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# KeizerSports

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## Lady Celts defeat Forest Grove in five

By DEREK WILEY  
Of the Keizertimes

McNary played its best when it had to in a 3-2 win against Forest Grove on Tuesday, Sept. 26.

The Lady Celts fell behind 4-11 in the first game before storming back to win 25-21. Sofia Zielinski started the run with back-to-back aces. Kara Thomas twice tied the set, 18-18 and then 19-19, with kills, before McNary won five of the last six points to put away the Vikings.

The Lady Celts found themselves in a similar situation in the second game, falling behind 14-19. After a timeout, McNary got within 20-21 but couldn't complete the comeback, losing 22-25.

"They struggled tonight," McNary head coach Crystal DeMello said. "You're always positive and optimistic and hoping that they can just stick to the basic technique and execute but some nights you're just off and some nights you're recovering. The entire team

has been out sick at some point but it's no excuse for sloppy play. They still need to remain disciplined.

"We panicked in situations when we didn't need to panic. Common plays that we practice all of the time, they looked puzzled."

With the match tied 1-1, the Lady Celts dominated the third game. Caiya Ewert had three aces as McNary jumped out to a 14-3 lead before finishing off Forest Grove 25-10 on a kill by Taylor Ebbs and block from Thomas.

"Serving kept us in the game," DeMello said. "That was our strong point tonight, which is good, when you go back there and have the game in your hands, it's the one time you do have complete control. I will commend those serving. They did a good job executing."

But the fourth game looked more like the first two as the Lady Celts again got behind, 14-18, and had to mount a comeback.

McNary got within 19-20 but Forest Grove held on to win the set 25-21 and tie the match 2-2.

"When we win by a lot, a lot of times we expect the other team to roll over and it's something that we need to fix because obviously no team is just going to roll over," Ewert said.

The Lady Celts controlled the final set from the beginning, winning 15-7.

"We knew we couldn't mess around so we just got it done," Ewert said.

McNary senior Valerie Diede warmed up before the match but didn't play as she's working back from a concussion. Diede was expected to return to practice Wednesday and then play at West Salem.

Hannah Corpe has started in her place.

"Val is really big part of our team but I think Hannah has really stepped up," Ewert said. "We obviously really miss Val but Hannah's been doing really well for her."



McNary junior Hannah Corpe has stepped up in the absence of senior Valerie Diede, who has been out with a concussion. KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley

## McNary runs past McKay

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By DEREK WILEY  
Of the Keizertimes

SALEM—McNary senior Hakam Nagra could not remain silent as the Celtics went into halftime trailing at McKay.

"When I saw the potential that we had, we weren't living up to it, it just lit something in me," Nagra told the Keizertimes after the game. "I just let it all out, everything I had to say. I had to motivate my team. I had to get them going. I saw that they were a little flat. This football team, I've never had better chemistry with. We're all a bunch of brothers. We go to each other for everything. If somebody is down, we pick them back up. That chemistry I just didn't see on the field. That's what ignited me."

The speech was just what McNary needed as it came from behind to defeat the Scots 21-7 on Friday, Sept. 22.

Jose Solorio was one of the player's that took Nagra's words to heart.

Down 7-0 to open the second half, Solorio and quarterback Erik Barker connected for a 41-yard touchdown on third-and-long to tie the game with 10:24 remaining in the third quarter.

"We just played to our competition level," Solorio said. "It took a half to wake us up."

Junior Walling started the scoring drive with runs of 23 and 34 yards.

"We had to do exactly what Sprague did to us, be mean, mad, show McKay that we're not soft and we can compete with the teams all around," Walling said.

McKay answered with a long drive but on the 10th play ended with a fumble that McNary junior Jacob Jackson recovered at the Celtic 4-yard line.

McNary then drove back into McKay territory but Kyle McCallister dropped a pass on

fourth down.

The Scots looked to strike quickly on a reverse pass but a wide open streaking receiver dropped the ball.

Jackson then intercepted a McKay pass to give the ball back to the Celtics, who went 65 yards on 10 plays to take a 14-7 lead with 10:11 remaining in the fourth quarter. Walling capped off the drive with a 1-yard touchdown run.

Barker added a 1-yard touchdown run with 37 seconds left to play to seal the victory.

Struggling in the passing game, McNary had to do most of its damage on the ground without its leading rusher as senior Lucas Garvey left in the first quarter with a shoulder injury and didn't return.

Walling took the load of the work, finishing with 171 yards on 29 carries. Senior Freddy Jimna added 31 yards on eight attempts. Robert Benson, who had mostly played junior varsity this season, picked up 37 yards on nine carries as the Celtics finished with 281 yards on the ground.

"You take one of your best players on both sides of the ball and take him out of the picture," McNary head coach Jeff Auvinen said of losing Lucas Garvey. "We had three other running backs go in there and play like they were possessed and really got every inch they could. I was pleased with all three running backs. It's something we had to do. We weren't executing throwing the football so we went mostly run with a little bit of play-action. The kids did real well with that."

Devyn Schurr, a junior varsity cornerback, took Garvey's place on defense.

Penalties, eight for 70 yards, killed the Celtics in the first half.

McKay scored its only touchdown on a short field. Starting from the McNary 35-



ABOVE: McNary sophomore Junior Walling rushed for 171 yards and a touchdown on Friday, Sept. 22 at McKay. BELOW: Junior Robert Benson added 37 yards on the ground as the Celtics won 21-7. KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley

yard line, the Scots were aided by two defensive offsides penalties. On offense, the Celtics were constantly facing second and third-and-longs.

Barker threw two interceptions in the first half, including one in the end zone, trying to get the ball to McCallister.

"We're playing with a lot of guts and a lot of heart but we're not playing with our mind much," Auvinen said of the first half. "I thought we battled. We just made a ton of mistakes throughout the game. We kept shooting ourselves in the foot, penalties and missed assignments, especially on offense."

Solorio had two interceptions, one in each half, as McNary was plus-3 in turnover margin.

