

Celtics win two duals in first competition



ON THE MAT

McNary wrestler Hunter Ruberto (blue singlet) earns a takedown in the first round of his match with Roseburg's Ethan Leaton. Photo by MATT RAWLINGS of Keizertimes

BY MATT RAWLINGS
Of the Keizertimes

The McNary wrestling squad won two of their three duals in their first competition of the season on Friday, Dec. 3, defeating Century 51-27 and beating Cleveland 46-34.

In their first dual with Roseburg, one of the premier programs in the state, McNary competed but wound up losing by a score of 43-31.

When these two teams faced off two seasons ago, McNary only won a single match during the dual, which was why McNary head coach Sam Martin was pleased that his team was able to keep the score close this time around.

"I remember just a couple years ago when that was close to a shutout. To have a tightly contested dual with a school that is storied as Roseburg is pretty cool," Martin said. "It was a great confidence builder. I know the kids felt pretty good after it. And the ability to follow it up with two victories by a large margin was even better."

McNary's top wrestler on the day was 170-pounder Hunter Ruberto, who won two of his matches via pin, while getting a major decision win in his other match.

"Hunter looked really good. He did exactly what he wanted to do. He was aggressive and just attacked. It was a

good momentum builder for him heading into the rest of the season," Martin said.

Damian Hernandez (132) and Max Blanco (113) were also unbeaten on the day. Both wrestlers earned a pair of falls in their two matches, as well as a win by forfeit.

"Those guys showed up ready to wrestle. It was good to see them get off to a quick start. Neither of them wasted too much time. They just got right down to business, which is what we talk about here all the time," Martin said.

Even though he finished with a record of 1-2 on the day, Martin said he was really impressed with the way 160-pounder Josh Friesen wrestled. Friesen faced Century's William Musser, who was the runner-up at 152 pounds at the state meet last year, and earned three takedowns before getting pinned late in the second round.

Friesen also wrestled tough against Roseburg's Varrius Scanlan, who placed third at state last season.

"On paper, it didn't look like he had good matches, but Josh wrestled pretty well. There is some stuff we got to clean up as far as mat wrestling goes, but he looked really good on his feet. I was really happy to see that," Martin said.

McNary will be back in action in a two-day tournament in North Bend beginning Friday, Dec. 10 — the event features 28

teams and is one of the biggest tournaments in Oregon.

"This is one of the toughest tournaments in the state. It's really about building up their confidence in tournaments

like these to build up their confidence when it comes down to districts and state. It's an opportunity for our feet to get wet in a big tournament. It will be a good opportunity for these guys," Martin said.



Josh Friesen (left) tries to make a move on his opponent. Photo by MATT RAWLINGS of Keizertimes

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