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McNary linebacker Jakoby Doke tackles West Salem running back Jacob Denning, who scored five touchdowns against the Celtics on Friday, Oct. 27.

Celtics to open playoffs at home

By **DEREK WILEY**
Of the Keizertimes

Surrounded by his teammates who have become like brothers, Hakam Nagra sat at midfield for as long as he could, trying to fight back the tears after a 57-6 loss to West Salem on Friday, Oct. 27, thinking he had played his final home game at McNary.

But thanks to a top 16 finish in the final OSAA power rankings, Nagra and McNary's other 22 seniors will get another shot to go out at home as winners when the Celtics, No. 14, host No. 19 Grants Pass on Friday, Nov. 3 in the first round of the state playoffs.

"To get one back home is a real blessing," Nagra said.

"Everybody is amped. Everybody is watching film. Everybody is going hard at practice. I'm really excited going forward."

McNary and Grants Pass, both 6-3, have similar resumes. Grants Pass finished third in the Southwest Conference behind two of the top 10 teams in the state, falling to No. 5 South Medford 40-21 and No. 7 Sheldon 62-20.

The Cavemen's other loss came to Sprague, 54-27.

McNary head coach Jeff Auvinen and Nagra both compared Grants Pass to McMinnville, who came from behind to defeat the Celtics 39-35 in the final minute on Oct. 6.

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McNary junior Sydney Snapp had 15 saves against Lincoln in the first round of the state tournament on Saturday, Oct. 28.

McNary hit with deja vu

By **DEREK WILEY**
Of the Keizertimes

Another home game against a top 10 team in the state resulted in another blow-out loss for McNary as the Celtics fell to West Salem 57-6 on Friday, Oct. 27 to close the regular season.

"It was Sprague revisited," McNary head coach Jeff Auvinen said after the game. "One bad thing happens and we just lost our will. We need to be able to play the next play and we've been talking about that but obviously we're not very good at it yet."

After McNary's first possession ended with an Erik Barker interception, the Titans scored on just their third play as West Salem running back Jacob Denning went untouched for a 31-yard touchdown. A successful two-point attempt gave the Titans an 8-0 lead with 8:02 remaining in the first quarter.

The Celtics were able to get within 8-6 early in the second quarter. After Barker connected with Alan Jefferson on two passes for 43 yards to get McNary deep into West Salem territory, Barker found Junior Walling for a 3-yard

touchdown.

But then West Salem's offense really began to heat up, scoring four touchdowns on its next five plays from scrimmage to take a commanding 36-6 lead with 7:11 remaining in the second quarter.

The Titans ran 13 plays in the second quarter for 265 yards and five touchdowns.

After quarterback Grant Thies threw a 61-yard touchdown pass to Anthony Gould, Denning rushed for a 70-yard score. Denning added a 5-yard touchdown after a Barker interception and then 68-yard and 2-yard touchdown runs to give West Salem a 43-6 lead at halftime.

"We didn't take on blocks. We didn't tackle," Auvinen said. "You're not going to win any games against any good opponents when you don't take on blocks and you don't tackle. We didn't cover people, the trifecta. That film is going to be tough to watch."

McNary's defense forced a punt to start the second half. However, a promising drive ended with Barker fumbling at the Titan 15-yard line.

West Salem then added to its lead with 1:06 remaining



McNary senior Alan Jefferson caught two passes in the Celtics' only scoring drive against West Salem on Friday, Oct. 27.

in the third quarter as Thies threw a 19-yard touchdown pass to Andy Moreno.

Both teams emptied their benches in the fourth quarter

with McNary senior Casey Toavs and junior Ryan Bamford splitting time at quarterback.

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Lady Celts knocked out in opening round

By **DEREK WILEY**
Of the Keizertimes

Missing Katy Wyatt, McNary's co-leading scorer and best defensive center midfielder, the Lady Celts couldn't keep up with Lincoln, falling 3-2 on Saturday, Oct. 28 in the first round of the state playoffs.

McNary gave up its first goal in just the fifth minute as nerves got the best of the Lady Celts and the Lincoln center midfielder took advantage of a poor clearance on a crossed ball in the box, and placed a driven shot to the upper corner from 22 yards out.

"The first five minutes, I couldn't believe what I was seeing," McNary head coach A.J. Nash said. "We were just frozen. But we settled in and realized they weren't as scary or as good as we were making them seem."

The Lady Celts earned a corner kick in the 28th minute that was crossed in by junior Gina Munguia. The Lincoln defense was able to play out the initial attempt but Munguia gathered it quickly and sent another cross into the box that was volleyed with the

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Bright future on display at GVC Championships



Led by senior Kailey Doult, 168, and freshman Ella Repp, 198, McNary's girls cross country team finished seventh at the GVC Championships on Wednesday, Oct. 25.

By **DEREK WILEY**
Of the Keizertimes

McNary didn't accomplish everything it wanted at the Greater Valley Conference Championships this season but the future continues to look bright for the cross country program.

"The kids this year, seniors all the way down to freshmen, they competed really hard, they worked really hard and they pushed themselves all season long," McNary coach David Holcomb said. "We're excited with how young we are and how much we have to improve on for next year."

McNary senior Kailey Doult and freshman Ella Repp both ran their best times of the season on Wednesday, Oct. 25 at Bush's Pasture Park but missed out of the top 10 and advancing to the state meet by finishing 12th and 13th in 19:39 and 19:46.

Doult said she felt good for

the first mile but her legs just wouldn't allow her to keep up with the lead pack. North Salem senior Madison Willhoff placed 10th in 19:18.

"I was trying to be super confident and positive," Doult said. "I was telling myself to go but my legs didn't feel very good. They haven't felt very good this whole season."

Repp, who was able to break 20 minutes for the first time, battled a side ache for the first mile.

"I grabbed on to my side to try stopping the pain and tried ignoring it," Repp said. "I thought I was going to run slower but I thought this has to go away, it just has to and it ended up going away. That shouldn't be an excuse why I didn't get top 10."

Sprague junior Ginger Murnieks led from start to finish to easily win the varsity girls race in 18:04. South Salem junior Anna Chau took

second in 18:23. Sprague put two more runners in the top five, Kaylee Mitchell and Elise Abbott, to edge Forest Grove for the team title.

The Lady Celts placed seventh.

Another McNary freshman, Nina Garland, beat her season best by nearly 40 seconds, finishing in 21:31. Sophomore Duyen Barr, who also had a PR of 23:14 and Alison Repp (23:56) completed the scoring.

The varsity boys race was much closer with Forest Grove sophomore Quincy Norman edging out McMinnville junior Zane Fodge by two seconds for first place.

McNary junior David Allen finished 21st in 17:40.

"I've just got to keep practicing," Allen said after the race. "It's obviously been working so far. I just to need to keep working hard and running more."

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