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Doran to lead girls basketball program

By **DEREK WILEY**
Of the Keizertimes

McNary's new girls basketball coach Liz Doran's toughest question at an introductory meeting last week didn't come from the press but from one of her future players—"Are there any teams in our league that you don't like?"

"No, I'm not going there," replied Doran after the room erupted in laughter.

Doran graduated from Crescent Valley High School in 2005 back when the Lady Raiders and McNary played in the same conference.

"We lost a heartbreaker here my senior year that I still remember," she said.

Doran was a McDonald's All-American nominee as a senior at Crescent Valley, averaging 19.4 points per game and represented her graduating class as their valedictorian.

Doran signed with Santa

Clara University after high school, starting 61 games and leading the team in 3-pointers her junior and senior seasons. In the classroom, she graduated summa cum laude with a 3.95 GPA in bioengineering.

After serving as an assistant girls basketball coach at Moscow High School in Idaho from 2009-2010, Doran returned to her alma mater to become an assistant at Crescent Valley.

After two seasons, Doran was set to become head coach of the girls program but instead jumped at the opportunity to join the staff at Texas A&M International University, a Division-II program in Laredo.

"At the time it was just one of those things that I couldn't turn down," Doran said. "It was hard to leave because I was really excited to coach the high school team but it was an

opportunity where I thought I could really build my resume and learn more about basketball."

Doran said she enjoyed coaching in college but got the itch to be a teacher and a coach, so after four years she returned to Corvallis and is currently getting her masters of science and education at Oregon State.

"I think the high school level is meant for me," Doran said. "I love building basketball skills and basketball smarts but I also love the life lessons that you can learn through basketball and building character, work ethic that will help you in every area."

At McNary, Doran is replacing Derick Handley, who stepped down at the end of the season.

Under Handley, the Lady Celts won a school record 23 games and finished fourth in

the state in 2016. After sending three players to Division-II programs, McNary then went 13-11 last year and lost to Jesuit in the first round of the playoffs.

The Lady Celts will graduate four seniors including leading scorer, Sydney Hunter, who has signed with the University of San Diego.

"It was a tough decision but the demands of being a husband, father of a 3-year old, teacher and coach were getting more and more difficult to balance," Handley said. "I was realizing that moving forward it would be nearly impossible to give 100 percent to everything, and while I love coaching it was the obvious option."

Handley will remain at McNary, taking on the responsibilities of the school's activities director.

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KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley

Liz Doran was introduced as McNary's next head girls basketball coach on Thursday, April 20.

Celtics drop three straight

By **DEREK WILEY**
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With the bases loaded and two outs, McNary couldn't break out of its slump as the Celtics fell at home 6-5 to Sprague on Friday, April 21.

McNary trailed 6-3 with one out in the bottom of the seventh when Jonah Geist and Joshua Benson hit back-to-back singles to put runners on first and second.

After Matthew Ismay added a third straight hit to score Geist, Riley Hays then singled to load the bases. With two outs, Daniel Johnson drew a walk to get the Celtics within 6-5. However, Jacob Jackson got caught looking at strike three to end the game.

"Our at bats were solid in the seventh inning to give us a chance to win," McNary head coach Larry Keeker said. "I like the way we competed against one of the better teams in our league. For a lot of our guys it's a matter of getting their timing down on a kid's fast ball and being prepared and not swinging early. In the sixth inning, we had pop up, pop up, pop up because the guys were completely off time and swinging early."

Sprague struck first Friday, scoring an unearned run on a McNary error at second base. But the Celtics quickly evened the game as Geist doubled and then scored on a RBI single by

Ismay. McNary had a chance to add even more runs but left the bases loaded.

After quiet second and third innings, Sprague loaded the bases with one out in the fourth. McNary starting pitcher Kyle McCallister struck out Sprague junior Michael Murphy for out two and got a ground ball to shortstop for a potential third out but an error gave the Olympians a 2-1 lead.

The Celtics again had an answer for Sprague in the bottom of the inning.

With the bases loaded, Geist singled, driving in two runs to give McNary a 3-2 lead.

Batting leadoff, Geist went 3-for-4 with two runs and two RBIs.

"Jonah's been a bright spot all year," Keeker said. "He's earned his way on to the field and he has a lot of confidence at the plate right now. He's hitting the ball on both sides of the field. He's lining the ball different places. We moved him to the top of our lineup because he's doing a good job of getting on base."

The Celtics did all of their damage at the top of the lineup. Joshua Benson was 1-for-3 while Ismay and Hays were both 2-for-4. McNary's fifth through nine batters didn't collect a hit.

"We've had some guys that have been pretty good in our lineup," Keeker said. "We want



KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley
McNary catcher Daniel Johnson tags out a Sprague runner at home Friday, April 21. The Celtics lost 6-5, leaving the bases loaded in the bottom of the seventh.

to be difficult to deal with one through nine. That's going to take some consistency from guys at the plate."

The Olympians took the lead for good in the fifth, scoring one run on a walk and a throwing error at shortstop

and a second run on a bad hop at third.

"Unfortunately for us it's coming down to a few plays

a game and lately it's kind of been on the defensive end," Keeker said.

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Yates signs with George Fox

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McNary senior Caleb Kiefiuk Yates' college choice checked off every box.

Along with the opportunity to play football and a strong mechanical engineering program, George Fox University will also help Yates practice his faith.

"The football team and then the academics with engineering, those were the two big things together and the fact that it's a Christian school," Yates said. "I'm not outgoing with it but having that atmosphere around, I feel comfortable being in that."

Yates, who will graduate with a 4.0 GPA, also wanted to stay close to home.

"I like going off to new places and exploring but the valley is just where I enjoy being," he said.

Yates got into contact with George Fox early in his senior football season. One of his old teammates, Hayden Sader, is on the roster. After a couple of visits to the campus in Newberg, Yates knew that's where he wanted to go, too.

"After I had seen what all they had to offer, they were my No. 1 and I knew that's where I was going," said Yates.

McNary head varsity coach Jeff Auvinen first got to know Yates as the coach of the freshmen team. He was on the field for every play at defensive end and tight end.

"I would like 150 kids like

him every year," Auvinen said. "He doesn't say much. He leads by his actions. He's a hard worker. We are going to miss him."

Yates was primarily on the offensive line as a junior and then moved to defensive end, where he'll play in college, this past season.

"He would anchor one end no matter the set," said Auvinen. "He was solid wherever we had him. He can do everything."

McNary offensive coordinator Brad Emmert also highlighted Yates' leadership.

"He never complained," Emmert said. "He's consistent in everything he does and we're always looking for people like that."



KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley

McNary defensive end Caleb Kiefiuk Yates signed with George Fox University on Monday, April 17 in the College and Career Center.