

Celts come up short against West Salem



LEFT: McNary 170-pounder Hunter Ruberto puts his opponent in an armbar. RIGHT: Josh Friesen takes his opponent to the mat in the 160-pound bout. Photo by MATT RAWLINGS of Keizertimes

BY MATT RAWLINGS
Of the Keizertimes

Despite winning five matches via forfeit, the McNary wrestling team fell just short of the dual victory on Friday, June 4 as they lost to West Salem 40-39.

Josh Friesen (160 pounds) and Hunter Ruberto (170) were McNary's lone victors on the night.

"It definitely wasn't the prettiest dual I have ever seen but we will bounce back," McNary coach Sam Martin said.

Although he was unhappy with the final result, Martin said that he appreciates that his crew can fill a full lineup in most duals.

"I think in years past, we have taken full lineup numbers for granted. This year, with lower roster numbers across the state, a full lineup is not a given. Being able to fill 14 weight-classes is a blessing and, a lot of times, it means guaranteed points on the board," Martin said.

After falling behind 22-0, McNary got their next 18 points thanks to three forfeits. West Salem's Austin Hamby was victorious in the 152-pound bout, but Friesen earned McNary's first win of the night by pinning Samuel Garcia 41 seconds into the second round.

"This dual didn't start the way we wanted it to, but that got me fired up for my match. I was ready to go out and win and I was really happy with my outcome," Friesen said. "Wrestling is an aggressive sport, and one thing I really focused on was competing with a chip on my shoulder.

Friesen got out to a 7-0 lead in the first round before pinning his opponent in the second round.

"Dictating the pace and setting up what he wants is Josh's strength. He went after it," Martin said. "He pushed the pace and got to where he wanted."

In the following match, Ruberto fell behind early to Corbyn Taylor after surrendering a two-point reversal, but fought back to take the lead late in the

first round after a takedown.

"I have wrestled him before, he is a strong guy that is going to fight hard until the very end of the match. I knew that I was going to have to outwork him," Ruberto said.

After Taylor came back to tie the match at 6-6, Ruberto scored on an escape and then a two-point takedown to win the decision 9-6.

"Hunter is a smart wrestler. He is really undersized for 170, but he understands situations," Martin said. "He knew he made a mistake on the edge, but after that he was very measured and calculated."

While he was pleased with the victory, Ruberto admitted that he was mildly disappointed in not getting the pin.

"I wanted the pin. I wanted to help the team out. Getting the win was good, but I really wanted that pin," Ruberto said.

"When you're battling the size difference, it becomes more difficult to get the pin," Martin added.

Ruberto's win cut the lead to one, but West Salem got pins in the 182 and 195-pound matches to secure the win.

McNary competes in their final meet of the season on Saturday, June 12 in a meet with Crater, Century and Bend.



Damian Hernandez attempts to escape the grasp of his opponent.

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