

McNary cruises by Central in final home game

BY MATT RAWLINGS
Of the Keizertimes

The seniors of the McNary girls basketball team capped off the final home game of their careers in memorable fashion against Central on Wednesday, June 16.

After falling behind in the first quarter, the Celtics ended the half by going on a 25-5 run and eventually defeated the Panthers by a score of 50-24.

In a year where the season looked uncertain at times due to the COVID-19 pandemic, McNary head coach Elizabeth Doran expressed gratitude in getting the chance to coach her seniors one last time.

“They are just a really special group to me. It has been really fun to see them all as seniors. It is a pretty special moment to have them play together in their last game at McNary,” Doran said.

Leah Doult, a four-year varsity player and reigning first-team all-league performer, led the way with 26 points.

“It is bittersweet. It still doesn't feel real. I am just grateful that I could finish it out with my teammates and best friends,” Doult said. “It feels good to go out on a win.”

“Leah has been the leader of this group from the start,” Doran added.

The anxiousness of senior night appeared to take a toll on the Celtics in the early going. McNary initially struggled with Central's full-court press and defensive pressure, which caused them to fall into a 5-0 hole midway through the first period.

Doran elected to burn a timeout to try and calm the nerves of her players

“I think it was about getting that timeout and telling them to take a deep breath. Central did have some intense pressure, so we had to be aggressive and attack, instead of being back on our heels,” Doran said.



Avery Buss runs by her defender on the way to the hoop in McNary's 50-24 victory over Central on Wednesday, June 16.

Photo by MATT RAWLINGS of Keizertimes

After Doult got free for a hoop to end the four-minute scoreless streak, things began to open up offensively for McNary. A steal and layup by KJ Custer, which was followed by a baseline triple from Kylie Nepstad, gave the Celtics their first lead at 7-5.

Later in the period, the Celtics showed phenomenal ball movement in breaking the press, which resulted in an easy layup by Custer off the feed from Doult. On the next Central possession, Custer got a steal and converted another uncontested bucket to increase the lead to 12-5.

“We have a very aggressive defense

and staying in the passing lane really helps us,” Custer said. “Our bench also helps us so much and it really motivates us to keep pushing.”

“KJ is a spark plug coming off the bench. It has been fun to see her get more comfortable at the varsity level the last couple of weeks,” Doran added.

McNary built their lead to 21-7 in the second period thanks to six straight points from Doult. Central got their first field goal in more than 10 minutes to cut the lead to 11, but McNary closed the half on a 9-0 run to go up 30-10 at the break.

McNary's offense sputtered in the

third quarter, going scoreless for four minutes. But thanks to stifling defense and seven points from Doult, McNary put the game well out of reach by going up 37-14 after three quarters.

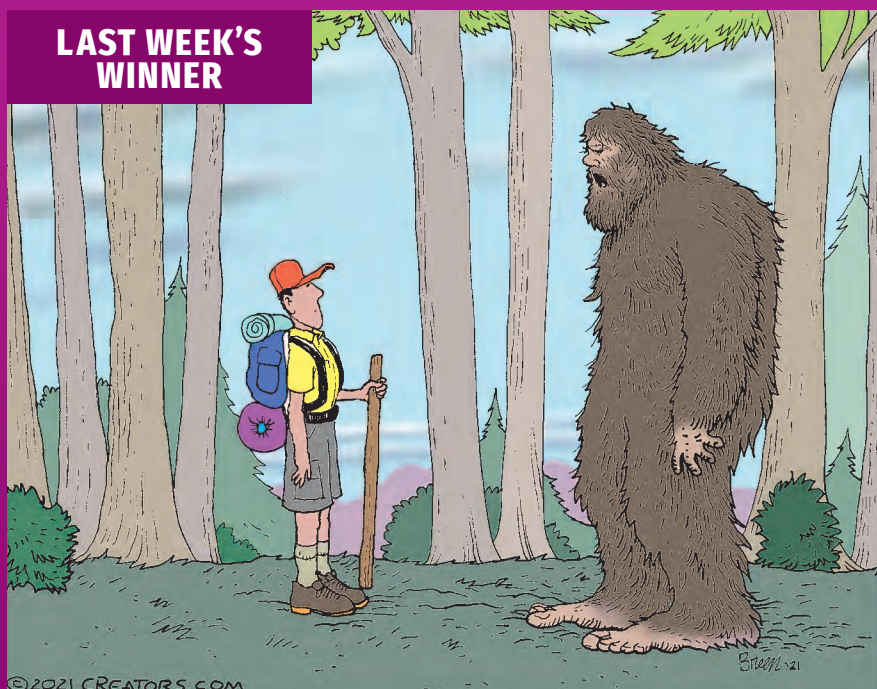
As her time at McNary comes to a close, Doult showed appreciation for what the McNary girls program has given her over the last four years.

“I have been playing with most of these girls since fourth grade. It has been awesome to be a part of Doran's first four-year group. Our coaching staff is amazing and we have such a great culture here. I am really grateful to have been able to play here,” Doult said.

Caption It!

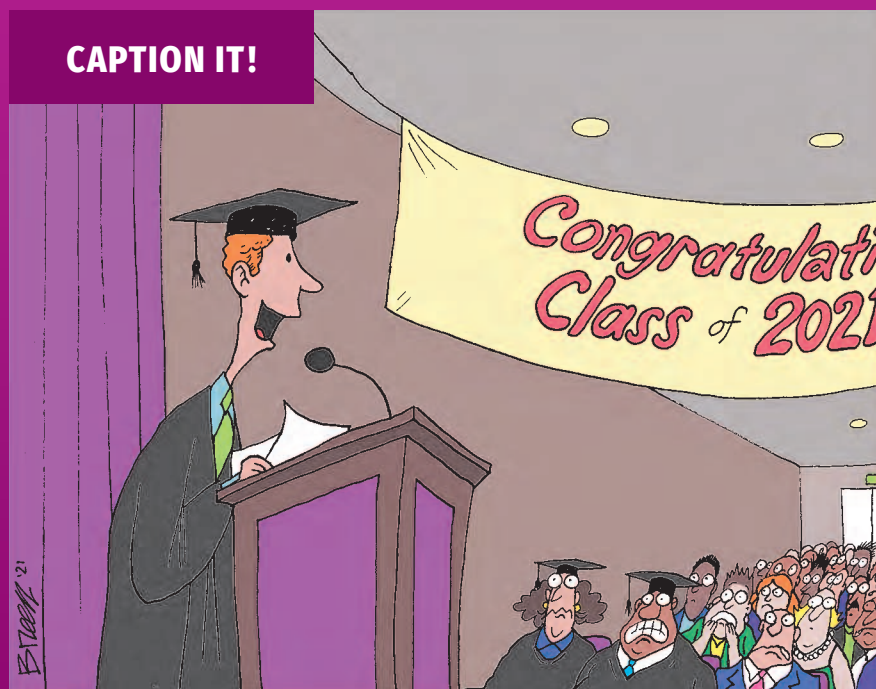
By STEVE BREEN

LAST WEEK'S WINNER



“OH, NOT AGAIN. I REALLY NEED TO WORK ON MY MATING CALL.”
—Liev Millner, Newton, MA

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