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Sophomore wins girls tournament

By **DEREK WILEY**
Of the Keizertimes

McNary sophomore Nicolette Parra went to the Sierra Nevada Classic in Reno for more mat time and to experience a big tournament with wrestlers from four different states.

She got much more.

Wrestling in a bracket with 10 other girls, Parra won the 135-pound championship on Dec. 29 at the Reno Livestock Events Center. She defeated Thurston junior Alaina Zamudio in the finals, pinning her in the first period.

"It was 0-0 for a minute and a half and I just got tired of it and tripped her leg and instantly pinned her," Parra said. "It was pretty quick. I wasn't too proud of it. I didn't feel like I really fought for it."

After a first round bye, Parra earned a third round pin

in the quarterfinals and then won by a 10-4 decision in the semifinals.

"It meant a lot because I've never even placed in anything before and then this year I've been doing so well," Parra said. "It means a lot and to stand on that podium, I was proud of myself."

Parra began wrestling in eighth grade at Whiteaker Middle School. She won her first match, despite not really knowing what she was doing. But high school wrestling was much tougher.

"It's a lot harder now," Parra said. "Last year, I had 30-40 matches and won like six of them."

Wrestling on McNary's junior varsity, Parra started her sophomore season 11-0 before losing her first match. She was 18-3 as of Friday, Jan. 5.

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Submitted
McNary sophomore Nicolette Parra won the 135-pound Sierra Nevada Classic championship in Reno on Dec. 29.

Ebbs, Vincent place at Sierra Nevada

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Brayden Ebbs believed he should have made the finals at the Sierra Nevada Classic.

But the McNary senior didn't let a disappointing loss in the quarterfinals keep him from finishing the 64-man, double elimination tournament strong.

Ebbs won four matches in the consolation bracket to place third at 160 pounds on Dec. 29 at the Reno Livestock Events Center.

"That's a big thing I tried to focus on," Ebbs said of wrestling through the consolation bracket.

"My dad (McNary head coach Jason Ebbs) has told me for years and my club coaches have told me for years that once you lose if you don't come back and get third, it's a mental thing.

"A lot of kids they'll lose a big tournament and they'll

think I should have taken first and it doesn't even matter anymore. I just think it shows a lot of character coming back."

Ebbs lost to Austin Watson of Thurston in the quarterfinals.

Watson finished the tournament in second.

"It was a mix of a tough kid and a bad match," Ebbs said. "I didn't wrestle the way I should have wrestled."

In the consolation bracket, Ebbs earned a quick pin and then won two decisions, 9-4 and 8-1, to advance to the third place match.

"I learned that I have different styles of wrestling that I can adjust to," Ebbs said.

"I just need to be able to transition into matches because usually I wrestle in an aggressive style but some kids I have to slow it down and be more strategic and technical."

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Celtics rolling

Smith posts double-double of 18 points, 10 rebounds

By **DEREK WILEY**
Of the Keizertimes

McNary coaches knew it was just a matter of time before 6-foot-6 junior Boston Smith had his coming out party.

Feeding him in the post, Smith finished with a double-double of 18 points and 10 rebounds as the Celtics defeated West Salem 61-54 on Friday, Jan. 5.

"This is a big night for me," Smith said. "I just think the energy helped me and the whole team score and lead us to victory."

Smith scored McNary's first two baskets of the game and added six more points in the final three minutes of the second quarter as the Celtics led 32-29 at halftime.

Smith scored six more points in the third quarter, including a dunk to give McNary a 42-36 lead with 2:53 remaining.

"You saw tonight an energy out of him that we've been waiting for," Celtics head coach Ryan Kirch said. "It's like a sleeping giant. It was so great to see tonight. I know he was nervous before the game. We've just got to give him confidence. We think he can do great things. Sometimes he's just got to trust that and we want to keep feeding him the ball and keep giving him confidence."

West Salem took its first lead since the first quarter on a 3-pointer to go ahead 49-48 with 5:44 remaining in the game. Trailing 53-50, McNary senior Lucas Garvey knocked down a 3-pointer to tie the game with 3:10 left to play.

Andrew Jones made two free throws to give the Celtics the lead for good, 55-54, with 1:59 remaining.

"We knew they were going to go on runs," said Jones, who was 6-for-6 from the free throw

line in the fourth quarter. "They've got shooters. They've got really good players and we just knew we had to stick together and keep playing our game. It's a just a big confidence booster because we knew we could compete with some of the best teams in the state and I think it just reassures that we know we can play with anyone."

McNary went 8-for-8 from the free throw line down the stretch while West Salem was 1-for-4, twice missing the front end of a one-and-one.

"I love coaching but games like this is when I miss playing," Kirch said. "They just embraced the moment. They're having a lot of fun and it's great to see."

West Salem is one of McNary's biggest rivals. "There's always been a conflict between us," Jones said. "We don't like them and they don't like us and we knew they were good and we've been good so it's just always been a battle."

Jones finished with 12 points, three rebounds and two assists. Garvey added 15 points, two rebounds and two assists. Chandler Cavell had 11 points, eight rebounds and five assists. Riccardo Gardelli was the only other Celtic to score, adding five points to go along with seven rebounds.

McNary also defeated McKay 81-64 on Tuesday, Jan. 9. The win was the Celtics fifth in a row since knocking off previously undefeated Tualatin on Dec. 27.

"I'm so happy and proud and excited of our team," Kirch said. "We just literally every day and every game are getting better and better and better. I think we've developed into a really good basketball team. We defend really, really well. We've got a lot of different scoring options."



KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley
McNary junior Boston Smith had the best game of his high school career, scoring 18 points and pulling down 10 rebounds as the Celtics defeated West Salem 61-54 on Friday, Jan. 5.

Lady Celts top West Salem

By **DEREK WILEY**
Of the Keizertimes

McNary overcame an ugly second quarter to defeat West Salem 52-38 on Friday, Jan. 5.

After jumping out to a 12-2 lead, the Lady Celts struggled to score, not making their first and only field goal of the second period until 50 seconds remaining to tie the game at 16-16.

A West Salem free throw then gave the Titans a 17-16 lead entering halftime.

"The second quarter they really got on the offensive rebounds and we had to box them out because they're a lot taller than us," McNary senior Paige Downer said. "That

was a big boost for us coming into the second half. And really pushing the ball up. We know we're faster than them. We have speed, quickness and good shooters so we tried to get the ball up quicker and just create shots for our teammates."

McNary also had to play much of the second quarter without leading scorer Kaylee Doult, who picked up her second foul with 2:32 remaining in the first period.

Doult then picked up her third foul with 6:03 left to play in the third.

Senior Emma Kinler came off the bench to tie the game at 21-21 on a three-point play.

Sabella Alfaro then gave the Lady Celts a 25-23 lead.

"It definitely hurts because she's mostly our go to," Downer said of playing without Doult. "We know we can rely on her to score a big bucket when we need it. People have to step up though. We need someone else on the court to step up and take the initiative."

After West Salem grabbed the lead again on a layup off a McNary turnover, Downer made two free throws to put the Lady Celts back on top 28-27. A jump shot by freshman Mackenzie Proctor stretched the lead to 30-27

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KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley
McNary junior Sabella Alfaro scored 10 points in the Lady Celts 52-38 win on Friday, Jan. 5.