

McNary places fourth at district meet

ON THE MAT



Josh Friesen (blue singlet) earns a pin over Kristian Contreras from Bend in quarterfinal match at 170 pounds. Friesen placed second in the division to qualify for the state meet

Photo by MATT RAWLINGS of Keizertimes



Anthony Thomas looks to make a move on Bend's Keelan Dennis.

Photo by MATT RAWLINGS of Keizertimes

BY MATT RAWLINGS Of the Keizertimes

The McNary wrestling team finished in fourth place at the Mountain Valley Conference district meet over the weekend and placed five athletes into the state tournament, highlighted by Max Blanco, who was the 106-pound district champion as a sophomore.

"We thought we would get a few more kids on the podium, but all-in-all it was a solid team showing," McNary head coach Sam Martin said.

Blanco is McNary's first district champion since Enrique Vincent won the 120-pound division in 2017.

"It feels good. It's just a lot of hard work paying off. I just came in with a ton of confidence," Blanco said.

After getting a pair of quick pins in his first two bouts, Blanco won via technical fall in the semifinals against Mountain View's Grayson Moore before earning a major decision victory in the championship over Eric Larwin from Bend.

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— SAM MARTIN

McNary head coach

"Max really wrestled really well. He wrestled the way we expected. He has been competing at 113 all year, so he's used to wrestling bigger guys," Martin said.

Damian Hernandez forced overtime in the 126-pound semifinal bout, but wound up falling to Brady Johns from Mountain View. Hernandez, however, was not deterred and came back to win his next two matches to place third and qualify for state.

