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Celtics can’t overcome poor fourth quarter

By **MATT RAWLINGS**
Of the Keizertimes

For three quarters, the McNary girls basketball team practically played even with South Salem — who won the Mountain Valley Conference regular season title. However, a poor performance in the final eight minutes doomed the Celtics down the stretch on senior night.

The Celtics scored just three points in the fourth period and only shot 10 percent from the field as South Salem was able to come away with the 53-40 victory over McNary on Friday, Feb. 22.

“I’m proud of the girls, but we have to put four quarters together,” McNary head coach Elizabeth Doran said. “The girls played super hard for three quarters. I think the effort was still there in the fourth, we were just not making smart decisions offensively.”

“South is such a good team, so if we have that lapse, we weren’t going to be able to win the game.”

Leah Douth was the only Celtic in double-figures with 18 points, and the sophomore point guard showed her aggressiveness from the get-go, scoring nine points in the opening period.

“I definitely came up pumped up for the game and I knew that I needed to lead my team in order for us to win,” Douth said.

South threw a variety of different defensive looks



KEIZERTIMES/Matt Rawlings

McNary guard Kennedy Buss desperately tries to find a teammate after getting trapped in the corner in the Celtics 53-40 loss to South Salem.



KEIZERTIMES/Matt Rawlings

Mackenzie Proctor follows through on a three-point shot in the corner.

at McNary in the first half, including a 1-2-2 and 2-3 zone. The Celtics, however, didn’t appear phased in the slightest.

Sabella Alfaro found a hole in the zone late in the period and knocked down a short jump-hook after Douth zipped a pass to her in the paint. Moments later, Abigail Hawley hit a mid-range jumper to cut the South lead to 18-15 at the end of the first quarter.

“They do have a good zone, but we were prepared for it,” Doran said. “We put it some new stuff and we executed it well.”

The Saxons got hot from the field in the second quarter and took a 28-19 lead midway through the period. McNary, however, responded with transition hoops from Douth and Alfaro.

Hawley and Annie Leigh Besa each nailed a pair of free throws late in the half to

trim the deficit to 32-27 at the break.

McNary was able to tie the game at 34-all in the third period after a pair of hoops from Douth and Hawley, as well as a 3-pointer by Alfaro. The Celtics even took their first lead of the game at 37-36 with less than two minutes remaining in the quarter.

“We wanted to share the ball and work as a team,” Alfaro said. “I was honestly re-

ally proud of how we came out.”

But South Salem scored twice before the end of the quarter to take a 40-37 advantage into the final period.

McNary got the lead back down to one with 5:07 left in the fourth quarter when Douth nailed a triple just left of the key.

It ended up being the final time McNary scored in the game.

With seven turnovers and

nine missed shots in the period, the Celtics squandered any opportunity they had to get back in the game as South Salem finished the contest on a 12-0 run.

“Our execution just wasn’t there in the fourth quarter,” Douth said. “We weren’t taking care of the ball, which really didn’t help us.”

Doran added: “We were timid down the stretch and we settled for a lot of outside shots.”

Parra and Burrows represent McNary at state

By **MATT RAWLINGS**
Of the Keizertimes

After each placing third in their respective divisions at the Mountain Valley Conference District Tournament, both Grady Burrows and Gilbert Parra were thrilled to be representing McNary High School at the state wrestling meet — which took place at Memorial Coliseum on Feb. 22-23.

However, it ended up being a short event for both guys.

Parra (138 lbs.) lost his first bout by major decision, then was eliminated from the tournament after losing via technical fall.

Burrows was able to win a match in the consolation round after getting pinned in his first round bout, but the 113-pound sophomore lost a tough 3-2 decision that ended his season.

Even though they didn’t get what they wanted in terms of results, it didn’t take away from what Parra and Burrows accomplished this season.

“I am extremely proud of both of those guys,” McNary head coach Jason Ebbs said. “They are the trailblazers for our program right now. They took our culture to the next step.”

Burrows, who was wrestling in his second straight state meet, had the goal of making in onto the second day.

While it looked like he was holding his own in the opening minute of his first round match against sixth-seeded Jeremiah Van Cleve from Centennial, Burrows got turned on his back and suffered an early fall.

But Burrows wasn’t going to let the loss discourage him as he made quick work of Finn Whittaker from Wilson in the

first consolation match, getting the pin in less than a minute.

“It felt good to get a win under my belt,” Burrows said. “I didn’t know anything about my opponent. My game-plan was just to get in and win.”

Burrows had the upper-hand for the majority of his next match against Sherwood’s Nick Hekker, taking a 2-1 lead into the final round. But he surrendered a two-point near-fall in the final minute of the bout to suffer a heartbreaking 3-2 loss.

“It was really tough for him because he’s not used to losing matches like that,” Ebbs said. “He is our most seasoned wrestler and he wanted to go deep in the tourney. But this tourney is so tough.”

“I was really proud of the way he bounced back after his (first) loss and wrestled the way he was supposed to wrestle.”

Parra, on the other hand, was just happy to just be at the state tournament after having a strong end to the regular season.

“Gilbert is the perfect example of a kid setting his mind to a goal and then just going after it,” Ebbs said. “Getting to (state) was a great accomplishment for him.”

Instead of coming out as the aggressor, Parra, who’s a junior, elected to play it safe and try to avoid getting pinned, which led to him getting down on the scoreboard early. Parra lost his first match 14-0 and his second bout 18-0.

If Parra ends up qualifying for state in his senior campaign, Ebbs believes that he will be better prepared.

“You got to get there once before it really starts making sense,” Ebbs said. “We’ll expect him to be back next year.”

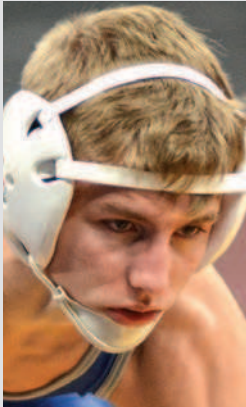


Top: Gilbert Parra (blue singlet) fights for position in his opening match of the tourney.

Bottom: Grady Burrows gains control over his opponent and prepares to get the pin.

KEIZERTIMES/ Matt Rawlings

ATHLETE *of the Week*



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GRADY BURROWS Sophomore at McNary High School

Burrows was the only McNary wrestler to win a match at the state meet on Friday, Feb. 22 at Memorial Coliseum. The 113-pound sophomore pinned Finn Whittaker from Wilson High School less than a minute into the bout in the first round of the consolation bracket.

This was Burrows’ second straight appearance in the state tournament.

The week prior, Burrows placed third at the Mountain Valley Conference District Meet.