As the new and improved Bobcat Stadium officially opened to the Bozeman community today, the Montana State University football team was preparing to make its home debut today against UC Davis.

**END (WORK) ZONE**

Stadium renovations, Bobcats making home debut today against UC Davis

By COLTER NUANEAZ Chronicle Sports Writer

As the hot summer Bozeman sun beat down, men with yellow hard hats built and built, seemingly reaching for the sky.

On the turf below, dozens of short-<br> less young men worked tirelessly as well, forming their cumulated craft and bonding into a singular unit in preparation of fulfilling great expectations. From the Bobcat Stadium press box above, Montana State University athletic director Peter Fields gazed out the window. It was almost as if what played out in front of him was a premonition of the future. Before his eyes, Bobcat Stadium was being constructed and so was the MSU football team. Both were racing toward a common goal, a similar date of debut. That day is today.

“I stood there and watched them, realizing they were both in construction,”Fields said Wednesday. “Now we get to unveil both pieces of work to this community.”

The MSU football team will make its home debut today against UC Da- vis and the home opener will be like no other in program history. Completion is a 7,200 seat renovation and addi- tion to the south end zone, giving the Bobcats a viable three-sided stadium with a multi-million dollar scoreboard to match. The capacity attendance of 17,779 is expected to be reached as an offensive lined up with more optimism than any in recent memory culminates in today’s game.

“The home opener is always exciting regardless, but with the new house, it’s going to be so fun,” MSU senior captain Clay Bignell, the team’s starting middle linebacker. “That place is going to be jam-packed. It’s going to be crazy."

Bignell knows what opening days are like. He grew up a Bobcat in Hali- na. His uncle, Joe Bignell, is a member of the MSU Hall of Fame and was a wide receiver on the MSU 1984 na- tional championship team. But Bignell and his teammates are trying to avoid the hoopla surrounding the unveiling of the stadium. Fed off the crowd, but not get captivated by the aura of the event, that’s what head coach Rob Ash is preaching to his players.

“We are excited about it, we are ap- preciative of it, we love the hype, the support, all that, but we are going to try to focus on the game on the field,” Ash said Tuesday. “Honestly, the only thing that mat- ters is the game so that’s what we are going to focus on. Our junior wide receiver Elvis Alapja, who enters sun- day with a streak of at least one catch in 23 straight games. “All the other stuff is great, but that’s really the experience it. We don’t sit in the stands. We will obviously look at the scoreboard, but it’s not for us as much as it is for the fans. We have to worry about the game because if we don’t perform well and get a win, it doesn’t matter.”

**END (WORK) ZONE**

**By COLTER NUANEAZ Chronicle Sports Writer**

‘New’ stadium bigger deal for Montana State fans than players

The capacity attendance of 17,779 is expected to be reached as an offensive lined up with more optimism than any in recent memory culminates in today’s game.

“They are trying to downplay the opening day experience it. We don’t sit in the stands. We will obviously look at the scoreboard, but it’s not for us as much as it is for the fans. We have to worry about the game because if we don’t perform well and get a win, it doesn’t matter.”

New MSU football stadium provides a healthier and more active life.

**Bozeman Daily Chronicle**

**Bozeman Daily Chronicle**

SATURDAY, SEPT. 10
VS. UC DAVIS

UC DAVIS AT MONTANA STATE, BOBCAT STADIUM, 1:05 P.M. — HOME OPENER

**INSIDE**

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**SUCCESSFUL HOME OPENER?**

■ Beat writer Colter Nuanez breaks down today’s matchup | 6

**LEVELED FIELD**

■ Montana State, Davis face an FCS foe for the first time this season | 2

**CH, CH, CH, CH, CH**

■ Changes ... much has happened since the last time Aggies visited Bozeman | 2

**TIGER REVENGE?**

■ Manhattan takes on Fairfield team that ended its season a year ago | PAGE B1

**PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER**

**Bozeman Daily Chronicle**

**FULL PAPER INSIDE**

**Where do you help you lead a healthier and more active life.**

**Bozeman Daily Chronicle**

**Bozeman Daily Chronicle**
much has changed in the "Bobcats" last visit to Bozeman in 2006

Much has changed in the

UC Davis will join Big Sky Conference in ’11

by OLIVER MURRAY
Chronicle Sports Writer

Although the school year is just a few weeks old, the football teams from Montana State University and UC Davis have tough tests today.

For MSC, the team plays in newly renovated Bobcat Stadium for the first time. The Bobcats are 4-0 at home openers under head coach Bob Ash, but today’s match-up against the Aggies is a different challenge. It’s the first time under Ash that MSU has played a non-Division II opponent in its season opener.

Ash said he is concerned about his team facing the Aggies, a team that has won its last two games but will face one of the nation’s top junior college teams.

For UC Davis, it’s the last week that the Aggies have to prepare for an opponent before joining the league on a permanent basis next week. The matchup is also one of the toughest on the Aggies’ schedule this season as they prepare for a Friday night road game against Montana State this week.

UC Davis head coach Bob Biggs said his team is prepared for the game and will be ready to go ahead into the season. The Aggies are looking to get off to a good start in the Big Sky Conference and to solidify their status as one of the program’s top players.

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2011 MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

BOBCATS

#25 // Running Back

Cody Kirk

Why settle for anything less?

$49 2011-12 Frequent Sky Card
Ski free 2 weeks plus $20 off peak or $5 off early/late day ticket rate

Purchase by 9/30/11
bigskyresort.com/seasonpass

Photo by Sean Sperry
Why settle for anything less?

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bigskyresort.com/seasonpass
Saturday, September 10, 2011

The Sky has no limits. Following Montana's lead, Big Sky become one of the top conferences in the FCS

By COLTER NUANEZ

The rise to prominence for
the Montana Grizzlies — and
the Big Sky Conference — the
Big Sky Conference has no
limit when it comes to reaching
for the sky right there, the
chase continues. And for the
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**When Montana State has the ball**

Passing: MSU sophomore quarterback Ryan Wright has thrown for 18 TDs and 2,477 yards, but he didn't play up in his team's opener against last week's Ute. McGhee was 16-for-29 for 190 yards — not bad numbers against a Pac-12 secondary with speed — but McGhee's quarterback throws two interceptions that gut the MSU offense.

This week, count on McGhee and the Bobcat running corps to be the main focus of the Montana State offense. Both McGhee and Wright have played in Pac-12 secondary passing yards per game in McGhee's freshman season. McGhee has 602 yards and 1,230 yards. Despite the fact the passing attack.

The secondary is the strength of UCD's defense, its transition to the Football Championship.

**When UC Davis has the ball**

**EDGE**

**Montana State**

**Defense**

11 John Lauletta 6-2/215 sr.
12 Zach Winters 6-5/260 sr.
19 Brian Begg 6-2/205 sr.
20 Christian Keli'i 6-1/185 sr.
21 Randy Wright 6-3/195 so.
22 Nick King 6-3/245 so.
23 Woody Ranieri 6-2/200 jr.
26 Rodel Lindquist 5-10/190 jr.
30 Marques Barron 6-2/248 fr.
34 Preston Gale 6-3/252 fr.
37 Sean Kelly 5-8/215 sr.
38 Michael Foster 6-3/205 jr.
40 T.J. King 6-1/175 fr.
44 Andrew Verlanic 6-4/300 sr.
45 Ben Flotkoetter 6-2/205 fr.
50 Reese Ludwig 6-1/230 jr.
51 Victor Lee 6-0/235 sr.
53 Al Doiron 6-3/295 so.
56 Shaun Sampson 6-0/277 jr.
57 Casey Dennehy 6-1/280 sr.
59 Brian Bignell 6-2/205 fr.
60 Marques Barron 6-2/248 fr.
63 Ryan Wright 6-3/195 so.
69 Wally Williams 5-10/185 fr.
70 Andre Allen 6-1/195 jr.
71 Jonathan Perkins 5-11/175 so.
75 Leo Davis 6-4/300 sr.
90 Brian Flotkoetter 6-2/205 fr.
50 Leo Davis 6-4/300 sr.
61 Alex Terrien 6-4/283 sr.
77 Ben Flotkoetter 6-2/205 fr.
84 Brian Flotkoetter 6-2/205 fr.
85 Todd Hammons 6-1/270 jr.
86 T.J. King 6-1/175 fr.
88 Shane Robison 6-5/276 fr.
94 Marques Barron 6-2/248 fr.
96 T.J. King 6-1/175 fr.
99 Brian Bignell 6-2/205 fr.

**Kickers**

16 Anas Bahr 5-10/190 jr.
21 Randy Wright 6-3/195 so.
22 Nick King 6-3/245 so.
30 Marques Barron 6-2/248 fr.
34 Preston Gale 6-3/252 fr.
37 Sean Kelly 5-8/215 sr.

**OFFENSE**

**Montana State**

**Bowl**

31 Montana State vs. UC Davis

**Central**

16 Nick King 6-3/245 so.
19 Brian Begg 6-2/205 sr.
20 Christian Keli'i 6-1/185 sr.
21 Randy Wright 6-3/195 so.
24 Nick King 6-3/245 so.
41 Ben Flotkoetter 6-2/205 fr.
42 T.J. King 6-1/175 fr.
50 Reese Ludwig 6-1/230 jr.
51 Victor Lee 6-0/235 sr.
56 Shaun Sampson 6-0/277 jr.
57 Casey Dennehy 6-1/280 sr.
60 Marques Barron 6-2/248 fr.
63 Ryan Wright 6-3/195 so.
69 Wally Williams 5-10/185 fr.
70 Andre Allen 6-1/195 jr.
71 Jonathan Perkins 5-11/175 so.
75 Leo Davis 6-4/300 sr.

**Both MSU and UC Davis fell victim to special teams breakdowns last week. UC Davis gave up what head coach Rod"}

**Dumas from G2**

And there was talk of sta-

**Montana State**

**Bowl**

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