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Duran 2nd in 300 hurdles

McNary High School's Dani Duran took second in the girls 300 meter hurdles at the state meet held in Eugene May 20 and 21.

Duran entered into the race with the second best time in the state and held onto that spot to take the silver medal. Duran's time, 44.37, was an improvement of more than half a second over her prior best and set a new school record, her second of the season in the same event.

The Celtics' Brendan Van Voorhis took sixth in the 400 meter race after winning the Greater Valley Conference title in the event two weeks ago. He also competed in the 200 meter race, but came up just shy of making the finals.

The boys 4x100 relay team – Austin Brown, Levi Timmons, Anthony Nguyen and Van Voorhis – placed ninth with a time of 43.12 at the state meet.

Sperle commmits to PSU Vikings



Submitted
McNary High School's Jason Sperle on a visit to his new home with the Portland State University Vikings.

By **TIM HAYS**
Of the Keizertimes

There isn't enough to say about Jason Sperle.

A 3-year varsity starter for the McNary Celtic football team, Sperle was more than most coaches could dream of.

"He was a great leader. He led by example, he led verbally, he was at every workout, every practice, [and] every game," said Jeff Auvinen, McNary's head football coach. "He gave it his best shot every time. I'm really going to miss him a ton."

Sperle, a staple in the McNary offensive line, committed to play football at Portland

State University in the fall at a signing ceremony Friday, May 21.

He is still unsure what he is going to study, but he is interested in business or some sort of physical therapy program.

"I am really excited to be a part of the future (of the Portland State football program)," Sperle said. "My overall goal is to be successful, not just in the weight room, but on the football field, and I really want to exceed everyone's expectations."

Sperle was named to the 2015 All-Greater Valley Conference second team this year playing center, and earned an

honorable mention in 2014 at the same position.

He works hard on the field and in the weight room, but also in the classroom. Sperle will carry a 3.8 grade point average into Portland State after graduation in June.

"It takes lots of hours after practice, and a lot of extra effort," he said.

Sperle went on to speak about what he hopes to accomplish in his upcoming endeavors, "I hope to get acclimated with the city of Portland, work my way around, get focused in on the classes, and find my role for the first year (on the football team)."



KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald
Lady Celt Xena Lane prepares to bunt in the game with Elmira High School Thursday, May 19.

Tornadoes oust Lady Celts

If the members of the McNary High School varsity softball team end up having bad dreams this week, they will probably involve North Medford High School's Sarah Thomas.

Thomas, the senior pitcher for the Black Tornadoes, pitched a two-hitter in the teams' first-round playoff game Monday, May 23. Medford rode a four-run second inning to a 4-1 victory.

The Celtics only run of the night came in the sixth inning when Kinsey McNaught rounded the bases on a pair of errors by Tornado infielders.

McNary pitcher Faith Danner handled duties in the

circle for the Celtics and held Medford scoreless aside from the second inning.

It was the second time the two teams faced this season, and a bit of retribution for the Tornadoes. McNary ousted Medford from the state playoff tournament in the second round in 2015.

The Celtics played a non-league contest with Elmira High School in the dead week between the end of the regular season and the beginning of the state playoffs. The Lady Celts won that match-up 9-2.

The teams were tied 1-1 after the first inning, but McNary unloaded for five runs in the third frame. Madisen Oliver blasted a home run

shot over the left field fence scoring Nadia Witt and Haley Ebner for a 4-1 lead. Nicole Duran scored on a single by Xena Lane, and Ebner scored again on a walk later in the inning.

Danner and McNaught had RBI-singles in the fourth inning, and Witt scored on another Danner single in the fifth.

Danner pitched a complete game with 19 first-pitch strikes and seven strikeouts.

While the season ended on a sour note, McNary will graduate only two seniors next month, McNaught and Oliver, which should leave the team with a lot of tested will and experience next spring.

Baseball team sets sights on 2017

By **TIM HAYS**
Of the Keizertimes

McNary High School varsity baseball team wrapped up its last game of the 2016 season Tuesday, May 17, in a 16-2 loss to Grants Pass.

The Celtics ended with an 11-14 (7-9) record with a sixth place finish in the Greater Valley Conference, and 35th overall rank in the state. They had the opportunity to advance to the state playoffs had they won their play-in game against Grants Pass.

The young Celtics had a very up and down season.

"We would have games where our offense was productive, but our defense and pitching wasn't," said Larry Keeker, head coach of the program. "And we had games where we pitched well, but the offense wasn't where it needed to be."

The Celtics played .500 ball for most of the season before dropping the final three games of their conference schedule and slipping from third to sixth place in the Greater Valley Conference.

"We were very inconsistent throughout the season, and it really hurt us when we couldn't finish those close games," said Matthew Ismay, a junior. "We really lacked that experience this year."

McNary was 3-7 in games where the game

was decided by two or fewer runs.

"Coming in next year, I think the experience we have will give us an advantage in those closer games," said Celt pitcher Josiah Gilbert. "There were a lot of players this year that had little varsity (game) action, and it showed from time-to-time."

The Celtics look to have four starting returners next year, with five other players who found their name in the line-up at some point in the season.

"All the guys that are returning, I am excited for," Keeker said, "I always look forward to a challenge of the next season."

Along with those returners are pitchers Kevin Martin and Riley Hays, who both had season-ending arm injuries in the past year.

"I think it really hurt us to not have those guys play for us this year," Gilbert said. "They gave us a lot of innings (on the mound) last summer, and we are looking forward to having them back next spring."

All-league honors for the Celtics consisted of first-team all GVC pitcher Josiah Gilbert and infielder Matthew Ismay; two second-team all GVC honorees in infielder Matthew Aguilar and outfielder Trent Van Cleave; and three honorable mention players: catcher Daniel Johnson, first baseman Collin Young and outfielder Brendan Frizelle.

"I think the experience we have will give us an advantage."

— Josiah Gilbert



Submitted
Sea lions like the ones pictured above pose a threat to the Columbia's sturgeon population.

Heartbreak on the Columbia

A massive 2,000-pound sea lion drags the struggling white sturgeon to the surface. The 50-year-old female – laden with roe – is no match for the vice-like canine teeth of the powerful predator.

In a matter of seconds the soft underbelly is ripped open and hundreds-of-thousands of eggs are gulped down. Ever present seagulls feast on scattered eggs. The lifeless carcass slowly drifts away in the current to become food for scavengers downriver. Unfortunately, this is not an isolated incident. This has serious implications for the future of white sturgeon from British Columbia to California.

These magnificent, prehistoric creatures, have never had a predator—other than man—until recent years on the Columbia. Sea lions have learned how to kill the much slower, defenseless females. They dive underneath and rip out the bellies to eat the roe. These females are 300, 400, or more pounds, a minimum of 20



On the Wild Side
by G.I. Wilson

years old. Some as much as 80.

The Columbia has not been just another river hosting white sturgeon. It has been the hub of the West Coast sturgeon population for Oregon, Washington and Northern California. Sturgeon migrate from the Columbia up and down the Pacific Coast.

White sturgeon numbers in the Columbia collapsed in the 1800s due to over harvesting. Old photographs show giant females, stacked like cordwood, on loading docks, waiting for transport to market. Photos show work horses and mules-in harness—used to pull heavy sturgeon out of the river. Tales were told of giant fish winning an occasional battle and pulling a team into the water.

Fortunately, some in the

fishing industry developed a conscious and didn't want sturgeon to follow the paths of the carrier pigeon and bison. Regulations were established. It took roughly 100 years for sturgeon numbers to recover.

A few years ago electronics revealed a large mass-downstream-at the base of Bonneville Dam. Engineers thought a huge chunk had broken off the dam. Cameras revealed a gigantic "ball" of sturgeon. Thousands of sturgeon, stacked up in layers. Biologists were baffled. No logical explanation could be found. Some speculated they were attempting to get away from sea lions.

Today, they are gone. "There are no sturgeon there now," Jimmy Watts, biologist, Oregon Department of Fish

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