

High expectations in place for McNary wrestling

ON THE MAT



Jonathan Canchola (left) placed second in the 138-pound division at the MVC District Meet last season. FILE PHOTO, Keizertimes

BY MATT RAWLINGS
Of the Keizertimes

After losing only three seniors and filling a roster with more than 60 athletes, the McNary wrestling program has a ton of depth heading into the 2021-22 season.

In the shortened spring season, the Celtics had 15 district placers and nine state qualifiers — all of whom are returning.

“We have the most kids I have ever had in my four years here. I am pumped. We have an experienced lineup. Most of these kids have been here two or three years now. They are excited and hungry and have their own set of expectations,”

McNary head coach Sam Martin said. “I would argue that we have a lot of depth that other programs don’t have. Every single one of those kids that qualified for state had some sort of success.”

Sophomore Max Blanco was McNary’s top finisher at the state tournament last season, placing fifth in the 106-pound division. Martin expects Blanco to make the podium at state once again this year.

“He now has that expectation to take it a step further,” Martin said.

McNary has two other quality wrestlers who will be competing at 106 pounds in Joey Barros and Jackson Wainwright. Barros qualified for the state meet last season while Wainwright, who

transferred in from Crook County, made it to the 4A state meet last season.

“Most schools forfeit at 106 in duals, and here we are with three really good ones. It’s definitely a good problem to have because it’s a problem that no one ever sees,” Martin said.

On the back end, senior Layne Runyan and Aldo Villalvazo will be two of the top heavyweights in the Mountain Valley Conference (MVC) after both qualified for state last season.

“Both of them are ready to take that next step,” Martin said.

Even though he hasn’t wrestled in a state tournament, senior Jordan Orr is arguably the most experienced wrestler

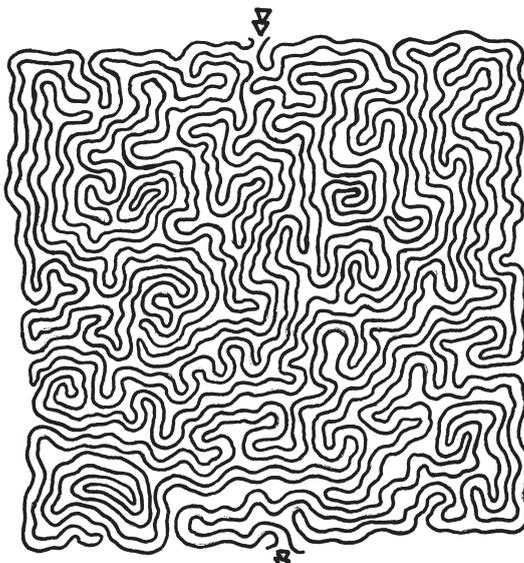
brainfood

sudoku

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