

McNary earns fourth consecutive clean sheet in win over West Albany

BY MATT RAWLINGS
Of the Keizertimes

With league play on the horizon, the McNary girls' soccer squad is heading into the meat of their schedule with a lot of confidence.

Sydnee Alfano and Tessa Fisher each scored a goal for the Celtics, while goalkeeper Hannah Ferguson earned her fourth straight shutout in the net, as McNary defeated West Albany 2-0 on Thursday, Sept. 16 for their fifth consecutive win.

"I'm feeling really good about the ability of this team and I think they are starting to believe it as well," McNary head coach Lauren Brouse said. "They take what we talk about at practice or at halftime and they go out and execute it. That is why it feels like every game, we are getting a little bit better."

The five-game win-streak is the longest the Celtics have had since 2016 — the Celtics outscored their opponents 9-1 during the stretch.

"We do a really good job of working together. Out of all the years I have been here, this has been the team that is the most connected. Having five wins in a row is a pretty big deal and we are feeling good about going into league play," Fisher said.

McNary had a pair of near-misses on corner kicks in the first 15 minutes in the contest. But in the 16th minute, the Celtics were able to connect on an opportunity from the corner to take the early lead.

Celtics midfielder Peyton Olafson placed a great ball in the middle that carried towards the net. The pass was knocked away by the West Albany keeper, but Alfano got a touch before the ball hit the turf and placed a shot that caromed off a Bulldog defender and into the back of the net for the goal.

"I have been working a lot on accuracy with corner kicks. I am always



McNary forward Sydnee Alfano shows off her footwork in the Celtics 2-0 victory against West Albany.

Photo by MATT RAWLINGS of Keizertimes

aiming right for Syd. And to see us connect and get that goal was a really proud moment for us. I was able to get it right where I wanted it," Olafson said.

"If you can find Sydney in there on a cross, she is going to put it in. Getting that early lead I think calms us down a little bit. We always start off a little hectic, but when we put one away, I feel like this team can just play their game," Brouse added.

The McNary defense was effective in limiting West Albany's opportunities as the Bulldogs struggled to get clean

looks in the first 40 minutes. They had a pair of chances to get on the board in the final five minutes of the first half, but both shots sailed wide.

Brouse cycled in a number of different players into the back line in the second half, but no matter who was on the field, the Celtics defense didn't miss a beat.

"Our back line is full of all-stars. But we also have depth. I can take someone out, and I am perfectly comfortable with my bench going in," Brouse said. "Those girls are really smart players.

And they are coachable."

Brouse also shared how proud she was of her team posting another clean sheet.

"I hope our defense and goalkeeper realize how big that is. That is a huge deal. They are really proud of that and I think it's helping them keep the intensity in their games," Brouse said.

With the score still at 1-0 midway through the second half, Fisher gave the Celtics a little more breathing room with an impressive goal.

After receiving the ball in the

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