

BRAWL OF THE WILD

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Montana’s Eli Gillman (right) is tackled by Montana State’s Bryce Grebe in the 123rd Brawl of the Wild game last November in Bozeman.
SHANNA MADISON, MISSOULIAN

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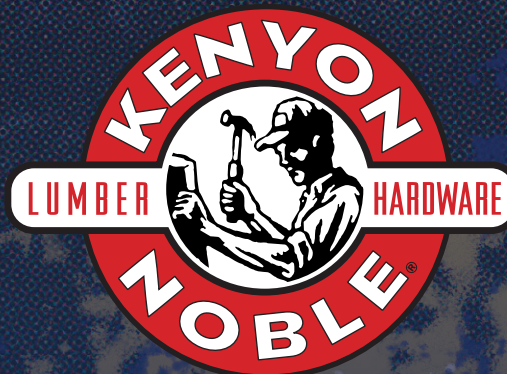
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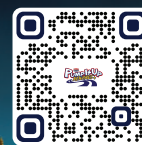
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'Cherish in my heart'

MISSOULIAN FILE

Former Montana Grizzly linebacker Jordan Tripp kisses the Great Divide Trophy at the end of the 113th Brawl of the Wild game while celebrating the victory with Jamaal Jones on Nov. 23, 2013. The No. 5 Grizzlies won 28-14 over the No. 13 Bobcats in front of 21,527 at Bobcat Stadium in Bozeman. Tripp will call his first Brawl as a television commentator next Saturday.

Missoula native, ex-Griz Jordan Tripp to call first Brawl on television

FRANK GOGOLA | 406 MT Sports

MISSOULA — Jordan Tripp has seen the Brawl of the Wild football game from a variety of perspectives over the years.

He watched from the stands and on television growing up as a kid in Missoula. He later played for the Grizzlies as

an All-American linebacker who wore the No. 37 legacy jersey. He then followed from afar while playing in the NFL.

He'll have a new vantage point for the latest rendition of the in-state rivalry on Nov. 22. He'll be perched up in the press box on the west side of Washington-Grizzly Stadium as a color analyst on the TV broadcast for Scripps Sports.

"As a kid growing up, that game was everything in the state of Montana," he said. "To be able to grow up as a fan and then play and be a fan again and then now be on

the broadcast side is really a full circle moment. And it's something that I don't take for granted."

Tripp needs no introduction to the Brawl of the Wild as a third-generation former Grizzly. He knows the history of the heated rivalry, which will be contested for the 124th time dating back to the debut matchup in 1897.

He remembers Brian Ah Yat's prayer pass to Justin Olsen that set up Kris Heppner's field goal for a 27-25 win in

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Tripp

From page 4

Bozeman in 1997 to keep The Streak alive. Sad memories remain of seeing that 16-game win streak end in 2002.

Tripp then played from 2009-13 in a stretch in which the road team won every game as he went 3-0 in Bozeman and 0-2 in Missoula. The rivalry currently is in a period in which the home team has won five straight games.

"I think being able to call one of the oldest rivalries in all of college football and have it be something that you played in and got to watch growing up, there's no words that speak to the gravity of it," he said. "It's a truly important game and something that I cherish in my heart."

The rivalry is importantly intact as both the Grizzlies and Bobcats have remained members of the Big Sky Conference. Realignment around the country has altered historic rivalries and even made some extinct.

The Brawl is the 17th-most played rivalry in all of NCAA Division I and the ninth-most played in the FCS. It has been contested more times than the Iron Bowl, the Egg Bowl, the Red River Shootout, Bedlam, the Holy War and more.

Adding to the stakes is that both teams have been relevant in not only the Big Sky but the national picture in recent years. They've combined to win the past three league titles and be the FCS runner-up in three of the past four years.

"I don't say this lightly," Tripp began. "I think that the Brawl of the Wild is without a question the best of the best when it comes to rivalries. The reason that I say that is because it has everything and more that some of the most significant rivalries in all of college sports have."

Then there's the atmosphere. For Tripp, not much compares to playing in the rivalry. The only thing that came close in college was playing at Neyland Stadium, the 100,000-seat home of the SEC's Tennessee Volunteers.

The only NFL stadiums that compared were the Green Bay Packers, Buffalo Bills and New England Patriots. He never got to play in the Philadelphia Eagles' stadium as he spent four years on five teams but heard great things about it.

For Montanans, the Griz and Cats are the professional teams in the state. All eyes are on the game not only in the state but also across the conference and the FCS landscape whether it's taking place in Missoula or Bozeman.

"Its atmosphere is unmatched," Tripp said. "I've played at the highest level and



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Former Griz No. 37 players Marcus Welnel, left, and Jordan Tripp, center, enjoy a light moment during the Griz Fest event hosted by the University of Montana Alumni Association on Jan. 6, 2024, at Frisco RoughRiders Ballpark in Frisco, Texas.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Scripps Sports TV color analyst Jordan Tripp (left), play-by-play broadcaster Trey Bender (center) and sideline reporter Kyle Hansen pose for a photo atop the Washington-Grizzly Stadium press box prior to Montana's season-opener against Central Washington on Sept. 6 in Missoula. Tripp, a Missoula native and former Griz All-American linebacker, is in his first year calling football games.

there's places that don't even come close to it. I've had friends who have been to the Brawl who played at SEC schools and they're blown away by the atmosphere."

Tripp has gained more of an understanding in his post-playing days of how athletic success extends beyond the playing field. Sports serve as the front porch of a university and can help aid the university in boosting enrollment.

He has been learning more about all the Big Sky schools in his weekly TV prep, which he said is "drastically different" than game prep as a player. He's no longer practicing on the field or doing rehab work or going to classes.

What might be similar come high noon Saturday is the steady emotional state for Tripp, who said he's not someone who is superstitious.

"I think it'll be controlled and nothing out of the ordinary," he said. "I think that that's just through years and experiences of learning that in order to perform at your best, at the highest level you possibly can, you need to know how to control your emotions no matter what the perceived implications are."

Tripp spends about 15 to 20 hours doing prep work for the broadcast. About 8 to 10 hours are spent breaking down film with the knowledge he accumulated over the years. The rest is production meetings, research and interviews.

There's also his pregame duties. That includes getting down to the field to see players and coaches before making his way up to the booth to call the games with play-by-play man Trey Bender, who is also in his first year in the role.

Then it'll be on to calling the biggest game of the year in the Big Sky. In his role as an analyst, he's had to cut out his Griz fandom and find a middle ground. It's all about being objective and honest in his assessment.

"It's really just talking ball and understanding both universities and both teams and the schematics and histories," he said. "I haven't found it too hard to stay in the middle because I get to be a broadcaster and evaluator and someone that gets to talk about things outside of the realm of the fandom of each team. I thought it would be harder and it's actually not."

And if he were to come away from the Brawl hearing any Cats fans calling him a Griz homer?

"That would be a failure," he said. "That won't happen."

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'It's pretty special:' Billings products wear legacy jerseys

LINDSAY ROSSMILLER
406 MT Sports

BILLINGS — For the first time this season, both players wearing Montana and Montana State's legacy number players are from the same town.

Montana State announced the selection of Paul Brott, a Billings West product, back in the spring while the University of Montana's selection of Clay Oven, a Billings Central product, came this past summer.

Both are the second selections from Billings in the history of each school's legacy jersey, but never before have both the Cats and Griz picked players from the same community at the same time.

"I think it's really, really neat, and it's pretty special to have those legacy numbers," Billings West coach Rob Stanton said. "We talk about it within our program, and we'll continue to talk about it, because it's special."

Honoring Legacy

Montana's Kraig Paulson played for the Grizzlies and wore 37 from 1983-1986. He then passed it to Tim Hauck in 1987. Since, it's been handed down from one Montana player to the next in recognition of the "Spirit of Montana."

Montana State's 41 was formalized in 2018 by then-coach Jeff Choate in recognition of Montana being the 41st state and in homage to the 1941 team, later dubbed the "Golden Ghosts" for the 14 players who died during service in WWII. It's worn by a senior from the Treasure State.

Both numbers have come to symbolize hard work, dedication and a representation of what it means to be from the state.

Montana 37s have come from 13 different Montana communities throughout its history and been worn by 19 players, some for a season with others donning the number for multiple years throughout their career.

MSU has had seven different 41s since the tradition began with senior players, representing six communities after a Billings player was selected to wear the jersey in both 2023 and 2025.

Representing the Magic City

It took until 2024 for a Billings player to be selected as UM's 37, but when Trevin Gradney's time was up, he chose to pass it to Clay Oven, a second Billings product.

"It was a really cool experience to be the first one from Billings to wear the number last year and I'm very honored to pass it to another Billings guy because this is a great



SHAWN RAECKE/FOR THE CHRONICLE

Montana State defensive linemen Paul Brott (41) and Hunter Parsons (45) rush the Mercyhurst offense on Sept. 20, 2025 at Bobcat Stadium.

place," Gradney said when the announcement was made. "A lot of great kids come from Billings and it's a special place for both of us. Clay is a good guy, I think this town deserves another 37, and I think he deserves to wear it."

As the most populous city in the state with just over 117,000 people as of the 2020 census, it took until 2023 for a player from Billings to don either of the jerseys. Billings Senior's Nolan Askelson was the first when he wore 41 for Montana State, a distinction recognized by Brott.

"I was thinking about all the people that have worn it before me and I was just glad I get to be mentioned in that group of people," Brott said about his selection in an interview April 26, 2025 after the Sonny Holland spring game.

"It's big time. I'm glad there's two Billings people on there now and Nolan's also a great guy that I looked up to so it's sweet."

The players carry with them pride of their state, but also of their city.

"He (Trevin) and I were both saying 37 (is) such a good representation of our hometown," Oven said. "To grow up there when we were little and play football there, and then to be able to look back and represent it again from here in Missoula, it's awesome, and it's awesome for Billings."

"I love the people there. Everybody's very supportive. If kids are going off to play college sports, the whole town backs you and you can feel that. So, it's really comforting and it's an honor to represent them."

Battle for Billings

Both Stantons pointed to the competitive nature of what players from Billings come to learn early.

"They can't just really just go through the motions, but have to go compete and starting at a very young, young age, they're competing with all the different kids around town," Jim Stanton said.

When they get to high school, that includes three AA programs and two Class

A programs in the city.

"I think that the real competitive kids, they love like-minded people, and they love being around people like that, and it just makes them a whole lot better," Rob Stanton said.

And when they get to start producing at the next level, the rest of the state has gotten to see what their coaches and Billings fans have known for awhile.

"It's cool to see them on clips and it's cool to watch them on Saturdays," Rob Stanton said. "We're so busy during the year, I don't get a chance to watch them in person, but always, you know can watch them on TV and tune into their games and it's pretty exciting."

Recruiting

Both programs have had success with homegrown players.

"We've had a lot of players from Billings over the years, so it's been good to us," Montana Grizzlies coach Bobby Hauck said.

"As the biggest city in Montana there is a good shot that there are going to be multiple prospects each and every year," Montana State coach Brent Vigen said. "The more important piece is there are some real good high school programs and the guys are coached really well and they value playing the game."

Nothing is guaranteed however and it takes both time and work to get to the next level.

"I think coming from whether it's my brother's program at Central or what we have at West, you know very good programs, and there's competition with those programs," Rob Stanton said. "I just think that, you know, Montana has really good football, and they're well coached. I think that appeals to (both the Cats and the Griz)."

And once they do get noticed, schools and prospective commits have to evaluate the best fit.

"Both schools — Montana, Montana State — they will find the best kids if they're hiding out in the northeast corner of Montana, and if they have the right length and the right speed, they'll find them," Jim Stanton said.

"You can't measure the intangibles and I think they see that in a lot of the Montana kids and in the Billings kids."

Capitalizing on the moment

Look deeper than just this season though and Billings players are making an impact for both teams.

The Cats currently have seven players from Billings — six from Billings West and one from Billings Central — including two captains who were former Golden Bears.

"Our run of Billings West players has been significant and when a high school prospect can look and see a familiar face having success in our program, that really creates a positive view of how an experience here in Bozeman would play out," Vigen said.

The Grizzlies currently have two — both from Billings Central.

Billings Senior has recently produced Junior Bergen, an All-American at UM, and Askelson, All-Big Sky player and MSU's 41 in 2023.

Of all the 2024 FCS All-American honorees, Montana as a state tied for third as the most represented home state, behind just Florida (10) and Texas (nine). Montana, Washington, Louisiana and New York all had six.

"The big thing is, it's hard to play at that level," Jim Stanton said. "And even in our program, if we get a kid or two a year just to get looked at, is pretty significant because there's just so many good athletes



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana linebacker Clay Oven (37) tackles Indiana State wide receiver Rashad Rochelle during a Sept 20 game at Washington-Grizzly Stadium. Oven is a Billings Central grad.

that they recruit from out of state and things like that. But we're definitely biased to Montana kids and Billings kids, and we always think they're a little bit better."

Out of those six All-Americans from the state of Montana last season, three of them came from Billings in Bergen along with Montana State's Marcus Wehr (Billings Central) and Taco Dowler (Billings West).

"There's nobody that outworked (Wehr) and you know, we use that as a sort of a standard that it's not just about 100% talent, but you've got to be able to develop yourself and work hard," Jim Stanton said of the example he uses to show his current players of what's possible. "Those kids, out of all those levels that have played at those schools, have been some of our hardest workers."

Rob Stanton reminds his current players that both Gradney and Brott did not start for the Golden Bears until midway through their junior seasons.

"I think it just shows you what type of character those two have to be awarded that number their senior year, just kind

of that never quit and prove people wrong and keep working and good things are going to happen," he said.

"That's a lesson for a lot of people to learn that you know, you go into a program, whether it's a high school program or a college program, it's okay to wait your turn, and it's okay to not go in there and start right away and it's okay to redshirt and not play maybe for a year, but you keep going, just like they did with our programs in high school, good things are going to happen."

Is Billings a Cats or a Griz town?

Both Vigen and Hauck think of Billings and the state as home territory for their teams and fans of both teams may make the claim that theirs is the predominant one.

For the players on both rosters from Montana, playing for the Cats or the Griz can mean the fulfillment of a goal, a continuation of a family legacy, a result of having a degree program the other doesn't or any number of other factors.

"It's been a dream since I was a little kid," Brott said during in interview this summer. "We used to put on Cats or Griz shirts during recess and it'd be football and so I have always worn the blue and gold and I'm just happy I get to represent it at the highest level."

Ask either of the Stantonos and they defer to rooting for former players, regardless of team, while acknowledging both the Cats and Griz have supporters in the area.

Regardless, the in-state players know they are being watched and cheered for with perhaps an extra level of attention.

"They don't want to disappoint, whether it's family members or former coaches, but I think it's a good thing that they're succeeding at that level and it's not as easy to do so, so I think that it's really cool that they can do that," Rob Stanton said.

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Big Sky coaches see pros, cons in post-House era

VICTOR FLORES
406 MT Sports

BOZEMAN — As he talked about the House settlement, Idaho State head football coach Cody Hawkins brought up a scene from the 2016 movie “Central Intelligence.”

“I need to know what is happening, right now,” Kevin Hart’s character says to Dwayne Johnson’s character in the scene.

“OK, OK, moving too fast,” Johnson’s character replies. “Bottom line: Are you in, or are you out?”

“What are you talking about?” Hart’s character responds. “In or out of what?”

Hawkins and other leaders in NCAA athletics were faced with a similar question earlier this year: Are you opting in or opting out of the House settlement?

The settlement, which was approved in June and went into effect July 1, forced the NCAA to pay \$2.8 billion in back damages to former college athletes. It also set roster limits and allowed schools to directly pay current players up to \$20.5 million per school in 2025-26 (that cap will increase in future years).

Most NCAA schools opted into the settlement, including six in the Big Sky Conference: Cal Poly, Montana, Montana State, Northern Colorado, Sacramento State and Weber State. The other half of the conference’s universities (Eastern Washington, Idaho, Idaho State, Northern Arizona, Portland State and UC Davis) will eventually opt in but had too many reservations to do it this year.

“We don’t know what being opted in really means yet,” Hawkins said during the Big Sky Football Kickoff on July 21. “We’d rather wait because in one year, how much of an impact is it going to have? We want to make sure we do it the right way.”

Hawkins isn’t the only person who wonders how football — and all of college sports, for that matter — will be affected by the settlement’s elements.

“We’re building the plane as we fly it with this new system,” Big Sky commissioner Tom Wistriceil said at the Kickoff. “I think the rules of engagement around everything dealing with the settlement will be different a year from now.”

‘The rich will get richer’

No Big Sky school will approach the \$20.5 million cap, and revenue sharing might not change much at the FCS level. But opting into the settlement was still appealing for some coaches because it gives their athletic departments more financial control.



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana head coach Bobby Hauck (left) shakes hands with Cal Poly head coach Paul Wulff after their game at Washington-Grizzly Stadium on Oct. 11.

Before July, athletes could get paid for their Name, Image and Likeness. This led to the formation of NIL collectives, such as the Bobcat Collective for MSU and the Good Ol’ Grizzlies for UM. Before the House settlement, schools couldn’t be in direct contact with those collectives. Now, they can.

“In the previous world, our fundraising efforts had to exist kind of separately. Now, our fundraising efforts and our intentionality can all be in the same direction,” MSU head coach Brent Vigen said at the Kickoff. “We can have actual conversations. We can be organized. I think our donors have a better understanding of, OK, what does this all mean? What are we after?”

While some collectives have shuttered, MSU has continued to work with the Bobcat Collective post-House. The collective and the university will probably join forces



Montana State head coach Brent Vigen speaks with QB Justin Lamson during their Sept. 6 game against South Dakota State.

JOSEPH SCHELLER, THE MONTANA STANDARD

House

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entirely by the end of the fiscal year on June 30, according to Vigen.

Another major change that happened in the post-House era: the NCAA recently eliminated the spring transfer portal window for football and pushed the December window to January.

"Player movement is something that will continue to happen but will happen differently because the timing will be a little bit different as we go into November and December and the portal technically not opening until January 2nd," Vigen said Oct. 20. "Will there be a tempered way it happens this year? It might."

Maybe the later, shorter transfer period combined with direct player payment will help Big Sky programs reduce their portal defectors.

"If their families are looking at that, they would say, 'Well, this school takes care of my son or daughter better than these other universities that are not opting in.' I think that does give you a bit of an advantage," said Sac State coach Brennan Marion, adding, "Now you're not depending on an outside group that you don't really know,



LINDSEY WASSON, ASSOCIATED PRESS

UC Davis head coach Tim Plough looks on from the sideline during a game against Washington on Sept. 6 in Seattle.

that you can't really talk to."

Hawkins and UM head coach Bobby Hauck, on the other hand, don't think

Big Sky schools will be able retain players any better than they could pre-House. Hawkins talked about that as he sat next

to one of his offensive linemen, Stryker Rashid, at the Kickoff.

"If I say, 'Hey, Stryker, I'm going to give you 50 grand,' and somebody else is like, 'Hey, we're going to give you \$400,000,' I'm like, 'He's leaving,'" Hawkins said. "He owes me a dinner, but he's leaving! And I'm like, 'Good for him.'"

UM initially planned to wait until next year to opt into the settlement. The Grizzlies reversed course right before the deadline because the NCAA had just allowed programs to designate athletes who would've been cut under the new House-determined roster limits. That rule lets UM and other football teams exceed the 105-man roster cap until those designated players run out of eligibility.

NCAA football programs can now offer scholarships to all 105 of the players on their rosters, up from 85 under pre-House rules. The Big Sky has been open to allowing that option too, but the league has maintained its 63-scholarship limit for this year (Big Sky schools give scholarship money to more than 63 football players via partial scholarships).

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House

From page 12

“If that number goes up, or if it goes to no limit, then the rich will get richer,” said UC Davis coach Tim Plough, adding, “That’s going to either force teams to adjust and say, ‘Hey, we’ve got to get better and we’ve got to keep up with these teams,’ or there’s going to be a huge gap that starts to get created with teams that can revenue share better than the others.”

Like UM, Northern Colorado decided to opt in after the designated athlete rule was approved. That allowed UNC to carry around 120 players on its 2025 football roster, per head coach Ed Lamb.

Some of those players have NIL deals, Lamb said, but they aren’t receiving revenue from UNC yet.

“We don’t have revenue streams,” he said at the Kickoff, adding, “Our university has to make some big decisions going forward about what type of revenue they’re going to open up to football. There is revenue at UNC, it’s just been earmarked other places for decades.”

Overall, though, Lamb is optimistic about his athletic department’s direction. The decision to opt in is a big reason why.

“For UNC to go ahead and make the commitment and fight for the struggles I think is a real indication of where the university wants to be on an athletic stage,” Lamb said. “Anybody that’s not opting in is not very serious about staying at this level of football.”

‘Some things we have to figure out’

While the Big Sky decided to give its members the choice to opt in or out this year, that almost certainly won’t be the case in 2026-27.

“It’s not a great spot from the conference office standpoint to have people doing different things,” Wistrick said. “There are only 40 schools in D-I who didn’t opt in. We have six of them. That tells me we need to be there. That’s the commitment we need to have to our student-athletes, to Division I as a whole. I think we’ll get there for next year.”

Wistrick understood why certain schools chose not to opt in this year. The settlement was approved about two months after initially expected, and the designated athlete ruling was made at the 11th hour.

“It’s a settlement, but it’s unsettled still,” said Eastern Washington head coach Aaron Best. “The goalposts seem to keep moving. We didn’t want to get too



SHAWN RAECKE, FOR THE BOZEMAN DAILY CHRONICLE

Montana State running back Colson Coon breaks free for a big gain as Eastern Washington linebacker Myles Mayovsky pursues and MSU quarterback Justin Lamson (8) looks on Sept. 27 at Bobcat Stadium in Bozeman.

in front of something that wasn’t clear enough.”

It won’t be long before those grandfathered in designated athletes finish their careers. When that happens, all football programs opted into the settlement will have 105 roster spots (about 15 fewer than college football teams averaged pre-House).

“If you’re going to play 12 games and play into the playoffs, I question if that’s enough guys to have on your team,” said Cal Poly head coach Paul Wulff. “I don’t know if it’s right.”

The new roster limits could cause more FBS talent to trickle down to the FCS level. As a result, there will likely be fewer spots for walk-ons and partial scholarship players.

“That hurts the game,” Marion said. “Those are some really good success stories that have happened throughout the 150-plus years of football.”

One of the toughest things to navigate in this era of college athletics is the lack of

transparency about how much programs are paying their players, Hawkins said. FBS schools clearly have more money than FCS schools, but how much? How far behind financially is the Big Sky from the Mountain West (a Group of 6 FBS conference that often loses to Big Sky teams)?

One thing is clear: to become a consistent FCS championship contender, there is no limit to how much revenue an athletic department can generate. That’s true even for UM, which sells more tickets for home games than any FCS program besides Jackson State.

“We rely on football revenue for everything in our department and external support. We need more. It’s not like there’s some great windfall in our place,” Hauck said, adding, “Our stadium isn’t getting any bigger, so we’ve got some things we have to figure out.”

Revenue sharing is a relatively small concern right now for many Big Sky schools. They simply hope to reach a

point where “we actually have something to share,” Plough said. He hopes Davis can sell more tickets, help the Big Sky sign a more lucrative TV deal or find other ways to get closer to the Montana schools’ financial tier.

Plough didn’t provide specific strategies to reach those goals. After all, he was talking just three weeks after the settlement’s terms went into effect.

The post-House landscape remains foggy.

“My glass half full thought process is, ‘Just let everything work itself out. I’m sure it will,’” Plough said. “Don’t blame the players. Don’t blame the coaches. Don’t blame anybody. This is a flawed system that’s been flawed for a long time, and people are trying to solve it. It’s going to take time.”

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Uniform changes stir echoes of Brawl fashion wars

BILL SPELTZ | 406 MT Sports

MISSOULA — The donning of different-colored uniforms for the Montana and Montana State football teams always adds to the game day excitement.

Whether you're a player, coach or fan, stadium electricity spikes when the home team storms the field in unique duds. Even for the Oregon Ducks, who do it more regularly than most, the kinetic feeling is palpable.

In the case of the Grizzlies and Griz Nation, the reintroduction of cop-

per and gold uniforms in October was wildly popular and marked a special afternoon that included a homecoming win over Cal Poly. In the case of the Bobcats and their high-energy fan base, the annual donning of gold jerseys on opening day wasn't quite enough to get the team a home win over powerhouse South Dakota State, but it was close.

Montana coach Bobby Hauck, for one, loved the return of copper jerseys with gold numbers and letters for the Grizzlies.

"I think it's awesome," he said of uniforms that reminded many of the 1995

national champion Griz. "It's cool for people in our generation at this place. It's really cool. It's fun to have that and I thought our team looked great and they played great."

Everyone knew the Grizzlies were coming out with different uniforms against Cal Poly. You might say it made the afternoon fan friendly because backers could be ready with their own copper and gold, which continues to be sold in several Missoula stores.

Please see **UNIFORMS**, Page 17



Taco Dowler,
2025

DeNarius
McGhee,
2011



MISSOULIAN FILE PHOTO

Dave Dickenson made many great memories as quarterback for the Montana Grizzlies. He is shown in Montana's old white jerseys with copper numbers and letters from the mid-1990s.

Uniforms

From page 16

Uniform switches are even more special when they're shrouded in secrecy and saved for a rivalry game. Take, for example, the short-lived Brawl of the Wild fashion wars that started 17 years ago at Washington-Grizzly Stadium.

The first sortie was arguably the most effective. Montana's throwback uniform ambush on Cat-Griz day in 2008 seemed to ignite the home team in a 35-3 win at Washington-Grizzly Stadium.

"Everybody was so geared up to be in those uniforms," recalled Jace Palmer, a Missoula native and former defensive end for Montana. "It was one of the louder times I've ever been in that stadium, sort of bringing people back to 1995 when we won the national championship in those colors."

Even former Montana State coach Rob Ash had to give credit to the Grizzlies on the idea.

"When they warmed up in one uniform and then came out in the retro uniforms," he said, "I just thought it was pretty cool. I didn't know the history of that (copper) color and it was unique to see."

"I remember when I played our uniform

was exactly the same all the time, never changed. You had your home uniform and road uniform. That was it. And it was true across the board for everybody."

Following 2008, the Grizzlies and Bobcats dabbled more in alternative Brawl dress. The common denominator was the fun for each side using the element of surprise.

For the record, Montana's trend-setting 2008 wasn't exactly spur-of-the-moment. The idea to wear throwbacks had been introduced by school boosters several years earlier, according to former athletic director Jim O'Day.

It suffered a quiet death then came back to life thanks to the Grizzly Scholarship Association and the UM vice president's office. But buying the copper and gold jerseys and white pants with a copper stripes was just the start. It took a lot of planning and work behind the scenes back then.

A lot of the tactical stuff involved the helmets. The Griz ordered new ones early in the 2008 campaign. On the Thursday before their rivalry game, they took the Griz logos off the helmets the players were using, put them on the new ones and had everyone fitted for the new headgear.

Please see **UNIFORMS**, Page 18

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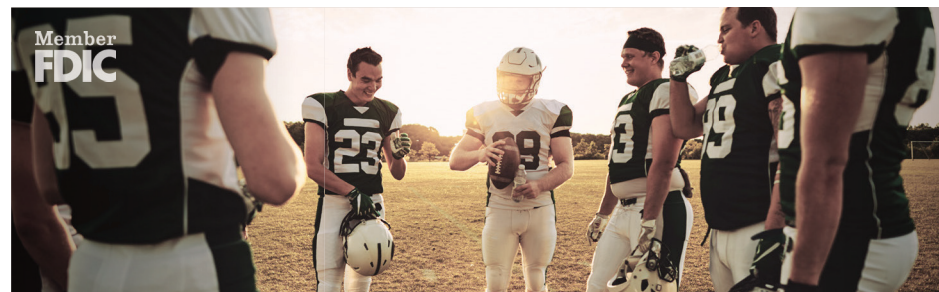
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Uniforms

From page 17

"The kids didn't realize everything that was happening," O'Day recalled. "They knew we were getting new helmets, but then we took the old ones and that's when we were able to paint them and turn them back into the old colors."

The players may not have known exactly what was going on but they had their suspicions.

"All the guys kept asking Stack, 'Are we going throwback uniforms?'" Palmer said, referring to Rob Stack, an assistant to long-time Griz equipment manager Steve Hackney at the time. "They always told us, 'Why would we spend thousands of dollars on that? We're not Oregon!'"

"But it was on the backburner that whole (rivalry) week and we thought maybe they were just having fun with us."

Palmer and his teammates discovered the truth the morning of the Brawl.

"I remember coming into the locker room and you could see through the lockers the gold helmets and everyone got fired up," he said. "It was neat to see the progression as everyone came in."

The Grizzly players got in on the deception when they took the field for warmups in their usual maroon and silver. By that time there was a rumor the team was up to something. Seeing them in their usual attire was no doubt disappointing to some.

Only the most perceptive saw through the smokescreen.

"My dad saw us come out for warm-ups and noticed right away nobody had any pads in their pants," Palmer said. "Plus nobody had tape on. That's how he figured it out."

"When we went back in to change it was a mad dash. Those things are made to be tight for a reason. We had about 15 or 20 minutes maybe, and a lot of times that stuff takes from 8 a.m. to game time to get done."

Neither team bothered with uniform tweaks in 2009. Then the war escalated in 2010. Call it a learning experience for both squads.

The Grizzlies learned that changing attire doesn't necessarily translate into a home victory. Their decision to go with black jerseys and pants and orange numbers — a Halloween look, if you will — produced a scary result. The Cats beat the Griz in Missoula, 21-16.

Ash learned you've got to make arrangements well in advance if you plan to switch your attire in a road game.

"I can't remember exactly how it started but we got this wild idea to do the gold jer-



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana quarterback Keali'i Ah Yat (8) celebrates next to Cal Poly linebacker Mikey D'Amato (44), UM offensive lineman Cannon Panfiloff and UM running back Eli Gillman (10) at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula on Saturday, Oct. 11.

seys," he uttered in a statement that seems so ironic now since MSU regularly sports gold. "We did not know Montana was already planning to do a black jersey."

"When you choose to wear something other than white on the road you have to get permission from the Big Sky Conference to make sure the jerseys are contrasting colors. Then you have to get permission from the home team. We got permission from the conference because our gold jersey would contrast with the dark maroon jersey they always wear at home. Then we asked Montana and, gosh, it took them like four days to decide what to do. They had committee meetings and everything else, I think."

Montana ended up shooting down the Cats' idea. But Montana State had the last laugh.

"I was surprised they decided to do that, but they did," Ash said of Montana. "We brought the jerseys with us and after the game I let the guys put them on."

"We talked about how gold stands for first place. We won the conference so we put them on as a trophy type thing. Not to make a big statement about anything, but since we ordered them we decided to use them."

Ash still remembers the big "Black Saturday" banner headline on the Missoulian sports page the day after the 2010 game.

"All coaches are looking for a motivational edge, but I think it can work both

ways," he offered. "I mean, sometimes wearing a new jersey can probably get you fired up. But in this case I think it was kind of a motivator that we were not allowed to wear those gold jerseys because we thought it was a reasonable request."

"Honestly though, in the final analysis, it probably doesn't matter what you're wearing."

November of 2011 brought uniform surprises for both teams in Bozeman. Montana took the easier route — white facemasks and new logos on the helmets — and steamrolled the Cats on a snowy Saturday, 36-10.

Like Montana in 2008, Montana State went the extra mile for Cat-Griz 2011 by donning different helmets. Instead of the usual gold with a blue M, they went blue with a gold Bobcat logo.

Although his team lost, Ash still looks back with happy memories of the days leading up to the game.

"We ordered the helmets and stored them over in the blockhouse," he recalled. "We didn't let the guys walk from here over to there."

Former Montana State wideout Tanner Bleskin said he and his teammates suspected something might be in the works since Montana had changed uniforms two of the three preceding years. But it was all just speculation.

"We kind of figured it out the week of," he said. "Until that point we didn't really

have much clue what it was going to be."

Once the players knew, it was a matter of keeping everyone quiet. That's no easy task, according to Bleskin, because "it's really hard not to tell family."

"The whole mystery and suspense of keeping it secret was really kind of fun for everybody," Ash said. "We wore our old helmets to warm up and then when we came out of the blockhouse it was all great, until we played the game."

"I don't think we'll wear them again any time soon. But they looked kind of cool, really. We ended up selling them and it was a good fundraiser. We didn't lose any money."

Exactly how much impact a uniform change has on a program — before, during and even years after — is hard to calculate. Bleskin is not convinced it's harmless.

"It's cool to be in something different, a one-time deal," he said. "But it also has the potential to be a huge distraction because at the end of the day it's just about football."

"The whole key is to get over it quick. Let the fans be in awe of the uniforms but when game time comes you have to be focused on your assignments."

If you don't think uniforms are significant, consider what it was like tagging along with Ash or former Griz head coach Mick Delaney on a recruiting visit in the 2010s. Inside every young man is a little boy who loves to don something different.

"It's not the uniform that wins football games, but it's important to them," Delaney said. "It's one of those things I think is good."

"You know Oregon, they change every single week. Everybody looks every week to see what the heck they're doing. That probably justifies the purpose of doing it because it calls attention to your program in a positive way, even though there's likes or dislikes as far as the color schemes or the throwbacks or whatever it may be. It brings more attention from the general public."

With challenging economic times taking their toll on athletic programs, it's hard to say when the Cats and/or Griz will bust out new uniforms again for the Brawl. Especially since both teams already did it once this season.

But the idea they might pull a surprise adds intrigue to a storied rivalry.

"It makes it a little more exciting," O'Day said, "because you never know when somebody is going to do something or if they're not going to do it. There's always going to be talk centered around what might happen."

Editor's note: Excerpts from this piece were taken from a story written by Speltz in 2012.

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Montana running back Adam Eastwood clutches the ball as he is hit by Montana State defensive line Zach Wright in the 2018 Brawl of the Wild. MISSOULIAN FILE



1 2018: Bobcats win 29-25 in Missoula: The Cats appeared destined for defeat after an apparent Adam Eastwood go-ahead rushing touchdown for the Griz with seconds left. But wait! Montana State coach Jeff Choate called timeout before the play started. Montana was forced to try again and opted for the same play with a disastrous result. Tucker Yates knocked the ball out of Eastwood’s hands and the Griz turned the ball over near the goal line in front of 26,508 fans. It wasn’t just that play that made the game hard for Montana to swallow. And Eastwood most certainly was not the only reason the Grizzlies lost. Montana led 22-0 in the first half and 25-15 with under 8 minutes left before the Cats made an epic comeback fueled by Troy Andersen’s offensive heroics.

2 1997: Grizzlies win 27-25 in Bozeman: A few Brawls of the Wild had go-ahead touchdowns in the last moments, and one other had a late field goal to win it. This had both. At a time during The Streak when the Bobcats finally seemed on equal footing, Eric Kinnaman scores with 22 seconds left to put the Cats up 25-24. Kinnaman’s conversion run is stopped inches short. MSU’s Geoff Groshelle kicks off out of bounds and on the second play from the 35, Grizzly quarterback Brian Ah Yat fakes a handoff and throws deep to Justin Olsen for 46 yards to the Montana State 19. After one more play, the Grizzlies call time out with four seconds left to set up a field goal attempt by Kris Heppner. Heppner, iced for several minutes by a series of timeouts, kicks a 37-yard field goal as time expires for the win.

3 2002: Bobcats win 10-7 in Missoula: By no stretch the best-played or most exciting game of the series, this is nevertheless the victory with the most recent resonance for Bobcat Nation: On a snowy, bitter afternoon in Missoula, The Streak ends — and it’s all the sweeter for the Cats because it ends in the Grizzlies’ house. Bobcat freshman QB Travis Lulay connects on a 53-yard TD pass to Junior Adams in the third quarter to pad the lead to 10-0, and the Cat defense makes the lead stand up, despite a Griz TD early in the fourth quarter. The Streak ends at 16 straight wins for the Grizzlies.

BEST OF THE BRAWLS

406 MT SPORTS

These aren’t necessarily the closest or best -played of the 123 Brawls of the Wild, although this list features some barnburners and includes games that featured incredible performances. But this list also includes games that changed the course of the series — even if those changes weren’t apparent or evident at the time. And, of course, like all of these lists, it’s subjective. This list was compiled by the sports staff of the Missoulian originally for a section to commemorate the 100th Brawl; it’s been updated and revised for this section.

4 1968: Bobcats win 29-24 in Missoula: Some students of the series consider this to be the best game in the series: Montana State scores 20 points in the last nine minutes and wins when Paul Schafer leaps into the end zone with 12 seconds left. After Schafer’s touchdown, the Grizzlies launch a hasty answer from the 20 with speedy receiver Ron Baines at quarterback. He gains 15 and another 15 are tacked on by an unnecessary roughness penalty. Baines then races 37 yards from midfield before he’s dragged down after time expires. Quarterback Dennis Erickson, flanker Ron Bain and Schafer lead the comeback as the Bobcats clinch a tie for the Big Sky championship. In all, 34 points are scored in the final quarter. Bain’s touchdown catch with five minutes left brings the Bobcats within 24-22. His brother, Doug, gave the Grizzlies a 17-9 lead early in the quarter on a pass from Ray Brum.

5 1986: Grizzlies win 59-28 in Missoula: The game that started The Streak; arguably, no Griz-Cat game did as much to turn the series or a program around. In their second game in Washington-Grizzly Stadium, the Grizzlies lead 31-0 at halftime and 45-7 after three quarters. They roll up 506 yards, roughly 50 percent of it passing, and even their season record at 3-3 under new head coach Don Read. Senior quarterback Brent Pease runs for the first touchdown and passes for two more. The Bobcats make an aerial assault behind reserve quarterback Shaun Shahan in the final period to make it closer. But it’s all but curtains for MSU head coach Dave Arnold, whose Bobcats won the national title two years earlier

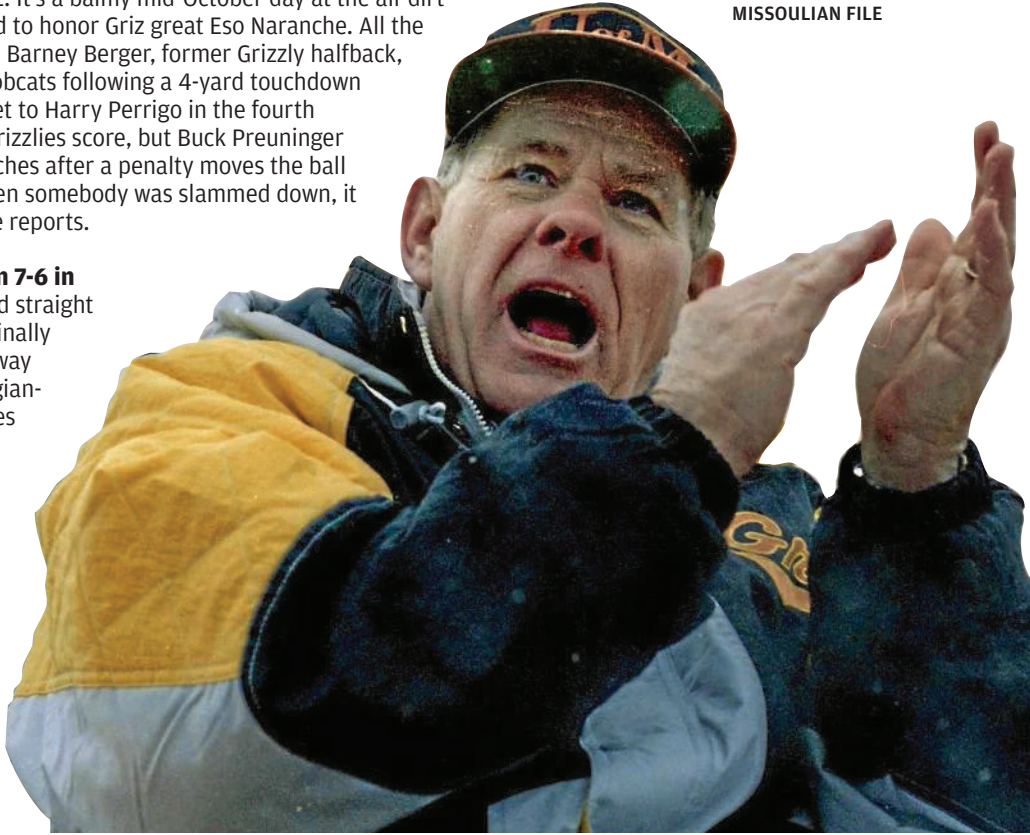
6 1956: Bobcats win 33-14 in Missoula: Before the streak of 16 started, Montana State had suffered through a half-century of football woes against the Grizzlies. But the Bobcats wash away five decades of frustration with a convincing win in Missoula – and go on to win 21 of the next 29 Brawls. This time, the Cats cap an undefeated season and secure a berth in the Aluminum Bowl in Little Rock, Arkansas, where they battle St. Joseph’s to a 0-0 tie. Big Don Edwards scores two touchdowns in the second half and a freshman triad of quarterback Dave Alt, halfback Jack Rada and center Sonny Holland shine for MSU. Of the three, only Holland plays in subsequent Brawls. He’ll finish his career a three-time All-American. Several hundred Bobcat rooters tear down the south goalpost at sunny Dornblaser Field. Coach Tony Storti is toted off the field on the shoulders of Bobcats celebrating their first victory in Missoula since 1902.

7 1922: Grizzlies win 7-6 in Missoula: It’s dubbed “as hectic and fierce a struggle as Dornblaser Field will ever see.” It’s perhaps also the most controversial ending of any Brawl. UM fullback “Bullet” Joe Kershner of Billings scores the tying touchdown as time runs out in the descending darkness at Montana’s Homecoming game. MSU’s timekeeper insists the final play didn’t start in time. UM’s timekeeper says it did, and he has the last word. State College coach Ott Romney charges onto the field during the argument, is shooed off, then returns. “Other dignitaries, all the way from the president of the university to the waterboys ... surged on the gridiron and harassed the officials,” reports the Missoulian. Finally the extra-point is attempted and captain Harvey Elliott of Missoula kicks it through. MSU protests it shouldn’t count because fans are on the field. “In the eyes of God and in 60 minutes of play, we won that game,” proclaims Romney.

8 1954: Grizzlies win 25-21 in Missoula: The Bobcats roar into their last game of 1954 unbeaten under Tony Storti, with the Cigar Bowl in Florida and the Refrigerator Bowl in Indiana eyeing them. The Grizzlies are last in the Skyline Conference, though they’ve beaten the Bobcats six straight times and 16 of the last 17. UM’s Murdo Campbell runs 61 yards for a TD on the first play from scrimmage. Don Edwards answers with a 43-yard jaunt to set up a Bobcat score. But Edwards is taken to the hospital with a concussion as a brutal battle develops. The Bobcats, their bowl hopes on the line, close within four on a late interception return by end Jim Posewitz. They’re on the Grizzly 32 when a last-ditch pass goes awry at the gun.

9 1947: Bobcats win 13-12 in Butte: On the 50th anniversary of the first Brawl of the Wild, the Bobcats break a 10-game losing streak that dates back to the depths of the Great Depression in 1932. It’s a balmy mid-October day at the all-dirt Butte High field, later named to honor Griz great Eso Naranche. All the scoring is in the second half. Barney Berger, former Grizzly halfback, kicks the winning extra point for the Bobcats following a 4-yard touchdown pass on fourth down from Gene Bourdet to Harry Perrigo in the fourth quarter. That makes it Cats 13-6. The Grizzlies score, but Buck Preuninger misses the extra-long extra point by inches after a penalty moves the ball back. “It was a game for keeps and when somebody was slammed down, it was hard,” the Missoulian’s Ray Rocene reports.

10 1969: Grizzlies win 7-6 in Bozeman: The third straight hair-raising Brawl finally goes the Grizzlies’ way in the mud. Norwegian-born Frank Kalfoss of the Bobcats leaves a 42-yard field goal try wide left with 25 seconds left. UM hadn’t won at Gatton Field since 1955. The winning touchdown is scored late in the first half when quarterback Ray Brum avoids a tackler in the backfield, nearly slips to the ground, then flings the ball downfield to halfback Arnie Blancas, who avoids his defender to consummate a 49-yard TD play. Dan Worrell kicks the vital extra point. On MSU’s next series, Kalfoss has his first shot from 42 yards — and makes it.



Don Read’s impact on the Grizzlies’ football program cannot be understated, as he turned the Grizzlies from a 3-8 1985 season into a winning program in 1986 and began a streak of wins against rival Montana State that lasted 16 years. MISSOULIAN FILE

"I think we were playing Stevensville," Hall recalled. "Where the pass was probably en route to be a 30-yard throw, probably 15 feet in the air."

"About 25 yards into the throw, Tommy jumps out of nowhere, grabs the ball and runs for like a 60-yard interception return."

All the while, Running Rabbit was attending Griz camps for high schoolers, as many of them as he could.

With the low win totals at Browning, though, Running Rabbit was still underestimated. Racine told Running Rabbit he needed to be at every Griz camp to get on Montana's radar, so that's what the athlete did. Showing out against other high schoolers on the same field, Racine said, is where he caught the eye of Montana running backs coach Justin Green.

Soon after, Running Rabbit received an offer. The athlete kept the news quiet, not showboating or bragging about the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. It was kept so quiet, in fact, that when Hall tried to get Running Rabbit on an all-state team his senior year, his claim was met with skepticism by the fellow class A coaches.

"One of my fighting spots was, 'I feel like he should be on there (all-state team) because despite all of these good athletes, Tommy is going to the Griz,'" Hall said. "All the coaches turned and look at me, I think they thought I was bulls---ing them."

Running Rabbit departed for Missoula after his senior year, earning the prestigious Gates Scholarship thanks to his stellar grades throughout high school. The recognition highlighted Running Rabbit's emphasis on academics despite his athletic success, something Andreas has helped remind him of throughout the years.

"Right when he was graduating and talking about the next year, I could tell he was terrified," Andreas said. "But what struck me was that he was willing to accept the unknown and be brave in the face of these big changes coming in his life."

"A lot of kids get frozen in that fear, and he was able to move through it."

Running Rabbit's redshirt season at Montana was characterized by development. He said the biggest points of growth in his game have been in his football knowledge, notably his blocking assignments in pass-pro situations, as well as beefing up in the weight room.

"Getting faster, getting stronger, and getting smarter, too," Running Rabbit added.

Meanwhile, he's remained closely attached to his home.

"Every time someone goes to Missoula from our community, they check in with



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana running back Tommy Running Rabbit (30) scores a touchdown during the FCS football game between Montana and Indiana State at Washington-Grizzly Stadium.

Tommy," Andreas said. "They go, 'I had dinner with Tommy,' or, 'I took him something and dropped it off.' He's called and texted multiple times out of the blue, just checking in."

Andreas said she could tell there was a lot of pressure felt by Running Rabbit to perform on the field in 2025, his redshirt freshman season, which brings us back to Sept. 20.

Andreas was at a fundraiser for the Glacier-Two Medicine Alliance when she received a text from one of her coworkers at the school telling her that Running Rabbit had scored a touchdown.

"You kind of saw a little ripple go around the room of local folks who were like, 'Tommy scored a touchdown,'" Andreas said.

Racine was in the mountains during the game. When he returned to cell service, his phone promptly blew up with messages, passed-along videos and celebrations.

Hall had watched the first half of the game with his family and was preparing to turn it off for the evening due to the lopsided score before Running Rabbit entered the game. He decided to keep watching.

"I had my little guy in my arms, and all of the sudden you see him break a tackle and I was like, 'Oh s---t, oh s---t, oh s---t,'" Hall said. "It was a choked-up moment

for sure."

The response to the play was seismic. Videos of the touchdown went viral, "Barstool Sports" publishing the highlight and receiving over 150 thousand views on X/Twitter. Running Rabbit said he's received a constant flow of messages since the afternoon, celebrating him and what he means to his community.

Back home, Andreas said the school's campus was buzzing with talk of its hometown hero, even after a long weekend kept the students out an extra day.

"All the kids were talking about it, all the teachers," Andreas added. "It was like everybody was a proud parent."

"I'm blowing up sometimes," Running Rabbit said. "And then, I'm getting posted on big social media stuff, it's pretty cool."

Beyond the viral clips and text messages and well-wishes Running Rabbit has received, though, is an immense amount of pressure on the second-year college student. The weight, the hopes, and the dreams of a town in northwest Montana with a population under 1,500 rest on Running Rabbit's shoulders in many ways.

Andreas said she has worried before that the weight of his expectations, and the necessity of succeeding in Missoula, may be too much for Running Rabbit. The expectations aren't lost on the redshirt

freshman, either.

"It's a little hard to carry because it's a lot of pressure," Running Rabbit said. "It's pretty easy to mess up for most people, so I'm just trying to do my best and keep my head high."

The touchdown is what most kids in Browning will remember when they think of Running Rabbit, but the student has maintained academic excellence at UM. It's required extra time management and scheduling, he said, but he's since found a new balance.

Andreas wants her current students and anyone looking up to Running Rabbit to remember his academic standards, and not just his athletic gifts, but she also acknowledges the allure of sports.

"We've had tons of kids go off to really amazing universities, go off and be extremely successful at U of M or MSU," Andreas added. "But the kids don't see it until they see someone on the basketball court or the football field."

"This is an amazing billboard to our younger kids that college is an absolutely normal next step, and when you go there, you can participate in all these other amazing things."

Running Rabbit's development on the field is still a work in progress as a redshirt freshman. Racine said Running Rabbit will need to continue to work and bide his time until he is ready to take carries for the Griz on a week-to-week basis.

Nevertheless, any sort of opportunity he receives is its own celebratory occasion.

"Anytime he does touch the field, this whole community, all of Indian Country, lines up beside him," Racine said.

The experience has been a whirlwind for Running Rabbit. He said his favorite memory from the experience was celebrating and high-fiving his teammates as he raced off the field, a testament to the bond he's formed with his Montana teammates.

Throughout the season, throughout the drive, throughout the touchdown run, Running Rabbit has remained acutely tied to his home and is excited to serve as a role model and as a reason for Browning to celebrate.

"It's a dream come true of just being a good role model for the Reservation and all these little kids," Running Rabbit added. "Because I was one of them."

"I looked up to older players when I was little, and I told myself I wanted to be one of them."

Carson Cashion is a sports writer for 406 MT Sports. Follow him on X @ CarsonCashion or contact him at carson.cashion@406mtsports.com.

COMMENTARY

Hate has no place in Treasure State sports

Editor's note: The following is a column written by Missoulian sports editor Bill Speltz six years ago. It has been updated to include thoughts on this season.

These teams genuinely hate one another. Sound familiar? Probably because you'll hear it at least a dozen times on television this month when college football's storied rivalries are renewed. Alabama-Auburn, Ohio State-Michigan, Montana-Montana State ... all terrific matchups but they're just games, folks. It's just sports.



**BILL
SPELTZ**

Here's a news flash for you passionate rival haters: Guys that play for MSU are just guys that share the same state as football players at UM, dealing with the same day-to-day challenges like wintry weather and skyrocketing costs of living in Bozeman and Missoula. The only real difference is the color of the uniform and the location in western Montana.

We at the Missoulian have tried to appease Griz fans that so passionately hate Montana State by running a limited amount of Bobcat stories in the paper — and rarely running one on the front sports page. But the truth is, those fans probably need to grow up and understand we're just trying to give readers more. Heck, they may even discover they have more fun when they start pulling for two Treasure State teams.

Hatred has no place in sports. Save your hate for the Adolph Hitlers and Osama bin Ladens of the world.

Ever notice how a lot of NFL players react after battling in so-called rivalry games? They walk to the middle of the field to greet one another, regardless of jersey color, and sometimes



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana head coach Bobby Hauck, left, shakes hands with Montana State head coach Brent Vigen, right, during the 120th Brawl of the Wild football between the Griz and Montana State at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in 2021. The teams will renew their rivalry next Saturday in Missoula.

even exchange jerseys for fun.

Growing up just 70 miles from Iowa City, this one-time-passionate Iowa fan loved to root for the Hawkeyes in their rivalry games against Iowa State. I may have hated to see Iowa lose to the Cyclones, but once the game was over, I was almost as happy to see Iowa State succeed as I was Iowa.

Is that so weird? That I would pull for two teams that made me feel good about my home state?

Competitively speaking, hating your opponent is a bad idea anyway. It can be disruptive in the heat of battle because hate and anger go hand in hand and anger can be distracting. Even in a sport as brutal as football, you must keep your wits about you, my friend.

No one hated to lose more than yours truly as a younger man. Not so much in high school or college because I was just happy to earn a starting job. My

high school football team went 0-9 but I still had a good time.

In my 30s, after leaving baseball and football behind, I focused on playing tennis because it's cheap, a good workout and a wonderful game. Oddly enough, it was this gentleman's game that planted seeds of hatred in my mind for anyone who dared try to beat me.

Call it the Jimmy Connors Syndrome. I had it in my head that being ranked as the top 35-and-over singles player in Iowa — roughly the equivalent of being the best surfer in Nome, Alaska — was my destiny. A Canadian gentleman was my nemesis, leaving me with more runner-up trophies than Bobby Hauck, the Buffalo Bills and the Minnesota Vikings combined.

Oh, I was a nasty cuss. I'd roll the ball out of my pocket onto an adjacent court just to make the Canadian chase it in

between points and games. I'd refuse to socialize on changeovers. I'd walk right toward the friendly chap just so he had to walk around me.

After losing to him six or seven times in a row in tournament finals, I finally beat my nemesis. It was my hometown tournament and I was so happy I gave my racket a bat flip.

As I was exiting the courts, enjoying congratulations from friends and family, my rival vanished. Minutes later, he showed up with an icy-cold beverage just for me. It was his way of saying nice match.

The competitive cuss in me snapped that day and I became fast friends with the Canadian. It took me 42 years to get there, but never again would I harbor white-hot competitive hatred toward anyone. How liberating it was.

All season I've pulled for both the Montana and Montana State

football teams to win. There, I admit it. Better start your campaign to have me impeached as Missoulian sports editor.

Watching the Cats isn't quite as thrilling as watching the Grizzlies since my children attended UM, but it's all entertainment to me. Those blue-and-gold-clad Bobcats have done the Treasure State proud in recent years and anyone that says differently needs to work on perspective.

This year's game promises to be a good one. Both teams are among the best on the FCS level.

It's strange the way the rivalry has played out the past four years.

Back in 2021, Montana dumped Montana State in Missoula, 29-10. A week later the Cats switched quarterbacks, going from Matthew McKay to Tommy Mellott, and the result was a thrilling run all the way to the FCS championship.

Three years ago, the Cats buried the Grizzlies, 55-21, in Bozeman. Even Cats fans would have to admit they never expected such a lopsided contest.

Two years ago, Montana whipped Montana State in Missoula, 37-7. The Grizzlies made it all way to the FCS title game before stumbling.

Last year, the Cats beat the Grizzlies in Bozeman. Mellott and the Blue & Gold went on to play in the FCS title game in Frisco, Texas.

So what will it be this year? Maybe the first really close game in seven years?

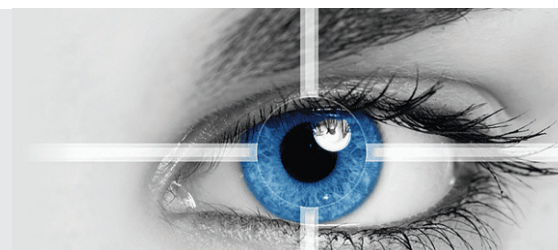
That's what I'm hoping for, along with the class of both programs and their fans to shine through on the field and in the parking lot after the game.

Bill Speltz is Missoulian sports editor and has served as a columnist for the newspaper for almost 20 years. If you have a question or comment, email bill.speltz@406mtsports.com

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Montana's Running Rabbit making Blackfeet Nation proud

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MISSOULA — With 12 minutes and seven seconds remaining in Montana's Sept. 20 home contest against Indiana State, the Griz offense took the field in the midst of a blowout.

Forty-two unanswered points helped give Montana a 56-13 lead over the Sycamores. The time of the game had been reached when UM deployed its second- and third-string athletes. The first play of the ensuing drive, an 11-yard run to the Montana 37-yard line, featured one of UM's reserve running backs.

Redshirt freshman Tommy Running Rabbit, a Browning product and member of the Blackfeet Nation, received seven carries on the fourth-quarter series. On fourth down inside the Sycamore red zone, Running Rabbit took a handoff from Flowers up the middle. Brushing off a handful of Indiana State would-be tacklers, the redshirt freshman cut to the right, spun out of the final ISU defender and reached the end zone.

Running Rabbit told 406 MT Sports he "blacked out" during the play.

"I barely remember," Running Rabbit added. "I just saw the gap, cooked one player, cooked another, and then got the last dude."

The Grizzlies are marching toward one of the more successful runs in recent memory. The 63-20 win over Indiana State pushed the team to 3-0, but not much else from the hardly competitive win will be etched into the 2025 Grizzlies' lore.

If Montana ends the season atop the FCS, as fans share memories of the season, the win over Indiana State will seldom be suggested in "remember-when" sessions.

And yet, Running Rabbit's touchdown, on one hand an extra score in an already decided game, was as meaningful as any point of the season to the Browning community. The first-ever Browning graduate to play football for the Griz on scholarship, Running Rabbit's success is an inspiration to his town and his community.

"I'm not a big person on Facebook, but when I got on there and saw all the reactions (to the touchdown), I got this huge lump in my throat," Browning football head coach Shance Hall said. "It's like, 'Who cut the onions?'"

Hall led Browning football for two of Running Rabbit's seasons of high school ball, Jerry Racine leading the program for the other two. Browning's athletic program is traditionally headlined by its



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana running back Tommy Running Rabbit (30) runs for yardage during the FCS football game between Montana and Indiana State at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula on Sept. 20.

basketball program — the boy's team has appeared in seven state title games, winning four of them — so Hall was impressed by Running Rabbit's dedication and insistence on playing football as a freshman and sophomore.

The athleticism was already evident early in his career, too; Racine said Running Rabbit entered high school already eclipsing six feet in height and 160 pounds in weight.

In his sophomore season, Running Rabbit ran for 598 yards, averaging over five yards per carry, and found the end zone five times in an injury-shortened campaign. In that same season, Browning lacked wide-receiver depth. Hall remem-

bers asking Running Rabbit to play on the outside on occasion, and he did so without complaint.

More importantly than his on-field production, though, Hall remembers a quiet kid with a signature big, happy smile.

"Anybody that meets him, you know right away that he's a big-hearted kid," Hall added.

Browning librarian Amy Andreas had Running Rabbit in one of her classes for all four years of his time at the high school. The then-freshman defied all of her preconceived notions of what an all-star athlete would act like, she said.

"He was very softspoken, quiet, kind of like this gentle giant kind of guy that was

just trying to figure things out," Andreas added.

The football team never found consistent success in the win-loss column. Browning's record across Running Rabbit's four years with the program was 5-25. And yet, the rising star continued to produce.

Running Rabbit totaled 785 all-purpose yards his senior season as Browning finished 3-6, its best win total of the running back's time at the program. The tail back's fluidity in his movements while maintaining high-end speed was unmatched, Hall said. He also played for Browning's defense, showing out on both sides of the ball.

"I think we were playing Stevensville," Hall recalled. "Where the pass was probably en route to be a 30-yard throw, probably 15 feet in the air."

"About 25 yards into the throw, Tommy jumps out of nowhere, grabs the ball and runs for like a 60-yard interception return."

All the while, Running Rabbit was attending Griz camps for high schoolers, as many of them as he could.

With the low win totals at Browning, though, Running Rabbit was still underestimated. Racine told Running Rabbit he needed to be at every Griz camp to get on Montana's radar, so that's what the athlete did. Showing out against other high schoolers on the same field, Racine said, is where he caught the eye of Montana running backs coach Justin Green.

Soon after, Running Rabbit received an offer. The athlete kept the news quiet, not showboating or bragging about the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. It was kept so quiet, in fact, that when Hall tried to get Running Rabbit on an all-state team his senior year, his claim was met with skepticism by the fellow class A coaches.

"One of my fighting spots was, 'I feel like he should be on there (all-state team) because despite all of these good athletes, Tommy is going to the Griz,'" Hall said. "All the coaches turned and look at me, I think they thought I was bulls---ing them."

Running Rabbit departed for Missoula after his senior year, earning the prestigious Gates Scholarship thanks to his stellar grades throughout high school. The recognition highlighted Running Rabbit's emphasis on academics despite his athletic success, something Andreas has helped remind him of throughout the years.

"Right when he was graduating and talking about the next year, I could tell he was terrified," Andreas said. "But what struck me was that he was willing to accept the unknown and be brave in the face of these big changes coming in his life."

"A lot of kids get frozen in that fear, and he was able to move through it."

Running Rabbit's redshirt season at Montana was characterized by development. He said the biggest points of growth in his game have been in his football knowledge, notably his blocking assignments in pass-pro situations, as well as beefing up in the weight room.

"Getting faster, getting stronger, and getting smarter, too," Running Rabbit added.

Meanwhile, he's remained closely attached to his home.

"Every time someone goes to Missoula from our community, they check in with



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana running back Tommy Running Rabbit (30) scores a touchdown during the FCS football game between Montana and Indiana State at Washington-Grizzly Stadium.

Tommy," Andreas said. "They go, 'I had dinner with Tommy,' or, 'I took him something and dropped it off.' He's called and texted multiple times out of the blue, just checking in."

Andreas said she could tell there was a lot of pressure felt by Running Rabbit to perform on the field in 2025, his redshirt freshman season, which brings us back to Sept. 20.

Andreas was at a fundraiser for the Glacier-Two Medicine Alliance when she received a text from one of her coworkers at the school telling her that Running Rabbit had scored a touchdown.

"You kind of saw a little ripple go around the room of local folks who were like, 'Tommy scored a touchdown,'" Andreas said.

Racine was in the mountains during the game. When he returned to cell service, his phone promptly blew up with messages, passed-along videos and celebrations.

Hall had watched the first half of the game with his family and was preparing to turn it off for the evening due to the lopsided score before Running Rabbit entered the game. He decided to keep watching.

"I had my little guy in my arms, and all of the sudden you see him break a tackle and I was like, 'Oh s---t, oh s---t, oh s---t,'" Hall said. "It was a choked-up moment

for sure."

The response to the play was seismic. Videos of the touchdown went viral, "Barstool Sports" publishing the highlight and receiving over 150 thousand views on X/Twitter. Running Rabbit said he's received a constant flow of messages since the afternoon, celebrating him and what he means to his community.

Back home, Andreas said the school's campus was buzzing with talk of its hometown hero, even after a long weekend kept the students out an extra day.

"All the kids were talking about it, all the teachers," Andreas added. "It was like everybody was a proud parent."

"I'm blowing up sometimes," Running Rabbit said. "And then, I'm getting posted on big social media stuff, it's pretty cool."

Beyond the viral clips and text messages and well-wishes Running Rabbit has received, though, is an immense amount of pressure on the second-year college student. The weight, the hopes, and the dreams of a town in northwest Montana with a population under 1,500 rest on Running Rabbit's shoulders in many ways.

Andreas said she has worried before that the weight of his expectations, and the necessity of succeeding in Missoula, may be too much for Running Rabbit. The expectations aren't lost on the redshirt

freshman, either.

"It's a little hard to carry because it's a lot of pressure," Running Rabbit said. "It's pretty easy to mess up for most people, so I'm just trying to do my best and keep my head high."

The touchdown is what most kids in Browning will remember when they think of Running Rabbit, but the student has maintained academic excellence at UM. It's required extra time management and scheduling, he said, but he's since found a new balance.

Andreas wants her current students and anyone looking up to Running Rabbit to remember his academic standards, and not just his athletic gifts, but she also acknowledges the allure of sports.

"We've had tons of kids go off to really amazing universities, go off and be extremely successful at U of M or MSU," Andreas added. "But the kids don't see it until they see someone on the basketball court or the football field."

"This is an amazing billboard to our younger kids that college is an absolutely normal next step, and when you go there, you can participate in all these other amazing things."

Running Rabbit's development on the field is still a work in progress as a redshirt freshman. Racine said Running Rabbit will need to continue to work and bide his time until he is ready to take carries for the Griz on a week-to-week basis.

Nevertheless, any sort of opportunity he receives is its own celebratory occasion.

"Anytime he does touch the field, this whole community, all of Indian Country, lines up beside him," Racine said.

The experience has been a whirlwind for Running Rabbit. He said his favorite memory from the experience was celebrating and high-fiving his teammates as he raced off the field, a testament to the bond he's formed with his Montana teammates.

Throughout the season, throughout the drive, throughout the touchdown run, Running Rabbit has remained acutely tied to his home and is excited to serve as a role model and as a reason for Browning to celebrate.

"It's a dream come true of just being a good role model for the Reservation and all these little kids," Running Rabbit added. "Because I was one of them."

"I looked up to older players when I was little, and I told myself I wanted to be one of them."

Carson Cashion is a sports writer for 406 MT Sports. Follow him on X @ CarsonCashion or contact him at carson.cashion@406mtsports.com.

RIVALRY THROUGH THE YEARS

Montana 18, Montana State 6 Game No. 1 - 1897, Missoula.

The "Varsity" squad beats the visitors from Bozeman in a game that might have been more one-sided than the score suggests: A report in the next day's Missoulian suggests that the Bozeman score was the result of a "fluke" - an illegal pass. The Missoulian account noted: "The passing of the ball in defiance of rules was seen by the spectators, players, everybody except Professor Wilcox, umpire, and his word went. ... But all in all it was a good game and thoroughly appreciated."

Montana 6, Montana State 0 Game No. 2 - 1898, Bozeman.

The "Varsity" from Missoula records the first out-of-town victory in its short history and goes up 2-0 in the series. Dan Heyfron of Missoula, playing halfback on offense and defense, picks up a fumble early in the second half and returns it for a five-point touchdown. George Kennett of Missoula kicks the "goal" for the final point.

State College of Bozeman stages a goal-line stand in the first half, thwarting UM on the 4-yard line behind the heroics of the Flaherty brothers at left and right ends. It's the only sniff of the end zone either offense has all afternoon.

The game is played on Saturday, Nov. 13, and assures a rematch in Missoula on Thanksgiving Day in two weeks.

Montana 16, Montana State 0 Game No. 3 - 1898, Missoula.

Charles Allard of Ravalli didn't play in the first Griz-Cat game of 1898, but he shines in the second one on Thanksgiving Day as UM takes a 3-0 lead in the series. Allard kicks what the Montana Kaimin, the UM student newspaper, calls "the first goal from the field ever kicked in the state." The ball hits a goal post and tumbles over.

Later Allard scores a touchdown on the last of three straight line bucks near the Bobcat goal.

For the second and last time, the Brawl of the Wild is played on grounds southeast of the Higgins Avenue Bridge, about where the Missoulian stands today.

Montana State 6, Montana 0 Game No. 4 - 1899, Missoula.

The streak is over and a new one begins.

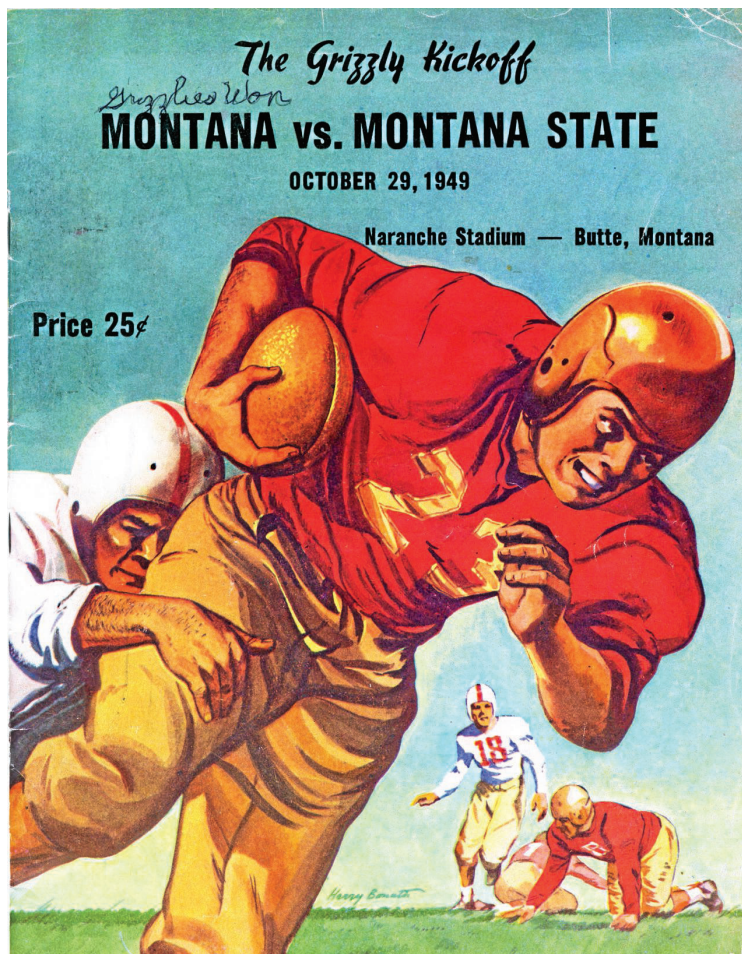
The College team from Bozeman beats Missoula for the first time in the Brawl of the Wild. It launches a six-game winning streak for Bozeman that's still tied for the longest against its arch rival.

Bozeman fullback Williams scores the game's only touchdown in the first half. Missoula punts from the Bozeman 40-yard line and Williams fields the ball almost underneath his own goal and returns it for the game's only touchdown.

Jeffers adds the extra point (touchdowns at the time are worth just five points).

Montana State 38, Montana 0 Game No. 5 - 1899, Bozeman.

In a preview of things to come, the game is



COURTESY

Featured here is a football program from the 1949 Cat-Griz game at Naranche Stadium. The Brawl of the Wild was played in Butte from 1926-1950, first at Clark Park, later at Butte High School from 1939-1950 (except 1942-1945).

a physical contest as three Missoula players are sent to the sidelines with injuries, forcing the university to use all three of its substitutes.

Williams scores three touchdowns, while Clarence Jeffers, Clifford Jeffers, Dick Flaherty and C. Parker score one apiece.

When Bozeman had the ball it "did all sorts of unmannerly tricks with their opponents," the Bozeman Avant Courier says. "They ran around, over, under and through them; kicked the ball over them, just to save carrying it, and then got it again; they took turns in making touchdowns; in fact, did about everything but give their opponents a chance."

Hamilton's Laurens Hechler is the quarterback of the Montana team and Shorty Cross of Missoula plays fullback. Claude McAllister and Sidney Walker, both of Missoula, are the halfbacks.

Montana State 12, Montana 11 Game No. 6 - 1900, Missoula.

In "by far the prettiest game of football

ever played in the city," the college squad knots the series at 3-3 on Thanksgiving Day at the South Missoula grounds near the Higgins Avenue Bridge.

Montana's extra-point attempt after the final touchdown with five minutes remaining goes awry when kicker William Craig falls down.

The boys from Bozeman dominate the first half, scoring two five-point touchdowns on runs by fullback Dick Flaherty and kicking one-point "goals" after each.

Frank Bean, in his first game as both coach and fullback at the Missoula school, exhorts his Varsity at halftime and then scores its first TD nine minutes into the second half.

Montana appears to have another touchdown on its next drive when Charles Allard of Ravalli crosses the line and plants the ball for a touchdown. But the referee understood Allard to call "down" when he was entangled at the 7-yard line, so the ball is placed there. Allard lugs the ball across the goal on the next play, setting up Craig's ill-fated extra-point try.

Montana State 31, Montana 0 Game No. 7 - 1901, Bozeman.

Not much goes right for Missoula's Varsity boys as they lose their fourth straight to Bozeman.

When it was all over, "fans of the game and players were glad that the agony was over," reports the Missoulian.

Much of the credit for the one-sided decision goes to the size of the players for the Agricultural College, who "outweighed Missoula more than 10 pounds to the man."

Missoula has the first opportunity to score, but a place kick is blocked. Soon afterward, Bozeman scores a five-point touchdown and adds the extra point. Two place kicks, four touchdowns and one goal account for the final score.

Once the rout is on, the "Missoula boys seem to lose heart and play a listless game," the Missoulian reports.

Montana State 38, Montana 0 Game No. 8 - 1902, Missoula.

Back in Missoula for this game, a subhead in the Missoulian proclaims in part: "the Sturdy Agricultural College Football Team takes the University of Montana Eleven Into Camp - Highly Interesting With No Fatalities in the Contest."

Either the Agricultural College 11 had beefed up after the 1901 game, or the University boys had shrunk: The Missoulian reports that the Bozeman squad outweighed the Missoula boys by 15 pounds per man - up from the 10-pound advantage the previous year. The result is about the same: Bozeman holds onto the ball for some 50 minutes of the 60-minute game.

Flaherty scores five of the seven touchdowns for Bozeman. Most are set up on "clean gains" by Wright, Irvin and Codd.

Afterward, the Missoulian notes, the visitors' spoils include a "sumptuous Thanksgiving dinner at the Florence."

Montana State 13, Montana 6 Game No. 9 - 1903, Bozeman.

On a sparkling Thanksgiving Day, MSU extends its win streak over UM to six games on two touchdown runs by Charles Ray and a safety late in the first half.

UM scores with two minutes left when end Eddie Corbin of Missoula returns a fumble all the way. John Curtis of Butte kicks the "goal."

"The Gallatin valley never appeared more advantageously than on this day. ... Forty years ago a paradise for the Indians; today, an excellent location for an agricultural school," writes a Kaimin reporter (probably right end Walter Hammer, athletics writer for the UM paper.)

After the game the teams share a Thanksgiving dinner at the Bozeman Hotel and attend a dance hosted by the Bouffons, a young ladies club at the college.

Montana 79, Montana State 0 Game No. 10 - 1904, Missoula.

On a day termed ideal for football, Montana breaks a six-game losing streak in the rivalry. Hartwell Willis of Plains springs UM to a 23-0 halftime lead with a pair of touchdown runs. Robie Holmes of Billings, in his only season with

the university, starts the second half with an 80-yard kickoff return. Emil Adams of Missoula enters in the second half and scores four spectacular TDs, including the last three. Roy McPhail of New Chicago and Elmer Johnson of Missoula kick seven extra points.

It's the most lopsided score in the history of the series. Touchdowns still count for just five points, but UM is bolstered by a rule requiring the team that's scored upon to kick off.

It's the last time UM faces Montana State for three years. By faculty decree, MSU abolishes football before the 1905 meeting and doesn't revive it until 1908.

Montana 0, Montana State 0 Game No. 11 - 1908, Missoula.

Nothing is settled in the first cross-state meeting since UM's 79-0 win in 1904. On the eve of the 1905 game, the MSU faculty abolished football at the state agricultural college and this is the first game since.

It's also UM's first game under coach Roy "Cupid" White, an Iowa man whose teams would post a 7-2-2 record over the next two seasons. The Bozeman team has brought in John H. McIntosh to revive the program.

For the first time, Bozeman's representation is referred to as the "Aggies."

Under a steaming sun on an early October afternoon, university captain Arthur Bishop of Missoula tries and misses three field goals. One of them, in the first half, hits the goal post and bounces wrong, the Missoulian reports.

Most of the action in the second half is in the vicinity of the MSU goal. Fransham is the Aggies' work horse but won't find the goal line until the Thanksgiving weekend rematch in Bozeman.

Montana State 5, Montana 0 Game No. 12 - 1908, Bozeman.

The first true upset of the series is secured when Fransham shakes off four tacklers on a 35-yard scoring dash for the Montana Agricultural college early in the second half.

"Everyone declared that this was as spectacular a run as was ever seen on a Montana football field," the Missoulian reports. The Aggies take control after that.

"Even the people of this city find it hard to understand," reads a dispatch filed from Bozeman to the Missoula Herald. "Nothing but the overconfidence of the Missoula team can explain it."

"Several times the Missoula men crossed the Aggies' five-yard line, but were unable to score, being penalized or held for downs," reports the Associated Press.

MSU won't win another game in the series until 1929, but Missoula partisans don't know that.

Montana 3, Montana State 0 Game No. 13 - 1909, Bozeman.

Ed Winstanley of Missoula kicks the game-winner with 90 seconds to go after missing on four other field goal attempts.

Montana launches a streak that will grow to 16-0-4 against the Aggies, finally ending with an MSU victory in 1929.

The hometown Aggies drive inside UM's 10-yard line early in the second half but fumble the

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ball away. Jameson, a Native American quarterback, and running backs White and Brown lead the MSU attack.

Arthur Bishop of Missoula guides the pre-Griz Grizzlies, both as quarterback and punter. Appointed referees don't show, so the coaches were obliged to officiate.

"It is extremely unfortunate that the officials from Butte missed their train," says John McIntosh of MSU.

Montana 15, Montana State 5

Game No. 14 - 1909, Missoula.

On a snow-covered Montana field, Roy "Cupid" White's varsity completes its first undefeated season, and one of only two in UM football history.

Five minutes into the game, 220-pound fullback William Ittner of Minnesota finalizes a 13-play drive for UM's first touchdown. Captain Arthur Bishop kicks the extra point.

"Then the Aggies got away with the famous Pennsylvania double pass for a touchdown, Pool outspringing Montana's entire eleven for a 65-yard run," the Missoulian reports.

It's the only score Montana surrenders all season. The university outscores foes 136-5 while compiling a 5-0-1 record.

Ittner tallies again on a short rush in the first half. His runs, catches by Missoula's George Little and the guidance of Bishop at quarterback establish UM's dominance.

Montana 0, Montana State 0

Game No. 15 - 1910, Bozeman.

The deadly fires of 1910 are burnt out by Oct. 21, and Bozeman is the site of its second straight scoreless Brawl of the Wild.

The Aggies knock on the door most. They miss two field goal tries, run out of downs on the 3-yard line and fumble inside the 10.

UM halfback Cecil Dobson of Dickinson, N.D., makes a "neat tackle" of Wolpert, who has broken into the clear. In the closing minutes, Montana tries a quick kick. MSU's Sheriff, the Aggies' captain, tears through the line and blocks it, but Elizard Deschamps of Missoula recovers the ball for the varsity on the 2-yard line. UM then kicks out of danger and the game ends.

For the first time, four quarters are played instead of two halves. Total yardage is cited: 200 for the Aggies, 142 for the university.

"The score does not tell the story of the most exciting game ever played on a Bozeman field," says the Missoulian. "The general style of play was open formations, and both teams used fake kicks and tricks to good advantage."

Quarterbacks Donald Williams of MSU and Missoula junior Edward "Windy" Winstanley are key contributors. Dobson, Deschamps and fullback Clifford Day of Missoula are also commended.

Robert Cary, who played for UM five years earlier, is in his second game as coach. He will die unexpectedly before the 1912 season.

Montana 10, Montana State 0

Game No. 16 - 1910, Missoula.

Paul Dornblaser makes his debut in the Brawl of the Wild. So does the touchdown pass.

Three minutes into the game UM quarterback Edward Winstanley and end George Little, both seniors from Missoula, connect on an 8-yard scoring toss.

Montana's second touchdown comes in the second quarter. Emmett "Count" Ryan of Valier scores on a "tackle back" play.

Dornblaser, for whom two UM stadiums would

be named, is sensational. The freshman from Chicago didn't play in a 0-0 tie in October, but this time he's "here, there and everywhere, always smiling but always getting his man with a bang."

Little stars too, snuffing out the Aggies' deepest threat with an interception on the 12-yard line.

It's the final Brawl for two years. The 1911 game is called off after one of the Aggies dies.

Montana 7, Montana State 0

Game No. 17 - 1912, Bozeman.

UM sophomore Merritt Owsley, a 154-pound halfback from Twin Bridges, begins a career of heroic games against the Agricultural College.

Late in the game, Owsley intercepts a pass by MSU quarterback Maddix on Montana's 40-yard line. Several plays later he scores the only touchdown on a short run. Ed Craighead of Missoula kicks the extra point. (Touchdowns now count for six points, not five any more.)

For the first time, the university team has a nickname, the Bruins, although a Salt Lake paper labels it the Grizzlies.

Upon UM's arrival in Bozeman on the eve of the game, quarterback Pat Kelly of Big Timber is captured by the Aggie faithful and forced to make a speech.

"Captain (Paul) Dornblaser, however, escaped the men who would have shanghaied him to a speaker's position," the Missoulian reports.

Both Kelly and Dornblaser, a 195-pound junior from Chicago, star the next day.

Montana 39, Montana State 3

Game No. 18 - 1912, Missoula.

Sophomore halfback Merritt Owsley of Twin Bridges runs roughshod over the Aggies.

Owsley scores five touchdowns and sets up a sixth with a 35-yard run. On that one, Missoula senior Burton Smead gets the call. Owsley also kicks three extra points to account for a total of 33 points.

UM captain and fullback Paul Dornblaser of Chicago is able to watch, but only from the grandstand, as he's fought an illness ever since a two-game trip to Utah.

"Using its superior weight with telling effect, the University of Montana eleven battered down the Montana Agricultural college team and won in a walk on Montana field," the Missoulian reports.

MSU's Carr kicks a field goal in the first quarter for the visitors' only points.

Montana 7, Montana State 0

Game No. 19 - 1913, Bozeman.

"Missoula is bathed in football glory this morning," the Missoulian reports on Nov. 2, a day after the "Varsity" upends the State College of Bozeman on a fourth-quarter touchdown by Paul Kress of Michigan.

The game is almost over when the Aggies fumble at their own 28-yard line and Montana recovers. A forward pass moves the ball to the 20 and on the next play Kress sprints around left end, "shaking off tacklers until he had covered the twenty yards, and had placed the ball across the goal line."

Merritt Owsley of Twin Bridges kicks the extra point.

With time running out, Bozeman stages a valiant drive to the Montana 20. But the home team is penalized for holding and the drive stalls.

The game is played on a converted alfalfa patch at the Bozeman fairgrounds. MSU wants to be called the Mountain Lions this year, but it doesn't catch on.

Montana 20, Montana State 0

Game No. 20 - 1913, Missoula.

MSU is shut out for the sixth time in eight Brawls of the Wild since 1909, and the second time in two weeks.

The Missoulian reports: "Except during the interscholastic meets Montana field has never seen a better crowd."

There were more than a thousand people in the stands, and the gate receipts more than covered the expense of the game - a rare, rare circumstance in this flat-purse time."

Both teams have bands and UM introduces another noise-maker innovation, a small cannon. Quarterback Pat Kelly of Big Timber scores on a short run three minutes into the game. Merritt Owsley of Twin Bridges scores up the middle in both the second and third periods and "kicks goal" after the first two touchdowns.

The "Baron," Paul Dornblaser, plays his final game against the Aggies.

"He has plastered himself with a lot of glory ... but he has never played better football than he did for an hour yesterday," the paper says.

Dornblaser soon becomes a Missoula deputy county attorney, then goes off to World War I. He is killed in France in 1918 by a German sniper.

Cy Gatton and Carr distinguish themselves for MSU, but the Aggies are overmatched.

Montana 26, Montana State 9

Game No. 21 - 1914, in Missoula.

Montana's "Bruins" start slowly but then romp en route to a 6-0-1 record and the unofficial Northwest championship.

But the Aggies have something to brag about: They are the only team to score against Montana.

UM scores first when tackle Christian Bentz of Aberdeen, S.D., returns a fumbled punt to the Aggies' 2-yard line. Quarterback Alfred Robertson of Minnesota plunges over.

The visitors strike back in the second quarter when fullback Cy Gatton caps a drive engineered by quarterback Romney with a 3-yard run over tackle.

UM takes a 13-6 lead into halftime after Robertson's pass is deflected and falls into the arms of his end Earl "Click" Clark, a budding star from Everett, WA Clark is just behind the goal posts.

Cecil Vance, also of Washington, scores twice on short runs in the third quarter and stars on defense.

MSU tallies the last three points on a field goal by Robideaux.

To commemorate the rivalry, Richard Howell of the UM law school has written "Up With Montana," which remains the school's fight song.

Montana 6, Montana State 6

Game No. 22 - 1916, in Bozeman.

The score is tied 6-6 when Montana snaps the ball, and the final whistle blows almost simultaneously.

UM halfback Harry Adams of Aberdeen, WA, carries the ball all the way downfield as the pro-Aggies crowd rushes onto the field. Montana's claim of touchdown goes unheeded.

A tie is a victory for MSU, which hasn't played its counterparts from Missoula for two years but lost six straight before that.

The game is bitterly fought on a Nov. 4 afternoon in front of the largest football crowd yet in Bozeman.

Montana, now routinely nicknamed the "Grizzlies," is led by Adams and Earl "Click" Clark, both future UM coaches. The school's field house will

be named for Adams when it's built in the 1950s.

Montana's score in the second quarter is set up when Clark signals for a fair catch and is tackled. The penalty gives UM a first down on Bozeman's 40. Adams gains 21 yards on two sweeps around right end. Then Grizzly quarterback Lester Jones of Everett, WA, goes left and scores from the 19.

The extra-point attempt by Claude McQuarrie of Missoula hits the crossbar and bounces back.

The State College ties the game in the third period on a drive punctuated by three long passes. Two tries from the UM 2-yard line fail, but quarterback Boberg is over by inches on the third attempt. Three Grizzlies converge to block Bryan's extra-point try.

Montana 9, Montana State 7

Game No. 23 - 1917, Missoula.

With the drums of war beating overseas, the Grizzlies salvage an otherwise lost season with a touchdown two minutes from the end.

"The game moved like a tremendous drama, from hope to despair to sudden, impossible, but undeniable victory," the Missoulian says.

MSU scores its only touchdown early in the fourth quarter on a determined 11-yard rush by quarterback Ross. It gives the Aggies a 7-3 lead.

With five minutes left, UM starts from its own 35. Quarterback John Driscoll of Butte, who fumbled away a punt minutes earlier, catches a pass and zig-zags 45 yards down the sideline to the Aggies 20.

From the 15, Grizzly team captain Christian Bentz, a 235-pound converted lineman from Aberdeen, S.D., carries it through the afternoon gloom five straight times.

On the fifth he bulls over center from a yard out.

It's the only win of 1917 for UM, which joined the Northwest Conference the year before.

Montana 6, Montana State 6

Game No. 24 - 1919, Bozeman.

War and an influenza outbreak led to the cancellation of the 1918 season.

As the Brawl gets set to resume, MSU is favored to beat the undermanned Grizzlies, especially since the Northwest Conference has decreed freshmen ineligible.

But in the mid-November snow and mud, halfback Harry Adams breaks a scintillating 71-yard touchdown run in the second quarter to give UM a 6-0 lead.

In the third quarter, Homer Taylor, MSU's captain and quarterback, ties the game on an end run. Neither extra-point kick works.

"Before the game was a minute old, the bright blue jerseys of the Aggies and the gray of the Grizzlies became black with the mud of roundup stadium," a Missoulian correspondent reports.

"Pools of water inches deep stood on all parts of the field and when opportunity offered the players would wash their hands and faces in these dirty puddles."

Montana 28, Montana State 0

Game No. 25 - 1920, Missoula.

Injuries have almost done in the Grizzlies after their epic 18-14 victory at Washington.

But on a November afternoon, in the first game played at Dornblaser Field, they dominate one of the top defenses in the West.

A crowd of 3,000 is on hand, and close to 800 students participate in a snake dance on the field at halftime.

Bernie Bierman's Grizzlies make 32 first downs to MSU's two and score a touchdown in each quarter. Harry Adams of Aberdeen, WA, adds four extra points and engineers the Grizzly running game.

Steve Sullivan, a hard-running half back from Butte, scores the middle two touchdowns and sets up the fourth with an interception.

The Aggies threaten early in the fourth quarter after Bush recovers a fumble on Montana's 15. Two runs gain nothing. On third down quarterback Ray McCarren fakes a drop kick but is stopped for little gain. A fourth-down pass is intercepted by UM's Earl Barry of Missoula.

Montana 14, Montana State 7

Game No. 26 - 1921, Bozeman.

Steve Sullivan of Butte, a future NFL player, sets up or scores all 14 points for Montana in as "thrilling and viciously contested football contest as Bozeman has ever seen," reports Ray T. Rocene of the Missoulian.

MSU loses at Gatton Field for the first time in five years. Montana hasn't lost in the series since 1908, but its first visits to Gatton in 1916 and 1918 resulted in ties.

Sullivan scores from 4 yards out and kicks the extra point in the first quarter. MSU scores on a short run by quarterback Ray McCarren in the second quarter after a blocked kick and return to the UM 10 by Mashin. Scott McDonald kicks the extra point.

Late in the third quarter, Montana stages the clinching 52-yard scoring drive. Sullivan runs for 38 of the yards. Fullback Ted Plummer, first of two brothers from Stevensville to play at Montana, scores from a yard out.

Students from UM, among the 190 who traveled to Bozeman by train, snake dance on the field between halves.

Montana 7, Montana State 6

Game No. 27 - 1922, Missoula.

Controversy reigns in the descending darkness at Dornblaser Field.

UM fullback "Bullet Joe" Kershner of Billings scores the tying touchdown either as or after time runs out on Montana's Homecoming Game.

MSU timekeeper George Davenport maintains the final play didn't start in time. UM's official timekeeper, who goes unidentified, says five seconds remained when the play began. State College coach Ott Romney charges onto the field during the argument, is shooed off, then returns.

"Other dignitaries, all the way from the president of the university to the waterboys ... surged on the gridiron and harassed the officials," reports the Missoulian.

Referee William Higgins rules touchdown, claiming the game isn't over until the official timer fires his gun. It went off after Kershner crossed the line.

Finally the extra-point goal is attempted and captain Harvey Elliott of Missoula kicks it through. Umpire William Lowry says fans went on the field during the kick and the goal should not count. Higgins overrules him.

"In the eyes of God and in 60 minutes of play, we won that game," proclaims Romney in an after-dinner speech.

Two of the smallest players are the biggest stars. MSU quarterback Ray McCarren's passing accounts for a touchdown in the first quarter. Tiny Grant Silvernale of Baker leads a Grizzly ground attack that rolls up 278 yards.

Unofficially, this is the first Griz-Cat game.

The nickname “Grizzlies” is well-established, but for the first time the Bozeman visitors are called “Bobcats.”

Montana 24, Montana State 13

Game No. 28 – 1923, Bozeman.

Sophomore Ted Illman arrives on the scene, scoring two Grizzly touchdowns in his Brawl of the Wild debut.

“Chief” Illman and “Wild” Bill Kelly starred on Missoula High’s 1921 state championship team. Kelly, soon to be a Grizzly great, plays on the UM freshman team in 1923.

More than 1,000 Missoula fans and the band show up at Gallatin Field in the wake of the previous year’s controversial 7-6 Grizzly win.

This is the last football visit to Bozeman for UM until 1951. The teams play 21 times in Butte in the meantime.

Two MSU scores are direct results of fumbles by Earl Johnson of Missoula, one on the first play from scrimmage. The Bobcats’ Floyd Romney kicks two field goals, and Benton scores in the fourth quarter on a 16-yard return of a fumbled punt.

UM takes a 7-3 lead in the first quarter on a short run by Illman, then puts the game away with a flurry in the second quarter. Quarterback Grant Silvernale of Baker scores from 15 yards out, then intercepts a pass. He hits Illman on a pass that “Chief” turns into a 40-yard score.

Montana 29, Montana State 7

Game No. 29 – 1925, Missoula.

“Wild Bill” Kelly of Missoula, in his only Griz-Cat game in Missoula, rips off 211 yards and four touchdowns.

‘The Grizzlies didn’t play the Bobcats in 1924 and are coming off consecutive trips to Oregon State, ID and Southern California. They receive sweet relief against the Bobcats.

Kelly, playing quarterback, scores on a 42-yard jaunt around end, on two plunges off tackle, and on a 68-yard interception return.

MSU’s one tally comes in the first quarter when Gregory intercepts a pass and rambles 62 yards. Glynn, at left end, is a standout for the Bobcats.

Oscar Dahlberg, youngest of four Butte brothers to play for UM, is one of the Grizzly leaders. It’s a sloppy game: three interceptions each, four Grizzly fumbles, and 20 penalties – including 12 for 100 yards for UM. Former Griz star Earl “Click” Clark concludes a two-year stint as head coach. Ott Romney’s Bobcats finish a busy 11-game schedule by losing to Utah, BYU and UM. Montana State, winless in its last 17 games against the Grizzlies, won’t score a point in the next three.

Montana 27, Montana State 0

Game No. 30 – 1926, Butte.

The Brawl of the Wild moves to Butte for the first of 21 Copper Bowls and Montana runs its series streak to 18 games without a loss.

“The kill took place Saturday afternoon (Oct. 23) at Butte before the largest crowd ever assembled for a sports event in the Treasure state,” reports the Missoulian. There were, it says, “8,000 and some odd fans.”

“Wild Bill” Kelly tops his four-touchdown performance of the 1925 Brawl. He runs for one Grizzly score, returns a punt for another and throws a pass nearly 50 yards for a third. Kelly also kicks three extra points and intercepts three Bobcat passes.

End Clarence Coyle of Alberton catches Kelly’s

long TD pass and halfback Milton Ritter of Eveleth, Minn., scores UM’s other touchdown.

Montana State, behind halfback Babcock and quarterback Wellington, gains more first downs and almost equal yardage but throws six interceptions.

The Bobcats threaten in the second quarter. Glynn misses a drop-kick try from 41 yards. Grizzly sophomore Eddie Chinske of Michigan City, Ind., intercepts a pass at the Montana 20. Kelly picks one off at the 12 and another at the 5.

Montana 6, Montana State 0

Game No. 31 – 1927, Butte.

Alberton’s Clarence Coyle speeds down the east side of Clark Park, slips past Bobcat halfback Richards, and hauls in a 30-yard scoring pass from Eddie Chinske of Indiana for the only score.

It comes in the final quarter – “a spectacular play, a thrilling moment, which sent the University rooters into cataclysms of joy,” the Missoulian reports.

Chinske, who had two interceptions against MSU in 1926, picks off another at the goal line to preserve the shutout.

MSU’s stingy defense, led by end Cashmore, holds the Missoula boys to four first downs. The Cats outgain the Griz 221 yards to 195 behind Eikren, “a slippery line smasher,” Gardner, “a hard man to stop at all times,” and Babcock.

Two plays before the touchdown, Chinske connects with Sam Kain of Helena for a 28-yard pass. On the winning play, both Kain and Coyle head down the same sideline and Richards has to choose which one to cover. He picks Kain and Chinske hits Coyle just short of the end zone.

Montana 0, Montana State 0

Game No. 32 – 1928, Butte.

Montana, wearing black jerseys and white helmets, comes closest to scoring but fails on three plays from the Bobcat 5-yard line late in the first half.

Bobcat linebacker Ott Gardner drops UM quarterback Jimmy Morrow of Moore for a loss of 3; Waldo Ekegren of Harlem regains 2 of those, and a fourth-down pass is batted down by a Montana State defender.

In the third quarter, Grizzly All-America candidate Tom Davis, from Butte, picks up a Bobcat fumble and runs 44 yards across the goal line. But referee Robert Morris has blown the ball dead, nullifying the score.

The crowd numbers some 8,000.

“It was a sellout, every seat being occupied, and the athletic funds of the two colleges will net a sweet sum as a result,” the Missoulian reports.

Montana State 14, Montana 12

Game No. 33 – 1929, Butte.

It’s over. On a sunny October day in Butte’s Clark Park, the Bobcats end the longest winless streak in series history. Montana State last won in 1908, when the series matched the Aggies and the Varsity.

Max Worthington scores both Bobcat touchdowns, on a 28-yard pass reception and an end-around near the goal line. Ivar Twilde’s long return of the opening kickoff sets up the first MSU score, and his two extra-point kicks are the decisive points. Jim Morrow of Moore misses both extra-point attempts for the Grizzlies.

All scoring comes in the first half as Montana quickly counters each Bobcat touchdown. Billings halfback Clyde Carpenter crashes 13 yards over right guard Clarence Muhlick of Wisconsin

to cap UM’s first drive.

Waldo Ekegren of Harlem, whose brother Kermit shares halfback duties, scores on a reverse from 3 yards out.

On a last-ditch drive, UM’s Morrow runs for 33 yards and passes for 22 to move the ball to the Bobcat 5-yard line. But the final gun sounds before Montana gets off another play.

MSU’s second touchdown is aided by a 15-yard penalty “for talking” against Jerry Ryan of Deer Lodge, who is warming up on the sideline for Montana. It gives the Cats the ball on the Grizzly 3.

Montana 13, Montana State 6

Game No. 34 – 1930, Butte.

The Grizzlies regain the winning track, dominating for three quarters and holding off a last-ditch Bobcat assault ignited by three blocked punts. Nearly 8,000 fans gather at Clark Park to see if Maj. Frank Milburn’s Montana men can avenge last year’s 14-12 defeat – their first to the Bobcats in more than 20 years.

Waldo Ekegren of Harlem scores twice from six inches out in the first half for the Grizzlies. The extra-point kick after the first score by Emile Perey of Philipsburg misses, but the Cats are off-side so the Griz get the point. Perey’s attempt after the second score is low.

UM’s Clyde Carpenter of Billings has a punt partly blocked in the third quarter. Max Worthington of MSU picks it up with clear field ahead but is caught from behind.

Another Carpenter punt is stuffed and recovered on the UM 8-yard line, but the Grizzlies hold on at the 1-yard line early in the final period.

The Cats block a third punt late in the game and take over on the Grizzly 16.

Quarterback DeFrate hits McFarland for a 9-yard touchdown pass to bring Montana State within seven. UM’s Gilbert Madden of Roundup helps stave off the Bobcats after that with an interception.

Montana 37, Montana State 6

Game No. 35 – 1931, Butte.

Halloween Day in Butte is mild and even “a trifle warm for those engaged in struggle on the field,” a reporter says. And the Grizzlies heat it up even more.

Lowell Dailey of Scobey tallies four touchdowns.

Montana leads just 12-0 late in the third quarter. But the Grizzlies’ Chalmers Lyman of Helena catches a short touchdown pass from Bill Boone of Deer Lodge, playing for injured quarterback Cale Crowley of Butte. Moments later Pat Caven of Miles City, playing with a broken nose, intercepts a Bobcat pass and returns it 35 yards for a touchdown. The romp is on.

MSU’s lone score comes in the fourth quarter when quarterback Parke hurdles over from a yard out. Halfback Ed Buzzetti leads the Bobcats on defense.

As game time approaches, three Navy airplanes sweep over the city in formation.

Montana State 19, Montana 7

Game No. 36 – 1932, Butte.

Two fourth-quarter touchdowns get the Bobcats back on the winning track. It spawns one of the series’ memorable quotes from disgruntled Grizzly coach Bernard “Bunny” Oakes: “I think we ought to play our games from now on in Denmark, we’re so rotten.”

Though the Oct. 21 morning is sunny and

warm, by noon the sky has clouded over. A stiff, cold wind blows from the south during the game. The U.S. is in the depths of the Great Depression and attendance dips to 5,500 at Clark Park, which holds 8,000. Election Day is a couple of weeks away, and Gov. John Erickson spends one half on the Grizzly side and one half with Bobcat fans. He poses for photographs with captains Paul McLean of Helena for MSU and the Grizzlies’ Dale Hinman of Greybull, Wyo.

Sophomore Louis Edwards of Hamilton scores the go-ahead touchdown early in the fourth period from a yard out. Later, Ray Buzzetti of Hardin tallies his second TD of the day on a 21-yard jaunt. Hinman gives the Grizzlies an early spark, intercepting a Buzzetti pass in the first quarter and returning it 93 yards for the first score.

Montana 32, Montana State 0

Game No. 37 – 1933, Butte.

The Griz explode for four touchdowns in the fourth quarter, in “merciless retribution for last year’s defeat,” a Missoulian reporter says. The Bobcats manage just 50 yards in total offense.

The Grizzlies begin their most dominant period in series history: The Bobcats won’t score for eight straight games.

Montana coach Bernard “Bunny” Oakes opens with “shock troop” – reserve players who three times successfully execute double lateral passes.

Sophomore Edison Kent of Dillon scores nine minutes into the game on a short run. The Bobcats, led by lineman Chris Nagle, blunt Montana after that until a blocked punt in the fourth quarter opens the floodgates.

Sophomore quarterback Hank Blastic of Chicago scores on four straight runs starting at the 17, then hits Louis Hartsell of Anaconda for a 34-yard touchdown. Herb Brandenburg of Miles City makes a leaping, one-hand touchdown catch from reserve QB Bergeson, who scores the last TD from the 5.

Montana 25, Montana State 0

Game No. 38 – 1934, Butte.

The Brawl of the Wild takes a turn toward dull in front of 6,500 on a shirt-sleeve Nov. 10 at Clark Park. The Grizzlies score a touchdown in each quarter and just miss on a couple of others.

Griz coach “Bunny” Oakes, in his fifth and final season, again starts his second-string “shock troops,” but the Bobcats make no headway.

Quarterback Hank Blastic of Chicago takes over and engineers the Grizzly assault. He scores twice on short runs. Leland Story of Winnett plows over left guard Leonard Kuka of Havre for the first touchdown. Don Holmquist of Whitefish tallies the final one.

The day’s most spectacular play is a triple lateral pass. It goes from Blastic to Naseby Rhinehart of Milwaukee to Bill Hileman of Whitefish to Helena’s Cal Emery. It works, but a penalty nullifies the TD.

The Bobcats’ best threat ends when the final gun sounds with the ball on the UM 19. Hard-running by Arthur Overturf and Taylor lead the MSU drive.

The Grizzlies even win the halftime cross-country race, which starts and ends in Clark Park. Jack Rose, from Kalispell, kicks at the end to outrun MSU’s Bernard Myers by 15 yards. Montana leads series 24-9-5.

Montana 20, Montana State 0

Game No. 39 – 1935, Butte.

Sen. Burton K. Wheeler shows up late and sits

among Grizzly fans at Clark Park. It’s an early October afternoon that starts in sunshine and ends with threatening rain in the mountains.

Under first-year Griz coach Doug Fessenden of Illinois, they post their third of eight straight shutouts against the Cats.

Senior Hank Blastic of Chicago scores one touchdown and passes for another, to Anaconda’s Louis Hartsell. Sophomores Paul Szakash, also of Chicago, and Butte’s Milt Popovich – both destined to become among Grizzly all-time greats – make their initial marks.

Szakash scores on a 2-yard plunge in the second quarter and kicks two extra points.

The Cats never get inside the Grizzly 30-yard line.

Montana 27, Montana State 0

Game No. 40 – 1936, Butte.

In Montana’s coming-of-age season under coach Doug Fessenden, Butte’s own Milt Popovich hogs the spotlight for UM.

“Twice speeding down the east side of Clark field on flying feet for touchdowns, reversing from the west side to give his interference a chance to form, Milton Popovich scampered half the length of the gridiron for touchdowns in the second quarter Saturday afternoon,” the Missoulian’s Ray Rocene writes.

Popovich is both punter and kick returner for the Griz. He unloads a 64-yard punt in the first quarter. In the second period, he returns two punts 49 yards each for touchdowns.

Reserves take charge in the second half for UM. Phil Peterson of Kalispell recovers a blocked punt in the end zone and Joe Mariana of Miles City scores from a yard out in the fourth quarter.

For the second straight year, the Bobcats don’t come close to scoring.

Montana 19, Montana State 0

Game No. 41 – 1937, Butte.

It’s the Grizzlies’ best team in their first 40 years, but things don’t start well.

Undefeated and riding an eight-game winning streak, Montana fumbles on the opening kickoff and on the first play from scrimmage at Clark Park.

The Griz recover both times, but it’s only 3-0 at halftime after a Paul Szakash field goal.

UM settles matters in the second half as Milt Popovich of Butte tallies from 8 and 12 yards out and Szakash, from Chicago, adds a second field goal.

The Bobcats’ deepest threat comes in the first half, when they reach the Grizzly 30 before Szakash intercepts a pass.

Montana 13, Montana State 0

Game No. 42 – 1938, Butte.

It’s freezing cold in Butte on Nov. 12, barely 20 degrees, but 7,000 fans are at Clark Park.

Griz co-captain Bill Lazetich of Anaconda, who later plays for the NFL’s Cleveland Rams, scores from 2 yards out early.

Halfback Fred Jenkin, also of Anaconda, clinches the victory by executing a “sparkling cutback climax sprint for 21 yards on the second play of the final period,” Missoulian sports editor Ray Rocene reports.

At halftime, both bands perform. UM’s girls drum corps entertains with flashlights to the music of the band with the stadium lights turned out – “as attractive and original a stunt as the University musicians have ever demonstrated,” one reporter says.

The Bobcats are paced by Stevensville's Max Stark, "a dynamo running with the ball, hard to stop fast, keeping his feet well," reports Rocene.

Montana 6, Montana State 0 *Game No. 43 – 1939, Butte.*

The game is played at Butte High's field in front of a record 8,500 fans.

Grizzly defensive dominance peaks as the Bobcats manage just one first down and 47 total yards.

The lone touchdown comes midway through the third quarter. Sophomore end Bob Ness catches a bullet pass from Jack Swarthout, described by the Missoulian's Ray T. Rocene as a "160-pound bundle of dynamite," and reaches the 1-yard line.

Another soph, Evan Roberts of Butte, bounces through a hole between left guard Bill Shegina of Anaconda and center Bob Gorton of Kalispell for the score. Swarthout, from Prosser, WA, does much of UM's passing at fullback.

The defensive star is Roger Lundberg, "brilliant ball hawk" from Northwood, Iowa, who has an interception and fumble recovery of a double lateral that sets up the winning score.

The Cats cross midfield just three times. Their deepest penetration is late in the game when Fjeld intercepts a pass and returns it to the Grizzly 21. A clipping call moves it back to the 42.

Montana 6, Montana State 0 *Game No. 44 – 1940, Butte.*

A crowd of 6,000 under a hot Oct. 19 sun watches the eighth straight shutout of the Bobcats. Doug Fessenden, Montana coach since 1935, is under fire as Grizzlies themselves have been shut out in five of seven previous games. But he still hasn't seen MSU score on his team.

UM's offense is hampered in the final quarter when fullback Jack Swarthout of Prosser, WA, is ejected for punching Bobcat center Lovera of Butte. Swarthout claims he was held three times. He later apologizes to Lovera.

Don Bryan of Billings sets up the winning touchdown in the second quarter with a 14-yard pass to Karl Fiske of Outlook. Fiske is run out of bounds a foot short of the goal. Two plays later, Bryan scores. UM threatens several other times but can't finish.

The Bobcats net minus 27 yards rushing and make just two first downs. Their lone foray across midfield comes early in the second half when Newell Berg intercepts and runs to the UM 25. A bad center pass loses 12 and the Cats end up punting.

Montana 23, Montana State 13 *Game No. 45 – 1941, Butte.*

Two Bobcat touchdowns – Montana State's first points against Montana since 1932 – shock the Grizzlies into action. Butte-grown Eso Naranche and Ben Tyvand go to work after a half-time tribute to Montanans in the armed services. Naranche scores in the third quarter and early in the fourth. He kicks both extra points, the second putting Montana up 14-13.

End Jack Swarthout of Prosser, WA, blocks a Bobcat punt for a safety. Tyvand's runs wear down a sagging MSU line. His 17-yarder to the 1 sets up a plunge by Karl Fiske of Outlook for the final TD.

MSU's "spread" offense catches Montana off-guard. Early in the game, Bobcat quarterback Jinx Anderson throws a lateral to Bill Zupan, who passes downfield to Anderson for



MISSOULIAN FILE

Running back Lex Hilliard gets a hug from Montana coach Bobby Hauck after a three-touchdown day in a 2007 win over Montana State in Bozeman.

a 40-yard touchdown. In the second quarter, Naranche drops back to pass and Bobcat end Jim Peterson snatches the ball from his hand. Peterson romps 60 yards to put MSU up 13-0. Arnold Scott of Plains rips off a 52-yard run in the first half for Montana and finishes with 108 yards on 10 carries.

The game is played on Oct. 25, six weeks before Japan bombs Pearl Harbor. There won't be another Brawl of the Wild until 1946.

Montana 20, Montana State 7 *Game No. 46 – 1946, Butte.*

After a four-year truce, the Grizzlies win their 10th straight Brawl of the Wild before 10,000 fans at Butte High's field on a glorious October afternoon. Grizzly end Bill Reynolds of Indiana snares two touchdown passes despite feeling the effects of malaria. UM intercepts Montana State four times and outgains the Cats 330-177.

The Griz lead 13-7 at halftime after touchdowns by Glasgow fullback Dan Radakovich and Reynolds, on a toss from Missoula's John Holding. The Cats' Hogan Krisman scores on a 33-yard pass from future MSU athletic director Gene Bourdet late in the half. Reynolds scores in the fourth period on a 9-yard pass from halfback John Reagan of Chicago. Reynolds and Reagan intercept passes and Jerry Walterskirchen of Missoula pounces on a fumble at the Bobcat 19 to set up a touchdown.

Montana State 13, Montana 12 *Game No. 47 – 1947, Butte.*

The Cats break a 10-game losing streak to the Grizzlies in a Brawl of the Wild laced with irony. A former Grizzly halfback, Barney Berger of Billings, kicks the decisive extra point for the Cats.

Montana's Buck Preuninger of Missoula misses

his first two PAT kicks of the season, the second by mere inches. "Let it be said (the Bobcats) played better football," concedes the Missoulian's Ray Rocene.

All points come in the second half, MSU's on touchdowns by end Harry Perrigo and halfback John Heine. Jack O'Loughlin of Missoula and Dan Radakovich of Glasgow score for UM, Radakovich on a 58-yard pass from Missoula's Pierre Roberts.

A record crowd of more than 10,000 watches the Oct. 17 fray at Butte High "on a dry, dirt field with warm sunshine and only a slight wind."

It's the 50th anniversary of the first Brawl. At halftime bands portray Montana history: "Indians along the trail, honky-tonk dancers, cowboys, sheepmen, railroad men and early automobile travel," Rocene says.

Montana 14, Montana State 0 *Game No. 48 – 1948, Butte.*

A year after the Bobcats ended a 10-game skein in the Brawl of the Wild, Montana starts a new streak. This time it will run to eight.

Another crowd of more than 10,000 is at Butte High field on Oct. 16 as John Holding runs for one touchdown and throws to fellow Missoula High alum Don Delaney for the other. Buck Preuninger of Missoula, who missed two extra points in the 13-12 loss of 1947, kicks two this time.

Montana State threatens late when Charles Masten intercepts and returns across midfield. A 17-yard quarterback sneak by Ed Gorrilla moves it to the 17. But two runs and two incomplete passes gain just 2 yards. Griz halfback Roy Malcolm runs for a first down, then punts 58 yards to end the game.

Montana 34, Montana State 12 *Game No. 49 – 1949, Butte.*

A crowd of 7,000 gathers on a chilly Oct. 29

in Butte High's newly-christened Naranche Field. The Grizzlies, under new coach Ted Shipkey, start a stretch in which they'll score 30 point or more against the Bobcats for five straight years.

Adam Marshall, who played for the UM frosh, scores both Bobcat touchdowns. The first opens scoring in the second quarter. Soon after, the Grizzlies tackle punter Bill Boston in the end zone for a safety. In short order, Bob "Lefty" Byrne of Billings runs 11 yards for a touchdown; the Grizzlies recover an onside kick, and Chick Murphy of Iowa scores from 11 again. It's 15-6 Griz at halftime.

In the fourth quarter Ray Bauer of Great Falls, leading receiver in the Pacific Coast Conference, catches long TD passes from Missoula's Tom Kingsford and John Holding. Grizzly halfback Roy Malcolm of Missoula scores on a zig-zaggy jaunt of 79 yards that covers at least 120.

Montana 33, Montana State 0 *Game No. 50 – 1950, Butte.*

It's the last Brawl in Butte, and the Grizzlies come out snorting on Halloween Day. They score 27 points before halftime behind the passing of Missoula's Tom Kingsford. Kingsford, in the process of rewriting the UM record books, throws first-half scoring strikes of 22 yards to Andy Kafentzis of Missoula; 24 yards to Bob Byrne of Billings, and 28 yards to Ed Nearing of Los Angeles. Don Campbell of Great Falls scores on a 2-yard plunge.

A cold, miserable drizzle mars the second half. A short run by UM fullback Bo Laird of Miles City in the third quarter is the only score.

MSU gets the ball inside Montana's 45 only once, on a fumble recovery at the 14 late in the game. Quarterback Bob Graham is stopped on fourth down at the 8. Graham and fullback Gene Stergar carry much of the load for the Cats.

Butte says goodbye to Griz-Cat games,

played in the Mining City since 1925. The Grizzlies won 17 of 21 there, none as lopsided as the final one.

Montana 38, Montana State 0 *Game No. 51 – 1951, Bozeman.*

The Brawl of the Wild returns to Bozeman after 28 years, and an October storm hits at about the same time.

Minutes in, Gatton Field is hammered by rain.

The Grizzlies are already up 6-0 after tackle Earl Merrill of California blocks a Bobcat punt and Frank Nickel of Billings recovers on the 2. Up 13-0, Montana grabs a fumble on the third play of the second half. Senior Paul Wold of Laurel soon bulls over for a TD.

Dick Shadoan of Billings, one of four Griz quarterbacks, hits Nickel over the middle from 9 yards out for first of three fourth-quarter touchdowns. Team MVP Bob "Lefty" Byrne, also of Billings, scores his second TD from a foot out. Wold plunges in again after Hal Sherbeck of Big Sandy returns an interception 57 yards.

Hal Maus of Anaconda leads the Griz defense to a second straight shutout of the Cats.

Montana 35, Montana State 12 *Game No. 52 – 1952, Missoula.*

It's Missoula's turn to accommodate the Brawl of the Wild, for the first time since 1925. A crowd of 3,500 at Dornblaser Field is barely a third of what the series drew at times in Butte from 1926-1950.

The Griz are playing for new coach Ed Chinske. The Bobcats score "first and last on forward passes," the Missoulian's Ray Rocene reports, but the "Grizzlies collected five touchdowns in between, with a safety."

Murdo Campbell of Great Falls throws for two scores and runs around end for a 33-yard TD. Campbell set up the run with an interception. Jim Murray of Anaconda picks off two Bobcat passes, returning the second for UM's last touchdown.

Both Cat scores come on passes from Jack Moore to Joe Barnett. Montana intercepts five passes and dominates with 378 rushing yards, outgaining Montana State 475-147. But the Griz lose two fumbles in the first quarter and two more in the fourth.

Bobcat center Bill Roney recovers two and intercepts a pass.

Montana 32, Montana State 13 *Game No. 53 – 1953, Bozeman.*

"I told 'em between halves to block," Grizzly coach Eddie Chinske says. "They did."

Dick Imer of Highland, Ind., ignites UM in the third quarter with a 49-yard run and the Grizzlies, trailing 13-6, explode past the Bobcats. Montana gets second-half touchdowns from quarterback Dick Heath of Miles City, Imer, Murdo Campbell of Great Falls and Bill Gue of Great Falls, who catches a 25-yard toss from Heath. Heath and Campbell hook up from 41 yards out for the first-half touchdown.

The Grizzlies set an NCAA record by running 112 plays.

Montana State goes up 13-0 on scores by fullback Tom Hoff and quarterback Tom Parac of Lewistown, future Bobcat coach and athletic director.

Montana 25, Montana State 21 *Game No. 54 – 1954, Missoula.*

A classic Brawl of the Wild draws 8,000 fans

to Dornblaser Field on Nov. 13, and the Grizzlies' Murdo Campbell breaks open the first play from scrimmage for a 61-yard TD.

Bobcat star Don Edwards answers Campbell's run with a 43-yard jaunt to set up a TD. Harvey Wylie, the "Canadian Comet," throws to Frank Landon to put Montana State up 14-6 in the second quarter.

But Bobcat fortunes dip when Edwards is taken the hospital with a concussion. The Griz score two quick TDs before halftime.

Wylie scores two touchdowns for MSU; Campbell has two for UM.

Late in the game, Bobcat end Jim Posewitz intercepts Dick Heath of Miles City and returns it for a TD that cuts the Griz lead to 25-21. A last-second Cat effort, triggered by a blocked punt by Jim Argeris, the Bobcat's All-American center, falls short as the pistol sounds.

Montana 19, Montana State 0

Game No. 55 - 1955, Bozeman.

Grizzly QB Norman Kampschror of Glendive throws fourth-quarter TD passes to Terry Hurley of Chicago and Dale Shupe of Harlem.

Montana State completes just two passes and earns seven first downs.

For the Griz, Shupe's rushes and punts are highlights, and Dick Dzivi of Kalispell stars for Montana, intercepting a pass and recovering a fumble. The Grizzlies keep MSU star Don Edwards, of Rockfield, Ill., out of the end zone.

But times are about to change in the Brawl of the Wild. In the past 52 years, the Bobcats have won just five times. Over the next 30 years, they'll win 22 games.

Montana State 33, Montana 14

Game No. 56 - 1956, Missoula.

For the first time since 1902, the Bobcats win in Missoula.

A capacity crowd of 8,500 watches the Grizzlies go up 7-6 when quarterback Roy Bray of Missoula dives over from a foot out.

In the second quarter, Bobcat quarterback Dave Alt avoids five Grizzlies to launch a touchdown pass to Jim Powewitz. Alt scores MSU's next TD on a run.

Montana scores before halftime on a 34-yard pass play from Bray to Pete Rhinehart of Missoula.

MSU's Don Edwards scores the only second-half TDs, on runs of 7 yards and 1 yard. Bob Black intercepts a pass and Ron Warzeka recovers a fumble for the Cats.

Montana State 22, Montana 13

Game No. 57 - 1957, Bozeman.

Bob Rudio's 49-yard scamper in the first half and a plunge by Rocco Perciavalle in the third quarter help stake the Bobcats to a 19-0 lead.

Griz quarterback Earl Keeley of Vancouver, B.C. sets up Montana's first touchdown on passes to Joe Pepe of Missoula then connects with Larry Myers of Pacoma, CA, for a 51-yard score with 10:50 left.

But the Cats' George Marinkovich of Bethlehem, Penn., booms a 64-yard punt and then intercepts a fourth-down pass. Brad Lowell of Kansas kicks a 28-yard field goal for the Bobcats' final points.

The Bobcats capture the morning bowling match, paced by a 207 game from Tom DeYoung. But the rifle teams manage to salvage some pride for the Grizzlies with a pair of wins.

Montana State 20, Montana 6

Game No. 58 - 1958, Missoula.

A crowd of 7,600 watches on a subfreezing November day as Bobcats cap an 8-1 season with their third straight win over the Grizzlies.

Montana finishes 0-10 under new coach Ray Jenkins.

The score stands 6-6 as the fourth quarter begins. Bobcat fullback Rocco Perciavalle of Pennsylvania bolts "like a rifle bullet" 46 yards on a belly play to put the visitors ahead. Perciavalle finishes with 130 yards and an interception that ends a Grizzly threat. With 1:30 left, the Cats' Tom Molen breaks loose for a 62-yard touchdown to clinch the outcome.

MSU quarterback Darryl Dupuis fires a strike to Jim McLeod for a 34-yard touchdown in the second quarter. A fumble recovery by Bob Everson of Cheney, WA, leads to UM's only score, a short smash by Missoula's Joe Pepe.

UM students park a trailer filled with manure above the east stands and at the foot of Mount Sentinel "in honor of their cousins from across the mountains," the Missoulian reports. After the game, Griz fans fend off Bobcat backers with a fire hose, but the south goal posts at Dornblaser Field go down. The hose breaks and confrontations turn physical.

Montana State 40, Montana 6

Game No. 59 - 1959, Bozeman.

It's all Bobcats as Jim "The Missile" McLeod scores on long plays to open scoring in each half and Montana State outrushes Montana 313 yards to 15. The Cats post their fourth straight victory in the series and most lopsided since a 38-0 shutout in 1902.

More than 8,000 are at Gatton Field for another sunny Brawl of the Wild on Nov. 7. McLeod, a senior for MSU, thwarts the Grizzlies' first scoring threat when he leaps to intercept a pass and speeds 86 yards. It's 14-0 at halftime.

Other Cat scores come from Bob Rudio, Rocco Perciavalle, Sam Moore and Tommy Molen. The first three are set up by fumble recoveries inside the Grizzly 35.

The Grizzlies score last, on a 2-yard run by Russ Grant of Spokane. Grizzly sophomore John Schulz of Missoula survives a heavy pass rush to complete 15 of 33 passes in place of injured quarterback Bob O'Billovich of Butte.

Montana 10, Montana State 6

Game No. 60 - 1960, Missoula.

The Grizzlies snap the Bobcats' four-year streak in the Brawl of the Wild. Montana scores on consecutive possessions in the first half. The Bobcat touchdown comes late in the game.

The Grizzlies are just 1-for-5 passing but sophomore Terry Dillon of Hopkins, Minn., rushes for 106 yards. Dillon's No. 22 will be the first retired at UM.

Shelby speedster Pat Dodson reaches the end zone on a 5-yard sprint around right end with 4:20 left in the first half, capping a 99-yard drive that started when Bob O'Billovich of Butte intercepted a pass on the 1-yard line.

Glenn Sorenson of Billings boots the extra point, then converts Montana's first field-goal attempt of the season from 30 yards out 30 seconds before halftime.

Cat quarterback Harry Lopsonzski hits end Bert Emery for an 18-yard touchdown with two minutes to play to make it 10-6. A bad snap ruins the PAT try.

The Bobcats get the ball back on their 42 with



406 MT SPORTS FILE PHOTO

Montana State players celebrate with students in the south end zone of Bobcat Stadium after beating Montana in 2017. It would prove to be the final game for Griz coach Bob Stitt, who was let go days later.

20 seconds left, but two passes go for naught.

Montana State 10, Montana 9

Game No. 61 - 1961, Bozeman.

An aerial assault by the Cats wipes out UM's 9-0 lead in the fourth quarter.

Phil Schneider boots a short field goal early in the period to make it 9-3, then adds the conversion with 4:50 left for the winning point. The Bobcats' tying touchdown is set up by a fumble at midfield by Grizzly Terry Dillon of Minnesota. It's recovered by Bill Mulcahy, who proceeds to pass 8 yards to Bill Cords in a Butte-to-Butte connection between two defenders in the Grizzly end zone.

Montana takes the lead in the first quarter with a 2-yard plunge by Gary Smith of Whitefish. Eugene Moe of Helena had recovered a Bobcat fumble on the home team's 34. A run by Dillon and a pass by Butte's Bob O'Billovich to Mike Trotter of Longview, WA, set up Smith's plunge. Glenn Sorenson of Billings kicks a 23-yard field goal to make it 9-0 Griz in the third period.

Up by one near the end, the Bobcats get an interception by Bob Durado.

Montana 36, Montana State 19

Game No. 62 - 1962, Missoula.

The Bobcats take a 13-0 lead at Dornblaser Field before Terry Dillon strikes for three touchdowns and 115 yards rushing as UM romps in surprising fashion.

There's talk of a new conference forming that for the first time will include both the Grizzlies and the Bobcats. This is billed as a mythical league title game.

Quarterback Paul Miller of Miles City, one of four seniors in the Grizzly backfield, turns a fake field goal into a touchdown early in the fourth quarter. He takes the snap, rolls right and hits Pat Dodson of Shelby from 18 yards out to put UM up 29-19.

Dillon's 17-yard interception return adds a

clinging score.

The Bobcats grab an early lead on Butte Central alum Bill Mulcahy's 5-yard pass to Gordie Schlabs of Kalispell; a fumble recovery by Schlabs, and a short plunge by Bucky May. May scores again in the second period on a 10-yard interception return to put the Cats ahead 19-14 at intermission.

Montana State 18, Montana 3

Game No. 63 - 1963, Bozeman.

On a cold November afternoon, the Bobcats reign in the first Big Sky Conference meeting between the schools.

It's the eighth straight loss in '63 for the Grizzlies and the Cats' sixth victory in the last eight Brawls of the Wild. A crowd of 8,500 watches at Gatton Field.

Dan Sundling rushes for 144 yards in 20 carries to set a Bobcat season rushing mark of 672 yards.

The Bozeman boys lead 6-3 at halftime after fullback Dave Miller's 1-yard plunge. UM scores on a field goal by Ted McElhenny, the Grizzlies' left-footed kicker from Butte.

It's still 6-3 in the fourth quarter when Bobcat quarterback Ken Christison of Kalispell dives over from a yard out to cap a 68-yard drive. After a fumbled lateral by the Grizzlies, Christison clinches it with another 1-yard dive.

Lineman Tom Hauck of Butte leads Montana's defensive effort.

Montana State 30, Montana 6

Game No. 64 - 1964, Missoula.

Jim Sweeney's Bobcats are Camellia Bowl-bound and ready to wrap up their second Big Sky title after bouncing the Grizzlies for the seventh time in nine years.

Reserve quarterback Foy McClung, a senior from Oklahoma, leads the Cat attack with a touchdown, a field goal and three extra points. Starting QB Ray Foley of Butte drives the visitors to a 16-6 halftime lead, passing to halfback Dan

Sundling from 18 yards out for the first touchdown. Later Dick Haden rambles 6 yards for a score on a pitch play.

The Grizzlies' lone score comes after Haden's touchdown. Former Billings West star Warren Hill breaks a 75-yard run to the Bobcat 1 before Jim Tuss of Great Falls brings him down. Quarterback Bob Benzley of Green River, Wyo., sneaks over from there. The Cats wrap it up in the fourth quarter on short runs by McClung and Butte's Dan Hodge.

The Bobcats go on to win the Camellia Bowl in Sacramento, 28-7 over Sacramento State.

Montana State 24, Montana 7

Game No. 65 - 1965, Bozeman.

A crowd of 9,000 witnesses the heroics of two soon-to-be Bobcat legends. Jan Stenerud of Fetsund, Norway, kicks a 59-yard field goal 90 seconds into the game. The future NFL Hall of Famer later misses, barely, from 67 yards. Glendive sophomore Don Hass, who'll be known as the "Iron Tumbleweed," scores once and rushes 27 times for 129 yards.

The Grizzlies close a 10-0 gap late in the first half on a 25-yard pass from Missoula Loyola grad Ed Steiner to Shelby's Roger Seeley. But the Bobcats' Jim Tuss of Great Falls deflates the Griz in the third quarter. Tuss, who will coach Helena Capital to state titles in the 1987 and 1993, returns a punt 80 yards for a touchdown. The last score is a 29-yard pass from the Cats' Gary Richards of Broadus to end Ray Foley 53 seconds left.

"My ears are getting tired from smiling," MSU coach Jim Sweeney says afterward. "Wasn't it great?"

Montana State 38, Montana 0

Game No. 66 - 1966, Missoula.

Six Bobcats score as Camellia Bowl-bound Montana State, ranked third in the nation, whips the Grizzlies.

Sophomore Dennis Erickson quarterbacks the Bobcats, and All-America candidate Don Hass and future NFL Hall of Famer Jan Stenerud star. Stenerud, a soccer-style kicker from Norway, hits a 38-yard field goal and five extra points. Hass, from Glendive, runs for 141 yards and surpasses the Big Sky season record.

Gary Popiel of Hamilton returns a punt 74 yards to make it 30-0 Bobcats.

Late in the game, UM's Jim Searles of Missoula hits Warren Hill of Billings for 42 yards. But two plays later, Dan Hodge of Butte intercepts for the Cats. Griz linebacker Mike Smith of Olympia, WA, recovers two fumbles and makes 10 tackles. Montana's Dewey Allen of Kalispell sets a Big Sky record with 10 punts.

Lynn Morrow, ASUM vice president and the loser of a bet, surrenders her slacks to MSU student president Rod Hoxey. "Miss Morrow was well-prepared, however, as she had a pair of striped shorts underneath," the Missoulian notes.

Montana State 14, Montana 8

Game No. 67 - 1967, Bozeman.

Either team can earn at least a share of the Big Sky title on a chilly, windless day at Gatton Field. More than 10,000 fans are screaming as the fourth quarter opens. Montana, trailing 14-8, faces fourth-and-goal on the Bobcat 1.

Griz quarterback Ed Steiner of Missoula fakes to fullback Bryan Magnuson of Minnesota and keeps it. Bobcats Earl Hanson and Wayne Pitzer pile Steiner up short of the goal and Montana State takes over.

The Cats hold on to claim their fifth straight Brawl of the Wild, all under Jim Sweeney. First-year UM coach Jack Swarthout says he called the play.

“Either it was a poor call or good defense by the Bobcats,” says Swarthout.

Senior Don Hass, MSU’s “Iron Tumbleweed,” runs 42 times for 209 yards. Total yards are almost even: Cats 256, Griz 254.

Hass and quarterback Dennis Erickson score for the Bobcats in the first half. Steiner hooks up three straight times with halfback Rick Strauss of Polson – for 38 yards, for an 8-yard touchdown, and for a two-point conversion.

All-America linebacker Bob Beers of Oregon is in on 27 tackles for the Griz.

Montana State 29, Montana 24

Game No. 68 – 1968, Missoula.

Paul Schafer leaps into the end zone from a yard out with 12 seconds left for the winning touchdown in one of the wildest Brawls of the Wild. It caps a 20-point Bobcat outburst in the final nine minutes.

Schafer carries 58 times, the last six at the end of the winning 67-yard drive.

The Grizzlies appear to have the drive stopped at the MSU 32, but a facemask penalty gives the Cats new life on the 17.

Kalispell brothers Doug and Ron Bain catch touchdown passes in the fourth quarter for opposing teams. Doug’s 25-yarder puts Montana up 17-9. Ron’s 14-yarder for Montana State shrinks the Griz lead to 24-22 with five minutes left.

After Schafer’s touchdown, the Grizzlies insert speedy Ron Baines of Tacoma at quarterback. He gains 15 and a penalty moves the Griz across midfield. As time runs out, Baines zig-zags 37 yards to the Bobcat 12 before he’s dragged down.

Bobcat QB Dennis Erickson is the difference. “Erickson killed us,” UM’s Jack Swarthout says.

Montana 7, Montana State 6

Game No. 69 – 1969, Bozeman.

A third straight down-to-the-wire Brawl of the Wild finally ends in the Grizzlies’ favor. A 42-yard field goal attempt by Bobcat sidewinder Frank Kalfoss with 25 seconds left strays to the right, spurring UM’s first football league championship celebration ever. On a soggy Nov. 1, Montana claims the Big Sky title and breaks the Bobcats’ six-year streak.

Kalfoss, MSU’s Norwegian successor to Jan Stenerud, nails field goals of 39 and 42 yards in the first half. Montana’s touchdown comes between them, ignited by quarterback Ray Brum of Honolulu.

“Brum dropped back, broke loose from one Bobcat tackler, nearly slipped to ground, then literally flung the ball downfield to (Arnie) Blancas, running step-for-step with MSU defensive back Don Duntsch,” reports Missoulian sports editor Bill Schwanke. “Blancas caught the well-placed pass, outmaneuvered Duntsch at the 10 and scored the only touchdown.”

Dan Worrell of Great Falls boots the winning extra point.

On third-and-goal at the 2 early in the fourth quarter, Bobcat fullback Gary Hughes fumbles out of the end zone. The ball goes to Montana.

Montana 35, Montana State 0

Game No. 70 – 1970, Missoula.

The Grizzlies win their 19th straight

regular-season game under Jack Swarthout after lumbering to 7-0 halftime lead.

Tom Parac’s Bobcats regularly put 11 men on the line to stop the Grizzly option, but they’re outmanned and worn down in the second half. Les Kent of Honolulu, Tom McMahon of California, Steve Caputo of Seattle and reserve quarterback Elroy Chong score second-half touchdowns for the Griz. The Grizzlies lose leading rusher Arnie Blancas to injured ribs in the first quarter.

Montana is en route to a second straight 10-0 regular season under Swarthout, though it’ll end with another loss in the Camellia Bowl.

MSU’s biggest threat comes in the fourth quarter when Monte Boston of Missoula blocks a Grizzly punt at the Montana 19. But the Cats, who gain just four first downs all day, go nowhere from there.

Montana 30, Montana State 0

Game No. 71 – 1971, Bozeman.

The Grizzlies score 27 points in the second half and post their second straight shutout in the Brawl of the Wild.

It’s a crisp 40-degree day for the last Griz-Cat game at Gatten Field, home of the Bobcats since 1930. Next year they’ll move into Reno H. Sales Stadium at the south end of campus.

Senior Steve Caputo of Seattle becomes the first 1,000-yard rusher in UM history, and he’s one of three Grizzlies over the 100-yard mark this afternoon. The visitors finish with 420 rushing yards. Caputo receives the game ball in a raucous locker room afterward.

In a surprise, Bobcat coach Sonny Holland starts Zoonie McLean of Plentynwood at quarterback. Larry Eyer of Missoula Hellgate takes over in the second half. Grizzly cornerback Robin Peters of Ohio nabs his seventh interception as the first half ends.

Bobcat safety Monte Boston of Missoula Hellgate intercepts a Gary Berding pass in the end zone.

Kalispell’s Bruce Robinson recovers a Grizzly fumble for the Cats in the second half.

Montana State 21, Montana 3

Game No. 72 – 1972, Missoula.

“The Cats won’t be back until they whip the Grizzlies,” MSU coach Sonny Holland growls before the game.

In front of 12,400 at Dornblaser Field, the Cats do just that.

Sam McCullum catches touchdown passes of 50 and 46 yards from Plentynwood’s Zoonie McLean. McCullum, a junior from Kalispell who’ll play in the NFL for the Vikings and Seahawks, breaks an MSU record for TD receptions in a season. Denton’s Wayne Edwards scores the final Bobcat touchdown in the fourth quarter.

Bob Turnquist of Billings hits a 42-yard field goal late in the first half for UM’s only points.

There are turnovers a-plenty. In the first quarter alone, Grizzly linebacker Terry Pugh of Kalispell forces McLean to fumble; Bobcat cornerback Mike Davis intercepts a pass in the end zone by freshman Van Troxel of Moscow, ID, and Pugh pilfers a McLean pass.

At the end of the half, UM safety Mick Dennehy of Butte grabs his ninth interception.

It’s 14-3 late in the third period when Grizzly linebacker Ron Rosenberg of Whitefish blocks a punt and chases it 15 yards before falling on it at the Bobcat 22.

But the Griz can’t capitalize, and MSU dominates after that.

Montana State 33, Montana 7

Game No. 73 – 1973, Bozeman.

The Bobcats score 20 points in the final quarter to salt away their second of six straight Cat-Griz victories.

Sophomore Mike Holder of Eureka replaces injured Bobcat quarterback Mike Dunbar of Bozeman in the first quarter and sets a school record for rushing by a QB with 144 yards. MSU scores on its first play when Dunbar, from Bozeman, hooks up with 204-pound Don Bagley of Illinois on a 76-yard pass play. Butte sophomore Pat Bolton kicks two field goals and three extra points to break Jan Stenerud’s school record for points in season by a kicker.

The Grizzlies tie it 7-7 at halftime on a pass from Shelby’s Rock Svennungsen to freshman Del Spear of Cheney, WA. It’s 13-7 in the third quarter when Griz linebacker Ron Rosenberg of Whitefish catches a fumble in midair and returns it to the Bobcat 44. UM’s on the 15 when Swarthout inserts quarterback Van Troxel of Moscow, ID. Troxel is thrown for an 8-yard loss, and Svennungsen is intercepted on the next play.

UM gets it right back on a Holder fumble, but a 46-yard field goal attempt by Bob Turnquist of Billings misses. A 72-yard interception return by Randy Hickel of Seattle breaks the Grizzlies’ backs.

Montana State 43, Montana 29

Game No. 74 – 1974, Missoula.

Sonny Holland’s Bobcats are relentless, scoring their most points ever in a Brawl of the Wild.

“Those mean old Bobcats blew into town and blew the Tips right out of Dornblaser (and pretty much out of the Big Sky race),” writes the Missoulian’s Don Bloom.

The tone is set when Steve Kracher of Columbia Falls and Bryan Flaig of Missoula Sentinel score for the Cats in the first quarter. Flaig on a 38-yard pass from Mike Dunbar of Bozeman. Kracher has 163 of the Bobcats’ 387 rushing yards. The Cats dominate the yardage battle 471-287.

More than a quarter of UM’s total yardage comes in the first quarter on a 75-yard pass play from Rock Svennungsen of Shelby to Del Spear of Cheney, WA. MSU junior Pat Bolton of Butte, who kicks five field goals and 12 extra points in four Cat-Griz games, has three and four this day.

Griz speedster Greg Anderson of Blue Island, Ill., returns a punt 72 yards and the second-half kickoff 95 yards for touchdowns. Svennungsen’s leap from a yard out and a two-point conversion pull UM within 37-29 with more than 12 minutes left.

But Mike Holder of Eureka caps a 72-yard drive by hitting John McCaffrey for a 12-yard Bobcat touchdown. Randy Hickel of Seattle, who returned an interception 72 yards late in the 1973 Brawl, picks off Svennungsen after the Griz reach the Cat 6 with 1:40 to go.

Montana State 20, Montana 3

Game No. 75 – 1975, Bozeman.

The Brawl of the Wild’s 75th anniversary becomes the Steve Kracher show.

Montana State’s star tailback from Columbia Falls gains 165 yards on 26 carries after puncturing the Griz for 163 yards the year before.

“It’s the biggest thing in my career, beating them,” Kracher says. “We’ve beaten them all four years I’ve been here and that means a lot.”

With 10 minutes to go, Kracher takes a pitch from Eureka’s Mike Holder, gets a block from receiver Jerry Reisig of Billings, and races untouched 30 yards down the left sideline.

Bruce Carlson of Great Falls scores UM’s lone points on a 29-yard field goal in the second quarter.

Holder throws for two first-half touchdowns. Montana’s Greg Harris, from Kalispell, smotherers Pat Bolton’s PAT kick after the second one to keep it 13-3 Cats at halftime. Three Griz passers complete just four aeriels. The Bobcat defense is anchored by Brad Daws of Bozeman and Les Leininger of Westby.

Bobcat coach Sonny Holland, 3-0 against the Griz as a player, is 4-1 as head coach.

Montana State 21, Montana 12

Game No. 76 – 1976, Missoula.

One day before Halloween, the Bobcats get a scare but continue on their path to the Division II championship.

Grizzly mistakes in front of 12,500 at Dornblaser Field let the Cats out of the bag for their fifth straight win over UM. The Bobcats earn just two first downs before halftime, and the top rushing team in the nation is outgained 206-64. But Montana leads just 6-0.

“We just weren’t winning on the front lines in the first half,” says Cat coach Sonny Holland.

Holland reinserts sophomore quarterback Paul Dennehy of Butte, who sat out most of the first half.

After Tom Powell recovers a Grizzly fumble at the UM 43, Dennehy hits Bryan Flaig of Missoula Sentinel for the Bobcats’ first touchdown from 18 yards out. Jeff Muri of Miles City nails his first of three extra points to give the Cats the lead.

A facemask penalty revives MSU’s next drive, and Dennehy catapults over from 12 yards out. He scores the Cats’ third touchdown of the third quarter after Les Leininger of Westby hits the arm of Griz quarterback Mike Roban and Tim Nixon intercepts. Dennehy leaps over a block by right guard Ken Verlanic of Anaconda to make it 21-6.

First-year Grizzly coach Gene Carlson plays four future pros: Doug Betters and Greg Anderson on defense, Terry Falcon and freshman Guy Bingham on the offensive line.

Montana State 24, Montana 19

Game No. 77 – 1977, Bozeman.

All points but 10 are scored in the last quarter to give a plodding game a wild finish.

“Over 15,000 people, the most ever to witness an athletic event in the state, were awakened from a semicomatose after Delmar Jones scored his second touchdown on a 21-yard run with 14:37 left to give MSU a 17-0 lead,” writes the Missoulian’s Vince Devlin.

But then the Grizzlies rally: Grizzly quarterback Tim Kerr of Missoula Sentinel tosses touchdowns to Vern Kelly of Los Angeles and tight end Allen Green of Anaconda in the final 13 minutes. Halfback Monty Bullerdick of California hits Randy Ogden of Michigan for another score on an option pass.

Kerr finishes 19 of 31 passing for 291 yards. Ron Muri of Miles City intercepts him to set up the Cats’ clinching score, on a short run by quarterback Paul Dennehy of Butte Central.

Jones, from Helena High, gains 187 of MSU’s 326 rushing yards. The Cats don’t complete a pass. Bullerdick runs 31 times for 138 yards for UM.

The Bobcats win their sixth straight over Montana, but they fell out of the Big Sky race last week by losing to ID.

They have a hard time celebrating. “Did you guys hear any shouting in here?” Holland asks reporters in the locker room. “That’s why I had to ask you to leave for a few minutes. I had to talk them into being happy.”

Montana 24, Montana State 8

Game No. 78 – 1978, Missoula.

Montana hasn’t won a home game all season and hasn’t defeated the Bobcats in six years.

But before a record crowd of 13,044 at Dornblaser Field, the Grizzlies score in every quarter and upset the fourth-ranked team in the new Division I-AA.

Coach Gene Carlson turns loose converted quarterback Rocky Klever of Anchorage in the “shotgun flex.” Klever rambles for 111 yards and throws a touchdown pass to Vern Kelly of Los Angeles early in the game.

Monte Bullerdick of California scores in the second quarter and Tim Kerr of Missoula Sentinel hits Jim Hard of California for six in the third. Mexican-born Raul Allegre, a freshman, boots his 10th field goal in 11 tries in the fourth quarter.

Trailing 14-0 at the end of the first half, MSU forsakes a field goal and goes for it from the 7. A run by Delmar Jones of Helena gains nothing.

“It was a bad call on my part,” says coach Sonny Lubick, who loses in his first Cat-Griz game as head coach. “That’s not being very smart.”

Scott Hoard of Great Falls tallies the lone MSU touchdown in the third period.

Tackle Arnie Rigoni of Chicago and linebacker Kent Clausen of Aberdeen, S.D., spark the Griz defense.

Montana State 38, Montana 21

Game No. 79 – 1979, Bozeman.

The Bobcats return to the Big Sky throne before yet another record crowd (15,352) at Reno H. Sales Stadium.

Mike Doerfler from, of all places, Missoula, rambles for three touchdowns and 167 yards to cap MSU’s rebound from a 1-3 start.

Montana’s Raul Allegre of Mexico has a chance to tie it at 17 in the third quarter, but his 31-yard field goal attempt is wide left. Two plays later Doerfler, a Missoula Sentinel graduate, sweeps 74 yards for a touchdown.

In the fourth quarter MSU’s Stu Dodds of Spokane punts to the Grizzly 1, then recovers a fumble on the 10 to set up a touchdown. Next time down Dodds intercepts a pass by Bob Boyes of Sacramento and returns it to the Montana 24. The Cats go on to score their final touchdown.

Montana State 24, Montana 7

Game No. 80 – 1980, Missoula.

Game 80 goes badly for new UM coach Larry Donovan’s “Team of the 80s.”

Twice the Bobcats go for it on fourth-and-1 from the Grizzly 30. Twice sophomore tailback Tony Boddie carries over the right side for a touchdown. Boddie, from Bremerton, WA, ends Halloween afternoon with 134 yards rushing.

Boddie’s second TD puts the Cats up 17-0 in the third quarter. Griz freshman Brad Dantic of Laurel, who had his jaw re-broken earlier, takes a handoff from quarterback Bart Andrus of California on an end-around. Andrus throws a block and Dantic races to a 57-yard touchdown.

UM’s comeback is stemmed when the Bobcats stop Wayne Harper of Livingston on fourth down. Two plays later, sophomore Britt Freeman snags a pass from Barry Sullivan of Butte High and goes 51 yards for the clinching Bobcat score.



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Montana 27, Montana State 17
Game No. 81 – 1981, Bozeman.

Two minutes into the first Halloween Brawl of the Wild since 1913, a chorus of “Poor Grizzlies” rolls across Reno H. Sales Stadium. UM’s Mickey Sutton has slipped in the mud and fumbled the opening kickoff, and the Bobcats are up 7-0 after Tony Boddie’s 30-yard run.

But quarterback Alan Powell of Lewistown, replacing sore-winged Marty Mornhinweg, leads Larry Donovan’s Griz back to a 20-10 halftime lead as fullback Mike Hagen of Auburn, WA, scores three times. Powell goes to tight end Brian Salonen of Great Falls High, a future Dallas Cowboy, to orchestrate one scoring drive. Rocky Klever of Anchorage, a future New York Jet, is the workhorse on another.

Sutton, who’ll play for the NFL Rams and Bills, makes amends with a 46-yard punt return to the Bobcat 13.

Bobcat quarterback Barry Sullivan of Butte, who joins Boddie and Klever as a 100-yard rusher, hits Ron Torchia of Great Falls High to bring the Bobcats within 20-17 in the third quarter.

Griz nose guard David Paoli of Great Falls Russell forces a crucial fumble by Boddie and UM scores 17 seconds from the end.

Montana 45, Montana State 14
Game No. 82 – 1982, Missoula.

It’s supposed to be a tossup, but the Grizzlies don’t care.

A record crowd of 13,598 at Dornblaser Field watches one of the more stunning routs in Brawl of the Wild history.

On the first series, Griz linebacker Curt McElroy of Butte High stuffs MSU’s Junior Fulp for a loss on fourth-and-1 from UM’s 6.

UM quarterback Marty Mornhinweg of San Jose completes his first seven passes and hits running back Greg Iseman of Kansas on a screen for a 24-yard touchdown.

Mornhinweg throws for three more scores before leaving with a shoulder injury in the third period. He and replacement Alan Powell of Lewistown engineer an offense that amasses 527 yards, 29 first downs and six touchdowns. UM’s Dave Glenn of Elma, WA, catches eight passes, one for a TD. Tight end Brian Salonen of Great Falls High, en route to an NFL career with the Cowboys, snags seven aerials.

Bobcat touchdowns come from Si Timberman of Butte and Dale Halgren of Charlo.

Montana State 28, Montana 8
Game No. 83 – 1983, Bozeman.

Another shocker hits the Brawl of the Wild. The Bobcats, 0-8 going in, dominate a Grizzly team with playoff aspirations.

It’s a balmy Oct. 29, and another record crowd of 15,197 watches in Sales Stadium.

The Cats score once on a fake field goal and once on a blocked punt. They collect a safety forced by Mark Fellows of Choteau and three field goals by Kansas transfer Mark Carter.

The Grizzlies get some spectacular catches from Brian Salonen of Great Falls High but little else.

Bobcat cornerback Derrick Abell of California halts UM’s opening drive with an interception.

In the second quarter, Tex Sikora of Billings Senior and Conrad’s Clete Linebarger make a key fourth down stop on UM’s Derrick Williams of Los Angeles.

Later, freshman Tyler Winter of Wisconsin recovers a blocked punt in the end zone for

a Bobcat TD.

Johnny Coppedge of Oregon, UM’s third quarterback, hits Salonen for the lone Griz touchdown and Missoula Sentinel’s Bob McCauley for the two-point conversion in the fourth quarter. Bobcat coach Dave Arnold lights up a cigar – the first he’s smoked since his daughter was born eight years before.

“I got sick then,” he says. “I’ll probably get sick this time too. But I don’t really care.”

Montana State 34, Montana 24
Game No. 84 – 1984, Missoula.

The Bobcats, whose only win in 1983 was over the Grizzlies, are five weeks away from claiming the Division I-AA championship. But they’re down 24-12 at halftime on muddy Dornblaser Field.

Then, a defense led by Choteau’s Mark Fellows shuts out Montana while halfback David Pandt of Michigan rushes for 118 of his 140 yards. Deer Lodge tight end Joe Bignell makes seven of his school-record 13 receptions after halftime and scores from a yard out on a play the Bobcats call “Big Special.”

Kelly Bradley of Minnesota flings touchdown tosses to Tom White of Riverton, Wyo., and Tom Mahlum of Missoula Sentinel.

Marty Mornhinweg, in his last home game for the Griz, passes for 353 yards and touchdowns to Bob McCauley of Missoula Sentinel and Kelly Richardson of Oregon. McCauley also tallies on a double reverse.

But Mornhinweg, playing on two sore legs, is pounded by the likes of Fellows, who has three sacks and sets up a TD with an interception.

Montana State 41, Montana 18
Game No. 85 – 1985, Bozeman.

The Bobcats unleash a heretofore punchless running attack behind bruising fullback Jesse Jones of Tacoma, who gains 136 yards. Five Cats score touchdowns and Swedish-born Anders Larsson of Great Falls Russell kicks two field goals and five extra points.

Hellgate’s Bob Byrne becomes the second Missoula product in two years to score a touchdown against UM. Tom Mahlum of Sentinel did it in 1984.

The Grizzlies’ own option game is grounded by the likes of linebacker Kirk Timmer of Boulder and safety Clete Linebarger of Conrad. Freshman Shanon Mornhinweg of San Jose plays quarterback for UM in the second half and completes 15 passes for 211 yards. But the Griz score just once, on a short run by LeRoy Foster of Chicago. Losing a third straight Brawl is another blow to UM coach Larry Donovan, who’s fired at the end of the season.

The decisive victory marks the end of MSU’s golden era in the Griz-Cat series. The Bobcats have claimed 22 of the last 30, but they won’t beat the Grizzlies again in the 20th century.

Montana 59, Montana State 28
Game No. 86 – 1986, Missoula.

Montana has a new coach, Don Read; a new stadium, Washington-Grizzly, and the start of a win streak over the Bobcats.

Behind record-breaking quarterback Brent Pease of Mountain Home, ID, the Grizzlies go up 17-0 after one quarter, 31-0 at the half and 45-7 after three quarters. Pease runs 1 yard for a touchdown to cap UM’s first drive.

Pease later throws to Mike Rice of Twin Falls, ID, and Great Falls High product Brad Salonen for scores.

Also in on the Grizzly touchdown parade: Kraig Paulson of Plentywood, Mike Ehlers of Wilsonville, Ore.; John Huestis of Battle Ground, WA; and reserve QB Don Douglas of Butte.

Linebacker Alex Hunter of Vancouver, WA, returns a Bobcat onside kick for a score.

Among UM leaders on defense: linemen Foster, Jason Ray of Missoula Big Sky and Rick Sullivan of Whitefish, and linebacker David Reeves of Sedro Wooley, WA

MSU quarterback Shaun Shahan of Billings West replaces Kelly Bradley and launches a last-quarter bombardment that includes TD passes of 82 yards to Pat Bergman of Miles City and 38 yards to Kelly Davis of Butte.

Montana 55, Montana State 7
Game No. 87 – 1987, Bozeman.

Ninety years after their first win over Montana State, the Grizzlies post one of the most lopsided.

Four punt blocks, a Division I-AA record, lead to three touchdowns and a field goal for UM. “Pooor Bobcats” chants are audible with 13:05 left in the first half after the Griz go up 21-0.

A record crowd of 17,027 fills Sales Stadium. Jason Ray of Missoula Big Sky blocks two punts. Big Timber’s Tim Hauck and Quinton Richardson of Oakland, CA, block one apiece. Richardson recovers his own block for the final touchdown.

Griz quarterback Scott Werbelow comes out firing, hitting Matt Clark of Missoula Hellgate for 43 yards and Brad Salonen of Great Falls High for the first touchdown. Nine other Grizzlies catch passes.

Jody Farmer of Libby scores on a pass and a run, and John Huestis of Battle Ground, WA, tallies twice on runs.

MSU, under new coach Earle Solomonson, crosses the 50 once in the first half. Dutton’s Nate Odden promptly intercepts.

Quarterback John Tetrault’s 41-yard scoring run in the third quarter marks the only time the Cats penetrate the UM 40.

Montana 17, Montana State 3
Game No. 88 – 1988, Missoula.

The Hellgate winds of November are howling, and the overflow crowd of 15,142 in Washington-Grizzly Stadium has little to get up about until the second half.

Griz strong safety Tim Hauck of Big Timber blocks his fourth punt of the season. Cornerback Dwayne Hans of Pasco, WA, who blocked a field goal earlier, picks it up and runs 23 yards to put Montana ahead 10-3.

Libby’s Jody Farmer puts it away with a 16-yard touchdown run in the fourth quarter after three big plays by John Huestis of Battle Ground, WA Griz defensive ends J.C. Campbell and Dan Edwards, both from western Washington, combine for three sacks and 20 tackles.

MSU’s Houston Veer, implemented by Earle Solomonson, has topped 300 yards twice this season. Today it garners 81, and one early field goal by Anders Larsson of Great Falls Russell. UM’s Kirk Duce of Missoula Hellgate answers with a three-pointer in the second period.

Bobcat noseguard Jon Wanago of Great Falls High and linebackers Jon Skelton of Minnesota and Mark D’Agostino of Bozeman match the Griz hit for hit.

Sore-thumbed quarterback Grady Bennett of Kalispell, who transferred to UM from MSU, has an off day passing but has some big runs.

Montana 17, Montana State 2
Game No. 89 – 1989, Bozeman.

Weather hasn’t played much of a role in many of the first 88 Griz-Cat games, but it does today.

There’s thunder and lightning before kickoff. Rain and hail mix with sunshine during the game. But most telling are 40-mph winds buffeting Sales Stadium.

Grizzly coach Don Read says it’s the worst environment for a football game he’s seen in 20 years of coaching.

The Bobcats enter the last period leading 2-0 after a UM punt snap gets caught in the jet stream and sails out of the Grizzly end zone.

UM’s defense turns the tide. Quarterback Grady Bennett of Kalispell scores the go-ahead touchdown after a 32-yard interception return by safety Galen Lawton of California.

Linebacker Bryan Tripp of Missoula Loyola forces a fumble and end Kirk Murphy of Polson recovers to set up a 24-yard field goal by Kirk Duce of Missoula Hellgate. Linebacker Mike McGowan of Seattle returns another interception 24 yards for the final score.

Montana State, the Big Sky’s top rushing team, has just a 118-104 edge on the ground. Montana gains only 88 yards through the air, least in the 10-year Read era.

“I was never comfortable,” grimaces Read afterward. “I ate a box of Tums, maybe two boxes.”

Montana 35, Montana State 18
Game No. 90 – 1990, Missoula.

It’s back to nice weather (sunshine, low 50s) and offense after windy Griz-Cat games the past two years.

Senior quarterback Grady Bennett of Kalispell sets a UM record for total offense with 476 yards as Don Read’s Griz extend their series streak to five.

Montana’s Shannon Cabunoc of Honolulu and Mike Trevathan of California catch seven passes and one touchdown each.

Earle Solomonson’s new passing game at MSU takes a blow when Joe Volek of California is hurt. But John Tetrault of Minnesota connects with Choteau’s Rob Tesch for 49 yards to the Grizzly 1. Si Ryan of Billings West scores the first of two straight MSU touchdowns that tie it at 18 with 19 seconds left in the half.

But UM drives quickly for a 40-yard field goal by Kirk Duce of Missoula Hellgate as time expires.

The Griz take over after halftime. An interception by safety Sean Dorris of Coeur d’Alene, ID, is followed by Bennett’s 20-yard scoring strike to Trevathan. Kevin Morris of California returns an interception 44 yards for Montana’s final TD.

Before kickoff, former All-Pro tight end Russ Francis of Stevensville parachutes bareheaded out of the sky. He lands out of bounds, his chute cords settling over retired UM team doctor Robert Curry.

Montana 16, Montana State 9
Game No. 91 – 1991, Bozeman.

Dropped passes abound as both offenses freeze up in single-digit temperatures. But at least the wind doesn’t blow through Sales Stadium.

The Grizzlies win for the sixth straight time under Don Read.

The Griz take a 10-0 lead on their first two possessions. Chuck Mason of Bigfork blocks a Bobcat extra point at the end of the first half that would have tied it 10-10.

Tony Rice of North Bend, Ore., plunges for the final points in the second half to pad a 10-9

Grizzly lead.

Griz linebacker Kurt Schilling of Shelby picks off a Mark Fisher pass on the Grizzly 6 late in the third quarter.

With fourth-and-8 from their own 38 and five minutes to go, the Bobcats punt. They never touch the ball again, as UM quarterback Brad Lebo completes third-down passes to Billy Cockhill of Helena Capital and to Marvin Turk of California, who took a helmet to the chin that required seven stitches in the first half.

Montana 29, Montana State 17
Game No. 92 – 1992, Missoula.

Quarterback Brad Lebo of Lewiston, Idaho, completes 13 of his first 14 passes and the Griz are up 22-0 in the first 12 minutes on another sunny Brawl afternoon.

“It made it impossible for us,” says new Bobcat coach Cliff Hysell, who was 11-2 against Montana as a Bobcat player and assistant coach. “This football team is not ready to get in a scoring contest with anybody at this point.”

Lebo winds up 35-of-56 passing for a season-high 410 yards. He throws touchdowns to Shannon Cabunoc of Honolulu and Scott Gurnsey of Tumwater, WA

After Tony Rice’s touchdown makes it 6-0, freshman holder Dave Dickenson takes the PAT snap, sprints right and hits Brent Swenson for a two-point conversion.

Chad Mayer, MSU’s freshman quarterback from Bozeman, engineers two touchdown drives in the fourth quarter. The rally fizzles when another Bobcat frosh, Dallas Williams of Missoula Hellgate, fumbles and Grizzly safety Sean Dorris of Coeur d’Alene intercepts Mayer.

Montana 42, Montana State 30
Game No. 93 – 1993, Bozeman.

Sophomore Dave Dickenson of Great Falls Russell is UM’s new quarterback as the Griz finish off their first unbeaten Big Sky season since 1970.

Dickenson runs for one score and throws for three others, including plays of 64 and 40 yards to Scott Gurnsey. Gurnsey, from Tumwater, WA, has five catches for 173 yards and sets the school single-season record for receiving yards.

It’s 28-3 Montana in the second quarter, but the Cats start clicking behind BYU transfer quarterback Brock Spencer. An 88-yard kickoff return by Sean Hill of Colorado makes it 35-24 in the third quarter. The Grizzlies hold on behind a fourth-down stop by Great Falls High’s Yohanse Manzanarez and the last two of four interceptions. Carl Franks of California gets his second pick of the game. Linebacker Garrett Venters of Richland, WA, bats a pass by Spencer that bounces off the helmet of linebacker Kurt Schilling and into Schilling’s hands.

“It reminded me of a Wild West film, shooting cans in the air,” says Schilling, an ex-Shelby Coyote.

Montana 55, Montana State 20
Game No. 94 – 1994, Missoula.

Unwilling to risk quarterback Dave Dickenson’s gimpy ankle, Grizzly coach Don Read turns to Bert Wilberger.

Wilberger, from Ashland, Ore., lights up a dreary day by throwing for 386 yards and three touchdowns. He runs for two more scores in front of 15,640 fans as the 11th-ranked Griz beat the Cats for the ninth straight time.

UM gains a season-high 613 yards, one more than against Carson-Newman in September.

"It was just a not-so-good team not stepping up to play one of the great teams in the nation," says Bobcat receiver Eric Hopkins of Texas.

Bobcat quarterbacks are intercepted four times for the second straight Brawl of the Wild.

UM's Mike Goicoechea of Stevensville partially blocks a punt and Josh Remington of Kalispell blocks an extra-point kick. Goicoechea also intercepts a pass. Griz receiver Scott Gurnsey catches eight passes for 190 yards and a touchdown, and overhauls teammate Shalon Baker for the UM career receiving record. Gurnsey, from Tumwater, WA, had 173 receiving yards against the Cats in '93. He's caught at least one touchdown pass in each of the last three Brawls of the Wild.

Montana's Damon Boddie of California carries 11 times for 143 yards.

Hopkins is MSU's bright spot with seven catches for 149 yards and a touchdown.

Montana 42, Montana State 33

Game No. 95 - 1995, Bozeman.

The Grizzlies, en route to the I-AA national championship, win their 10th straight Brawl of the Wild.

But they trail 25-20 in the fourth quarter on a warm and windy Nov. 18 in Bozeman.

Senior Dave Dickenson of Great Falls Russell prevails in his duel with MSU freshman quarterback Rob Compson by guiding the Griz to three late touchdowns.

He runs for one, passes 16 yards to Matt Wells of Ashland, Ore., for another, and hits Mike Erhardt of Eugene, Ore., from 27 yards out to make it 42-25.

Compson responds with a 47-yard pass to freshman Marquez Lewis. But UM safety Blaine

McElmurry of Troy snuffs out the Cat candle, intercepting Compson with 3:19 left.

Montana junior Joe Douglass, an Oregon State transfer, makes 13 receptions for 208 yards, none more important than the bullet he catches while sliding through the end zone just before halftime. Andy Larson's extra point cuts the Bobcats' lead to 19-14.

Wells becomes the Grizzlies' all-time leader in pass receptions in his last regular-season game.

Montana 35, Montana State 14

Game No. 96 - 1996, Missoula.

Washington-Grizzly Stadium is stuffed with 19,042 shivering fans who reach a fever pitch as they watch the Grizzlies move to 11-0 for the first time with their 11th straight win over the Bobcats.

Receiver Joe Douglass, a transfer from Oregon State, locks up the I-AA receiving title with 205 yards on 14 catches from sophomore Brian Ah Yat. Douglass caught 13 for 203 in Bozeman last year.

The Grizzlies record nine quarterback sacks — four by tackle Ryan Thompson of Missoula Big Sky.

Montana, trailing 14-7 at halftime, scores four unanswered touchdowns.

UM leads 28-14 with 90 seconds left when Ah Yat throws a 12-yard touchdown to Butte's Josh Paffhausen. Bobcat assistants refuse to shake hands afterward. Head coach Cliff Hysell, when asked about the late score, says, "No comment." Then he adds: "It didn't surprise me a bit. I'll put that in there."

Says first-year UM head coach Mick Dennehy: "I didn't feel comfortable with the lead, period, and for some of their coaches not to walk across

the field is (expletive). It's (same expletive). You might say B.S. in the paper."

Montana 27, Montana State 25

Game No. 97 - 1997, Bozeman.

The be-all and end-all of endings in the Brawl of the Wild occurs in Sales Stadium.

Kris Heppner's winning 37-yard field goal as time expires is only the last heroic or notorious play in the last minutes of the Grizzlies' 12th straight victory over the Cats.

Eric Kinnaman of Nebraska scores what should be the streak-breaker with 22 seconds left on a 3-yard sweep to make it 25-24 Bobcats. But Kinnaman's two-point conversion run comes up inches short.

The Bobcats' Geoff Groshelle pulls the ensuing kickoff out of bounds, a penalty that takes up no time and sets up UM on its own 35.

Grizzly quarterback Brian Ah Yat of Honolulu fires a prayer pass that Justin Olsen of Helena catches on the Bobcat 19 on 46 yards to the Bobcat 19. After a yard loss, Heppner takes the field with four seconds left. Three timeouts are called before he gets his chance.

"I just got down on my knee for about five seconds and thanked God for putting me in this situation," says the Great Falls High graduate. "This is every kicker's dream."

Another ex-Bison, Eric Manzanarez, makes the snap, as he'd made the one for Andy Larson's game-winning field goal in the 1995 I-AA championship game. Raul Pacheco of Honolulu places it for Heppner.

"I can make it 100 out of 100 times if everything like that goes the same way," says Heppner.

Montana 28, Montana State 21

Game No. 98 - 1998, Missoula.

Brian Ah Yat fakes a handoff and throws to his left. Grizzly tight end Dallas Neil catches it on the east side of Washington-Grizzly Stadium and heads south on a tackle-shaking, tightrope-walking romp for the winning touchdown.

The 18-yard play with 5:21 left nudges the Grizzlies past the Bobcats.

Neil, a junior tight end from Great Falls, slips the grip of the Bobcats' leading tackler, Shon Flores of Hawaii.

"It all happened so fast," he says. "I saw the end zone and my eyes got huge."

The Bobcats can't answer. On their final play senior Rob Compson of Great Falls High has to field a shotgun snap off the ground. He throws incomplete to Chip Hobbs of Oklahoma.

"This is tough," says Compson. "The last four years I've seen the season end this way, and I didn't want that to happen to me."

Montana 49, Montana State 3

Game No. 99 - 1999, Bozeman.

After two nip-and-tuckers, this Brawl of the Wild isn't expected to be close — and it's not.

Grizzly quarterback Drew Miller, a BYU transfer, battles wind gusts of up to 30 mph at Sales Stadium to pass for 305 yards. Two of his four touchdowns go to Jimmy Farris of Lewiston, Idaho.

Bobcat quarterbacks Dusty Broderick of Omaha and Kasey Harte of Bozeman throw for 126 yards between them.

UM's Yohance Humphery of Anchorage sets

a school record for rushing in a season (1,277). Jeremy Watkins of Missoula Big Sky goes over 1,000 yards receiving.

MSU's Matthew Peot, on track to break the league punting record, kicks five of eight into the wind and loses the record by less than a yard per punt. The Cats get no deeper than their own 40 in the second half.

It's the third most lopsided Griz win over the Cats. In 1904 they won 79-0; in 1987, 55-7.

Cliff Hysell coaches his final game for the Bobcats and Mick Dennehy his last for the Grizzlies. Within two weeks Dennehy and most of his staff will be at Utah State after a playoff loss to Youngstown State.

Hysell, battling health problems all season, loses his eighth straight to Montana and retires.

"What a way to ride into the sunset," he says. "Life's not the movies, unfortunately."

Montana 28, Montana State 3

Game No. 100 - 2000, Missoula.

A 91-yard TD pass from John Edwards to Jimmy Farris — the longest touchdown pass in the history of the Brawl of the Wild — puts the final touch on a sloppily played game, the 100th edition of the Brawl.

The Cats are winless going in; the Grizzlies are headed to the I-AA playoffs. The Grizzlies score two TDs, one an 11-yard TD from Edwards to Yohance Humphery, the other on a 1-yard Edwards run.

The Cats answer with a Nate Cook field goal from 32 yards out, but the Grizzlies go up 21-3 at halftime with another Humphery TD, this one from 10 yards out.

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Montana 38, Montana State 27*Game No. 101 – 2001, Bozeman.*

The Grizzlies take command in the second half to claim their 16th straight win over the Bobcats.

Montana running back Yohance Humphery scraps for 101 yards and scores twice from 1-yard out in the third quarter, as the Grizzlies break away from a 17-17 halftime tie.

Grizzly senior receiver/holder T.J. Oelkers runs for a 19-yard touchdown on a fake field goal in the second quarter to put Montana ahead 17-14.

“It’s the Super Bowl for us in the state of Montana,” said Grizzly coach Joe Glenn, who moves to 2-0 against the Cats. “We came in with that train of thought.”

The Cats take the opening drive and lead 7-0 on a 3-yard TD run by Ryan Johnson. The Grizzlies answer with a 26-yard TD pass from John Edwards to Etu Molden. Johnson scores again, from 6 yards out to stake the Cats to a 14-7 lead, but then Chris Snyder connects on a 36-yard field goal and Oelkers’ run gives the Griz a 17-14 lead. The Cats tie it on Nate Cook’s 39-yard field goal.

After Humphery’s pair of third-quarter TDs, the Cats regroup and cut the Griz lead to 31-24 when Tyler Thomas hit tight end Aaron Ware for a 3-yard score on fourth-and-goal. Nate Cook cut the gap to 31-27 on a 35-yard field goal with 14:24 to play. But then Griz QB John Edwards, who had sat out the week before with injured ribs, rolls out on a bootleg and waltzes into the end zone from a yard out to put the Griz ahead 38-27.

Montana State 10, Montana 7*Game No. 102 – 2002, Missoula.*

On a bitterly cold and windy day at Washington-Grizzly Stadium, the Cat defense dominates and Griz QB John Edwards suffers through perhaps his worst day in a UM uniform, completing just eight of 32 passes.

Nate Cook connects on a 27-yard field goal that is the only scoring in the first half.

In the third quarter, MSU’s freshman quarterback Travis Lulay hooks up with Junior Adams on a 53-yard TD pass and the Cats lead 10-0.

In the fourth quarter, the Grizzlies come back to life as Tim Bush recovers a fumble from MSU workhorse Ryan Johnson, who leads all rushers with 132 yards. David Gober caps the ensuing Grizzly drive with a 1-yard TD which closes the lead to 10-7 with 13:51 left in the game. But the Grizzlies can’t get any closer than their own 47-yard line for the rest of the game.

Says MSU safety Kane Ioane of Billings: “Words really can’t describe what I’m feeling right now. Just being able to go home now and not have to listen to everybody saying, ‘When are you going to beat the Griz, when are you going to beat the Griz?’ It’s a huge monkey off all our backs.”

Meanwhile, both coaches, who have been trying to downplay The Streak, are guarded in their comments: MSU’s Mike Kramer calls the streak “immaterial,” and UM coach Joe Glenn says: “No archrivalry should get out of hand like that. It makes the whole thing less fun and it becomes very bitter. You can’t even joke about it. You all know what I’m talking about. It’s been almost sickening since I’ve been here.”

Montana State 27, Montana 20*Game No. 103 – 2003, Bozeman.*

Two costly mistakes doom Montana in a game where the Griz dominate almost all of the statistics. Montana State’s Corey Smith returns the opening kickoff 90 yards for a touchdown, and safety Kenneth Qualls intercepts a Craig Ochs

**BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN**

From left, Pat McAfee, Desmond Howard, Rece Davis, David Pollack, Kirk Herbstreit and Lee Corso of ESPN’s College GameDay stand on Dyché Field in Bozeman before the 121st Brawl of the Wild on Nov. 19, 2022.

pass and races 54 yards for a score to give the Cats a 13-10 halftime lead.

The Cats put the game away in the second half with a pair of TD runs, each from 1 yard out: Bruce Molock scores in the third quarter, and QB Travis Lulay, who claims his second win over the Griz, cashes in from 1 yard out in the fourth.

UM closes within 27-20 with a 32-yard Chris Snyder field goal and a 6-yard TD pass from Ochs to Dane Oliver. But a potential game-tying drive ends when Adam Cordeiro and Clive Lowe sacked Ochs on a fourth down with 2:09 to play.

It is the first time the Cats have won a Brawl of the Wild in Bozeman since 1985.

Montana 38, Montana State 22*Game No. 104 – 2004, Missoula.*

The Griz ride two touchdowns each from Lex Hilliard and Jefferson Heidelberger to romp to a 38-22 win, despite 386 passing yards from MSU quarterback Travis Lulay and a Brawl-record 235 receiving yards from the Cats’ Rick Gatewood.

Heidelberger, who has 131 receiving yards of his own, gives the Griz the lead when he collects a 15-yard scoring strike from Craig Ochs. His second score, a 14-yarder, gives the Griz a 31-16 lead in the third quarter and essentially puts the Cats away.

Gatewood catches a 38-yard strike from Lulay off a fake punt to the tie the game at 7-7 with 6:18 left in the first, and ended the scoring with a 2-yard option run with 6:42 remaining. It wasn’t enough because Montana piles up 524 yards of offense, 244 on the ground.

Montana State 16, Montana 6*Game No. 105 – 2005, Bozeman.*

On a muddy track in Bobcat Stadium, MSU freshman Evin Groves ran for 143 yards and a touchdown, and teammate Travis Lulay engineered his third win over the Griz in his four seasons as starting quarterback.

Montana State also got three Jeff Hastings

field goals while earning a share of the Big Sky title, alongside Montana and Eastern.

Lulay had pedestrian passing statistics: 15-for-31, 171 yards with one interception. But he engineered a 90-yard, first-quarter touchdown drive that was all the 22nd-ranked Bobcats needed. They outgained the No. 3 Grizzlies 370-220.

Montana had its opportunities. In the third quarter, the Griz had first-and-goal at the 3 after a 33-yard run by Lex Hilliard, only to come up empty. With 10:27 left, freshman QB Cole Bergquist completed a fourth-down strike to Mike Ferriter for UM’s points.

Hilliard, hampered by a migraine headache, managed 75 yards on 19 carries.

“It’s been a long time in the shadow of a great Grizzly program that they’ve been held to six points,” Bobcat coach Mike Kramer said.

Montana 13, Montana State 7*Game No. 106 – 2006, Missoula.*

Montana quarterback Josh Swogger threw for 231 yards, including a 54-yard touchdown pass to Eric Allen, but the Grizzly defense and two Dan Carpenter field goals were the difference on a cold, sunny afternoon.

What turned out to be MSU coach Mike Kramer’s last “Brawl” was a defensive battle that saw the teams combine for just five third-down conversions.

The Bobcats’ only score came on Aaron Mason’s 5-yard TD run at 5:07 of the second quarter, set up by a 43-yard pass from Jack Rolovich to Josh Lewis. But the visitors were never out of it.

After Allen’s touchdown gave UM a 10-7 lead midway through the third quarter, the Griz twice traded interceptions with the Bobcats. The last pick came from Andre Fuller and gave MSU the ball at Montana’s 40-yard line with 4:40 remaining, but the Bobcats’ last gasp edned on downs at UM’s 25.

“With a couple minutes left to go in the game, we’re standing on the doorstep,” said Mike Kramer, who went 3-4 against the Griz. “It’s us

against them. And it was them. Congratulations.”

Montana 41, Montana State 20*Game No. 107 – 2007, Bozeman.*

Montana’s 67th win in the Griz-Cat series was the first for UM coach Bobby Hauck in Bozeman, and was a landmark day as well for seniors Lex Hilliard, Dan Carpenter and Eric Allen in front of 14,877 fans.

Allen caught the go-ahead touchdown pass against the Cats for a second straight year, a 29-yard reception shortly after UM’s Colt Anderson intercepted a Jack Rolovich pass near midfield. That put the Griz ahead 20-14 at 12:08 of the third quarter.

Allen, who had five catches for 89 yards, caught another TD pass early in the fourth as Montana went up 27-14. Hilliard scored his second and third touchdowns, from 2 and 31 yards, in the final 3:38 to put the game away. Montana withstood 115 rushing yards by MSU’s Demetrius Crawford, who had two TDs, to go 8-0 in Big Sky play for the second straight year and 11-0 in the regular season for the second time in school history.

Carpenter hit two first-quarter field goals to give him a career total of 72; that and his 403 career points set the FCS standard (he still holds the career kicking records at 75 field goals and 407 points).

But the biggest day belonged to Hilliard, who finished with 181 yards and three TDs on a muddy track. That gave the Kalispell product a school-record 49 career rushing touchdowns and his first win at Bobcat Stadium.

“I think he probably had a little extra spring in his step today, being a Montana guy and playing in this game,” noted first-year MSU coach Rob Ash. “He’s a senior, too, I hope. Isn’t he?”

Montana 35, Montana State 3*Game No. 108 – 2008, Missoula.*

The Griz go “old school,” donning copper

jerseys and yellow helmets for the first time since 1995, and use five MSU turnovers and big plays to beat the undermanned Bobcats.

A record crowd of 25,629 sees Drummond product Chase Reynolds run for 115 yards and two touchdowns for the Griz, though the fans go silent when MSU’s Demetrius Crawford tears off an 84-yard run on the Cats’ second snap.

The game turns UM’s way after Crawford is pushed out of bounds at UM’s 3. The Griz mount a goal-line stand, ending with a fourth-down fumble.

The Griz go up 7-0 on Havre flash Marc Mariani’s 75-yard punt return in the first quarter, and lead 14-3 at halftime on a 6-yard run by Reynolds.

Crawford runs for 203 yards for MSU, but it isn’t enough. Cole Bergquist hits Mariani with a 37-yard TD pass ahead of a Reynolds 15-yard run to cap a 98-yard fourth-quarter drive. Libby’s George Mercer delivers the final blow for UM, tumbling into the end zone with a 73-yard interception return in the final minute.

“Everyone just piled up on each other,” UM safety Shann Schillinger, who has eight tackles and an interception, said of the final TD. “It kind of set in then that we won, and it was an unbelievable feeling; something I’ll never forget.”

Montana 33, Montana State 19*Game No. 109 – 2009, Bozeman.*

In a game in which each team scored a safety, Dan Beaudin and Marc Mariani caught two touchdown passes apiece for the Grizzlies, who extended their “Brawl” streak to four and improved to 11-0 for the second time in three seasons.

Beaudin, a senior from Noxon, made nifty catches on a 1-yard pass from Justin Roper and a 14-yard strike from Andrew Selle, who threw for three TDs. The latter made it 33-12. MSU’s Cody Kempt, who also threw for a score, had a 1-yard TD run to cap the scoring with a minute left. Shann Schillinger had six tackles, two passes defended and interception to lead the Griz D.

Mariani’s second TD began a nightmarish third quarter for the Bobcats, who had the wind in their faces and saw UM use short fields to pad a 9-5 halftime lead out to 26-5.

Yet the key play came after Billings West product Joe Schreibeis scored his first collegiate TD, drawing the Bobcats to 26-12 with 12:40 left. The Griz drove 80 yards into the wind to Beaudin’s second TD, but needed a fourth-and-4 pass from Selle to Mariani to keep the drive alive.

Mariani made a dynamite catch; he also had 120 yards on three punt returns, including a 33-yarder that set up Beaudin’s first TD.

“The individual stuff is one thing,” said Mariani. “But this senior class is 4-0 now, and it’s a great feeling. It feels awesome.”

Montana State 21, Montana 16*Game No. 110 – 2010, Missoula.*

The Griz ran into Washington-Grizzly Stadium in new all-black uniforms but couldn’t catch the Bobcats, who scored on their first three possessions and never trailed.

DeNarius McGhee, MSU’s freshman quarterback, threw touchdown passes to Great Falls’ Tanner Bleskin and C.J. Palmer, and Orenzo Davis provided the winning points with a 17-yard TD run.

The Grizzlies stayed in range, answering the Cats’ first two drives with a 59-yard TD burst from Chase Reynolds and a 6-yard scoring run from QB Justin Roper.

But UM was turnover-plagued: Both Reynolds and Gerald Kemp fumbled inside the MSU 5-yard line in the second half. Reynolds’ turnover came after a bad punt snap resulted in an



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MSU safety. The Griz also turned the ball over on downs at MSU's 15 with 1:23 left.

That cinched the Cats' first win over the Griz and first Big Sky title since 2005. Davis ran for 140 yards for MSU.

Reynolds ran for 180 yards for the Griz, who ended up 7-4 and out of the postseason for the first time since 1992.

Montana 36, Montana State 10

Game No. 111 – 2011, Bozeman.

It was set up as a coronation for the newly top-ranked Bobcats, but the No. 7 Griz took command in the second half behind Dan Moore and Peter Nguyen.

Moore rushed for 116 yards, including a 37-yard touchdown to put UM up 29-7 at 5:37 of the third quarter. Nguyen ran for 123, including a 21-yard run to cap the scoring with 9:28 left, and send many of the record crowd of 20,247 at an expanded Bobcat Stadium for the exits.

Griz quarterback Jordan Johnson threw for two touchdowns, one a 2-yard strike to Kavario Middleton on fourth-and-goal with 2:15 left in the first half. That put Montana up 12-0.

MSU drove to a touchdown to start the second half, DeNarius McGee hitting Elvis Akpla from 7 yards. But the Griz answered on their next offensive snap: Johnson found Jabin Sambrano for 79 yards and a TD to make it 19-7.

Montana gained 316 yards of offense in the second half, and rushed for 309 yards against the Big Sky's top run defense.

"I'm very proud and honored to be involved in a game like this, when it comes down to the great state of Montana for the championship," second-year Griz coach Robin Pflugrad said. "It's nice to get on that bus with a win."

Both teams lost at Sam Houston State in the FCS playoffs; the Griz fell 31-28 in the semifinals.

Montana State 16, Montana 7

Game No. 112 – 2012, Missoula.

The second-ranked Bobcats relied on defense, kicker Rory Perez and quarterback DeNarius McGhee to subdue the Griz.

Montana led 7-3 after Peter Nguyen's 47-yard scoring run in the first quarter but didn't score again. Bobcat defensive ends Caleb Schreiber (16 tackles and a sack) and Brad Daly shut down the Griz running game; Montana punted eight times after Nguyen's TD.

A record Washington-Grizzly Stadium of 26,210 saw MSU go in front on McGhee's 15-yard scoring pass to Saco product Krui Siewing at 7:54 of the second quarter.

McGhee threw for 246 yards and ran four times on a clock-killing drive that ended in Perez's third field goal with 2:23 left.

That made it a two-score game and clinched the Grizzlies' first losing season since 1985. The Griz, who missed two field goals, finished 5-6.

"We knew they were big up front and knew they would be a physical team," said Schreiber, who in January became the first Bobcat to win the Buck Buchanan Award for the top defensive player in the FCS. "We just had to weather the storm for a little bit and then let our speed kind of take control."

The Cats improved to 10-1 and finished 11-2 with a loss in the FCS quarterfinals.

Montana 28, Montana State 14

Game No. 113 – 2013, Bozeman.

Once again the Montana football team leaves

its opponent feeling blue at Bobcat Stadium.

Spurred by a determined veteran defense and quarterback Jordan Johnson's dynamic second half, the fifth-ranked Grizzlies double up 13th-ranked Montana State in front of 21,527 fans. In his illustrious seven-year career with the Bobcats, coach Rob Ash has come up empty in all four home games against the Grizzlies.

"I've never lost in Bozeman," said Montana senior linebacker and future Seattle Seahawk Brock Coyle, a Bozeman native who enjoys a stellar day with a game-high 14 tackles and a critical forced fumble.

The Griz defense turns in perhaps its finest performance of the season. Montana State converts on just 4 of 13 third-down attempts and manages just 277 yards with two costly fumbles. Cats Qb DeNarius McGhee, the preseason player of the year in the Big Sky, struggles in completing 17 of 33 passes for 160 yards.

Johnson starts slowly but comes on like gangbusters. After throwing for minus-3 yards in the first quarter, he completes 20 of 32 passes for 253 yards and a TD in the final three periods.

Montana 34, Montana State 7

Game No. 114 – 2014, Missoula.

The pressure cooker of a week begins with Griz coach Mick Delaney announcing he will retire at the end of the season.

On top of that, the 13th-ranked Griz need a victory over their arch-rivals to gain a berth in the FCS playoffs. It was never a contest.

Montana storms to a 17-0 lead in the first quarter and goes into halftime with a 27-0 advantage.

Griz senior quarterback Jordan Johnson completes 22 of 36 passes for 313 yards and three touchdowns to three different receivers. Classmate Jordan Canada adds 119 yards on 27 carries.

"This is unreal — just so many emotions right now running through me," says Delaney. "... Today was probably the most special day of my coaching career because of what these young men and our coaches did. Just total domination from beginning to end."

Montana 54, Montana State 35

Game No. 115 – 2015, Bozeman.

The Grizzlies storm out to a 37-14 halftime lead in the final game of Rob Ash's tenure coaching the Bobcats. The winningest football coach in Montana State history is fired two days later after nine years leading the school.

Montana State hits the scoreboard first on a 46-yard touchdown pass from Dakota Prukop to Beau Sandland, but the Griz then reel off 31 unanswered points. UM quarterback Brady Gustafson has three of his four touchdowns in that stretch.

Gustafson finishes with 353 yards passing and three TD tosses to Jamaal Jones, who becomes UM's career leader in receiving yards (3,021) by the end of the season. Gustafson's fourth goes to Ellis Henderson as the Griz win their third straight game to end the season and earn a playoff berth. The rivalry brawl features 1,040 yards of offense with both teams reaching the 500-yard plateau.

Prukop finishes with four scores as well, three through the air and one on the ground, in his final game in a Bobcat uniform before announcing his intentions to transfer to FBS Oregon a month later.

Montana State 24, Montana 17

Game No. 116 – 2016, Missoula.

Montana has designs on a playoff berth, and the only thing standing in its way are the

three-win Bobcats. But the Grizzlies can't account for freshman quarterback Chris Murray, who rushes for 142 yards and two touchdowns to lead Montana State to an upset victory in front of 26,182 fans at Washington-Grizzly Stadium.

Murray flips into the end zone head over feet on an 8-yard scoring run to tie the game 7-7 with 4:13 remaining in the first quarter, and MSU reels off 24 consecutive points until a Brandon Purdy field goal closes the gap for UM late in the third quarter.

Murray completes just two passes, but the Bobcats rush for 368 yards and 62 attempts. Murray's 26-yard throw to tight end Connor Sullivan on fourth-and-1 with 1:19 left ices the game. It's the first time neither the Bobcats nor the Grizzlies make the FCS playoffs since 1992.

"You don't ever come into Washington-Grizzly and expect to blow guys off the ball," says MSU All-American lineman J.P. Flynn. "That's not how it goes."

Montana State 31, Montana 23

Game No. 117 – 2017, Bozeman.

Montana enters 7-3, has won five of its past six games and is one win away from a potential playoff berth. Montana State comes in at 4-6 on a two-game losing streak and looks to play spoiler. The Cats erase a 3-0 deficit after one quarter, rush for 322 yards and get a late defensive stop to earn the win in front of 19,907 fans at Bobcat Stadium.

The Cats scored three of their four rushing touchdowns in the second quarter, including a 71-yard score by Nick LaSane, to take a 21-10 lead. They built their biggest lead, 31-16, on Chris Murray's rushing touchdown with 6:20 to play. Montana answers 55 seconds later on Gresch Jensen's 32-yard touchdown pass to Keenan Curran.

The Griz forced a three-and-out, lost a fumble, then forced another three-and-out. They started at their own 12-yard line with 2:08 left, advanced to the Montana State 28-yard line before throwing four incomplete passes to turn the ball over with 4 seconds left. It's Bob Stitt's last game coaching Montana.

Montana State 29, Montana 25

Game No. 118 – 2018, Missoula.

The game marked the greatest comeback and most inexplicable finish in the history of the series. Both teams entered at 6-4 with post-season aspirations and both were riding a two-game winning streak. The Cats appeared to lose on an Adam Eastwood rushing touchdown with time running out. But Montana State called time-out before the play started. Montana then tried the same play with a disastrous result. Colstrip's Tucker Yates knocked the ball out of Eastwood's hands and Belgrade's Derek Marks recovered as the Cats held on the goal line.

The Pride of Dillon, Troy Andersen, was the offensive MVP for the Bobcats. He rushed for 107 yards and three touchdowns as his team overcame a 22-0 deficit. Andersen's passing wasn't too shabby either as he completed 15 of 24 attempts for 158 yards.

Montana State 48, Montana 14

Game No. 119 – 2019, Bozeman.

Montana's first offensive play resulted in the same as its last snap from scrimmage the previous season — a lost fumble recovered coincidentally by the same player that recovered it in 2018, Marks.

This time Montana State used it to fuel a

blowout win. MSU came into the game with Andersen sidelined, but it didn't matter as the Cats scored the first 24 points. The Grizzlies cut their deficit to 17 at halftime but couldn't muster any offense in the second half.

The Bobcats, who claimed their fourth straight win in the series, advanced to the national semifinals whole the Grizzlies lost out in the quarterfinals.

Montana 29, Montana State 10

Game No. 120 – 2021, Missoula.

The seventh-ranked Griz snapped a four-game losing streak to the Cats behind strong defense and special teams. Montana's swarming, sure-tackling defense beat blocks on its way to gobbling up nine tackles for loss and four sacks. The Griz forced the Cats to punt nine times in 14 drives, including six three-and-outs. Their streak of consecutive quarters without allowing a touchdown reached 13 before being snapped.

Griz linebacker Pat O'Connell, a Kalispell native, had a game-high 11 tackles. Teammate Jace Lewis tabbed eight tackles and a forced fumble while playing with an effort level UM coach Bobby Hauck called "terrific."

UM true freshman Junior Bergen had a big day against the team he signed with before flipping to UM when MSU coach Choate left for Texas in the spring. Bergen got his first action at punt returner in 2021 and ran back punts for 21, 22 and 31 yards, leading to two field goals. The Billings Senior grad also had UM's lone offensive TD on a 74-yard catch-and-run masterpiece — a scripted play on the second snap of the game against the Cats.

Montana State 55, Montana 21

Game No. 121 – 2022, Bozeman.

Montana State could've let "ESPN College GameDay" rivalry pressure or a host of other factors derail its focus. Instead, the Bobcats put together their most complete game of the season.

MSU quarterback Tommy Mellott, his offensive line and the team's ensemble cast of running backs powered an unstoppable ground attack in a blowout win for the No. 3-ranked Bobcats over No. 13 Montana in front of a stadium-record 22,037 fans. The win gave MSU a share of the Big Sky Conference title, something the Cats hadn't accomplished since 2012.

Mellott made his mark right away, rushing four times for 46 yards on the opening drive, which ended with a 1-yard touchdown run from the sophomore from Butte. That put the electric home crowd and the momentum on MSU's side.

The Griz answered four minutes later with a 30-yard TD pass from Lucas Johnson to Malik Flowers, but the Cats marched right back down the field, once again without attempting a pass. Mellott made it 14-7 on a 12-yard run.

The tide truly turned on the following drive. Less than a month after Weber State committed four safeties on high snaps at Bobcat Stadium, UM long snapper Grayson Pibal did the same, and it wasn't a two-point play this time. Senior linebacker Jory Choate, a Bozeman High graduate and son of previous MSU head coach Jeff "Griz Slayer" Choate, recovered the fumble at the 3:13 mark of the first quarter to put the Cats up 21-7.

The Cats finished with 439 rushing yards, their most ever against UM and sixth-most in program history. They rushed 65 times, attempted 10 passes, tallied 561 total yards and didn't punt.

A day that began with ESPN broadcasting GameDay across the street from Bobcat Stadium ended with one of the biggest Brawl beatdowns

in MSU history (55 are the most points MSU has scored in a Brawl).

Montana 37, Montana State 7

Game No. 122 – 2023, Missoula.

The third-ranked Griz dominated fourth-ranked Montana State from start to finish. They led wire-to-wire in a 37-7 victory that netted them their first Big Sky championship since 2009, doing so in front of an announced stadium-record crowd of 27,178 fans.

UM completed the regular season with a 10-1 record overall and a 7-1 mark in Big Sky play. Hauck improved to 7-5 in the rivalry game and 2-3 in his second stint. Vigen dropped to 1-2 in the series and is 0-2 playing in the Garden City.

UM scored on seven of 12 drives while it rolled up 430 yards of offense, picked up 21 first downs and converted seven of 14 third downs. The Griz forced MSU into four turnovers on downs and an interception in 11 drives, limited the Cats to 280 yards and held them to 1 of 14 on third and fourth downs.

Griz quarterback Clifton McDowell finished 17 of 22 passing for 200 yards and one touchdown, a 20-yard strike to wide receiver Junior Bergen, who had a game-high 91 yards on six catches. Nick Ostmo ran for 85 yards and McDowell added 69 to lead the Griz ground game that racked up 202 yards on 40 totes.

UM held MSU's vaunted rushing attack to 213 yards on 35 carries, well below the Cats' average of 301.4 yards per game, second in the FCS. Mellott piled up 108 yards on 10 carries and running back Julius Davis totaled 107 yards on 14 rushes. MSU was 4-of-16 passing for 67 yards.

Montana State 34, Montana 11

Game No. 123 – 2024, Bozeman.

MSU improved to 12-0 in front of a Bobcat Stadium-record 22,057 fans. It marked Montana State's first undefeated regular season since 1956, when it finished 9-0-1 and won the NAIA title.

It also marked the Cats' first outright conference championship since 1984. They're credited with a solo Big Sky title in 2011, but they initially shared it with UM before the NCAA vacated several UM wins due to extra benefits.

MSU opened Saturday's game with a 14-play, 75-yard drive that quarterback Tommy Mellott capped with a 5-yard touchdown run. UM's Ty Morrison made a 47-yard field goal with 13 minutes, 8 seconds left in the first half to cut the deficit to 7-3 — the first time since 2017 that the winning team has held a lead of less than seven points in the second quarter. That was, however, as close as it would get.

About three minutes after the field goal, Mellott completed a 35-yard TD pass to Rohan Jones on third-and-8 to put MSU ahead 14-3. It was one of six third downs the Cats converted in the game on 12 attempts. They also scored on all four red-zone trips.

UM, meanwhile, went 2 for 12 on third downs and 1 for 1 in the red zone.

Mellott, a senior from Butte, completed 6 of 12 passes for 94 yards and rushed for 50 yards on 10 attempts. The Grizzlies finished with 234 total yards (exactly 117 passing and rushing), more than 200 fewer than they averaged entering the game. They punted on their first three drives of the second half.

Adam Jones, a Missoula Sentinel graduate, finished with a career-best 197 rushing yards on a career-high 25 carries for the hosts. It marked MSU's fourth straight Brawl victory at Bobcat Stadium.



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