



# McNary ends season in heartbreaking defeat



## Football

BY MATT RAWLINGS  
Of the Keizertimes

Former broadcaster Jim McKay once famously described that sports bring athletes “the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat.”

The McNary football team may be agonizing over this senior night defeat for months to come.

Despite holding a 24-point lead in the first half and forcing seven turnovers the Celtics couldn't prevent South Salem from scoring 30 unanswered points and coming back for the 44-43 overtime win on Friday, April 9.

McNary finishes the season with a 3-3 record.

“It is just really bittersweet. I love these guys. I love being out here with these guys. It just really sucks having an outcome like that in your last game,” McNary senior linebacker Dyami Rios said.

South Salem grabbed the early momentum when Javier Ramirez Perez took back the opening kickoff for a touchdown, but for the remainder of the first half, it was all McNary.

After the Saxons got the ball back on a McNary fumble inside the red zone, the Celtics got their first of five interceptions as defensive back Gunner Smedema picked off South Salem quarterback Drew Gertenrich's first pass of the night.

First down completions from Jack McCarty to Logan Ready and Tyler

Copeland — as well as the first of many pass interference penalties — put the Celtics inside the five-yard line. McNary running back Zane Aicher then punched it in from three yards out to give the Celtics their first lead at 7-6.

McNary would score again off another Saxons interception on their next possession. After an interception by McNary linebacker Kyle Grass, the Celts marched 62 yards down the field and finished off the drive with a four-yard touchdown pass from McCarty to Ethan Martin.

“Everything was working. We were getting a good push up front, our receivers were catching the ball, I was making the right reads. We were just clicking in the first half,” McCarty said.

McCarty finished the game going 29-for-50 for 361 yards — all career-highs.

McCarty kept his rhythm going into the second quarter, hitting Smedema in perfect stride on a wheel route for a 29-yard gain. Aicher punched it from a

McNary receiver Tyler Copeland stiff-arms a defender on his way to picking up a first down.

Photo by MATT RAWLINGS of Keizertimes

yard out two plays later for his second score of the night to extend McNary's advantage to 21-6.

After getting it done on the offensive end, Aicher came up with a huge play on defense, stripping Gertenrich of the football for another Saxons turnover. McNary converted the turnover into a 22-yard field goal from Ready.

It appeared that the game was getting closer to a rout after an interception by Tyler Copeland, which led to a touchdown catch by his brother, Braiden, to give the Celtics a 30-6 lead. However, the Saxons got the lead down to 30-12 before the break after a four-yard touchdown run by Tony Rodriguez.

Even though it was still an 18-point

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