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OVERTIME, *Continued from page A15*

quarter,” said Braiden Copeland, who had seven tackles (two tackles-for-loss) and a sack on the night.

“It shows the mental toughness of this group. I can’t say enough about our defensive effort in the second half, shutting down a pretty physical team. Love this group of kids. They really work hard and they really battle,” Auvinen added. “We got a little rest at halftime and were able to put them behind the chains several times. We also subbed a little more. They were just doing whatever it took.”

The McNary offense, on the other hand, struggled for much of the second and third quarters. But after a first down catch by Braiden Copeland and a long run by Zane Aicher — who led the Celtics with 107 yards rushing on 17 carries — McNary found themselves in the red zone to start the fourth period.

The McNary coaching staff noticed that the Newberg defense was starting to key on Aicher when the Celtics ran their inside zone in the second half. On the third play of the quarter, Tyler Copeland faked the handoff to Aicher, drawing the outside linebacker into the middle of the field, and took off to the outside, sprinting untouched into the end zone to tie the game at 14-14.

“The more we ran (inside zone), the more their outside guys started creeping into the box and chasing down the running back. And the kid is an athlete, no doubt about that. It was a great play call, and a great play on Tyler’s part,” Auvinen said.

Both squads didn’t threaten to score for the remainder of regulation, forcing the game into overtime.

Newberg had possession first in the

extra session and, after a multitude of penalties on both teams, were forced into a 40-yard field goal attempt, which was blocked by McNary cornerback Sage Allen, putting the Celtics in a situation to win with a score.

However, McNary got backed into a third-and-11 situation, and the Newberg pass-rush forced Tyler Copeland into an errant throw, bringing up fourth down.

With the game hanging in the balance, Auvinen called on Ready to attempt the 43-yarder for the win.

A 43-yard field goal with the game on the line would be a tall task for most high school kickers, but Ready — who has one of the strongest legs in the state — was unfazed by the pressure and the distance.

“There were a lot of nerves, but at the same time I was hyped. I knew I could make that field goal. I have done it in practice many times. This week was kind of a struggle, but it made me better. It made me focus more on making that kick,” Ready said.

“I was hoping we would pick up a few yards there to make it an easier kick. But it was fourth-and-11 and we have a kid that can kick. I felt like it was our best shot at that point,” Auvinen added. “He has a big leg. He has shown that in practice quite a bit. And he is a gutsy kid. When (Newberg) called timeout, Logan just had a smile on his face and I told him ‘you got this.’”

The snap and hold were picture-perfect. When the ball was struck by Ready’s mighty right foot, everyone in the stadium knew the game was over.

“It was a no-doubter,” Auvinen said.

Ready was mobbed by teammates after making the clutch kick as the McNary fans erupted while the hometown team left the field dejected, suffering their second straight one-score loss.

“These kids will be talking about this game at their 10- and 20-year reunion,” Auvinen said.

McNary will be back at home on Friday to take on Grants Pass at 7 p.m.



McNary quarterback Tyler Copeland scampers for a 28-yard run in the second quarter.

Photo by MATT RAWLINGS of Keizertimes