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GRIZZLY GAME DAY

Missoulian

QUICK SILVER

GLOBETROTTER JO SILVER IS FAST LEARNER

BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

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GOING THE DISTANCE

Silver's traversing of globe leads to role as UM kicker

FRANK GOGOLA
406 MT Sports

Jo Silver is well acquainted with long-distance travel.

That's not just on the football field, where the Montana kicker hit a lifetime-best 50-yard field goal on Sept. 5, tying him for the second-longest make by a Grizzlies player this decade heading into their first road game of the season against Oregon State at 9 p.m. MT Saturday in Corvallis, Oregon.

His experience with covering a lot of ground is quite literal too. He has lived in six countries, spent time in three states in the U.S. and moved 10 times in just over 20 years of life, most recently coming to Montana in 2024.

"I've gained so many different perspectives on life and how to view certain things just because of moving, having to do all these different situations again, learning to make new friends," he said. "So I would say moving around has really made my life for the better."

Silver was born in Indonesia, moved to Malaysia and came to the United States for the first time when his family went to Virginia. Then it was back to Asia in Hong Kong before moves to Africa in Ethiopia and later Uganda.

He returned to Virginia for a second time, went to a boarding school and spent his final high school season in Ohio. He remained in the Buckeye State to play college football at Kent State, which is in the FBS Mid-American Conference.

After two years with the Golden Flashes, he made the move to Missoula to play for the Grizzlies. Another move and another chance to put to use the skills he developed over the years



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana kicker Jo Silver (46) attempts an extra point during the Big Sky Conference football game against Utah Tech on Sept. 12 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula. Silver is in his third season with the Grizzlies after he played two seasons at Kent State.

of how to get to know new people quickly.

"Even with transferring from Kent State, being able to connect with the guys here, you got to rekindle those skills I made while moving around so much," he said. "I feel like transferring here, although the team is super welcoming and everyone was super cool, wanted to hang out, do whatever it might have been, it made it a lot easier knowing how to be a social person in order to create these new friendships."

Silver walked on with the Montana football team ahead of spring camp in 2024 and earned a spot on the team. He took on a larger role toward the end of the 2025 season, got put on partial scholarship this past offseason, he said, and has taken over as the kicker on extra points and field goals this season.

He was a late arrival to football. His introduction to the sport came from a colleague of his father, he said, when he was in Uganda and knew he'd soon

be moving to Virginia to go to boarding school as a high school sophomore.

"I was trying to figure out what sport I wanted to play in the fall," he said. "I never played football. I was always a big basketball kid, and soccer. He ended up training me for two months trying to figure out what I might want to play, what position. The final day, he had me try kicking. It worked out pretty well."

The experimentation with football gave him some basics for

his move to Virginia. He couldn't promise he would be that good of a kicker when his coaches asked if anyone knew how to kick at their first team meeting.

He drilled a 45-yard field goal that first day, he recalled, and things began to take off. However, he was deprived of a junior season in 2020 because the state of Virginia didn't play football that fall because of the pandemic.

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BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana defensive lineman Tyler King (90) lines up for a play during the Big Sky Conference football game against Utah Tech on Sept. 12 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula. King transferred to UM from Central Washington this past offseason.

KING CASHING IN AT D-I LEVEL

D-lineman
thriving
after transfer
from Central
Washington

CARSON CASHION
406 MT Sports

It's rare for a Montana Grizzly to get their first taste of Washington-Grizzly Stadium coming from the north end zone tunnel.

That was the case for senior defensive lineman Tyler King though. The 6-foot-5, 252-pound product of Happy

Valley, Oregon, started his career at Central Washington. He visited Missoula in 2025 as a member of the Wildcats football team, falling in Montana's season opener last year in a 42-17 loss.

In that game, King recorded two tackles. In his first three games with the Grizzlies after finishing his Wildcat career as

a second-team NCAA Division II All-American, he's enjoyed much more production.

After recording seven total tackles in UM's season-opening win over Southern Utah, tied for the second most among Griz defensemen, King got to Drake's backfield for a pair of sacks. The plays created a total loss of 10 yards for the Bulldogs, forcing a

fumble on one of the two, leading to a Griz touchdown.

King logged four more total tackles against Utah Tech, bringing his season total to 13. The number is the sixth highest among all Grizzlies, while King's pair of sacks lead Montana as well.

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HOW WE SEE THE BIG SKY

BILL SPELTZ
406 MT Sports

After fighting so hard only to fall short in their upset bid against 13th-ranked Texas Tech last Saturday, you better believe the Oregon State Beavers are going to be ready when Montana rolls into town this weekend.



**FRANK
GOGOLA**

29-2



**BILL
SPELTZ**

28-3



**VICTOR
FLORES**

27-4



**CARSON
CASHION**

27-4

I felt sorry for the Beavers after a questionable flag late in the game derailed their bid for a potential go-ahead TD against the Red Raiders. OSU trailed by four at the time and ended up settling for a moral victory in a 35-24 setback.

You could say Oregon State has become one of the forgotten ones when it comes to big-time college football. But the program is making strides to change that under capable first-year head coach JaMarcus Shephard, who spent the past two seasons as a high-level assistant coach at Alabama.

The Beavers have been dealt a tough hand in recent years and it goes beyond losing records. Imagine being a member of the fabled original Pac-12 and then, poof, the league is gone. While traditional regional rivals Oregon and Washington bolted for the most prestigious league in the country, the Big Ten, the Beavers were left to pick up the pieces alongside others like Washington State.

Just think of it: Oregon State doesn't even play heated archrival Oregon this season (it used to be called the Civil War but was changed for political correctness in 2020). Those two teams are separated by 47 miles but they're worlds apart when it comes to respect (although the Ducks were humbled last Saturday at previously hapless Oklahoma State).

The good news is the Beavers and Ducks have inked a four-year agreement and will start playing one another again in 2028. But can you imagine going for two years with-

out the Brawl of the Wild? How unfortunate for the state of Oregon.

For the record, Oregon State is part of the Pac-12 again. It's the rebuilt Pac-12, formed ahead of the 2026 season and devoid of big-timers like the aforementioned Ducks and Huskies along with USC, Utah, UCLA ... you get the picture.

Replacing those big-timers in the new Pac-12 are teams like Boise State, Colorado State, Fresno State and even Texas State. Boise State is arguably the marquee program in the rebuilt Pac-12, making the league feel a little like the old Mountain West.

Oh well. The Beavers are still a proud football program that drew 30,539 fans for their home opener against Texas Tech. It will be interesting to see if they top that number this Saturday because you know there's going to be a lot of maroon in the crowd.

Here's a look at this weekend's games (all are Saturday except Portland State-Oregon, which is Friday night):

No. 3 Montana (1-0, 3-0) at FBS Oregon State (0-2), 9 p.m. TV: USA Sports. Oregon State freshman wide receiver Jesse Legree is the real deal and he's going to keep Montana's defensive coaches up at night this week worrying how they'll stop him. His 37-yard TD reception in the third quarter against Texas Tech tied the score at 21-21 and his team proceeded to take the lead on a field goal early in the fourth quarter. The Beavers still had the lead with seven minutes left. Montana is going to put up some points in Corvallis but the big question is whether or not the Grizzly defense will rise to the challenge. It's important for Montana to get off to a good start, especially since the team has not dealt with disruptive crowd noise this season, starting with three games at home. In the end, the Grizzlies will come up a bit short. **Bill Speltz:** Beavers 38, Grizzlies 34. **Frank Gogola:** Beavs 34, Griz 27. **Victor Flores:** Beavers 31, Griz 20. **Carson Cashion:** Oregon State 38, Montana 24.

Central Connecticut State (0-2) at No. 1 Montana State (1-0, 3-0), 1 p.m. TV: Scripps Sports/ESPN+. Could the Bobcats win the FBS Mountain West Conference? It's fun to think about after they won at Nevada on Saturday night and won at New Mexico in 2024. Right now North Dakota State and UNLV lead the Mountain West at 1-0, with the Bison racing to a 3-0 start overall. Seems like Montana State would be a good fit in that conference. Anyway, getting back to reality, it's hard to

say whether Central Connecticut State can even be competitive in Bozeman Saturday. The team dropped its first two games, losing 59-20 at South Dakota in late August before being humbled at FBS Toledo last Saturday, 63-10. My guess is that Saturday is going to be a cakewalk for the Cats. **Speltz:** Cats 60, Blue Devils 10. **Gogola:** Cats 56, Blue Devils 10. **Flores:** Cats 63, Blue Devils 14. **Cashion:** Montana State 49, Central Connecticut State 7.

Abilene Christian (0-3) at Idaho (0-1, 0-3), 2 p.m. TV: ESPN+. The Vandals were very competitive against 14th-ranked Lamar last Saturday in Moscow. Lamar finished with a very small edge in total yards, 303-296. Perhaps this weekend Idaho will get over the hump against Abilene Christian, a well-respected program that was in the rankings as recently as last week (No. 23) before the Wildcats lost at home to 12th-ranked Stephen F. Austin, 26-7. **Speltz:** Vandals 28, Wildcats 24. **Gogola:** Idaho 27, ACU 21. **Flores:** Idaho 24, ACU 17. **Cashion:** Idaho 31, Abilene Christian 20.

Eastern Washington (0-1, 1-2) at FBS No. 24 Washington (2-0), 5:15 p.m. TV: Big Ten Network. The Huskies are ranked No. 24 in the AFCA Coaches Poll after starting the season with close wins over Washington State and Utah State. They have lost key contributors at the skill positions to injury but they're still going to win comfortably over the Eagles, who were beaten handily at No. 10 South Dakota last week. **Speltz:** Huskies 34, Eags 13. **Gogola:** Huskies 42, Eags 20. **Flores:** UW 31, EWU 14. **Cashion:** Washington 56, Eastern Washington 6.

Southern Utah (0-1, 1-2) at St. Thomas (2-1), 12:05 p.m. TV: ESPN+. The Thunderbirds have a good football team and they're going to prove it this weekend in the Twin Cities. Actually they already proved it in Missoula last month. But SUU is going to have to outscore the Tommies because its defense is not exactly Fort Knox. **Speltz:** Thunderbirds 40, Tommies 35. **Gogola:** T-Birds 35, St. Thomas 21. **Flores:** SUU 38, St. Thomas 24. **Cashion:** Southern Utah 24, St. Thomas 14.

San Diego (0-2) at Cal Poly (1-0, 2-1), 6 p.m. TV: ESPN+. Arguably the biggest surprise in the Big Sky this season, the Mustangs will take care of the non-scholarship Toreros at home. But San Diego may make it close. The Toreros' record is a little misleading in that their losses have come to top-25 teams UC Davis and Idaho State. **Speltz:** Mustangs 31, Toreros 21. **Gogola:** Cal Poly 42, USD 17. **Flores:** Cal Poly 45,

San Diego 14. **Cashion:** Cal Poly 31, San Diego 20.

Northeastern State (3-0) at Northern Colorado (0-1, 0-3), 6 p.m. TV: ESPN+. The NCAA Division II Riverhawks will bring a lot of momentum to Greeley and could make things interesting. But the Bears are starved for a victory and coming off a solid defensive showing at Wyoming in a 21-13 loss. **Speltz:** Bears 28, Riverhawks 20. **Gogola:** UNC 31, NESU 13. **Flores:** UNC 35, NESU 10. **Cashion:** Northern Colorado 38, Northeastern State 21.

Northwestern State (0-3) at Weber State (1-0, 1-2), 6 p.m. TV: ESPN+. It's the first home game for the Wildcats, who played well in their two FCS road games. The Demons gave up 80 points at Louisiana Tech. That's a lot of points to be giving up to an FBS team unless it's a heavyweight. **Speltz:** Wildcats 41, Demons 21. **Gogola:** Weber 45, NW State 14. **Flores:** Weber 49, NWSU 17. **Cashion:** Weber State 56, Northwestern State 17.

No. 20 Northern Arizona (1-0, 2-1) at Utah Tech (0-1, 0-3), 6 p.m. TV: ESPN+. The Trailblazers have been outscored 152-21 this season. Two of their touchdowns came against the Griz, which is a little concerning if you're a Griz fan. The dome-dwelling Lumberjacks will roll in St. George, even if it is 90 degrees. **Speltz:** Lumberjacks 38, Trailblazers 14. **Gogola:** NAU 42, Utah Tech 16. **Flores:** NAU 41, Utah Tech 10. **Cashion:** Northern Arizona 35, Utah Tech 13.

Stetson (1-2) at No. 11 UC Davis (1-0, 2-1), 8 p.m. TV: ESPN+. The Aggies suffered their first loss last weekend against FBS 16th-ranked SMU in Dallas. They will get back on track this week against a Stetson team that surrendered 70 points at South Dakota State in the Hatters' season opener. **Speltz:** Aggies 70, Hatters 17. **Gogola:** UC Davis 49, Stetson 10. **Flores:** Davis 52, Stetson 14. **Cashion:** UC Davis 42, Stetson 10.

Portland State (0-1, 0-3) at FBS No. 21 Oregon (1-1), Friday at 8:30 p.m. TV: Big Ten Network. Oh my goodness, the Ducks are going to be madder than a wet hen after last Saturday's humbling loss to FBS also-ran Oklahoma State. Let's just say being a Viking is not going to be fun Friday night. **Speltz:** Ducks 77, Vikings 10. **Gogola:** Ducks 63, Viks 9. **Flores:** Oregon 56, PSU 7. **Cashion:** Oregon 64, Portland State 7.

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Silver

From 2

“It was really unfortunate, but at the same time, it gave me a lot of time to work on kicking myself,” he said. “I could go out to the field for three hours a day during it and just kick footballs. I think that’s what drew me in, made me as good as I am today.”

He returned to the field as a senior at Fremont Ross High School in Fremont, Ohio. He considered moving to Montana that year with his family, which had spent parts of some summers in the Treasure State when he was growing up, but instead went to Ohio and lived with his grandparents on his mother’s side.

It was at Fremont where he was named an all-state honorable mention and garnered interest from area college teams. There, special teams coach Austin Baker helped him along as a kicker and aided in the recruiting process.

“Overseas, playing college sports wasn’t something that was super big or like even an idea,” he said. “When I came to the United States, that kind of became a much bigger thing, and I didn’t realize how it was, but I always knew I wanted to play sports throughout my life.”

Choosing Kent State in Kent, Ohio, meant he could stay close to his grandparents in the state. Later choosing to transfer to Montana meant he would be closer to his parents, Ted and Sarah, who moved to the state, and his older sister, Lili, who was attending UM at the time.

He gave props to his Kent State teammates for teaching him about sticking together through the ups and downs of a 1-11 season in 2023. He credited his sister with helping him when he struggled with college classes. His sister and parents also kept his head in it when he was limited to five games across his first three college seasons.

“I feel like one of the biggest things throughout college football that I figured out about myself is I just need to trust myself and stick with what I promised myself and not kind of lose focus,” he said. “That was prob-



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana kicker Jo Silver (46) celebrates after making an extra point during the Big Sky Conference football game against Utah Tech on Sept. 12 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula. Silver is in his first season as the Grizzlies’ full-time kicker on field goals and extra points.

ably the biggest thing to me is persisting through problems that I might have, whether that’s school-related problems or football or whatever.”

Silver is now in Year 3 living in Missoula. It’s the second longest he’s lived in any one place without moving. It’s also been a location where he’s developed a love for outdoor activities like target shooting and floating the river.

The duration is just behind his four-year run in Ethiopia from fifth grade through eighth grade. That was where he made some of his best friends who he still talks to today, making it a highly emotional move at the time, he recalled.

“I’m at the age where I’m kind

of starting to figure out who I am as a person, and I think this is a great place for me to be at,” he said. “I’ve been at a lot of faster-paced places, but I think being here with the community, everyone is super respectful of each other and everyone can be welcoming to each other.”

Missoula has presented yet another different perspective of the world for him to learn about while immersing himself in it. At UM, he graduated with a bachelor’s degree in criminology in summer 2025. He’s currently in a master’s program and is working on a cybersecurity certificate.

He has thought about a career working in law enforcement or cybersecurity. He has also long

been interested in his father’s line of work. His father worked in the CIA, he said, which is what led to all the moving around in his childhood.

“Working in that kind of area, I’m problem-solving oriented,” he said. “Some of my professors have helped me a ton with navigating my way through that.”

For how well-traveled Silver has been in his first two-plus decades of life, he might not be one to settle down — at least at first. He’s looking forward to the potential of living in even more new locations around the world.

So when he’s done covering yardage on the football field with his kicks, he might be knocking out miles by the thousands tra-

versing the globe some more.

“It sounds weird, but I like being able to restart and do things differently,” he said. “You move one place and you’re like OK, I kind of want to try something else. It’s like a clean slate, and so I really do like that concept.”

“At the same time, I love being in one place and getting to know everyone there, building all these cool relationships with people. While I’m younger, if I have the opportunity to move around, I would take it in a heartbeat.”

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.

King

From 3

King sat down with 406 MT Sports ahead of Montana's road contest against Oregon State at 9 p.m. MT Saturday. This interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

Q: Coming out of high school in your recruitment process, you had an offer to Idaho. What made you commit to Central Washington still in the end?

A: I kind of just felt more valued at Central, I could make an impact quicker at Central. That's why I chose there. I just felt more valued, so I decided to go to Central.

Q: In your three years there, what do you feel like the major points of growth and development for you were?

A: I mean, everywhere. Probably just my athleticism, my power. I feel like I changed a lot mentally, my mental game got a lot better from high school to college. So I think that was a development, too.

Q: Players that start off in D-II and make their way up to D-I, do you feel like that kind of gives you a little bit of an edge or just kind of a little bit more grit than maybe other athletes?

A: A little bit. I remember coming here and thinking, you know, we got a lot to prove. You know, we're D-II, not everyone knows about D-II, but I think D-II, they have some ballers down there.

Q: Do you have any plays you remember from playing here when y'all came here (to Missoula)?

A: I think that when we came out of half, we were on defense, or maybe we punted it and then we were on defense. But first pos-



SHANNA MADISON, MISSOULIAN

Montana linebacker Peyton Wing (32) and defensive lineman Tyler King (90) celebrate during the college football game against Drake on Sept. 5 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula. King had two sacks in the victory.

session, we came down, third down, we picked them off. I thought we had a chance, but we ended up getting blown out pretty bad.

Q: Do you ever talk to any of the guys here about that game?

A: Yeah, for sure. We fought in the first half, kind of got away from us in the second half. Yeah, there's definitely some laughs in the locker room about that kind of stuff.

Q: What stood out about Montana when you en-

tered the transfer portal?

A: Playing here was super fun, and obviously they do a lot of winning. The tradition and the culture and stuff like that, I just wanted to be a part of something.

Q: Who have you relied on as leaders in the locker room through your first summer in Missoula?

A: I'd say Hayden Schwartz has been a big help. Yeah, Winger (Peyton Wing) is obviously a big leader on the defense,

and then Solo (Solomon me getting with the group Tuliaupupu) kind of helped and kind of figure out

where to go.

Q: What do you attribute your early season success to so far?

A: I just feel like all the work I've done since winter. Coming here, I wasn't guaranteed a spot out there. I had something to work for.

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

A: Golf, even though I'm terrible at it.

Q: What's your most confident club in your bag?

A: Maybe my 7-iron. The driver's off and on, the chipping is also off and on, and the irons are just terrible. Except the seven.

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