

MCNARY,

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double-digit advantage and Proctor nailed a 3-pointer at the top of the key to extend the advantage to 14 at the end of three.

But the run didn't stop there. Douff completed a nifty three-point play to begin the final period. Then, a bucket from Annie Leigh Besa completed the Celtics 17-2 run.

"Summit came out of the half pretty strong at first, but then we started hitting some shots and playing really aggressively on offense," McNary head coach Elizabeth Doran said.



KEIZERTIMES/Matt Rawlings

TOP: Kenzie Proctor lines up a three-point shot from the baseline. BOTTOM: Annie Leigh Besa looks to go up for a shot in the post.

Doran also credited the Celtics swarming zone defense that held Summit to 30 percent shooting from the field. "Our defense was pretty solid today. The girls were moving and communicating in our zone defense better than they have all season and I think that was a huge part of this game," Doran said. Buss put an exclamation point on the contest with three straight treys late in the fourth quarter. "We wanted it more. We wanted to prove that we were the better team, because deep down, we knew that we could beat them," Buss said.

McNary hosts Bend at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 14.

CELTS,

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helpless feeling. It's not difficult things. It's just defensive fundamentals. It's stuff our program has been known for, and maybe I haven't done a good job of holding us to those fundamentals."

West Salem got the lead up to 18-10 in the opening period, but four straight free throws by Gonzalez and Meithof trimmed the deficit to four at the end of the quarter.

Meithof scored in the post to begin the second period, but once again, the Titans responded, going on a 7-2 run to go up 27-18. The Titans maintained their nine-point advantage through the second period until Carson Long banked in a 3-pointer before the half-time buzzer sounded to cut the lead to 39-33 at the break.

But the game started to slip away from the Celtics in the third quarter. The Titans led by as many as 16 in the period and eventually took a 55-42 lead into the fourth.

Meithof came into the game as the third leading scorer in the state at 23.8 points per game. But West Salem held the star shooting guard in check for most of the contest — Meithof had just nine points entering the final period.

"It was tough, because once I got past my man, there were two other guys waiting for me," Meithof said.

However, despite the deficit, McNary found a way to make things interesting in the final period.

Meithof got into double-figures by scoring after grabbing an offensive rebound and Gonzalez got the lead down to single-digits by nailing a deep trey.

The Celtics continued to shoot the ball well from beyond the arc as Meithof and Long each knocked down 3-pointers of their own to make the score 60-55 with just over three minutes remaining.

Three-point shooting was the thing that kept McNary in this one. The Celtics made



KEIZERTIMES/Matt Rawlings

Nate Meithof tries to beat his man off the dribble.

12 treys on the night — six of which came in the fourth quarter.

"We came out with a lot of energy. We pushed the ball and started gaining some momentum in the fourth quarter," Gonzalez said.

Meithof added: "We got to play like we did in the fourth quarter for the entire game."

Moments later, Gonzalez buried a shot from beyond the arc. Then, after a Titans turnover, Gunner Smedema hit his second triple of the day to cut the lead to 65-63 with 1:12 remaining. It was the first time McNary had been within two since early in the second quarter.

West Salem had a chance to close the game out, but missed three out of six foul shots down the stretch to leave the door open. Meithof got his corner with one after hitting a banked in 3-pointer in the corner with two guys in his face.

West Salem's reliable forward Jackson Lowery was sent to the line with 15.5 seconds

left on the clock, but even he missed one out of two free throws, giving McNary the opportunity to send the game to overtime, or be in line for the victory, in the last possession.

Kirch called his final timeout to give his team some final instructions

"We were just trying to get Nate the ball and let him make a play. We knew that they were going to face-guard him, so we gave the option of taking a ball-screen or not," Kirch said.

Meithof couldn't shake his defender on the screen and was forced to the baseline after being double-teamed. He took a tough fadeaway triple that didn't draw iron.

McNary's Zane Aicher somehow corralled the loose ball and kicked it out to Gonzalez, who hoisted a desperation 3-pointer as the buzzer sounded, but the ball glanced off the rim and fell harmlessly to the hardwood.

"I should have told him to keep the ball-screen away because that brought the dou-

ble-team. We probably could have done a few things to get a little more movement for him. You just want to get the ball in your best player's hands," Kirch said.

McNary will travel to Bend for their next matchup for a 6:30 p.m. game on Friday, Feb. 14. They will return home to host Mountain View on Tuesday, Feb. 18 at 6:30 p.m.

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