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# Celtics swim concludes season at MVC meet



McNary senior Alyssa Garvey made it to the finals in the 50-yard freestyle and placed eighth at the MVC District Meet. The McNary girls finished sixth overall.

KEIZERTIMES/Matt Rawlings

By MATT RAWLINGS  
*Of the Keizertimes*

After weather derailed the format last year, the Mountain Valley Conference hosted their first true district meet Feb. 13-14 at the Kroc Center in Salem.

The McNary boys took fifth place with 220 points while the Celtic girls placed sixth with 138 points.

While they had a tough time hanging with the likes of Bend and Summit on the scoreboard, McNary head coach Casey Lewin was glad to see his team give their best performances of the season.

"We had best times across the board on Friday and we backed up our swims on Saturday. The kids really focused and worked hard the few weeks leading to districts. It was nice to see their efforts rewarded," Lewin said.

The big highlight of the meet for the Celtics was that Bella Beard became the first McNary girl to qualify for the state meet since Marissa Kuch in 2016. Beard finished third in the 100-yard breaststroke with a time of (1:09.52).

Beard will race in the

preliminary heat at Mount Hood Community College on Friday, Feb. 21. If she finishes in the top eight, she will compete in the finals the following day.

It's unlikely that Beard will compete for a state title, but Lewin believes that the McNary junior could break the school record in the 100-breast at the state meet, which is 1:08.80.

"It will be great for her to get another opportunity to break the school record. With a good, clean race, she can get down to the 1:08s," Lewin said.

Despite dealing with an injury, Paris Boyd also had a fantastic day for the McNary girls.

Boyd made it to the podium in two individual events, placing sixth in the 50-freestyle (25.84) and fifth in the 100-free (57.27). She also helped the 200-free relay team finish fifth and the 200-medley team place fourth.

"Paris had big swims for us, even though she was dealing with an injury," Lewin

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# Celts send 12 wrestlers to podium at districts

By MATT RAWLINGS  
*Of the Keizertimes*

After placing seventh last year, the McNary wrestling team was hoping to show improvement at the Mountain Valley Conference District Meet, which took place at Mountain View High School Feb. 13-14.

It's safe to say their goal was accomplished.

The Celtics, who only placed five wrestlers last season, sent 12 of their 21 kids to the podium, which earned McNary a third-place finish at districts.

"I'm so proud of the kids. They wrestled so tough. They were in a bunch of close matches and they never stopped wrestling. It was such a fun weekend. I got a lot of compliments from other coaches on how tough the kids wrestled. It was a huge difference from last year," McNary interim head coach Sam Martin said.

Despite some of the expe-

rience McNary has, the top finishers for the Celtics were actually young guys in freshman Hunter Ruberto and sophomore Aldo Villavazo.

Ruberto placed third in the 145-pound division while Villavazo took second at 220 pounds. Both wrestlers automatically qualified for the state tournament at the Moda Center in Portland, which starts on Friday, Feb. 28.

After receiving a bye in the first round, Villavazo pinned Anthony Alvarez from McKay to earn a spot in the semifinals. Villavazo then advanced to the championship match after his opponent was disqualified — Villavazo was unable to wrestle in the championship bout due to injury.

Ruberto, on the other hand, took a much windier road to earn his state qualification.

Ruberto won his first round match, but got beat with an 18-3 technical fall against Elijah Byers from

Sprague in the quarterfinals. But the Celtics freshman responded in a big way.

"All week, we talk about never giving up during a match. You're always in a match until the final whistle. I took every match like it was going to be my last. I was putting it all on the line," Ruberto said.

Ruberto got two straight pins before edging out Mountain View's Mason Burke in the consolation semifinals, winning by a score of 12-8.

The victory over Burke gave Ruberto a berth in the third-place match, which wound up being a rematch with Byers with a state tournament spot on the line.

Ruberto battled with Byers into the second round, but when he was able to get position with a two-point reversal, Ruberto nailed down the pin six seconds before the second round ended.

"Going into the second

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McNary guard Gunner Smedema elevates for a jumper over a Mountain View defender in the Celtics 67-49 win on Tuesday, Feb. 18.

KEIZERTIMES/Matt Rawlings

# McNary rolls at home against Mountain View

By MATT RAWLINGS  
*Of the Keizertimes*

It's typical for Nate Meithof to have a big night. The state's third leading scorer once again carried the McNary boys hoops team with 27 points in this one.

But it was a performance from an unexpected source that pushed the Celtics over the edge.

McNary sophomore Tyler Copeland, a guy that has swung time between JV and varsity for part of the season, was 4-of-5 from beyond the arc and had 14 points as the Celtics defeated Mountain View 67-49 on Tuesday, Feb. 18.

"My coach was telling me that I needed to be more of a varsity player. It really got to my head so I knew that I had to come out here and play well," Copeland said. "I felt like I needed to prove myself today. It was just a great night. I don't know what else

to say."

After McNary head coach Ryan Kirch was very critical of the Celtics in their last home game, he was much more pleased with what he saw from his squad against Mountain View.

"I thought it was the best 32 minutes we have played. I was really pleased with the complete effort from start to finish," Kirch said.

McNary started the game with a lineup they haven't played before as Copeland, along with Gunner Smedema and Junior Nunez each got their first varsity starts.

The new starting five gave the Celtics a spark immediately, scoring the first 14 points of the game.

Copeland hit back-to-back triples from the baseline in the first minute of the game. Meithof then hit a deep 3-pointer from the top of the key to extend the lead to 9-0.

Meithof then hit a runner on the Celtics following possession, and moments later, Smedema nailed a trey from the corner get the advantage to 14-0. "Once we got on a roll, we just kept going," Copeland said.

Coming out with a new starting five stemmed from a strategy by Kirch to add some intensity to their practices. Kirch installed several competitions at practice and the five guys that earned the most points from the competitions would be named the starters for the next game.

"I thought we were getting complacent in some areas as a group. Our top five guys that compete the hardest in practice and have the most competition points, those guys started. It makes for good comradery and it makes our practices

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McNary's Anthony Garcia-Reyes (blue singlet) finished fourth in the 220-pound division at the MVC District Tournament.

KEIZERTIMES/Matt Rawlings