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K SPORTS

Celtic softball's West Salem walk-off win

By JOSHUA MANES
Of the Keizertimes

Kayelee Schwab's eighth inning walk-off double that brought home Ali Martinez sealed the day for McNary softball Tuesday against West Salem High School.

Schwab was 3-for-4 with 2 RBIs in the 4-3 win for McNary (10-3, 2-0), including the game winner in extra innings with one out and a runner on third.

"I honestly was like 'I need to get a friggin hit,' and then I did," Schwab said. "And honestly I knew if I didn't someone behind me would have."

Schwab only needed a ball in the air deep enough for Martinez to tag. She sent a 2-0 pitch over the West Salem center fielder's head and off the wall, leaving no doubt that Martinez would score.

The hit was the culmination of a quintessential small-ball inning. A lead-off single from Martinez. Karah Miller sacrificed her over to second with the bunt. On the first pitch to Schwab, Martinez stole third, her second steal of the game. The next pitch, Schwab sent everyone home.

It was a perfect sequence in an otherwise sloppy game for the Celtics. Base running mistakes and infield miscues slightly marred the victory for head coach Kelly Parsell.

"We didn't look our best," Parsell said. "We're a lot better in every aspect, from energy to effort to just simple softball skills. We're better than that, but they did pull through a big win and anytime you win like that it's something to be celebrated."

Things looked like they could get out of hand early on for McNary. In the top of the first, West Salem scored two, and were still threatening with runners on the corners and only one out. But starting pitcher Lacey Vasas responded, retiring the next two batters.



Teammates mob Kayelee Schwab following her walk-off double against West Salem on Tuesday, April 26, at McNary High School. The Celtics won 4-3, and Schwab went 3-for-4 with 2 RBIs.

Photo by JOSHUA MANES of the Keizertimes

The Celtics were out-hit 12-9 in the game, and Schwab was the only batter with multiple hits for them. But they found a way to grind out a victory and remain undefeated early in league play.

Parsell wasn't ready to celebrate yet though, pointing out that some of the team didn't seem to have their "A game."

"But that's no excuse, especially for a lot of those things," Parsell said. "It's a mental thing. We're going to continue to work on making sure our effort is always 100% there. Whether or not our hard skills are there we're going to make sure we're

bringing everything we've got."

Vasas may be one of those players that might admit to not being on her A game. Even though she went 8 innings, struck out 6 and only allowed 3 runs, 2 earned, Vasas called the game one of her worst she's pitched in her entire life. She did allow 12 hits to the Titans.

"I felt angry mostly," Vasas said. "It wasn't even just pitching. I had so many errors that were just so easy to get. I just wasn't in it today. But I felt better having the team behind me."

Vasas threw 122 pitches, with a 62%

strike rate. Parsell said she thought she was having issues with the strike zone all day.

"I think she powered through it and that last inning there was a strike that wasn't called her way and I was hoping she would stay tough and push through and she did," Parsell said. "She's a really tough player and this is a testament to it."

McNary has two doubleheaders to close out the week. McCay High School comes to town on Wednesday (results not available at time of print), and Summit High School makes the trip on Saturday.

Late surge from Titans topples Celtic baseball

By JOSHUA MANES
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McNary starting pitcher Jake Allen took a two-hitter into the sixth inning, but two walks and a two-out, three-run home run broke the game open for West Salem High School on Tuesday.

The 8-3 home loss drops the Celtics to 2-3 in league play.

McNary had opportunities in the game, but were unable to capitalize on multiple West Salem errors.

"I felt like we could put some pressure

on them offensively, and we didn't," McNary head coach Larry Keeker said. "It kind of felt like if we are able to get some big hits in some moments where we had opportunities in that game, and put a little more pressure on them, potentially it could be different."

The game was tied at one heading into the top of the sixth inning. Allen's inning started out good, striking out the lead off hitter. But two walks started to open the flood gates.

With two men on and two outs, second

baseman Tyler Rock took a 2-0 pitch from Allen deep, making the score 4-1.

The Titans added some insurance in the seventh, scoring four more runs.

McNary just couldn't seem to get a read on West Salem starting pitcher Matthew Luke.

"Kind of a slow, left-handed off-speed guy, slip the fastball in every once in a while, Keeker said. "We were just off time, a lot of pop-ups today. Tried to get our guys to make some adjustments, just couldn't make them today."