

Celts win first dual against West Salem

BY MATT RAWLINGS

Of the *Keizertimes*

The McNary boys' swim team started their season on the right foot in their opening dual meet against West Salem, defeating the Titans 85-80 on Thursday, Dec. 16.

"It was huge. We have had some success on the boys side against west for the past three or four years now, so it was good to continue that. We had a lot of great swims," McNary head coach Casey Lewin said.

Junior Zach Kilby led the way for the Celtics in the sprints, winning the 50-yard freestyle with a time of 25.95. Kilby also won the 100-free and was the only competitor to finish the race in under a minute (57.81). McNary swept both races as Caleb Skipper and Zach Harrington finished in second and third in the 50-free, while Ben Standley and Hayden Wampler did the same in the 100-free.

"The core group has been showing up for us," Lewin said. "They really came together and competed well."

Kilby said that even though he's not as fast as he was hoping to be at this point in the season, he is pleased with the steady improvement that he is showing.

"I like the way I'm progressing. It is looking promising," Kilby said.

McNary's other individual winner was Skipper, who was victorious in the 100-backstroke with a time of 1:05.40.



Caleb Skipper finished first in the 100-yard backstroke with a time of 1:05.40.

FILE PHOTO, *Keizertimes*

Last year, Skipper said he was about six seconds slower in the backstroke than he is now, which is why he was so encouraged with his time.

"I was feeling really good about my backstroke. I have been focusing more on my freestyle, but I was ready to get back into the backstroke because it's one of my favorite races," Skipper said. "It felt good to do well in that race."

Skipper and Kilby were also dominant in their relay races, which helped put McNary over the edge on the scoreboard. Both swimmers helped the Celtics win the 200-medley relay, along with Zander Rhoades and Tyshin Nguyen. Skipper, Kilby, Harrington and Standley also placed first in the 200-free relay.

"My teammates made it easy for me as an anchor. They did all the work to get

the lead, I was just there to finish it off," Kilby said.

"I really love the relays because of the team spirit. Everyone contributes. It's a great atmosphere," Skipper added.

The Celtics return to the pool after the holiday break to take on Sprague at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 6 at the Kroc Center in Salem.

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