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Gragg inducted into Montana Hall of Fame

BY MATT RAWLINGS
Of the Keizertimes

Whether it's the way he walks with the swagger of a former athlete, or the fact that he towers over just about everyone in the city of Keizer, it's easy to assume that Scott Gragg was once a star in the athletic arena.

Even though his playing days have been over for more than a decade, the 6-foot-8 inch former offensive lineman is still getting recognized for his outstanding football career.

On Saturday, March 23, Gragg was inducted into the Montana Football Hall of Fame as a part of the class of 2019.

Gragg played at the University of Montana from 1991 to 1994 and served as an assistant coach with the school from 2009 to 2015.

While he has spent most of his life in Oregon, Gragg has always thought of Montana as his second home, so being recognized for his excellence on the football field was a humbling experience for him.

"I had no expectation to be acknowledged, so to get that honor was really huge," Gragg said.

"Every time I was introduced, it was Scott Gragg from the University of Montana. So even though I'm an Oregon kid, there is part of me that feels like I'm from Montana as well."

Gragg grew up in the mid-Valley and was a stand-out football and basketball

player at Silverton High School.

Initially, his favorite sport was basketball. But after having a lot of success in football his junior and senior seasons, Gragg was pursued by multiple Division 1 schools.

Gragg took his first official visit to the University of Idaho. However, after he checked out the Montana campus, he knew where he wanted to continue his education and football career.

"I was first attracted to the University of Montana because it felt like home to me," Gragg said. "It was a special place."

"I knew that this was the right place for me."

Gragg played at Montana from 1991 to 1994 and was an all-Big Sky Conference selection for three straight seasons and started in 38 consecutive games for the Grizzlies at offensive tackle.

Gragg was coached by the legendary Don Read, who coached at the University of Oregon and Portland State University before coaching at Montana from 1986 to 1995.

"Don Read, to this day, is the best coach I've ever had," Gragg said. "I don't know how he is at X's and O's, but he is the most positive person you're around and the most uplifting and encouraging. You wanted to do everything you could do represent what he believed and I fell in love with that."

"He taught me what I had to do to be successful."



McNary athletic director Scott Gragg (left) with his son, Brian, after a football game in 2016.

File

After completing his senior season, Gragg was selected to the East-West Shrine Game and the Senior Bowl — he is the only Montana player to ever be selected to the senior bowl.

Because of his exceptional

college career, as well as his good showing at both all-star games, Gragg was selected by the New York Giants in the second round of the 1995 NFL Draft.

Gragg played for the Giants from 1995 to 1999, then

played five seasons for the San Francisco 49ers from 2000 to 2004 before concluding his career with the New York Jets in 2005.

"At some point in time I'm going to wake up, because it just feels like a dream

that has come true," Gragg said. "If you were going to set a course of aspirations for yourself, I don't know how I could have planned it any better than how my college and professional career went."

McNary opens up track season

BY MATT RAWLINGS
Of the Keizertimes

The McNary track team opened their season last week with a home dual meet against South Salem where the boys team defeated the Saxons 76-69, while the McNary girls fell 90-54 on Wednesday, April 3.

"The kids are working and competing hard and doing what we are asking of them," McNary head coach Frank Gauntz said.

One of McNary's top sprinters Ethan Martin picked up where he left off from last season as we won both the 100 and 200 meters. He was also a part of the Celtics 4x100 relay team that finished in first.

In the 100m, Martin was neck-and-neck with McNary sprinter Dyami Rios, but Martin was able to edge out his teammate and crossed the line in 11.76 seconds.

"It's fun to watch those two compete against each other," Gauntz said.

Martin also finished just ahead of Rios in the 200m (24.23).

"It feels really good to come back from last year and have my training in the off-season pay off," Martin said. "It also felt good to beat Dyami because he's usually faster than me. It just shows that we were both putting in work."

A big key for the McNary boys winning this meet was their dominance in the throwing events, starting with freshman Francisco Gomez, who threw the shot 35-feet-9.25 inches.

Will Krauss triumphed in the discus with his top throw of 112 ft. and Logun Ander-

son took home the win in the javelin (144-02).

Cole Garland won the long jump (20-00) to round out the individual victories for the Celtic boys.

"It was great to see Cole jump 20 feet, especially as a sophomore," Gauntz said.

On the girls' side, Isabella Walker started of her season on the right track by winning the 100m (14.07).

Caitlyn Kiefiuk Yates was the only McNary girl to win multiple events as she was

victorious in the 100-hurdles (17.68) and the long jump (15-1.5).

The Celtics also picked up victories from Reyna Terrazas in the 400m (1:05.72), Brandi Grunberg in the pole vault (8-00) Kennedy Buss in the discus (100-02) and Sabella Alfaro in the javelin (107-01).

Alfaro followed up on that success two days later at the Titan Track Classic at West Salem High School by throwing a personal-best of 121-09 and placing second at

the 18-team meet.

However, the rest of the Celtic team couldn't find that same success. The McNary boys placed 15th while the girls placed in 17th at the TTC.

"It was a big meet, and we don't really have the firepower to compete with some of those teams because 70 percent of our team are sophomores and freshmen," Gauntz said. "But, down the road, we will be competitive in meets like that."



McNary's Logun Anderson prepares to throw the javelin at the Titan Track Classic on Friday, April 5 at West Salem High School.

KEIZERTIMES/Matt Rawlings



Nigel Harris takes a turn around first base after hitting a ball in the outfield in a game from last month.

KEIZERTIMES/Matt Rawlings

Celts fall in final non-league game

BY MATT RAWLINGS
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The McNary baseball squad could only muster five hits for the game as they fell by a score of 3-2 to Grant in their non-conference finale on Wednesday, April 3.

Both Alex Tavera and Jacob Jackson led the Celtics with two hits apiece.

McNary ace David Allen had his best start of the season in this one as he went 5.2 innings and gave up just four hits and no earned runs. But the senior right-hander fell victim to five Celtic errors, which allowed all three of Grant's runs to be unearned.

Grant went on top 1-0

in the top of the first on a throwing error by McNary catcher Ty Covalt trying to throw out a runner at third base.

The Generals went up 2-0 in the following frame on another defensive miscue by the Celtics.

After coming up empty on offense in the first three innings, McNary responded with a run in the bottom of the fourth to cut the lead to one.

Allen began the frame with a walk, then advanced to second on a wild pitch. Allen wound up stealing third

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