



KEIZERTIMES/Matt Rawlings
McNary midfielder Nic Heath dribbles past a North Salem player in the Celtics 2-0 victory on Monday, March 1.

Celts defeat North Salem in first COVID-19-era contest

BY MATT RAWLINGS
Of the Keizertimes

For an entire calendar year, McNary High School did not host a sporting event due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, that streak finally came to an end on Monday, March 1.

Nic Heath and Eddie Martinez each notched goals in the first half as the McNary boys' soccer team took down North Salem by a score of 2-0. But what was more important to the kids was not the final score, it was that they once again got the chance

to play the game they love with their friends and teammates.

“It feels like we're alive. Even though you couldn't see their faces through the masks, the kids were smiling and so joyous to be out there.”

— Miguel Camarena,
McNary head coach

first 15 minutes of the contest, including whiffing on a point-blank shot with the keeper out of position. But in the 18th

minute, McNary executed a beautiful set-piece for the first goal of the season.

Manuel Avendano was awarded a free-kick 40 yards away from the net and sent a high ball into the middle of the box. Eli Petilo was able to elevate over the crowd to get the first touch by heading the ball to his right. Martinez got in position to play the touch, torqued his head as he leapt in the air and sent a header unto the upper left-hand corner of the net for the score.

“I saw the ball coming in after Eli got a hit on it, so I jumped and got the header on it. It felt good to score the first goal,” Heath said.

North Salem, on the other hand, didn't get their first shot-on-goal until the 22nd

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McCarty finally gets his opportunity with McNary

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At 5-foot-9, 175 lbs, McNary quarterback Jack McCarty isn't going to wow anyone with his physical presence. But, despite his stature, those that have seen the arm talent of the senior signal-caller know that McCarty can sling it with the best of them.

“Jack has gotten more and more athletic and his arm strength is impressive. He has great range down-field and throws the deep ball with great touch, but he can also throw a rifle when he needs to and he can read a defense pretty well,” McNary head coach Jeff Auvinen said.

McCarty admitted that being small gives him a chip on his shoulder, but he also believes that his lack of size has helped him develop a better competitive mentality.

“I really think being undersized gives me an edge. I

have been one of the smaller kids ever since I was in third grade, so I am used to trying to prove myself. If I were six feet or over, I don't know if I would be as good. My size forces me to have to work harder,” McCarty said.

Despite being a stand-out on the McNary JV team, McCarty has had to wait in the wings behind Erik Barker — a three-year starting quarterback for McNary who signed to play with the University of Montana last winter — for the last two years.

After the 2019 season ended, McCarty thought that he would finally get

his chance to shine in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, had other plans.

“I've been training to be in this spot for a long time, but when COVID came I

didn't really know what was going to happen,” McCarty said.

With the season being in limbo, McCarty still wanted himself and his squad to be prepared, which is why the quarterback started organizing get-togethers at the field

with his teammates.

“When all this went down he was organizing bringing kids to the field to do workouts and throw routes. He took that on himself,” Auvinen said. “He is the epitome of what we like as a student-athlete. He is a great kid, a great student and a great leader.”

McCarty knows that leadership is a natural quality of being a good quarterback, and he is embracing it to the best of his ability.

“Being a leader is something I am definitely taking pride in,” McCarty said. “I was just trying to remain optimistic and help get guys prepared and ready to go.”

Even when the OSAA announced in August that the fall football season would be delayed

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Submitted
After being a backup for two seasons Jack McCarty is prepared to take the reins at the Celtics starting quarterback.

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