

Wyer ready to take swimming to next level

By **DEREK WILEY**
Of the Keizertimes

When snow fell on Keizer earlier this year, Jake Wyer had to convince his parents to take the journey to Coos Bay to visit Southwestern Oregon Community College.

It was a good thing they listened.

After touring the campus, eating lunch with the swim team and then taking part in practice, Wyer received a scholarship offer to SWOCC.

After getting over the shock, he accepted.

"I was speechless because at that point I realized all of my hard work had paid off and I have something special to look forward to next year," Wyer said.

"It was a beautiful campus. They're (the team) all great. They were very humble and kind. At practice, they helped me out with what stretches to do. I felt at home when I was swimming with them. They're really close together. It was a lot of fun. The workouts were really hard but I was able to do it. It was the

good kind of hard."

Wyer signed his letter of intent on Feb. 23 in the McNary library.

Celtics head coach Casey Lewin said Wyer was unique in that he had never swam year-round.

Wyer, who has also played football and ran track at McNary, said he was too busy with the other sports.

"I just enjoyed swimming for the school because I enjoyed the coaches and I really never thought about joining a club," said Wyer, who began taking swimming more seriously his junior year and then even more so as a senior as he thought about competing in college. "I love being in the water and it's the one thing I look forward to every day during the season."

Wyer credited McNary coaches, Lewin, and assistant Brittany Awalt as well as teammate Haley Debban for pushing him to become a better swimmer.

"She (Debban) really helped me out this year at getting better in the little things," Wyer said. "I wasn't

the fastest kicker and this year I feel like I got a little bit better. It's all a progress."

Wyer helped the McNary boys place fifth in the Greater Valley Conference in the 200-yard medley relay and sixth in the 200 freestyle relay.

But Lewin believes Wyer's best is ahead of him as he spends more time in the pool.

"That's what I'm really, really excited to see," Lewin said. "That's one thing we've talked about a little bit, where he's at right now, to see the improvements that he really wants to see, he needs more pool time and he's going to get that."

Wyer's work ethic will also be missed.

"He's one of those kids that sometimes you have to tell him to not work so hard in practice," Lewin said. "He'll push himself, which is good, it's not a bad trait to have. When he really wants something, he does everything in his power to make it happen. The younger kids see that and it rubs off and we'll definitely miss having that around."



McNary senior Jake Wyer signed a national letter of intent to swim at Southwestern Oregon Community College in Coosy Bay on Feb. 23. KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley

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