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Young Lady Celts to play small ball

By DEREK WILEY
Of the Keizertimes

Paige Downer remembers what it was like to play on the varsity team as a freshman.

"I didn't feel confident," Downer said. "I was intimidated by all the older girls."

As one of four seniors on McNary's girls basketball team, Downer wants to make sure that these four freshmen are more comfortable. That should be easier since Downer played with them through the Keizer Youth Basketball Association.

"It's just been a blast getting to know all of these girls," Downer said. "We work so well together. And I think that will definitely come to our advantage."

McNary senior Kailey Doult also knows the four freshmen well. One of them, Leah Doult, is her sister.

"My parents coached all of the freshman from fifth grade to eighth grade so I know them all really well," Kailey said. "They're all like my little sisters so I'm super excited that they're here and I actually have my little sister on the team. I think they'll do really well."

roster

K. Munguia-Martinez	#3
Paige Downer	#5
Sabella Alfaro	#10
Kennedy Buss	#11
Kailey Doult	#14
Emma Kinler	#15
Leah Doult	#20
Abbie Hawley	#21
Kenzie Proctor	#22
Kyah Witherspoon	#24
Annie-Leigh Besa	#32

Liz Doran, the Lady Celts new head coach, expects all four freshmen, Doult, Kennedy Buss, Mackenzie Proctor and Annie-Leigh Besa, to contribute to both the varsity and JV teams.

"This freshmen class is strong," Doran said. "All of them are going to swing (between varsity and JV) a little bit, some more than others. I think as the year goes on some of the freshmen will really step up and get more into that (varsity) rotation."

McNary returns three starters in Downer, Doult and junior Abbie Hawley. Junior Sabella Alfaro, who played on



McNary has as many freshmen as seniors, four, on its 2017-18 varsity roster. The Lady Celts opened the regular season Thursday, Nov. 30 at Barlow and play at home Saturday, Dec. 2 against Tualatin.

Submitted

the varsity team last year, is also back.

The Lady Celts lost one player, Anita Lao, via transfer, but gained another in Emma

Kinler, who comes to McNary from Willamette Valley Christian.

Kinler has played softball at McNary since Willamette

Valley Christian doesn't have a team. She was an all-league outfielder last season.

"The girls are really buying into everything that I'm say-

ing," Doran said. "They practice really hard for me. They're a good group and they're going to be fun to coach."

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Vincent, Ebbs lead wrestling program

By DEREK WILEY
Of the Keizertimes

McNary junior Enrique Vincent is excited to see what he can accomplish with a whole season of wrestling.

"I realized last year with only two weeks of practice, I made it that far," said Vincent, who returned from an injury late in the season to finish third in the state at 120 pounds. "I wondered what could happen if I worked as hard the whole entire season and the offseason."

Vincent went to camp at Oregon State University over the summer and even trained with Ronnie Bresser, the Beaver's 125-pounder, who was a four-time state champion at Henley High School in Klamath Falls.

"The success last year just opened his eyes a little bit to what his potential is," Celtics head coach Jason Ebbs said. "He'll do whatever you ask him to do but I think he's finally transitioning into a kid that sees a bigger picture for himself. He's talking about going to college and doing well at state."

McNary senior Brayden Ebbs spent the summer getting stronger after a disappointing junior season in which he failed to place in the state tour-



McNary junior Enrique Vincent and senior Brayden Ebbs return to a wrestling team full of new faces. Vincent placed third in the state at 120 pounds last season while Ebbs looks to rebound after a disappointing junior campaign.

nament.

"My biggest weakness I think going through my high school career is my strength," Brayden said. "I wasn't very strong. This year I finally decided to put the strength on that I needed to."

After wrestling at 145 pounds last season, Ebbs expects to jump as high as 170.

In a new weight class, Ebbs hasn't scouted out the competition around the state.

"I haven't looked and to be honest with you I don't really

care," Ebbs said. "I'm coming back this year with a bad attitude and a sour taste in my mouth from what happened last year. You can't control what happens the year before. You just have to push through that, flush it and come back the next year and tear it up. I'm not giving anything to anyone that they don't deserve. I'm going to wrestle everybody like it's going to be my last match ever."

Vincent and Ebbs lead a young McNary team with a lot of new faces.

Senior Isaiah Putnam, another wrestler with experience at the state tournament, is out for the season after having knee and shoulder surgery in the off-season. But Putnam is still contributing.

"He's a model example of what a true teammate should be," coach Ebbs said. "He's helping kids. He's involved in the program. There's no trophies that come for what he's doing. We love having him around."

The only other returning

Celtics who have wrestled at the state tournament are Jerry Martinez, Noah Grunberg and Blake Norton. But coach Ebbs liked what he saw at the annual Blue-Gray wrestle off on Wednesday, Nov. 22.

"This group has tenacity," Ebbs said. "We had only had six practices (before the wrestle off) so we're not real good at wrestling yet but the tenacity was off the charts. The kids are getting after it. They're aggressive. They're going hard. Once we get that refined into a cou-

ple techniques, it's going to be really, really good to see where they go."

McNary opens the season on Friday, Dec. 1 at home with an eight-team dual tournament, now called the Jerry Lane Invitational. The field includes powerhouses Roseburg and Dallas. Wrestling begins at 4 p.m.

"We invite some of the best teams we can get here and we hope to set a bar for what wrestling should look like," Ebbs said.



McNary High School had 70 kids register for its youth wrestling camp on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights from Oct. 24 to Nov. 9.

The camp was led by McNary's coaching staff including head coach Jason Ebbs.

Campers learned the basic fundamentals of wrestling: takedowns, reversals and escapes.

The camp led up to the Celtic Mat Club, which meets Monday through Thursday at 6 p.m. More photos on A13.

KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley
Kids and coaches show off their muscles at McNary High School's youth wrestling camp.