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McNary senior Lucas Garvey tries to drive past a Sprague defender during the Celtics final game of the Capitol City Classic on Friday, Dec. 22 at Willamette University.

McNary finishes 2-2 at Capitol City

By DEREK WILEY
Of the Keizertimes

SALEM—McNary simply ran out of gas, falling to Sprague 58-43 on Friday, Dec. 22 in its final game of the Capitol City Classic at Willamette University.

"I just literally think that the gas tank was below empty," Celtics head coach Ryan Kirch said. "And they're frustrated and disappointed because it's a rival."

"They just played so hard for four games. You could see out there that they could barely just run and get up and down the floor on the college court. They're not excuses but the guys just ran out of gas. There's not much you can say other than that. I appreciate how hard they played all week."

Out-hustling the Olympians, McNary jumped out to a 9-2 lead.

However, Sprague answered with six 3-pointers to take a 32-23 lead into halftime.

The Olympians made

three more 3-pointers in the second half to lead by as many as 18.

Chandler Cavell led McNary with 11 points.

Noah Hudkins came off the bench to score nine points. Boston Smith finished with eight and Andrew Jones added seven.

The Celtics opened the 16-team tournament on Monday, Dec. 18 with a 71-60 win over defending 6A state runner-up Clackamas.

Cavell had 27 points and seven assists. Lucas Garvey finished with 11 points and Riccardo Gardelli added 10.

McNary then lost to Woodcreek, last season's state runner-up in California, 54-52 in overtime on Wednesday, Dec. 20.

Garvey, who led the Celtics with 15 points, sent the game to overtime with a 3-pointer at the buzzer.

Cavell added 12 points, six rebounds and four assists.

"Our kids battled," Kirch said. "It was a good, physical game (against Clackamas)

and the same against Woodcreek from California. You go and you play big, really talented teams for a reason and we got better.

"Losing a couple of tough games here makes us better in the long run as we go and play other teams in the league. I think we got tougher, more competitive. I thought we did some really good things. As far as a week is concerned, we got a lot better."

McNary defeated Wilsonville 55-30 on Thursday, Dec. 21.

Gardelli had 15 points and five rebounds. Garvey added 11 points, four rebounds and four assists.

"Our guys really defended well," Kirch said. "We were able to get stops, which allowed us to run in transition."

The Celtics play at Sheldon on Friday, Dec. 29 at 7 p.m.

McNary's next league game is Tuesday, Jan. 2 at Forest Grove.

Top sports stories of 2017

The order of the top 10 sports stories of 2017 was decided by an online poll at keizertimes.com. Any ties were broken by associate editor Derek Wiley.

#1 Vincent comes back from injury to win district

Winning the district title alone probably wasn't enough to propel McNary sophomore Enrique Vincent to the top sports story of 2017.

It's how he did it.

After missing most of the season with a knee injury, Vincent returned in February for the Celtics final two duals of the regular season and then defeated West Albany junior Wyatt French 11-5 in the finals of the OSAA 6A Special District 5 tournament on Saturday, Feb. 18 at West Salem

High School.

Vincent ran twice a day, in the morning before school and then after practice, to cut 12 pounds to make weight (120 pounds).

Vincent thanked his coaches, Jason Ebbs and assistant Devin Reynolds, for pushing him.

"They knew my limits. They knew I would do anything for this spot right here," Vincent said. "It feels great. It makes up for all the days and weeks I've missed."

The following weekend Vincent placed third in the state tournament at Memorial Coliseum in Portland.

"Ricky's got a drive that a lot of kids don't have nowadays," McNary head coach Jason Ebbs said. "He goes hard all the time and it frustrates wrestlers when he goes that hard for as long as he goes. That's a unique skill set to have. That makes him dangerous. That makes him scary. That makes him hard to wrestle."



File

McNary sophomore Enrique Vincent hugs Celtics assistant coach Devin Reynolds after winning the OSAA 6A Special District 5 tournament at West Salem.

#2 Bibens-Dirkx finally gets call to big leagues

After more than 11 years in the minors, 32-year-old pitcher Austin Bibens-Dirkx was called up to the Texas Rangers. The former Keizer Little Leaguer and McNary High School graduate made his Major League Baseball debut on May 17 in Texas, allowing one hit and one run in one inning.

Bibens-Dirkx got his first start on May 31 against Tampa Bay. On June 11, he then went head-to-head with two-time Cy Young Award winner Max Scherzer and faced a Washington Nationals lineup that included 2015 National League Most Valuable Player Bryce Harper and 2016 Silver Slugger Daniel Murphy. Over seven innings, Bibens-Dirkx allowed just three hits and one run, a solo home run to the first hitter of the game, to earn the win.

"That might be probably one of the most memorable



Submitted

Austin Bibens-Dirkx, a McNary graduate, made his MLB debut on May 17 for the Texas Rangers.

outings that I might ever have in my career," said Bibens-Dirkx, who retired 19 Nationals in a row. "I just kept the ball down with making quality pitches and if you do that in any

league, you can get guys out." Moving back to the bullpen in August, Bibens-Dirkx finished his rookie season 5-2 with a 4.67 ERA and 38 strikeouts over 69 innings.



File

McNary football player Kolby Barker signed with the Air Force Academy during a ceremony in early February.

#3 McNary athletes sign

Headlined by three Division I scholarships, 19 McNary student athletes signed with colleges in 2017.

Kolby Barker signed a national letter of intent to play football with the Air Force Academy in February.

Barker didn't always plan on playing Division I football. But after his junior season, programs began flooding

him with attention. Wyoming was the first to offer, then Air Force.

"I started this with let's see if maybe I can play for Western Oregon or something like that," Barker said. "I did not expect this. It's been so much greater than I could have ever expected. It's a dream come true. I'm so excited about my future and about the Air Force

Academy."

Brendan Van Voorhis got a full ride, 70 percent athletic, 30 percent academic, to DePaul University, a private school in Chicago. He signed in April.

"It's kind of unreal honestly because I didn't think that I was going to be D-I for track," Van Voorhis said.

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