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# Celtics outpace Sprague, McMinnville

By DEREK WILEY  
Of the Keizertimes

McNary looked more like the team coming off a night off than the one playing the second game of a back-to-back as the Celtics turned a one-point halftime deficit into a 75-55 victory over Sprague on Saturday, Jan. 14.

"I think we scored a lot more in transition in the second half," said McNary senior Matthew Ismay, who had 17 points, five rebounds and eight assists in the win. "They got a little bit tired and we had a lot more good cuts and passes."

The first half was back-and-forth. After an 11-11 tie at the end of the first quarter, the Celtics led 28-23 with two minutes remaining in the first half before Sprague closed the second quarter with six straight points.

But McNary quickly took control in the second half, opening the third quarter on an 11-2 run. By the end of the period, the Celtics led 51-41 as Adam Harvey knocked down a 3-pointer. McNary continued to pad its lead in the final quarter, outscoring the Olympians 24-14.

Wearing down Sprague, who didn't play Friday because of snow in Forest Grove, was the Celtics plan all along.

"We knew in the final minutes we would out pace them so we tried to pick up the pace a little bit," McNary head coach Ryan Kirch said. "We talked to our guys about just feeling comfortable getting up and down the floor because that's what we do best."

The Celtics also had to defend Sprague forward Teagan Quitoriano, a 6-7 junior who entered the game averaging more than 32 points per game. McNary held him to 10.

"I thought we did a nice job defensively trying to take Teagan out of the game," Kirch said. "We got him frus-

trated, got him tired, just like we wanted."

Ismay, two-time Greater Valley Conference Defensive Player of the Year, was tasked with guarding Teagan.

"He's really strong," Ismay said. "We try to keep him out of the paint because if he gets in the paint, it's over. We just tried to make it as hard as possible on him."

After holding Sprague to just 55 points and defeating McMinnville 65-44 on Friday, Jan. 13, Kirch was pleased with the entire team's play on defense.

"I'm really pleased with our team defense right now," he said. "We're working really, really hard. To hold a 6A basketball team into the 40s, that's just the difference between us and some other teams. We can score it but to be able to play at the next level you have to really be able to defend."

McNary had 27 assists against Sprague. Cade Goff finished with 16 points, 12 rebounds and five assists. Harvey had 16 points, six rebounds and three assists. Easton Neitzel added 14 points, three rebounds and four assists.

With 17 points, five rebounds and four assists, Harvey led the Celtics against McMinnville. Ismay had 14 points, three rebounds and five assists. Neitzel added 16 points.

"We've got such tough kids and I'm really so proud of them," Kirch said. "Our team has really developed into what we've envision, which is a player-led team, not a coached team."

"We are such a veteran group that they can kind of pace themselves a little bit. They can hold each other accountable and I'll ask them what they see and if they see certain things, I trust their judgment on the floor. We've grown. I'm really happy where we're at so far."



McNary senior Adam Harvey drives to the rim against Sprague on Saturday, Jan. 14. He finished with 16 points, six rebounds and three assists in the Celtics 75-55 victory.

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KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley

McNary swimmers Harrison Vaughn, left, and Sarah Eckert won thrilling 500-yard freestyle races against South Salem on Thursday, Jan. 12 in the KROC Center.

# McNary sweeps 500 free in loss to South Salem

By DEREK WILEY  
Of the Keizertimes

SALEM—As McNary junior Sarah Eckert swam the final laps of the 500-yard freestyle, closing in on the leader, she wasn't thinking about her runner-up finish in the 100 butterfly just 10 minutes earlier.

"I feel like it makes swimming harder when you think about the races that you've already swam so I just like to clear my mind," Eckert said. "I'm a really competitive per-

son so when I saw her ahead of me, it was the last 100, I knew I could do it, I just started kicking like crazy and letting my body take over."

Eckert had just enough left to edge South Salem sophomore Maya Merrill by less than half a second, 5:50.15 to 5:50.52 in the longest race of the night.

"Sometimes I think our bodies are more capable than what we think of so I just like to let my mind go blank and just let my body swim,"

Eckert said. "I know Maya is a really, really good swimmer so I did expect it to be pretty close."

Eckert's victory in the 500 wasn't enough for the Lady Celts to defeat South Salem, who outscored the McNary girls 107-62 at the KROC Center on Thursday, Jan. 12.

Along with placing second in the 100 fly in 1:07.73, Eckert also swam on two relays.

The 200 medley with Lizzie Bryant, Haley Debban

and Marissa Kuch finished second in 2:05.01. Swimming anchor in the 400 free relay, Eckert, Kylie McCarty, Emily Alger and Hannah Corpe also took second in 4:10.67.

Kuch also had a strong night individually, winning the 50 free in 25.50 and the 100 free in 56.19.

South Salem outscored the McNary boys as well, 113-56, but the 500 free was neck and neck with McNary sophomore Harrison Vaughn

leading from the start and able to hold off South Salem freshman Alistair Heringer to win the event in 5:23.44.

"When it got to the last 200, I picked it up," Vaughn said. "I had enough at the end and I just think he (Heringer) died."

Vaughn and Eckert are both undefeated in the 500 free this season.

"They compete well," McNary head coach Casey Lewin said. "They don't like to lose. Being pushed brings

the best out of them."

The meet wrapped up a busy two weeks for McNary that included four meets over 10 days.

"We had a lot of best times and considering we're at the end of that run, where we're at is a pretty good place," Lewin said. "I was really proud of how we swam."

The Celtics got a much deserved bye next week and dive back into the pool at West Albany on Friday, Jan. 27 at 4 p.m.