

GRIZZLY GAME DAY

Missoulian

DANCING

Griz senior Michael
Wortham balances
football, fatherhood

DAD

SHANNA MADISON, MISSOULIAN

Q&A WITH LB PEYTON WING, PAGE 3 • SPELTZ PICKS THE BIG SKY, PAGE 4 • ROSTERS, PAGE 5

Strength Within

Wellness Throughout



Montana

A Division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company, an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

You're at
THE CENTER
of all we do



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana wide receiver Michael Wortham (6) celebrates a touchdown during the college football game against Sacred Heart on Oct. 18 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula. The fifth-year senior went into his homecoming game at Sacramento State leading the FCS in all-purpose yards per game.

Wortham enjoying eruption after team, position changes

FRANK GOGOLA
406 MT Sports

Michael Wortham took a direct snap, faked a toss to Eli Gillman, sidestepped a defender and waltzed untouched into the end zone before he broke out one of the many dance moves he's displayed this season.

That touchdown sealed Montana's win at Sacramento State in late October as Wortham had a homecoming to remember playing in front of about 50 family members while he continued dancing his way into the hearts of Grizzly fans.

In attendance were his wife, Maria, and daughter, Maleah, who had seen him play every game up to that point in what has been a breakout first year with the Griz for the 23-year-old receiver who balances football and fatherhood.

"It's very important to think like, man, I have a family at the end of the day and the things I do on the field can potentially take care of them later in life, so that's just the biggest thing," he said ahead of Montana's game against Eastern Washington at 1 p.m. Saturday at Washington-Grizzly Stadium.

Wortham's perspective has shifted after the birth of his child, now 18 months old. That he even has a chance to better his family through sports didn't seem possible as a high schooler with no offers aside

from the local junior college.

He was passed over by Sacramento State out of high school, junior college and the transfer portal, he said. He became an All-American quarterback at Sierra College and an All-American all-purpose player at Eastern Washington.

His performance in his return home in a Montana uniform earned him national offensive player of the week honors. He might just play his way into a Big Sky or FCS player of the year award. Being father of the year would be special too.

"More meaningful for sure," he said. "Would love to be father of the year, but that's up to my daughter and my wife."

While wearing the No. 6 jersey like other family members did in the past on

the gridiron, Wortham is striving to be the best father he can be off the field as he has tried to model his parenting style off two important men in his life.

His grandfather, Christopher Gordon, was someone who Wortham recalled putting a smile on his face by cracking jokes. There was also a time to be serious, an emphasis on supporting family and a heavy focus on church.

His father, Michael Wortham Sr., is someone who was there to provide a listening ear when he needed to talk and an inspiring voice when he needed someone to push him in not only sports but in life when times were tough.

See WORTHAM, PAGE 6



Montana linebacker Peyton Wing (32) celebrates after intercepting a pass in the college football game against North Dakota on Sept. 13 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula. The junior leads the team with 5.5 tackles for loss through nine games.

BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Wing wreaking havoc

Junior linebacker thrives in 1st year after transferring

CARSON CASHION
406 MT Sports

The team leader in tackles for loss entering November, linebacker Peyton Wing has quickly made an impact with Montana football.

A transfer from Portland State, the junior has been a week-to-week starter for the Griz linebacker room and has logged at

least three total tackles in all nine of Montana's games this season.

His breakout performance came against North Dakota, when he totaled six tackles, including three solo tackles, and nabbed a third-quarter interception that put Montana in plus territory and led to an immediate touchdown. He hauled in another interception the very next week against Indiana State.

More recently, at Sacramento State, Wing recorded three sacks for a total loss of 23 yards. He logged five total tackles on

the road at Weber State last week, tied for second most of any Griz behind Clay Oven. His 41 total tackles through nine games are third most on the roster while he leads the team in TFLs at 5.5 and QB hurries at three. His 3.5 sacks and two interceptions are both tied for team highs.

Wing sat down with 406 MT Sports ahead of Montana's matchup with Eastern Washington at 1 p.m. Saturday in Washington-Grizzly Stadium. This interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

Q: You logged three sacks against Sacramento State, what was working so well for you?

A: I think we have a great D-line and a great coaching staff to put us all in the right situations. It turns out that last week I was the one getting them, but everyone on our team in the front seven could do it.

Q: Do you feel like your team's pass rush is getting better as the season moves along?

See WING, PAGE 7

HOW WE SEE THE BIG SKY

BILL SPELTZ
406 MT Sports

Eastern Washington considers Montana its football rival. The feeling isn't mutual. The Grizzlies will forever look upon the Montana State Bobcats as their archrival.



**BILL
SPELTZ**

65-10



**CARSON
CASHION**

64-11



**FRANK
GOGOLA**

61-14



**VICTOR
FLORES**

59-16

It's worth noting Eastern Washington's league wins have come against Portland State, Idaho and Weber State. Those teams have a combined league record of 4-11.

Montana should be fine Saturday if it

But the fact the Eagles feel that way and are a competitive group should make for interesting viewing Saturday afternoon when they visit Montana. Eastern would love to be the first to rain on Montana's undefeated parade.

Even back in 2014 when the Eagles were the class of the Big Sky Conference, with Vernon Adams Jr. at quarterback and Cooper Kupp at receiver, they always gave the Grizzlies their undivided attention. Consider, if you will, a quote from Eastern defensive tackle Dylan Zylstra that year.

"I don't know how the Griz feel about it, but I know this is the game we look forward to a lot of the year," he said. "... It means something more for us."

Montana needs to be mindful not to look past the Eags. Don't forget last year when the Grizzlies took a 3-1 record to Eastern and escaped with a 52-49 win over the 1-3 Eagles.

EWU has been what I would call sneaky competitive in Big Sky action. The team took a three-game win streak into last Saturday's home game against Sacramento State before falling flat, 35-13. Losing the way the Eagles did makes you wonder how much their heart is in the latter part of the season. But maybe it was an anomaly.



SHANNA MADISON, MISSOULIAN

Montana wide receivers Brooks Davis (3) and Blake Bohannon (4) celebrate during a college football game against Weber State on Nov. 1 at Stewart Stadium in Ogden, Utah. The Grizzlies will host Eastern Washington on Saturday.

comes to play. Then after facing a sagging Eagles squad, the Griz will travel to face the last-place team in the league in the Portland State Vikings on Nov. 15. It's a pretty favorable schedule heading into the Brawl of the Wild on Nov. 22.

Here's a look at this week's Big Sky Conference games:

Eastern Washington (3-2, 4-5) at No. 2 Montana (5-0, 9-0), 1 p.m. TV: Scripps Sports. Another week, another Big Sky foe with a losing record for the Grizzlies. Of Montana's five league victories, only one has come against a team with a winning record (Sac State is barely over .500 with its 5-4 mark). It's no one's fault — Montana can only play the teams on the schedule. But you have to wonder if facing so many losing teams in a row will hurt UM heading into its home showdown with Montana State in two weeks. My guess is no. Montana will be just fine against the Bobcats because it has such a lethal offense. Plus playing weaker teams affords UM the luxury of resting the first unit late in these early November games. Don't look for the Eagles to be within striking distance in the fourth quarter Saturday. They may put up a good

fight early, but they'll fade by the third quarter. **Speltz:** Grizzlies 35, Eagles 20. **Cashion:** Montana 38, Eastern Washington 21. **Gogola:** Montana 45, Eastern Washington 14. **Flores:** Griz 42, EWU 17. **Weber State (1-4, 3-6) at No. 3 Montana State (5-0, 7-2), 1 p.m. TV: The Spot-MTN.** The Bobcats have been the best defensive team in the Big Sky and it's not even close. They have played a tough schedule and allowed 147 points in nine games (Oregon and South Dakota State were on the slate to start the season). Montana has been the second-best team defensively in the Big Sky, allowing 210 points against softer competition. Montana State will steamroll in this game, which is the final home test of its regular season. Then the Cats have a tough finish to their league slate against UC Davis and at Montana. **Speltz:** Montana State 48, Weber State 12. **Cashion:** Montana State 52, Weber State 10. **Gogola:** Montana State 49, Weber State 9. **Flores:** Cats 44, Weber 7.

Sacramento State (3-2, 5-4) at Portland State (1-4, 1-8), 3 p.m. TV: ESPN+. The Hornets impressed me with their blowout win at Eastern Washington last

week. Mostly because it came after a humbling home loss to Montana. Kudos to the Sac State coaching staff for keeping the team focused. This week the Hornets should win even if they're not real focused. Portland State did finally get a win at Cal Poly last week but has allowed 373 points this season. The only other team in the Big Sky that has allowed more than 300 is Weber State at 335. **Speltz:** Hornets 42, Vikings 7. **Cashion:** Sacramento State 35, Portland State 3. **Gogola:** Sacramento State 35, Portland State 17. **Flores:** Sac 38, PSU 21.

Northern Colorado (1-4, 3-6) at Northern Arizona (2-3, 5-4), 4 p.m. TV: ESPN+. The Lumberjacks dropped out of the rankings after losing at home to Idaho last week, 35-32 in overtime. They're playing for pride now and trying to maintain a winning overall record. That and the fact the Jacks are at home this week should help them get over the hump against a Northern Colorado team that followed up an Oct. 11 win at Idaho with three losses in a row. **Speltz:** Jacks 31, Bears 21. **Cashion:** Northern Arizona 28, Northern Colorado 17. **Gogola:** Northern Arizona 31, Northern Colorado 24. **Flores:** NAU 31, UNC 28.

Cal Poly (1-4, 3-6) at Idaho State (2-3, 3-6), 4 p.m. TV: ESPN+. Watching the Bengals tally 38 points against the mighty Montana Grizzlies in Pocatello last month impressed me. Hearing that Idaho State upset UC Davis in California last week impressed me even more. Look for the Bengals to win again this week against a Mustangs team that has dropped four in a row. **Speltz:** Bengals 38, Mustangs 17. **Cashion:** Cal Poly 31, Idaho State 28. **Gogola:** Idaho State 38, Cal Poly 27. **Flores:** ISU 41, Cal Poly 35. **No. 11 UC Davis (4-1, 6-2) at Idaho (2-3, 4-5), 5 p.m. TV: ESPN+.** This is the toughest Big Sky game to pick this week. The Vandals have won two in a row and knocked off then-ranked Northern Arizona in Flagstaff last week. The Aggies were upset at home by Idaho State last week. Call it a hunch, but I'll go with Davis to regroup and get a win on the road this week. **Speltz:** Aggies 28, Vandals 24. **Cashion:** UC Davis 21, Idaho 20. **Gogola:** Idaho 34, UC Davis 28. **Flores:** Davis 34, Idaho 27.

Bill Speltz is Missoulian sports editor. Contact him at bill.speltz@406mtsports.com or on Twitter @billspeltz

MONTANA GRIZZLIES

No.	Name	Year	Position	Height	Weight	Hometown
0	Monte Gillman	R-Fr.	WR	5-8	162	Dassel, Minn.
0	Terahiti Wolfe	So.	S	5-11	173	Kahalu'u, Hawaii
2	Drew Deck	R-Sr.	WR	5-9	165	Kalispell, Mont.
2	Micah Harper	R-Sr.	S	5-10	194	Chandler, Ariz.
3	Brooks Davis	R-Fr.	WR	6-0	174	Brentwood, Calif.
3	Jeilani Davis	R-Fr.	S	6-0	204	Inglewood, Calif.
4	Blake Bohannon	R-Sr.	WR	6-1	195	Woodstock, Ga.
4	Dane Parker	R-Fr.	S	6-1	175	Puyallup, Wash.
5	Ian Finch	R-Jr.	WR	6-3	209	Missoula, Mont.
5	Kyon Loud	So.	CB	6-2	175	San Mateo, Calif.
6	Prince Ford	R-Sr.	CB	5-11	170	Concord, N.C.
6	Michael Wortham	R-Sr.	WR	5-9	190	North Highlands, Calif.
7	Malae Fonoti	R-Fr.	RB	5-11	207	Laie, Hawaii
7	Kash Goicoechea	R-Fr.	S	6-1	197	Kalispell, Mont.
8	Keali'i Ah Yat	R-So.	QB	6-1	200	Kaneohe, Hawaii
8	Kenzel Lawler	R-Sr.	CB	6-0	190	Corona, Calif.
9	Justus Breston	Sr.	CB	5-11	178	Atlanta, Ga.
9	Jordan Dever	R-So.	WR	6-0	174	Spokane, Wash.
10	Eli Gillman	R-Jr.	RB	6-0	213	Dassel, Minn.
10	TJ Rausch	R-Sr.	S	6-3	208	Missoula, Mont.
11	Cameron Gurnsey	R-So.	WR	6-1	197	Butte, Mont.
11	Elijahwah Tolbert	R-Sr.	LB	6-1	232	Chicago, Ill.
12	Elijah Brady	R-So.	CB	6-1	172	Seattle, Wash.
12	Gage Sliter	R-So.	QB	6-1	193	Kalispell, Mont.
13	Brock Beaner	Fr.	S	6-0	193	Anacortes, Wash.
13	Lekeldrick Bridges	R-Fr.	WR	5-11	170	Cedar Hill, Texas
14	DeAnte Gentry	Fr.	DB	5-11	169	Fort Worth, Texas
14	Korbin Hendrix	R-So.	WR	6-3	192	McKinney, Texas
16	Jake Jensen	R-Sr.	QB	6-1	215	Pleasant Grove, Utah
17	Kade Boyd	R-So.	S	6-0	197	Billings, Mont.
17	Luke Flowers	R-Fr.	QB	6-1	188	Rigby, Idaho
18	Cody Schweikert	R-Fr.	QB	6-3	212	Columbia Falls, Mont.
19	Drew Price	Fr.	QB	5-10	171	Jacksonville, Fla.
20	Sage Salopek	Fr.	CB	6-0	168	Seattle, Wash.
21	Stevie Rocker Jr.	R-Sr.	RB	6-0	210	Tucson, Ariz.
23	Rashid Mansour	Jr.	CB	6-0	163	Fresno, Calif.
24	Diezel Wilkinson	So.	S	6-0	193	Spokane, Wash.
25	Brady Beaner	Fr.	S	6-0	187	Anacortes, Wash.
26	Chase Cook	Fr.	RB	5-11	198	Red Lodge, Mont.
28	Hashim Jones	Fr.	RB	6-0	208	Hartford, Conn.
29	Tanner Huff	R-Sr.	S	6-0	210	Butte, Mont.
30	Kade Cutler	R-Jr.	S	6-0	200	Phillipsburg, Mont.
30	Tommy Running Rabbit	R-Fr.	RB	6-1	195	Browning, Mont.
31	Geno Leonard	R-Sr.	LB	5-11	230	Missoula, Mont.
32	Peyton Wing	Jr.	LB	6-0	229	Sumner, Wash.
33	Taylor Jones	Fr.	LB	6-1	205	Missoula, Mont.
34	Talen Reynolds	R-Fr.	RB	5-11	170	Missoula, Mont.
35	Grady Walker	R-Fr.	LB	6-4	224	Missoula, Mont.
36	Ty Morrison	Sr.	KP	6-3	220	Valencia, Calif.
36	Garrett Speer	R-Fr.	DB	6-0	191	Sherwood, Ore.
37	Clay Owen	R-So.	LB	6-2	216	Billings, Mont.
38	Caleb Moran	So.	LB	6-1	210	Milton, Ga.
39	Fynn Ridgeway	R-So	S	6-1	204	Whitefish, Mont.
40	Colton Lentz	Fr.	LB	6-3	213	Nooksack, Wash.
42	Giovanni Pifferini	Jr.	DL	6-4	230	Placerville, Calif.
43	Grayson Pibal	R-Sr.	LS	6-3	214	Clackamas, Ore.
44	Titus Rohrer	R-Jr.	TE	6-7	240	Bryan, Ohio
45	Caleb Otlewski	R-So.	LB	6-4	241	Melissa, Texas
46	Jo Silver	R-Jr.	KP	6-0	213	Fremont, Ohio
47	Kellen Detrick	R-Sr.	DE	6-3	240	Havre, Mont.
48	Styles Goodman	Fr.	LB	6-2	234	Austin, Texas
49	Isaac Keim	R-Fr.	DL	6-4	265	Kalispell, Mont.
50	Sam Merriman	Fr.	LB	6-0	225	Seattle, Wash.
51	Spencer Tripp	Fr.	DL	5-11	264	Missoula, Mont.
52	Cy Stevenson	R-So.	LB	6-2	220	Libby, Mont.
54	Bridger Salvevold	Fr.	LB	6-2	207	Culbertson, Mont.
55	Austin Buehler	R-So.	OL	6-5	285	Helena, Mont.
56	Hunter Peck	R-Sr.	DE	6-2	252	Windsor, Colo.
57	Jake Mason	R-So.	DL	6-2	250	Ferndale, Wash.
58	Solomon Tuliaupupu	Gr.	LB	6-3	242	Pomona, Calif.
59	Hayden Opitz	R-So.	LB	6-2	230	Helena, Mont.
60	Dillon Botner	Gr.	OL	6-6	280	Whitefish, Mont.
61	Lincoln Hoefer	Fr.	OL	6-6	279	Everson, Wash.
62	Everett Johnson	R-Sr.	OL	6-7	290	Turlock, Calif.
63	Kaiko Kanakaole	Fr.	OL	6-5	335	Kapa'a, Hawaii
64	Matt Hilden	R-Fr.	OL	6-6	309	Santa Rosa, Calif.
65	Dylan Jemtegaard	R-Sr.	OL	6-4	281	Yelm, Wash.
66	Ezra Meyer	Fr.	OL	6-5	290	Missoula, Mont.
68	Torin Jeske	R-Fr.	OL	6-6	271	Bozeman, Mont.
69	Cannon Panfiloff	R-Sr.	OL	6-6	294	Roy, Utah
70	Colin Amick	R-Fr.	OL	6-6	292	Sammamish, Wash.
71	Quinlan Hyatt	Fr.	OL	6-7	285	Spokane, Wash.
72	Cade Klimczak	Gr.	OL	6-1	285	Rockford, Mich.
73	Trevor Steinbach	R-Fr.	OL	6-5	300	Sammamish, Wash.
74	Tate Templeton	R-So.	OL	6-3	290	Missoula, Mont.
75	Jose Balver-Mendoza	R-Fr.	OL	6-5	287	Athens, Ga.
76	Patrick Matan	Gr.	OL	6-4	295	Chevy Chase, Md.
77	Carter Bowen	Jr.	OL	6-7	318	Dawson, Minn.
78	Lucas Freitas	R-So.	OL	6-6	318	Snoqualmie, Wash.
79	Liam Brown	R-Sr.	OL	6-5	316	Beaverton, Ore.
80	Jamell Ward	Fr.	WR	6-4	170	Nacogdoches, Texas
81	Josh Gale	R-Sr.	TE	6-4	243	Gilbert, Ariz.
84	Evan Shafer	Gr.	TE	6-5	270	Connersville, Ind.
85	Bridger Smith	Fr.	WR	5-11	170	Kalispell, Mont.
86	Weston Adams	R-Jr.	WR	5-11	192	Shell, Wyo.
87	Jake Olson	R-Sr.	TE	6-7	260	Butte, Mont.
88	Malaki Davis	Fr.	TE	6-5	230	Tacoma, Wash.
89	Danny Siron	R-Fr.	TE	6-6	255	Missoula, Mont.
90	Jareb Ramos	R-Jr.	DL	6-4	287	Centennial, Colo.
91	Cooper Buffington	Fr.	DL	6-4	252	Winfield, Iowa
92	Zekiel Seumalo	Jr.	DL	6-0	265	Kent, Wash.
93	Cole Muilenburg	R-Fr.	DL	6-5	246	Gig Harbor, Wash.
94	Cole Harpole	Fr.	DL	6-3	221	Gunter, Texas
95	Derek Moreland	Sr.	DL	6-1	262	Fresno, Calif.
96	Logan Knaevelsrud	Fr.	DL	6-4	235	Snoqualmie, Wash.
97	Hayden Schwartz	R-Jr.	DL	6-4	248	Jacksonville, Fla.
98	Matai Mata'afa	R-Sr.	DL	6-1	236	Lahaina, Hawaii
99	Braydon Bailey	R-Jr.	DL	6-2	280	Kona, Hawaii

EASTERN WASHINGTON EAGLES

No.	Name	Year	Position	Height	Weight	Hometown	28	Drew Carter	R-Jr.	S	6-2	195	Lake Stevens, Wash.	64	Brady Ackerman	Fr.	OL	6-4	265	Everson, Wash.
0	McKel Broussard	Gr.	S	6-0	203	Los Angeles, Calif.	29	Dre Greeley	R-Jr.	CB	5-11	191	Monroe, La.	65	Cole McGovern	So.	OL	6-4	300	Moorpark, Calif.
1	Tylin Jackson	R-So.	DE	6-5	260	Atlanta, Ga.	30	Jonathan Landry	R-So.	CB	5-11	174	Vancouver, Wash.	67	Mark Johnson	R-Fr.	OL	6-5	295	Vernon, B.C.
2	Nate Bell	R-So.	QB	5-10	195	Brentwood, Calif.	30	David Cabera	Fr.	WR	5-9	170	Goodyear, Ariz.	68	Gauge Larsen	Fr.	DE	6-3	230	Rigby, Idaho
3	Dajean Wells	R-Sr.	CB	5-11	177	Seattle, Wash.	31	Jaylon Jenkins	R-So.	S	6-1	180	Federal Way, Wash.	69	Dane Gatterman	R-So.	OL	6-2	300	Lynden, Wash.
4	Isaiah Perez	R-Jr.	DT	6-2	272	Othello, Wash.	31	Wilson Medina	Fr.	RB	6-0	200	Burnt Ranch, Calif.	70	Gavin Allen	R-Fr.	OL	6-6	270	Kennewick, Wash.
5	Samarai Anderson	R-So.	LB	6-1	225	Corona, Calif.	32	Bryce Lucas	Sr.	CB	5-10	187	Temecula, Calif.	72	Dylan Conner	R-Jr.	OL	6-5	295	Orange, Calif.
6	Noah Cronquist	R-Sr.	WR	5-10	190	Moorpark, Calif.	33	Josiah Goode	R-Fr.	S	6-2	183	Federal Way, wash.	73	Aidan Corning	R-Sr.	OL	6-6	293	Deming, Wash.
7	Malik Dotson	Gr.	RB	6-0	212	Arlington, Wash.	34	JoJo Maxey-Johnson	R-So.	S	6-2	180	Tacoma, Wash.	74	Nick Savage	Fr.	OL	6-3	265	Issaquah, Wash.
8	Miles Williams	R-Jr.	WR	6-0	195	Happy Valley, Ore.	36	Gavin O'Leary	So.	S	6-1	205	Oakland, Calif.	75	Fletcher Gibson	So.	OL	6-2	290	Kingsports, Tenn.
9	Myles Mayovsky	R-Jr.	LB	6-1	225	Kennewick, Wash.	37	Vincent Macaluso	R-So.	LB	6-2	225	Upland, Calif.	76	Carson Berry	R-Fr.	OL	6-5	304	Newbury Park, Calif.
10	Kaden Rolfsness	Fr.	QB	6-3	205	Puyallup, Wash.	38	Jaden Price	Sr.	DB	6-0	200	Brentwood, Calif.	77	William Buzzard	R-So.	OL	6-3	290	Chehalis, Wash.
10	Trevor Thurman	Gr.	LB	6-3	245	Kenmore, Wash.	39	Isaiah Oudman	Fr.	TE	6-4	230	Lynden Wash.	78	Gabe Rhue	R-So.	OL	6-4	295	Boring, Ore.
11	Ben Voigtlaender	R-Jr.	DE	6-3	245	Spokane, Wash.	40	Amdane Aboudou	Sr.	S	6-2	190	Seattle, Wash.	79	Dylan Scott	Fr.	OL	6-4	270	Arlington, Wash.
11	Anthony Quinones	Fr.	QB	6-0	205	Murrieta, Calif.	41	Kevin Allen III	R-Fr.	RB	5-11	191	San Diego, Calif.	80	Drew Carlson	R-Fr.	WR	6-1	185	Olympia, Wash.
12	Dishawn Misa	R-Jr.	DE	6-2	220	Tacoma, Wash.	41	Tyler Lepolo	R-Jr.	LB	6-0	225	Oakley, Calif.	81	Sean Embree Jr.	Fr.	WR	6-4	176	Santa Margarita, Calif.
12	Jake Schakel	R-Fr.	QB	6-2	205	Puyallup, Wash.	42	Ryan Johnson	Jr.	TE	6-3	240	Camarillo, Calif.	83	Rylin Lang	Fr.	WR	6-0	185	Anacortes, Wash.
13	Bjorn Birmingham	Fr.	S	6-2	190	San Bernardino, Calif.	44	Kayden Stuit	R-Fr.	TE	6-4	245	Lynden, Wash.	85	Will Roberts	Jr.	TE	6-6	230	San Anselmo, Calif.
13	Wesley Garrett	R-Jr.	WR	5-11	185	Mukilteo, Wash.	45	Ryker Oswald	Fr.	RB	5-7	161	Caldwell, Idaho	86	Braden Kuik	R-So.	TE	6-4	242	Lynden, Wash.
14	Riley Rudolfo	Gr.	WR	5-10	183	Sultan, Wash.	45	Shea Robertson	R-Fr.	LB	6-1	220	Coeur d'Alene, Idaho	86	Jeremiah Polk	Fr.	CB	5-11	170	Yuma, Ariz.
15	Jared Taylor	Gr.	QB	6-0	205	North Lakewood, Wash.	46	Landon Ogles	Sr.	P	6-3	240	San Diego, Calif.	87	Kyson Thomas	R-Fr.	WR	5-9	178	Moses Lake, Wash.
16	Soren McKee	R-Jr.	K	6-0	200	Bend, Ore.	47	Messiah Washington	Fr.	S	6-0	180	Los Angeles, Calif.	88	Landon Cooper	R-Sr.	TE/FB	6-3	235	Sutter, Calif.
17	Nolan Ulm	R-Sr.	WR	6-2	200	Kelowna, B.C.	48	Steven Lee Jr.	R-Fr	DB	6-2	175	Lake Stevens, Wash.	89	Asher Bowie	R-Fr.	TE	6-5	230	Rathdrum, Idaho
18	Cole Pruett	R-Jr.	WR	5-7	170	Ka'a'awa, Hawai'i	49	Landen Kahai	Fr.	CB	6-0	175	Tacoma Wash.	90	Justis La'ulu	R-Jr.	DT	6-2	308	Colorado Springs, Colo.
19	Jaxon Branch	R-Fr.	WR	6-3	200	Chandler, Ariz.	50	Tyras Blake	Fr.	LB	6-4	210	Post Falls, Idaho	91	Elijah Riley	Fr.	DE	6-3	230	Corona, Calif.
19	Bryce Smith	Fr.	DB	6-1	180	Bellevue, Wash.	51	Gage Brumfield	Fr.	LB	6-2	210	Chehalis, Wash.	92	Brandon Thomas	R-So.	DE	6-2	258	Spokane Valley, Wash.
20	Tyson Jacobson	R-Jr.	LS	6-0	216	Camas, Wash.	52	Conner Walcker	R-Fr.	LB	6-3	225	Ferndale, Wash.	93	Ethan Williamson	R-So.	DT	6-1	295	Colbert, Wash.
21	Marceese Yettis	R-Jr.	RB	5-8	175	Santa Ana, Calif.	55	Yemoni Howell	R-So.	DE	6-2	230	Seattle, Wash.	94	Jaden Radke	Jr.	DE	6-3	255	Okanogan, Wash.
22	Amir Dendy	R-Jr.	RB	6-1	205	Anderson S.C.	56	Kyle Stahlecker	R-So.	OL	6-6	305	Citrus Heights, Calif.	95	Waylon Romero	R-Fr.	DL	6-3	230	Spokane Valley, Wash.
23	Boden Gardner	R-Fr.	WR	6-2	195	Spokane, Wash.	57	Michael Gradle	Fr.	OL	6-5	270	Moorpark, Calif.	96	Hunter McKee	Fr.	K	6-4	210	Spokane, Wash.
23	Marcus Nixon	Fr.	S	6-1	203	Bellingham, Wash.	58	Cole Abarca	Jr.	OL	6-5	290	Chico, Calif.	97	Luke Faccione	Fr.	P	6-0	195	Puyallup, Wash.
24	Marcus Lloyd	R-Fr.	DB	6-0	170	Bonney Lake, Wash.	59	Clayton McCarrell	R-Fr.	DL	6-3	270	Las Vegas, Nev.	97	Tariq May	R-Jr.	DE	6-4	244	Baltimore, Md.
25	Talon Betts	R-Jr.	RB	5-11	185	Rochester, Wash.	60	Gabriel Rzany	R-So.	OL	6-7	296	Graham, Wash.	98	Jirah Leaupepetele	R-So.	DT	6-3	315	Apple Valley, Calif.
25	Ambrose Marsh	R-Fr.	DB	6-1	181	Renton, Wash.	61	Andrew Langer	Fr.	OL	6-3	275	Carlsbad, Calif.	98	Zander Turner	Fr.	TE	6-4	240	Seattle, Wash.
26	Read Sunn	Gr.	LB	6-2	230	Wasilla, Alaska	62	Jackson Ritchie	Fr.	OL	6-7	315	Billings, Mont.	99	Jheison Saunders	R-Sr.	DL	6-5	285	Peterson, N.J.
27	Isaac Redford	R-So.	CB	5-11	199	Everett, Wash.	63	Jaice Tupea	Fr.	DT	6-2	245	South Jordan, Utah							

WORTHAM

Continued from page 2

“I want to have that presence in my daughter’s life as well, to continue to push her in whatever she does,” he said. “I want to be that person she could lean on and understand that I’ve been through it, but you got to keep going, keep going, keep going. That’s what my dad kind of taught me.”

Wortham’s football journey started as a youngster. His grandmother, Joyce Stone, helped out by buying him football cleats and accessories, he said. His mother, Chanel Green, supported him while holding down the house, he noted.

Then there’s the aunts, uncles, cousins, friends and coaches who all pitched in with helping to shape him. He could’ve named how each one helped him, he said, and the turnout in Sacramento showed it was truly a village raising him.

Football was his avenue for bettering his life. He made it to a higher level than any other family member, he said, and has joined many of the women in his life as a college graduate. Now it’s about setting an example for his daughter.

“I just want to be that role model to where she looks up to me and be like, man, I love the way my dad treats my mom, I love how he takes care of his business,” he said. “Whatever that I could do, the best I could do, I want her to look up to that and be like, man, I love my dad, I love what he’s about.”

Now at his third college stop, it has been Wortham and his wife raising their kid, first in Cheney, Washington, and now in Missoula. He credited his wife for trusting him and believing in him when deciding to move to new teams.

Wortham met her on Instagram when he was looking for someone to braid his hair in Sacramento around 2020 and had seen she did that for one of his teammates, he said. She’s continued providing those services in Missoula.

He had thought being a father would be so much more time-consuming to the point he might not have time for football. He praised his wife for assisting in making it possible for him to dedicate the necessary time to the sport.

“I think I’d be way more stressed out,” said Wortham, who holds associate’s and bachelor’s degrees. “I think focusing on football would probably be like 10 times harder.

“I’m so thankful for her because without her, it is very stressful. If you do not have a partner that’s good with communication and willing to help you out and sacrifice her time and sleep to follow your dreams,



SHANNA MADISON, MISSOULIAN

Montana wide receiver Michael Wortham (6) celebrates a touchdown during the college football game against Idaho on Sept. 27 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula. The fifth-year senior is the Grizzlies’ leading receiver in his first year with the program.

then it is a little rough.”

It was important for Wortham when choosing his next destination out of the transfer portal this past winter that while a team might want him for his playmaking ability, they had to be the right fit for his family situation too.

Money from name, image and likeness has helped with his family paying rent and other basic needs, he said. His wife still works a graveyard shift. And he’s appreciated getting advice about food banks and finding baby clothes cheaply.

His favorite part of being a father has been seeing his daughter grow. Her birth time — 9:16, the same as his hometown Sacramento area code — has made it onto his body along with numerous other fam-

ily-related tattoos.

“Seeing her walk, communicate with other babies, run around, laugh with us, you know, I can start seeing her personality, man,” he said. “It’s just little stuff like that, man, I’m just enjoying so much.”

Football taught Wortham much about time management, which has benefitted him as a father. His days during the football season start with lifts followed by classes or bodily recovery, lunch, meetings and practice before daddy duties.

Then it’s family dinner before his alone time with his daughter. They watch her favorite show, Bluey, and read books with animal noises. His receiver hands come in useful when he lifts her up high and tosses her a couple inches.

Of course, there’s also some rudimentary dance lessons going on too. Dancing is nothing new for Wortham, as a lightly viewed YouTube video of him as a 7-year-old dressed as Michael Jackson dancing to a Chris Brown song attests.

“She’s actually got a little dance bug in her,” he said of his daughter. “She knows how to shake her shoulders and stuff. She’s obviously not going to be busting out crazy moves right now. She’s just kind of moving her legs like this. She will definitely be a dancer too by the time she’s older.”

Frank Gogola is the Senior Sports Reporter at the Missoulian and 406 MT Sports. Follow him on X @FrankGogola or email him at frank.gogola@406mtsports.com.

WING

Continued from page 3

A: Yeah, I think we're moving the right direction every single game, every day. We work on it, we harp on it a lot, so we're getting better and better.

Q: What makes Montana's line-backer room so good?

A: We just have a lot of guys that can play, and it's pretty cool to have that on a team, all in one room. Knowing that you have a lot of people that can play on the field means that it's a lot of competition. It makes you better and better each week, and you always know anyone can play, so everyone has a shot and opportunity. Everyone stays ready, it's a very engaging group.

Q: Transferring out of Portland State, what stood out about Montana?

A: I think the whole coaching staff sold me, and it wasn't really a single selling point. They just showed me what it was like here, and that was it. It wasn't flashy, wasn't anything specific. It was just what I was looking for, just what I wanted.

Q: What do you remember from coming here with the Vikings in 2024?

A: I remember that we lost and that I wanted to get that win last year, so it's fun to be over here and call Wa-Griz my home.

Q: What was that first time running out of the tunnel before a game in Missoula like?

A: It was surreal. We have a huge fan base and a huge supportive crowd, which every game, every weekend, we have them with us. It's pretty awesome.

Q: The amount of crowd noise Wa-Griz generates, especially at the FCS level, is pretty unique. How does that help the team's on-field product?

A: It helps a lot. I mean, it's like a 12th man, you know, especially on defense. They're loud, the fans are loud and they love us. It's pretty cool to have that kind of support in our community.

Q: You mention the 12th man, does coming from Sumner, Washington make you a Seahawks fan?

A: Oh, yeah. Seahawks, Mariners, all those teams. I'm sad the Mariners lost, though.

Q: What are your favorite parts of Missoula you didn't have in Portland?

A: I mean, Portland, Missoula, they're two different places. Portland, you got the city, and outside the city, you have rivers and stuff. Fifteen or 20 minutes outside the city, you've got rivers, which are fun to be on. Missoula is different. It's more of a small-town feel, and I like that a lot. It's a good community. It's pretty cool.



Montana linebacker Peyton Wing (32) breaks up a pass intended for Cal Poly running back Paul Holyfield Jr. (22) during the college football game on Oct. 11 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula. The junior is tied for the team lead with 3.5 sacks through nine games.

BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Q: What are some of your favorite food spots around Missoula?

A: Oh, gosh, there's a lot of good food spots. I remember coming here on my visit and having Notorious P.I.G., man, it was very good. Their burnt ends are awesome. There's so many good food spots around here.

Q: What are some of your hobbies outside of football?

A: I like fishing, I like being outside as much as I can.

Q: Any favorite fishing spots in the area?

A: My roommate, Grayson Pibal, is a fishing guide. He was showing me around Rock Creek and the Blackfoot. And then my other roommates fish a lot too, so I was just going with the flow. It was my first time being here in June, so I didn't know anything. It was a lot of fun.

Q: Was it mostly fly fishing? Any guess of what the biggest fish you've caught was?

A: Yeah, fly fishing. Not too big, I'm not the best, but it's fun.

Q: Do you have any personal favorite games so far this season?

A: That North Dakota game was a fun one. It was early on in the season. It was fun to see us put it on the line like that. All of them have been pretty fun. I'm looking forward to the ones coming up soon.

GO GRIZ!

HERE TO HELP WITH ALL YOUR CAFFEINATED NEEDS!

1915 STEPHENS AVE • 1650 W BROADWAY • 4921 N RESERVE

Griz CMC Copper Mountain Coffee

First chair still means something here.

Lock in your 2025-2026 Season Pass before prices increase for unbeatable value, more days on the mountain, and first tracks all winter long.

- Adult **\$549** (ages 18-64)
- Youth **\$399** (ages 7-17)
- Senior **\$399** (ages 65-79)
- College **\$159**
(full time 9+ credits, ages 18-35)
- Transferable Season Pass **\$1250**

Prices Increase 11/22/2025



**Get Your
Season Pass Today!**