

McNARY CELTICS



KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley

The Celtics have a smaller senior class this year but 29 juniors on its 2018 varsity roster, which opens the season Aug. 31 at home versus North Medford.

McNary vows to be tougher in 2018

By **DEREK WILEY**
Of the *Keizertimes*

McNary reached the second round of the state playoffs last season for the first time since 2013.

But the Celtics didn't play their best in the biggest games, particularly in blowout losses to Sprague and West Salem.

"We're working on our toughness and our tenacity, which people think of as physical things but they're mental things as well," said Jeff Auvinen, who enters his fourth season as McNary's head coach.

The Celtics return eight players who started on at least one side of the ball last season, and due to a lack of depth, more players will be counted on to play both ways.

On the offensive line, seniors Joshua Schmeltzer and Wyatt Sherwood are back at guard and tackle. But Auvinen wants both guys on defense, where they were used sparingly last

season.

"I wish they could play every play but we need them on offense," Auvinen said. "I don't know if we can because of our pace and it's a tough game anyway. In the trenches like that is very demanding."

"I like how these kids are running around, how enthusiastic they are."

— Jeff Auvinen,
McNary head coach

One player that will definitely play offense and defense is Junior Walling, who led the Celtics with 991 yards rushing and nine touchdowns while also leading McNary's defense at outside linebacker.

Walling will move inside this season to Mike linebacker.

"As far as our defense goes, he's the overall leader and he'll be that way this year and next year," Auvinen said of Walling, a junior who has started on defense since he was a freshman. "Mike allows

him to play the whole field. It allows him to run sideline to sideline. Junior has all the skills to play inside, outside. He's got good strength and quickness and good instincts. I think he's

going to lead by example. He's also become more of a vocal guy this year."

Dyami Rios, a sophomore who dominated freshman ball last year, could follow a similar path as Walling.

"He works like a beast in the weight room and really has continued to keep his speed and quickness," Auvinen said. "He's going to take some people by surprise coming up from the freshman level and playing really well."

While Rios will primarily play outside linebacker, McNary offensive coordinator Brad Emmert also has a plan for him at running back whenever he shows he's ready.

"First year varsity guys we try to focus on one side of the ball," Emmert said. "I have a plan for him but it's going to depend on how he progresses. He's going to be a stud, no doubt."

Senior Robert Benson is another kid who will play both ways, getting carries in the backfield and also snaps at strong safety.

Senior Jacob Jackson, who led the Celtics in receiving with 562 yards and four touchdowns last season, will start at free safety.

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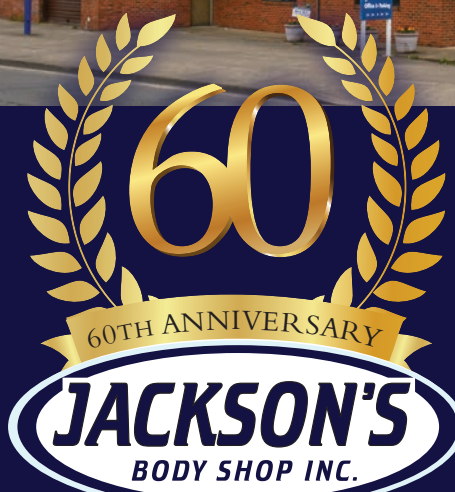
SCHEDULE

- Aug. 31 vs North Medford
- Sept. 7 at West Linn
- Sept. 14 at Tualatin
- Sept. 21 at Tumwater, Wash.
- Sept. 28 vs South Medford
- Oct. 5 vs Sprague
- Oct. 12 at Bend
- Oct. 19 at West Salem
- Oct. 26 vs South Salem

McNary roster

#	PLAYER NAME	YR.	POS.	HT.	WT.	#	PLAYER NAME	YR.	POS.	HT.	WT.
1	Nigel Harris	12	WR/DB	6-0	160	28	Brian Hernandez	11	WR/DB	5-9	165
2	Junior Walling	11	RB/LB	6-2	225	29	Nico Sandoval	11	RB/DB	5-8	165
3	Carson Heldt	12	WR/DB	5-10	140	31	Collin Penner	12	H/LB	5-11	170
4	Devyn Schurr	12	WR/DB	5-9	165	32	Brian Schindler	11	H/LB	5-11	195
5	Alex Tavera	11	WR/DB	5-9	150	33	Matti Wiegand	11	WR/DB	6-2	185
6	Noah Lelack	11	WR/DB	6-0	185	34	Alex Simpson	11	H/DL	5-11	210
7	Robert Benson	12	RB/DB	5-8	155	42	Drew Brown	11	H/DL	5-9	190
8	Spencer Delacruz	11	H/DL	6-0	190	45	Dyami Rios	10	RB/LB	6-2	205
9	Griffin Oliveira	12	WR/DB	6-1	170	50	Wyatt Sherwood	12	OL/DL	6-4	250
10	Layton Thurlow	11	RB/LB	6-0	195	52	Ian Koenig	12	OL/DL	6-2	240
11	Noah Bach	12	H/LB	6-2	195	53	Michael Flores	11	OL/DL	5-10	175
12	Erik Barker	11	QB/DB	6-4	210	55	Arik Dela Cruz	12	OL/DL	5-10	205
13	Riley Gates	12	WR/DB	5-9	155	58	Anthony Garcia-Reyes	11	OL/DL	5-8	210
14	Joseph Fowler	11	WR/DB	5-11	180	63	Pietro Forgia	12	OL/DL	6-3	195
15	Ryan Bamford	12	QB/DB	5-10	170	64	Nathan Young	11	OL/DL	6-0	270
16	Haley Hughes	11	K	5-6	135	65	Keith Cardoza	12	OL/DL	6-0	230
17	Tyler Branstetter	12	RB/DB	5-10	165	66	Miguel Garibay	11	OL/DL	6-1	200
19	Hans Laufer	11	QB/DB	6-4	195	70	Malakai Vasseur	11	OL/DL	6-5	300
20	Riley Flores	11	WR/DB	6-2	175	72	Joshua Schmeltzer	12	OL/DL	6-1	300
21	Jacob Jackson	12	WR/DB	5-10	165	73	Gage Vrooman	11	OL/DL	5-10	205
22	Brian Bates	12	WR/LB	5-7	140	74	Nic Shepherd	11	OL/DL	6-2	240
23	Daniel Mood	11	WR/DB/K	5-11	165	75	Michael Ridgway	11	OL/DL	6-3	240
24	Adam Dang	11	RB/LB	5-11	185	76	Coleman Young	10	OL/DL	6-3	240
25	Ethan Rubio	11	WR/DB	6-2	200	78	Michael Tischer	11	OL/DL	6-1	290
27	Ethan McMunn	11	WR/DB	5-10	170						

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