

A family affair: Copeland bros lead McNary football



Brothers Tyler (left) and Braiden Copeland are expected to be two of the top players in the Mountain Valley Conference this season. Photo by MATT RAWLINGS of Keizertimes

KEIZERTIMES SPORTS

BY MATT RAWLINGS
Of the Keizertimes

For brothers Tyler and Braiden Copeland, sibling rivalry has always been prevalent in their household.

“There was a moment right around sixth or seventh grade where you could see that it was becoming contentious and the rivalry was really increasing. It was at that moment that my wife and I sat and encouraged them to fight against the world instead of fighting against each other because they are each other’s best allies,” said Andrew Copeland, Tyler and Braiden’s father.

The brothers took their dad’s advice to heart and have now established themselves as two of the best players on the McNary football squad — Tyler will be entering his senior year while Braiden will be a junior this season.

“There are some days where we can get into pretty heated arguments, but then we can separate for 30 minutes and we are completely fine after that. It’s awesome and then we can come out here and compete. We can get a little

mad at each other, but then go home and play Xbox together,” Braiden said.

During the spring football season, Tyler started at receiver and free safety while Braiden got first-team reps at receiver, running back and linebacker. In the second game of last season against McKay, the Copeland brothers got the opportunity to put their skills on full display.

On the second drive of the game, Tyler caught a long pass down the sideline for the score to put the Celtics up 14-0.

Later in the half, Braiden hauled in a touchdown pass of his own on a shallow crossing route to extend McNary’s lead to 28-0.

Not to be outdone by his little brother, Tyler extended the McNary lead to 35-0 with an incredible touchdown grab with less than two minutes remaining in the first half.

Tyler was targeted down the middle of the field in double coverage and it appeared that a McKay safety was camped under the ball after it was

thrown, preparing to make the interception. But at the last moment, Tyler leapt and snagged the ball out of the air and got to the end zone for the 32-yard score.

But Braiden had a highlight-reel play of his own in the second half. On McNary’s first play of the third quarter,

Braiden caught a quick slant, broke numerous tackles and rumbled 68 yards for his second score of the game.

Both Copelands had over 70 yards receiving and two touchdowns in McNary’s 42-7 rout of McKay.

“It was the moment we realized that

HE HAS TWO JOBS BUT ONLY GETS PAID FOR ONE.

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