



Volleyball

Celts dominate in victory over Corvallis

BY MATT RAWLINGS
Of the Keizertimes

Corvallis proved to be no match for the McNary volleyball team on Thursday, March 18 as the Celts defeated the Spartans 25-7, 25-14, 25-7.

The win over Corvallis not only marked a 5-0 start to the season, but also a 15-set win streak for the Celts.

“They are just taking advantage of the opportunity. They are hungry. They have been off the court for so long,” McNary head coach Crystal DeMello said. “They all love the game so much and I couldn’t be more proud of how they are coming out and just taking care of the ball. It is good to see.”

After winning the first set handily, McNary continued their domination in the following game, scoring 20 of the first 24 points. Corvallis made a comeback to make the score a little more respectable, but Maddison Corpe and Eliana Dean finished the set with kills to seal the game two victory.

With such a large lead for much of

the match, DeMello was able to get many of her younger and more inexperienced players some more extensive varsity minutes.

“Seventy percent of your season is spent in training and in practice but game time is just naturally faster. You have your adrenaline pumping. For them to learn how to control their emotions and out their skill and technique into play is huge,” DeMello said. “To execute everything they have been trying to do, but to do it in a game setting is a completely different mindset. I’m happy with them. They are excelling in the experience.”

Kills from Maddox Snider and Trinity Kampstra, as well as four aces from Taylor Ebbs gave the Celtics a 9-0

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— CRYSTAL DeMELLO

Head Coach, McNARY VOLLEYBALL

ABOVE: Maddox Snider prepares to serve.
Photo by MATT RAWLINGS of Keizertimes

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lead in game three.

DeMello commented on how her team's ability to serve at a high level gives them a big advantage over opponents.

“Serving is the name of the game. That is how we get our runs and how we get momentum. Serving well drives an entire piece of the game and it really paid off for us tonight,” DeMello said.

A mini rally from Corvallis helped them cut the lead to 11-4 in the third set, but the Celtics responded emphatically.

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was capped off by a seven-yard score from Bullock.

“Defensively, we hung around for the most part, but they really wore us down in that second half. They were just gassed. They were completely exhausted,” Auvinen said. “The defense was probably on the field 75 percent of the time. That was a challenge that really tested us.”

The McNary offense tried to give their defense some reprieve, but went three-and-out in both of their third quarter possessions as the physicality of Sprague was too much for the Celts to handle — McNary went three-and-out five times in the first three quarters.

“They were really good and really physical. They won the battle up front and we couldn’t get much going offensively,” Auvinen said. “When you are not

owning the line-of-scrimmage it’s really tough to move the ball unless you throw it really well, and we didn’t throw or catch really well tonight.”

McNary quarterback Jack McCarty found Gunner Smedema on a screen pass for a 27-yard gain — which was the Celtics longest play of the night — on third-and-19, but McNary was still forced to punt. Bullock soon followed with his third touchdown run of the night to give Sprague the four-score lead.

The Celtics got into the red zone for the first time late in the fourth quarter but they were turned away when McCarty was picked off for the second time.

McNary’s next task won’t be any easier as they get set to travel to undefeated West Salem for a 7:30 p.m. game on Friday, March 26, but Auvinen believes that his team is up for the challenge.

“We have played really well against them the last few years. It’s a game where we should come in feeling confident, but we’ve got to get better from this one,” Auvinen said.