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## McNary gets convincing win over Summit



McNary guard Leah Doult drives past her defender in the Celtics 54-37 victory over Summit on Friday, Feb. 7. Doult had a game-high of 20 points in the win.

By **MATT RAWLINGS**  
*Of the Keizertimes*

After the McNary girls hoops team lost to Summit by the double-digits in their last matchup, the Celtics were able to exact their revenge against the Storm on Friday, Feb. 7.

Leah Doult led the way with 20 points and five assists and Kennedy Buss chipped in with 11 points on 3-of-5 shooting from behind the arc as McNary picked up their third win in league play with a 54-37 victory over Summit.

“We came out with a really high intensity and we stuck with that for all four quarters. It started on defense and then it led into our offense and I think that gave us a ton of momentum to keep it going,” Doult said.

A jumper from Buss and a 3-pointer from Doult had the Celtics up 9-5 midway through the first quarter. But Summit ended the period on a 6-0 run to go on top 11-9.

The Summit lead extended late into the second quarter as McNary trailed 17-14 at the 1:18 mark. However, all the momentum swung in McNary’s favor before the half.

After a pair of free throws by Bekah Grimmer to cut

the lead to one, Doult got to the rim on the next McNary possession for a layup, which allowed the Celtics to re-take the lead.

Summit committed back-to-back turnovers on their final two possessions of the half, which led to a triple from Doult and a buzzer-beating runner by Kylie Nepstad, which completed a 9-0 run for McNary and put them up 23-17.

The Storm trimmed the deficit to four at 27-23 with just over three minutes remaining in the third quarter. But once again, the Celtics would go on a run that wound up decimating Summit’s chances.

Kendyl Jennings swished a mid-range jumper, which was followed by a triple from Doult. Moments later, Doult picked up one of her three steals, then hit Kenzie Proctor with a beautiful outlet pass for an easy lay-in.

“We always talk about how the first four minutes of the third quarter are the most important part of the game, so we really wanted to come out strong,” Doult said.

A hoop from Grimmer off an offensive rebound gave the Celtics their first

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## Celts comeback falls short against Titans

By **MATT RAWLINGS**  
*Of the Keizertimes*

The McNary boys hoops team defeated West Salem in a 64-63 thriller the last time these two teams met up in January.

Once again, the two squads gave the fans an entertaining battle in their most recent matchup, only this time, McNary ended up on the short end.

The Celtics had a chance to win twice in the final seconds, but both shots were off the mark as McNary fell to West Salem by a score of 68-66 on Tuesday, Feb. 11.

Nate Meithof had 19 points to lead the Celtics and Jando Gonzalez added 11 points in defeat.

McNary started Mountain Valley Conference play with a 5-0 record, but the Celtics have lost three of there last four to fall to 6-3 — they are tied for second place in the standings with Summit.

West Salem was without their leading scorer Justin Scoggin, who missed the game due to injury. But even without their top dog, the Titans offense appeared to be firing on all cylinders through much of this contest.

After McNary shooting guard Riley Flores knocked down a triple in the corner, the Titans went on a 10-4 run and were able to get easy buckets both in their half-

court offense and in transition.

McNary head coach Ryan Kirch was visibly displeased with his team’s defensive effort for the majority of the game.

“That was probably the worst team defensive performance I can think of in the last six or seven years,” Kirch said. “Right now, defensively, we’re just horrendous in every aspect. From our closeouts, to our communication, to keeping people in front of us. We just have to get better there and commit to that.”

“When the game started, we weren’t focused. We weren’t engaged. It’s a very

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Jando Gonzalez puts up a shot in traffic in McNary’s 68-66 loss to West Salem on Tuesday, Feb. 11. Gonzalez was in double-figures with 11 points.



North Johnson, the new president of the Northwest League, speaks at the Salem-Keizer Volcanoes Winter banquet on Friday, Jan. 31.

## Johnson introduced as new NWL President

By **MATT RAWLINGS**  
*Of the Keizertimes*

North Johnson has been involved with Minor League Baseball (MiLB) for more than 42 years and has been a general manager for multiple organizations over the course of his career.

But this year, Johnson will be tasking on a new challenge.

Back in December, Johnson, who is from Georgia, was named the new president of the Northwest League (NWL), taking over for Mike Ellis, who has been the league president since 2013.

Last year, Johnson was the chief operating officer for the Florida Fire Frogs and from 2010-18, he served as the general manager for the Gwinnett Strippers.

In his more than 30 years

as a general manager, Johnson has been named the MiLB Executive of the Year three times (1988, 1995, 2000).

Even though he has never been a league president, he is excited for the challenge that awaits him.

“It’s better than I imagined. My excitement level and my energy level is up 100 percent. I feel like I’ve drawn the winning lottery ticket,” Johnson said.

One of the main challenges Johnson will face in his first year as league president is attempting to protect the respective futures of the Salem-Keizer Volcanoes and the Tri-City Dust Devils of the NWL.

As a part of their plan to overhaul the current minor league system, Major League

Baseball (MLB) has created a proposal to cut ties with approximately 25 percent of their lower level minor league teams, including the Volcanoes and the Dust Devils.

“It’s very frustrating for everyone involved with Minor League Baseball. It wasn’t handled how it should have been handled,” Johnson said.

Through this proposal, the goal of the MLB is to reorganize the current system to make the minor leagues more efficient and improve on conditions and facilities.

If there were any improvements that needed to be made at certain minor league parks, Johnson claims that minor league organizations weren’t notified prior to the MLB releasing their proposal in November.

“We were given this list of

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