

Celtics top Forest Grove, fall to Sprague

By DEREK WILEY
Of the Keizertimes

Forfeiting three weight classes, McNary was no match for reigning district champion and state runner-up Sprague on Thursday, Jan. 4.

But head coach Jason Ebbs believes a better Celtic squad is on the horizon.

"I can tell you right now there's a better McNary coming down the road here," Ebbs said. "We'll have our weights filled up. We'll have some good talent. Our kids are going to get better. This is all going to go the right direction."

The Celtics won their first two matches against Sprague. At 285 pounds, Alex Harrison earned a 4-3 victory over Austin Schreefer.

Grady Burrows (106) then pinned Aaron Joklur in the first period.

But with the exception of McNary junior Enrique Vincent (126), who pinned Colby Hemmert in the second period, it was all Sprague from there.

The Olympians finished with seven pins to defeat McNary 61-15.

Brayden Ebbs was out with a concussion.

"We always aim to beat Sprague," coach Ebbs said. "They're a good program and they're good kids. We're never ever going to walk



KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley
McNary junior Enrique Vincent pinned Sprague wrestler Colby Hemmert in the second period on Thursday, Jan. 4.

away from that match. That's one of our highlights of the year and we'll use that as testing water, hopefully come back in about three weeks at the district tournament and change the results of some of those matches and continue to battle.

"It's kind of a love-hate relationship with them. You get better at wrestling pushing yourself among the tough people and for years now Sprague doesn't like us but we make them work hard and we don't like Sprague but they make us work hard. There's nothing wrong with

that."

McNary opened the three-team dual against Forest Grove, winning 45-33.

Harrison, a senior but first-year wrestler, won by a 6-1 decision.

Ebbs had previously coached Harrison in football and asked him if he wanted to give wrestling a try.

"At first I didn't know what I was doing but I could pick up things really quickly," Harrison said.

"There's always that one senior that comes out and sees the light, loves the sport, loves the team," Ebbs said.



KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley
McNary senior Alex Harrison opened the Celtics match against Sprague with a 4-3 victory over Austin Schreefer.

"We wish we could have figured it out earlier but I'll never regret it. We enjoy him. We're tremendously proud of him. He's quickly come from a guy that's learning to a guy we're depending on."

Vincent, Jerry Martinez (132), Gilbert Parra (138), Noah Grunberg (145) and Blake Norton (220) all won by pin fall against Forest Grove. The Celtics also won two matches by forfeit.

"They're well coached and they work hard and they're

good kids," Ebbs said of Forest Grove. "That's a dual we like to win but they definitely always present a few technical

items that make us go up to the room and prepare for the district tournament. It helps our kids get better."



File
McNary senior Brayden Ebbs placed third at the Sierra Nevada Classic in Reno.

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At 126 pounds, McNary junior Enrique Vincent advanced to the semifinals, where he was pinned late in the second period by Rhett Miner of Lehi, Utah.

After losing a 4-2 decision in the consolation bracket, Vincent then pinned Alex Jimenez of Escalon, Calif. to place fifth.

Blake Norton (220) and Alex Harrison (285) were both one match away from

placing. Norton reached the quarterfinals and finished the tournament 3-2. Harrison went 4-2.

At 106 pounds, McNary freshman Grady Burrows won his first two matches before losing his next two to finish the tournament 2-2.

"I felt really good about how our kids responded in regards to focus and competition and making the most of that opportunity," coach Ebbs said. "We had a good time. Almost everybody won some matches."

puzzle answers

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