

McNary wrestlers going to Reno, Nev.

By DEREK WILEY
Of the Keizertimes

McNary had four wrestlers place in the top three at the Liberty Invitational on Saturday, Dec. 16 in Hillsboro.

At 106 pounds, freshman Grady Burrows took second, winning his first three matches by pin fall. He then earned a technical fall in the semifinals before getting pinned by Cael Morrison, of Dallas, in the first place match.

Enrique Vincent cruised through his first three matches at 132 pounds, winning the first two by pin fall and then the third by major decision. However, after losing 5-3 to North Marion's Russel Stigall in the semifinals, Vincent rebounded with a 6-4 victory in the third place match.

At 170 pounds, Brayden Ebbs also won his first three matches, two by pin and one by technical fall to reach the semifinals, where he lost 7-3 to Wilsonville's Perry Rodenbeck. Ebbs then got another pin in his third place match.

After receiving a bye in the first round, Blake Norton pinned his way into the semi-

finals at 220, where he was pinned by Westview's Jhamante Woods. Norton earned another pin in the third place match.

McNary also had three wrestlers place in the top four in the girls tournament.

After losing her first match, Ella Repp earned a pin and major decision to finish third in the 87-96 pound weight class.

At 140-149, Nicolette Parra also placed third, getting three pins. Ariel Buik took fourth at 99-110, going 2-2 in the tournament with two pins.

On Wednesday, Dec. 27, McNary is leaving for Reno, Nev. to compete in the Sierra Nevada Classic, a double elimination tournament held at the Dec. 28-29 at the Reno Livestock Events Center.

"I remember when I was a kid if my coach would have said, 'Hey, pack up your stuff and we're going,' and he could have said anywhere out of town, I don't care, I was excited to go," McNary wrestling coach Jason Ebbs said.

"As often as we can, we like to work something into our schedule, hopefully kids still

get excited about traveling. I've taken kids on planes and to towns they've never been to and it's just cool to hear kids say, 'Cool, I've never been here.'"

More than 100 high schools from six states have registered for the tournament.

"It's great because it's everything you could want when you get there," Ebbs said. "There's regular Joe wrestlers there. There's national caliber wrestlers there and everything in between. As long as you can win a match or two, you'll filter into a group of kids that are your skill set and have a great experience."

Only nine of the entries are from Oregon.

"The freshness of it and getting out of town and wrestling nobody you know is amazing," Ebbs said. "You get down there and no one knows anybody. You get to the raw basic emotion of wrestling and sometimes you get the best out of the kids when they know less about their opponent."

The Celtics next league dual is Thursday, Jan. 4 at home against Sprague and Forest Grove, beginning at 4 p.m.



McNary wrestler Garrett Wampler (182) pinned his South Salem opponent in the first period on Thursday, Dec. 14.

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The Saxons weren't as fortunate, forfeiting seven weight classes to give McNary a 42-0 advantage before the first match even started.

At 138 pounds, Jerry Martinez won a 16-0 technical fall in the opening match.

Noah Grunberg then lost by a major decision to Ricky Villarreal at 145 pounds for South Salem's first points.

"We're still trying to get

Noah Grunberg to rise up to the Villarreal level," Ebbs said. "That's a match I'd like to get Noah to compete better at but Ricky's going to go to the state tournament."

At 182 pounds, Garrett Wampler pinned his opponent in the first period to add to McNary's lead. Blake Norton won 3-2 at 220 pounds. South Salem took the 195 and 285-pound matches.

"South Salem typically has better heavyweights, from the JV to the novice all the way through the varsity, everyone

of those matches was big and tough and close," Ebbs said. "That's where the strength is."

Tony Castenada won the final match of the night at 113 pounds by pinning his South Salem opponent in the second period.

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"It feels amazing to be back. I always wanted to come back and help. If I started a coaching career, this is a place I wanted to get back to. It's definitely different than playing but it's really rewarding getting to teach and help kids learn and fall in love with the game."

Making sure the girls have fun is Hunter's top priority.

"High school is supposed to be fun," Hunter said. "Winning is important and I know all my girls love to win but being able to learn and take it step by step and enjoy the process while you're here."

The Lady Celts have done plenty of winning as well, opening the season 7-0.

Hunter, who is also working at the high school as an instruction assistant in the Emotional Growth Center, graduated from

McNary in 2012. She averaged 18 points and 11.6 rebounds per game her senior season, leading the Lady Celts to fourth place in the state tournament.

At OSU, Hunter finished her career with 893 rebounds,

good for fourth in Lady Beavers history.

"She had a lot of really cool experiences in college and played for a great coach (Scott Rueck)," Doran said.

"It's just awesome to have

another really good basketball mind on the bench to turn to. She always has good stuff to say to the girls at practice and before the game, after the game, halftime. It's awesome having her around."

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