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KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley
Scott Gragg, left, played 11 seasons as an offensive lineman in the National Football League. His son, Brian, is now a lineman on the McNary football team after the family moved to Keizer from Missoula, Mont.

McKay on tap for homecoming

By DEREK WILEY
Of the Keizertimes

McNary overlooked McKay last season.

Senior Kolby Barker guaranteed that won't be the case this Friday.

"We didn't give them the respect they deserved and we had a really off night," Barker said of last year's game. "Probably the first quarter was overlooking them and then after that we couldn't recover."

Along with last season's 10-7 result, which turned out to be McKay's only win of 2015, the Celtics are coming off back-to-back losses to South Salem and Sprague.

"You have to forget about those (losses)," Barker said. "You can't dwell on them. You learn from your mistakes and move on. We're working really hard. We're ready to go."

It's also homecoming for McNary.

"It should be a big week for them for a lot of reasons and I think they're prepping pretty well," McNary head coach Jeff Auvinen said of his team. "I think this year we have a different attitude. These seniors have done a really nice job of getting ready."

McKay went 4-24 over the last three seasons but have a new head coach in Josh Riddell, who previously spent a season at McNary as the freshman team's offensive coordinator.

The Royal Scots, 1-2, have shown improvement with a 3-point loss to West Salem, followed by a blowout loss to McMinnville and then a convincing win over Forest Grove.

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KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley
Whiteaker lineman Coleman Young tackles Adams Stephens quarterback for a loss on Wednesday, Sept. 14.

Defense fuels Whiteaker win

Whiteaker Middle School opened its football season with a 14-6 win over Adams Stephens on Wednesday, Sept. 14.

After a scoreless first quarter, WMS got on the board on the first of two short touchdown runs by Ian Martin, who led the Wolverines with 65 yards rushing.

Whiteaker led 6-0 until just before halftime, when the Wolverines stopped Stephens on downs just short of the goal line, only to fumble in the

end zone on the ensuing play, which Stephens recovered for the game-tying touchdown.

In the second half, following an 18-yard run by Whiteaker quarterback Rian Canini and a completed pass to Cameron Parks down to the Stephens 6-yard line, the Wolverines took a 14-6 second half lead when Martin punched it in from the 3-yard line behind the right side of the offensive line (Eric Sorenson, Matt Mehlhoff and

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Big man on campus

Graggs join Celtic football program

By DEREK WILEY
Of the Keizertimes

At 6-11, 400 pounds, Brian Gragg would stand out in a NFL lineup.

At McNary, he's quickly become one of the most popular players on the Celtic football team.

When Gragg saw his first game action, against South Salem on Sept. 9, the McNary student section erupted, chanting, "Brian, Brian, Brian."

"I felt really excited for the crowd that they were getting excited over football and getting really pumped up about the sport but I also felt a little bit of embarrassment because I am a new student here and I'd only been there for about a week," Gragg said. "It's not like I've been here since freshmen year. I literally just got here and everybody in the student section already knew my name. It just blew

my mind. I'm riding it and it's so much fun. It's a great experience."

Gragg said he didn't get many second glances on the first day of school, probably because the other kids didn't realize he was a student. Once they did, the questions started.

"I've probably been asked over 100 times how tall I was over the last two weeks and I don't really expect that to be stopping anytime soon," Gragg said.

Brian, who was born 10 pounds, two ounces and 23 inches long, gets his size from his father Scott, a NFL offensive lineman for 11 seasons with the New York Giants, San Francisco 49ers and New York Jets, who was 6-8, 315 pounds during his playing days.

Scott said up until about two years ago, Brian was growing five or six inches a year. Over the last two years,

it's been more like an inch or two, and he may not be finished.

"It's just astonishing to me to see that," Scott said of his son's growth. "It's big for me. I still tease him and when other people are around I question whether he's taller than me and claim that I can still take him but I won't let him test that."

Scott wears a size 16 shoe. Brian is a 17.

Brian's sister, Anna, is 6-2 and a freshman on the Liberty University volleyball team. Scott said the kids get their athleticism from their mom, Toni, who played college basketball at Chemeketa and then Carroll College in Montana.

"I would say that my wife is a much better athlete than I am," Scott said.

The highlight of Scott's NFL career came in 2002. Playing for the 49ers against his former team, the Giants, in New York, Scott held defensive end Michael Strahan, who had set the single season sack record the year before, sackless. San Francisco also met the Giants in the wild

card playoffs and Scott again held Strahan without a sack in a come-from-behind win to advance to the divisional playoffs, where the 49ers lost to Tampa Bay, the eventual Super Bowl champs.

"I had practiced against Strahan for five straight years while I was with the Giants so we had a love-hate relationship, mostly hate," Scott said.

Brian, a junior, spent his first two years of high school at Valley Christian, a small private school in Missoula, Mont. His family moved to Keizer to be closer to family in Silverton.

Scott, who has coached at alma maters Silverton (four years) and University of Montana (five years) and been the principal of Fort Benton in Missoula for a year since retiring from the NFL in 2005, is an instructional coach at McNary High, providing professional development for teachers. He is also serving as a volunteer assistant on the football team, primarily working with Brad Lomax on the offensive line.

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KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley
McNary junior Kaily Doutt outran Jaden Mandal, of West Salem, to win a dual meet at McKay on Wednesday, Sept. 14.

Doutt wins cross country race

By DEREK WILEY
Of the Keizertimes

SALEM—Kaily Doutt and Emma Garland finished first and third, respectively, to lead the McNary girls cross country team Wednesday, Sept. 14 at McKay.

Doutt was running neck-and-neck with Jaden Mandal for much of the race before the McNary junior left the West Salem sophomore on the final stretch to finish in 20:42, or 17 seconds in front of Mandal.

"My first strategy was to stay with her and then the last 200 meters kick it because that's what I usually do," Doutt said. "I have a pretty good kick. Then when I felt like she was getting tired, I took off."

The win was a confidence booster for Doutt, whose legs had been really sore when she finished behind Mandal in the Greater Valley Conference preview meet on Aug. 31.

"It helped me gain a lot of confidence because I think it's going to be a really tight race at districts," Doutt said. "The top five or six girls are really close together. I'll keep pushing myself in races and hopefully I'll do good things."

Garland ran a personal record 22:46 to take third for the Lady Celts. New to cross country, she is learning something new every race.

"I felt like I could have probably run a little bit faster sometimes," Garland said. "I think I can do better next time.

I like cross country. It's fun. It's a lot of work. It's really hard but it's a great experience. I want to keep on working at it. As weeks go by, I'm starting to get better and build my endurance up. I didn't really know how to run a 5K so I'm starting to understand how to run it a little better."

Paced by Doutt and Garland, McNary (40) finished second as a team in between West Salem (36) and McKay (45).

Allison Repp placed sixth in 24:35. Makayla Long had a season best 26:03 to take 14th and Madeline Bielby finished 16th in 26:07.

With the top six runners all representing West Salem (15), the Titans dominated the boys

race. McKay (54) and McNary (62) finished a distant second and third.

Jonas Honeyman was the first Celtic boy to cross the finish line in a season best 20 minutes to take ninth. Cameron Garrison (20:06) and Brock Wyrer (20:22) weren't far behind in 10th and 11th.

"I think I probably helped push some of my teammates along, Honeyman said. "I think I might have had faster splits, which is good. I'm slowly getting back to where I was last season."

Noah Egli (20:47, 15th) and Tyler Dougall (21:02, 17th) rounded out the scoring for McNary.