAYS, Page A13

Track and field preps for GVC district peak

By **ERIC A. HOWALD**
Of the Keizertimes

With the Greater Valley Conference championships a scant week away, the McNary High School varsity track and field teams are hoping to peak when it matters most.

"We want the kids to get healed up after pounding them pretty hard. We want them to have their best meet at the conference meet. That's what we tailor our practices to, but there are a lot of potential — good and bad — surprises," said Frank Gauntz, McNary head coach.

The conference meet will be held Friday and Saturday, May 12 and 13, at the Wortman Stadium in McMinnville. The first events next Friday begin at 2:30 p.m. Saturday's finals begin at 4 p.m.

On the girls' side of things, Gauntz is hoping for big things from Alyssa Looney, Dani Duran and Cambrian Partridge.

"Alyssa is going up higher and higher in the pole vault. Dani has the top GVC time in the 300 hurdles, and Cambrian had a great series of throws



McNary's Brycen Boucher narrowly misses a high jump during the dual meet with McMinnville High School April 27.

at the Rob Allen Invite last weekend," Gauntz said.

Looney cleared nine feet in the pole vault during a dual meet with McMinnville High

School Wednesday, April 27. It was a personal record for the Lady Celt and put her in third place in the GVC.

Please see TRACK, Page A11