

SCHEDULE

ALL GAMES START AT 7 P.M.

- Sept. 6 at North Medford
- Sept. 13 vs West Linn
- Sept. 20 vs. Tualatin
- Sept. 27 vs. Barlow
- Oct. 4 at South Medford
- Oct. 10 at Sprague
- Oct. 18 vs. Bend
- Oct. 25 vs. West Salem*
- Nov. 1 at South Salem

*game will start at 7:15 p.m.

also one of the best students on this McNary roster.

“We expect huge things from Dyami. He’s a physical specimen, but he’s really sharp mentally too,” Auvinen said. “He loves to mix it up and be as physical as possible and he’s got very good instincts. The sky is the limit for that kid.”

Not to be lost in the shuffle is senior offensive tackle Michael Ridgeway, who was a first-team all-conference performer last season and is expected to be the leader for McNary in the trenches.

Senior offensive lineman Nathan Young is also expected to have an impact on the line of scrimmage.

One of McNary’s biggest question marks coming into 2019 is how they are going to replace the talent they had with their secondary and receiving core.

The Celtics graduated Nigel Harris, Griffin Oliveira and Jacob Jackson from last year’s team — all three players got all-league recognition for their play in the secondary and as receivers.

However, Auvinen has a trio of senior receivers in Riley Flores, Noah Lelack and Alex Tavera that he believes are ready to fill the void.

“I think those guys are ready to step up and have their time. They are physical kids who can run and catch. We’re light on experience but I know that those kids can play,” Auvinen said.

Lelack is also



at times this season.

“He’s an ultimate team guy. He’s got great technique and I think it would be a mistake not to use him on that side of the ball,” Auvinen said.

While Barker and Walling have gotten a lot of recognition during the offseason, junior linebacker Dyami Rios might have just as big of an impact for the Celtics in 2019.

As a sophomore, Rios had 10 sacks to go along with his 87 tackles (38 solo), which helped him achieve second-team all-league status.

With a 4.18 GPA, Rios is



expected to be the starting free safety alongside sophomore Zane Aicher, who is slotted to play strong safety. However, Auvinen and his staff are still deciding who will make the rotation at cornerback.

Even though McNary will have a target on their back as they head into this season, it’s clear that the Celtics still have a chip on their shoulder.

“We want to win a league championship and then make a run in the playoffs. We want to at least get to the second round,” Barker said. “I’m most looking forward to the out-of-league schedule, because we have something to prove.”

“We’re definitely looking to take a step up,” Auvinen added.



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