

IDAHO AT MONTANA • KICKOFF: 1 P.M. SATURDAY • TV: MTN • THURSDAY, OCT. 15, 2026

GRIZZLY GAME DAY

Missoulian

THE MAKING OF MOSE

Family shapes,
still fuels
LB Nai Mose

BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Q&A WITH OL AUSTIN BUEHLER, PAGE 3 • SPELTZ PICKS THE BIG SKY, PAGE 4 • ROSTERS, PAGE 5



SHANNA MADISON, MISSOULIAN

Montana linebacker Nai Mose reacts to a play during the college football game against Northern Colorado on Oct. 3 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula. Mose transferred from Georgetown this past offseason for his final year.

SHOOTING FOR THE STARS

LB Mose carries great motivation through college

FRANK GOGOLA
406 MT Sports

Nai Mose roams the field at Washington-Grizzly Stadium carrying his family on his right arm.

The Montana linebacker has his father's name, Tevita Mose, tattooed alongside tra-

ditional tribal artwork representing his family's Polynesian culture.

The tribute to his late father extends from just above his elbow to just below his wrist. It's an intricate design that wraps 360 degrees around his forearm and took about 12 hours to complete.

"I just wanted to have a remembrance of my dad and carry him with me," he said. "This is one of those ways just showing off the name and is another way I can honor him as well."

Mose had plenty of motivation before he lost his father during his junior season at Georgetown in 2024. Representing the Mose name in a positive manner is at the

essence of the myriad of factors that have driven him.

Both of his parents were born in Tonga, later moved to America and worked tirelessly just to try to make ends meet for their family, he said. He saw attending college on a football scholarship as a way to improve his life.

"Me and my siblings, we always counted on each other," he said. "It was definitely hard growing up knowing we didn't have everything. But my parents worked hard to make the most of it. They made sure we were well fed and had a roof over our heads."

"Growing up like that, that's definitely pushed me and is a reason why I'm still

pushing today. Just using football as a chance to better my life going forward. It's always been a way for me to get out and get an opportunity and go bigger and do better."

He's done that on a crisscrossing journey from Texas to Washington D.C. to Montana. He joined the Grizzlies this past offseason, accepted another scholarship and has since found his way into a starting role.

Now in his fifth and final college season, he has been leading by example for his siblings. He's the second oldest of six children and has four brothers and one sister.

Please see **MOSE**, Page 6



SHANNA MADISON, MISSOULIAN

Montana offensive lineman Austin Buehler (55) walks off the field during the college football game against Northern Colorado on Oct. 3 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula. Buehler has been the starting right tackle this season.

Buehler leading charge

Helena native is first-year starter for surging O-line

CARSON CASHION
406 MT Sports

Montana right tackle Austin Buehler comes from a decorated line of Grizzly athletes.

His mother, Greta, was an All-American Lady Griz that received Big Sky MVP honors. His father, Eric, played on the UM defensive line during Montana's 1995 national title run.

Now, in his first year as a starter for Montana, Buehler has helped anchor an offensive line that has allowed just six sacks through seven games. The unit has

also powered a rushing attack that averages over 185 yards per game.

Against Northern Arizona last week, Buehler and the rest of the offensive line helped the Grizzlies average over 5 yards per carry while allowing just one sack.

Buehler sat down with 406 MT Sports ahead of Montana's home matchup against Idaho at 1 p.m. Saturday at Washington-

Grizzly Stadium. This interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

Q: As an offensive lineman, how much does your diet and workout routine shift as you get towards the meat of the regular season and away from summer workouts and fall camp?

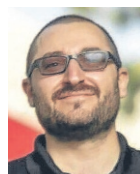
Please see **BUEHLER**, Page 7

HOW WE SEE THE BIG SKY

BILL SPELTZ | 406 MT SPORTS

It has all the makings of a shootout.

There's a good bet Montana's football team is going to score a lot of points in Saturday's home game against giant killer Idaho. There's also a decent chance the Vandals will score a lot based on the fact they put up 35 in a stunning home win over then-No. 1-ranked Montana State on Oct. 2.



**FRANK
GOGOLA**

47-12



**BILL
SPELTZ**

46-13



**CARSON
CASHION**

44-15



**VICTOR
FLORES**

42-17

All statistics aside, the Griz will cruise into this year's Brawl of the Wild on a four-game winning streak if they play up to their potential from this point forward. Three of the next four are at home and the toughest doesn't come until mid-November when UM hosts a dangerous Idaho State team that is in crisis mode after two straight losses.

Statistically, the Cats still have the best defense in the Big Sky, allowing an average of 16.3 points per game. The 35 they allowed to Idaho was not only a season high, it was 28 more than they allowed against FBS foe Nevada on Sept. 12 in Reno.

A lot of Griz fans are lamenting the fact Montana's injury depleted defense is vulnerable. Saturday's shootout loss at Northern Arizona was proof.

The Grizzlies have shown flashes of defensive promise but consistency has been elusive. They have kept all but two opponents under 23 points, with the exception being the 52-17 blowout loss at Oregon State and last Saturday's 49-44 setback at NAU that featured a 100-yard kickoff return for a TD by the Jacks.

Idaho's offense kicked into high gear when the team tallied 39 points in a Sept. 19 home loss to Abilene Christian, which was nationally ranked at the time. Then came the big win over the Cats two weeks later.

Last week the Vandals took a step backward with two interceptions in a 38-27 loss at Weber State, which holds a share of the Big Sky lead with UM, NAU and Cal Poly. But a lot of folks figured Idaho might be flat after a monster win over MSU that may have saved coach Thomas Ford's job for another year.

The player that will keep Montana's defensive coaches from sleeping well Friday night is Vandals quarterback Joshua Wood. He's a capable passer with elusive qualities that make him a nightmare extending plays. If you saw him in action against Montana State, you'd agree. Not only did he complete 19 of 25 passes for 315 yards and two touchdowns, he rushed for 68 yards.

Montana will do its best to prevent Wood from running wild. But it's easier said than done. The Fresno State transfer racked up 63 yards rushing in the 41-39 loss to Abilene Christian and last Saturday totaled 58 yards rushing at Weber State.



NIKO RODRIGUEZ PHOTO, 406MTSPORTS

Montana defensive end Nui Tovey (right) pressures Northern Arizona quarterback Ty Pennington during Saturday's game in Flagstaff, Arizona. The seventh-ranked Grizzlies will host upset-minded Idaho this Saturday.

Idaho (1-2, 1-5) at No. 7 Montana (3-1, 5-2), 1 p.m. TV: Scripps Sports. A good friend of mine made a noteworthy comment on the Montana team last week, even before the debacle at Northern Arizona. He declared it's the same-old Montana team that's dangerous on offense but not good enough on defense. It's hard to argue that point right now. Montana seems especially vulnerable against experienced quarterbacks and that's a red flag heading into Saturday's game. But let's face it: Idaho is not a good road team and playing in front of a loud crowd at Washington-Grizzly Stadium is not going to make the Vandals any better. Montana will win this game and the only question is whether or not it will be a blowout. If the Grizzlies get off to a fast start, I could see Idaho folding up like a cheap tent. **Bill Speltz:** Griz 49, Vandals 31. **Frank Gogola:** Montana 51, Idaho 30. **Carson Cashion:** Montana 42, Idaho 31. **Victor Flores:** Griz 45, Vandals 31.

No. 5 Montana State (2-1, 5-1) at Eastern Washington (1-3, 2-5), 5 p.m. TV: Scripps Sports. The once-formidable Eagles, who won five Big Sky championships in seven years from 2012 to 2018, are formidable no more. It used to be that they were especially hard to beat on the red turf in Cheney. This year they're 2-1 with a home loss to Cal Poly three weeks ago. Look for Montana State to start fast and pull away. Like the Griz game this week, the big question is whether or not the healed-up Cats will win in blowout fashion. This game is very important for Montana State as it works to reestablish itself as a FCS title contender following a shocking loss to previously winless Idaho two weeks ago. I still don't like the way that game was officiated at the end, but whining about officials is like whining about the weather. Look for the Cats, who when healthy are still the team to beat in the FCS, to steamroll. **Speltz:** Cats 44, Eagles 28. **Gogola:** MSU 42, EWU 24. **Cashion:** Montana State 45, Eastern Washington 21. **Flores:** Cats 38, Eagles 27.

No. 21 Idaho State (1-2, 4-2) at Weber State (3-1, 4-3), 1 p.m. TV: ESPN+. Oh, how the mighty have fallen. The Bengals were humming along, enjoying a breakout season three weeks ago behind the momentum of a three-game

winning streak. Among their victims was FBS Utah State. Then it started to come unraveled with a home loss to eighth-ranked Northern Arizona, followed by a home loss to Cal Poly last week. Both losses came in one-score games, so it's not like Idaho State has lost its grip. Now comes a must-win for the Bengals in their bid to earn an elusive playoff bid. And, hold on to your hat, the Wildcats are tied for first place in the Big Sky after a month of action. This game looks like a toss-up, but the weatherman is calling for beautiful conditions and that's favorable for the Bengals and their passing attack. **Speltz:** Bengals 35, Wildcats 31. **Gogola:** ISU 34, Weber 30. **Cashion:** Idaho State 31, Weber State 20. **Flores:** ISU 41, Weber 35.

Portland State (2-1, 2-4) at No. 8 Northern Arizona (3-1, 5-2), 4 p.m. TV: ESPN+. The Lumberjacks are for real. They beat nationally ranked Idaho State in the Bengals' dome two weeks ago, then bounced the mighty Montana Grizzlies in a game that the UM defense would just as soon forget. Perhaps even more surprising is the fact the Vikings are one-half game out of first place in the Big Sky. Surprising because Portland State lost its first four games of the season, leading almost everyone to assume it's just going to be another also-ran season. The Jacks will need to guard against complacency in this game but their quarterback appears to be good enough to get the team out of any sort crisis that may arise against upset-minded Portland State. **Speltz:** Jacks 30, Viks 18. **Gogola:** NAU 41, PSU 20. **Cashion:** Northern Arizona 35, Portland State 17. **Flores:** NAU 38, PSU 17.

No. 14 UC Davis (2-1, 4-2) at Southern Utah (1-2, 2-4), 6 p.m. TV: ESPN+. The Aggies looked so bad in their home loss to Montana that it's hard to know if they're overrated or that nightmare against the Griz was an anomaly. Davis did regroup for a home win over Eastern Washington last week, but the defense allowed 38 points. That makes this game hard to predict. The Thunderbirds are tough at home, with a win over Weber State and a close loss to Idaho State. My problem with Southern Utah is the team surrendered 33 points to winless Utah Tech in last week's game. I'm going to go with a hunch and pick the Thunderbirds at home this week. **Speltz:** Thunderbirds 28, Aggies 27. **Gogola:** Davis 35, SUU 27. **Cashion:** UC Davis 28, Southern Utah 27. **Flores:** Davis 27, SUU 24.

Cal Poly (3-1, 4-3) at Northern Colorado (1-3, 2-5), 6 p.m. TV: ESPN+. Not only are the upstart Mustangs tied for the Big Sky Conference lead, they'd be all alone in first place if not for a double-overtime home heartbreaker against Weber State two weeks ago. Cal Poly's win at Idaho State last week was a message to the rest of the Big Sky that the Mustangs really are contenders for the league title. Cal Poly's Jaden Green ranks third in the Big Sky in rushing with an average of 118.7 yards per game. Northern Colorado is capable defensively but ranks near the bottom of the Big Sky in scoring. **Speltz:** Mustangs 32, Bears 21. **Gogola:** Cal Poly 37, UNC 24. **Cashion:** Cal Poly 35, Northern Colorado 28. **Flores:** Cal Poly 28, UNC 20.

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

IDAHO VANDALS																				
No.	Name	Year	Pos	Ht	Wt	Hometown														
0	Davon Donaldson	Sr.	LB	6-2	224	Elk Grove, Calif.	19	Brayden Rice	Sr.	S	6-0	208	Lewiston, Idaho	51	Shepard Fish	So.	DL	6-4	260	Meridian, Idaho
0	Marquawn McCraney	Jr.	WR	6-0	203	SeaTac, Wash.	19	Markel Taylor	Jr.	WR	6-2	179	Sacramento, Calif.	52	Jack Giannini	So.	LB	6-0	220	Eagle, Idaho
1	P.J. Blanchard	So.	DB	6-3	173	Palmdale, Calif.	20	Daemon Fagan	Sr.	S	6-3	190	Fort Lauderdale, Fla.	52	Kiegan Henson	Sr.	OL	6-5	298	Meridian, Idaho
1	Israel Carter	Sr.	QB	6-1	200	Corona, Calif.	21	Isiah Bivins	Jr.	DB	6-1	201	Monterey, Calif.	54	Alex Green	Sr.	OL	6-6	316	Coeur d'Alene, Idaho
1	Lonyatta Alexander Jr.	5th	WR	6-3	206	Auburn, Wash.	21	Aiden Nixon	Jr.	TE	6-5	206	Boise, Idaho	54	Titus Ringor	Jr.	DL	6-3	277	Wahiawa, Hawaii
2	Ishaan Daniels	Jr.	DB	5-10	169	Bellevue, Wash.	22	Wyatt Mickelberry	So.	RB	5-11	200	Bothell, Wash.	55	Ma'ake Apo	So.	DL	6-4	340	Orem, Utah
3	Hysan Dalton	Sr.	DB	6-2	191	Athens, Ga.	22	Sha'Heem Taylor	Jr.	DB	6-2	178	Moreno, Calif.	55	Austin Leykam	5th	OL	6-2	282	Lake Oswego, Ore.
3	Joshua Wood	Sr.	QB	6-3	215	Graham, Wash.	23	Jerry Allen III	Fr.	DB	6-2	191	Spokane, Wash.	57	Jayden Fernandez	So.	LS	6-2	175	Temecula, Calif.
4	Tony Harste	Jr.	WR	5-11	180	Puyallup, Wash.	24	Kenny Golston	Fr.	RB	6-0	225	Valliant, Okla.	58	Kingston Kerkhoff	Fr.	OL	6-6	290	Tacoma, Wash.
4	Khaled Rawls	Jr.	DB	5-10	190	Walls, Miss.	24	Jayden Rice-Claiborne	So.	DB	6-0	186	Tacoma, Wash.	59	Jace Winchester	Fr.	OL	6-3	286	Littleton, Colo.
5	Holden Bea	Jr.	QB	6-2	220	Washougal, Wash.	25	Carlos Matheney	Sr.	RB	5-10	210	Olympia, Wash.	62	Cameron Glenn	So.	OL	6-4	297	Springfield, Ore.
5	Mika Roberson	Jr.	DB	5-11	178	Graham, Wash.	26	Tsiyown Lowery	So.	DB	6-1	199	Maple Valley, Wash.	63	Ryan Holmes	So.	OL	6-1	281	West Linn, Ore.
6	Trais Higgins	5th	WR	5-11	202	Nampa, Idaho	27	Luca Moore	Fr.	S	6-0	189	Anacortes, Wash.	66	Ryan Kawalek	Jr.	OL	6-3	305	La Center, Wash.
6	Tyrane Stewart	5th	DB	5-11	182	Osyka, Miss.	28	Jermell Green	Fr.	DB	6-4	173	Sacramento, Calif.	67	Tyler Skinner	Sr.	OL	6-4	319	Moscow, Idaho
7	Damonte Bias	Jr.	RB	5-11	190	Lawndale, Calif.	28	Ferrari Miller	Jr.	RB	5-10	233	Oakland, Calif.	68	Charlie Vliem	Sr.	OL	6-8	295	Duvall, Wash.
7	Aaron Kinsey	Jr.	DB	5-11	191	Spokane, Wash.	30	Taeshawn Reese	So.	RB	5-10	196	Meridian, Idaho	70	Zach Penner	Sr.	OL	6-4	305	Eagle, Idaho
8	Tim Jackson	5th	S	6-5	203	Van Nuys, Calif.	33	Julian Lee	Sr.	DL	6-6	292	Lacey, Wash.	71	Howard Stedford	Sr.	OL	6-4	328	Meriden, Conn.
8	Jackson Weng	Sr.	WR	6-2	218	Orange, Calif.	34	Geovoney Burks	Fr.	LB	6-1	218	Portland, Ore.	72	Gabe Staszak	Jr.	OL	6-6	287	Medford, Ore.
10	Jamarion Augustus	Sr.	DE	6-3	241	Montgomery, Ala.	35	Nathan Tweit	Fr.	DB	6-3	194	Kendrick, Idaho	73	Nathan Pritchard	Sr.	OL	6-5	322	Auburn, Wash.
10	Nolan McWilliams	So.	WR	5-10	186	Auburn, Wash.	36	Ta'ulelei Mareko	Fr.	LB	6-1	210	Lacey, Wash.	74	Omar Kaba	Fr.	OL	6-4	303	Mesa, Ariz.
11	Zack Card	Sr.	WR	5-9	166	Brentwood, Calif.	37	Hayden Kincheloe	5th	RB	5-10	229	Homedale, Idaho	75	LeRonn Nelson	So.	OL	6-5	301	Sacramento, Calif.
11	Darrell Gipson Jr.	Jr.	LB	6-1	233	Lacey, Wash.	37	Ocean Taufa	Fr.	DL	6-3	265	St. George, Utah	77	Kaden Haeckel	Jr.	OL	6-5	309	Peoria, Ariz.
12	Brody Michael	So.	S	6-0	200	Queen Creek, Ariz.	38	Nash O'Kelley	Fr.	LB	6-2	228	Boise, Idaho	81	Noah West-Baranco	Jr.	TE	6-4	231	Nampa, Idaho
12	Kage Repenn	Jr.	WR	6-1	207	Ravensdale, Wash.	39	Jacob Skobis	5th	DB	5-8	177	Downey, Calif.	82	Tristan Baker	Fr.	WR	6-1	193	Lacey, Wash.
13	Chance Bogan	5th	TE	6-3	228	Tacoma, Wash.	40	Harrison Deshazer	So.	DL	6-5	242	Washougal, Wash.	83	Dom Wolthuis	Fr.	WR	6-1	182	Eagle, Idaho
13	La'anui Meyers	Fr.	DL	6-3	235	Hai'ula, Hawaii	41	Mason Krahm	So.	DL	6-2	239	Nampa, Idaho	84	Joseph Vinup	So.	WR	5-11	180	Oceanside, Calif.
14	Kai Richardson	Jr.	DE	6-4	250	Puyallup, Wash.	42	Ryder Bordner	Sr.	LB	6-1	227	Boise, Idaho	85	Mason Culmer	So.	TE	6-4	240	Chandler, Ariz.
14	Sawyer Teeney	So.	QB	5-11	195	Silverton, Ore.	43	Nikko Speer	So.	LB	6-2	230	Camas, Wash.	86	Cal Huish	Fr.	TE	6-5	255	Eagle, Idaho
15	Daveon Superales	So.	WR	6-1	191	Graham, Wash.	44	Cruz Hepburn	5th	LB	6-1	220	Lewiston, Idaho	87	Ethan Rodriguez	Fr.	TE	6-5	223	Rochester, Wash.
15	Zach Wusstig	Sr.	S	6-1	199	Jefferson, Ore.	45	Mitchel Jaskowiak	5th	DL	6-3	274	Glencoe, Minn.	88	Gus Donnerberg	Jr.	TE	6-3	242	West Linn, Ore.
16	Javen Augustus	Sr.	DE	6-4	240	Montgomery, Ala.	47	Da'Vaughn Robinson	Jr.	DL	6-1	250	Avondale, Ariz.	89	Ryan Jezioro	Jr.	WR	6-3	213	Peoria, Ariz.
16	Blitz McCarty	Fr.	QB	6-3	184	Denver, Colo.	48	Owen Forsman	Jr.	K	6-0	199	Rathdrum, Idaho	89	Tyler Kinsman	Jr.	K	6-5	243	Nampa, Idaho
18	Deion Gunn	Jr.	DB	5-11	181	Center Point, Ala.	49	Tommy O'Sullivan	Jr.	LS	5-11	220	Wantagh, N.Y.	91	Cameron Pope	5th	K	5-10	175	East Wenatchee, Wash.
18	Jayden Homuth	Sr.	TE	6-7	236	Burnsville, Minn.	50	Mason McKenna	Fr.	DE	6-3	230	Boise, Idaho	97	Frederick Lujan III	Sr.	DL	6-1	266	Chino Hills, Calif.
							50	Layton Vining	Sr.	OL	6-2	288	Peoria, Ariz.	98	Hikifo'Ou Maile	5th	DL	6-3	315	Oakland, Calif.
							51	Leon Evans	Jr.	OL	6-4	305	Eagle, Idaho	99	Luke Teskey	5th	DE	6-2	265	New Westminster, B.C.

Mose

From page 2

He's the first in his immediate family to play college sports. He's hoping to see others follow in his footsteps.

"I think I've definitely set the example in terms of being able to go out there and be independent but also have fun," he said. "There's more in life, there's more you can do outside of Texas, outside of football. But also knowing you can go to school without our parents having to worry about that was the biggest thing I wanted to set for them."

Family is an important aspect in the Tongan culture. Mose experienced that growing up in Euless, Texas, which is in the Mid-Cities region between Fort Worth and Dallas in northern Texas.

A large Tongan community began to develop there long before Mose was born. It started in the 1970s when American Airlines moved its headquarters to the newly created Dallas Fort Worth International Airport.

Working for the airline industry gave Mose's parents, like many Tongans, flight benefits to travel back to the islands in the South Pacific Ocean. They were also able to set down roots in a place where the cost of living was doable.

"My parents, the biggest thing for me was just keeping your head down and working hard and just quieting all the noise," he said. "Watching my parents growing up, they were both hard workers. That was big in the Tongan culture of showing the younger generations how to do things without telling them."

The Tongan culture in Euless shined at Trinity High School, a powerhouse program in Texas Class 6A football. The Trojans won three state titles in the 2000s and have sent players on to NCAA Division I, including two of Mose's cousins, Sosaia and Manase Mose, who went on to FBS team North Texas.

Nai Mose was drawn in by the Polynesian presence in the high school football program. The players would do a traditional, ceremonial Tongan war dance, the Sipi Tau, before games that could shock the opponents but captivated him.

"I fell in love with playing football but also idolized my high school team growing up," he said. "All those guys were big and scary, and so just looking up to them when I was young, it made me want to be a part of that team."

Mose excelled as he earned 6A All-District first-team honors three times. He was also the co-defensive MVP as a senior in 2021 after he was the defensive newcomer of the year as a sophomore in 2019.



SHANNA MADISON, MISSOULIAN

Montana linebacker Nai Mose pursues Northern Colorado quarterback Brayten Silbor during the college football game against Northern Colorado on Oct. 3 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula. Mose is from Euless, Texas.

The physical style of play at Trinity spoke to Mose. A hard-nosed mentality was instilled in him growing up. He counts roughly 40 first cousins who he grew up around in Texas, so he didn't have to look too far to find people to play sports or other games with.

"One of the main things was just always being tough, always being determined," he said. "Also being respectful to those around. Being part of that Polynesian culture and growing up in that family, it kind of shaped who I am today and how I go about things as well."

He has rode all his life lessons to Montana, where he has started the past three games. He has shown his physicality and athleticism as he has led the team in tackles in each of the previous four weeks.

He has done that while playing the weak-side linebacker position. He's better suited for the middle linebacker position and began the year there, defensive coordinator and linebackers coach Eric Sanders said.

Peyton Wing locked down the middle linebacker spot, but Sanders wanted Mose on the field and saw the weakside linebacker role as a way to achieve that. Mose and Wing both set the defensive front together, Sanders said.

"He's just a really savvy, space-aware player," he said of Mose. "His strength

is being off the ball, reacting to blocking schemes, slipping blockers. He's a really good blitzter. We call it the Eurostep; he gives the guy the jab and goes underneath. He's fast, plays fast and decisive. That's what you need, far more than doing the perfect thing."

Mose had joined Montana after a breakout senior season in 2025 at Georgetown when he earned All-Patriot League second-team honors. That came after his 2024 season was cut short by an injury.

He dislocated the ring finger on his left hand twice. The second time, part of the bone got chipped off. The scar is still clearly visible from where he had a surgery in which he had a metal pin inserted into his finger.

That injury in his second game made it a rough month for Mose. His father died on Aug. 19, 2024, just 12 days before the season opener. He returned from injury after missing six games and later got the special tattoo inked on his arm.

"Family as well as football, those two things were probably like the biggest things in my life, so that definitely broke me down," he said. "Just remembering that I still have younger siblings who are still looking up to me kind of kept pushing me."

"My family's doing well now. We're all closer. He's bringing us even closer than we were before."

Leaving home had left Mose feeling homesick early. Numerous family members came out to Georgetown over the years to watch him play. His mother and one of his brothers have made the trip to Missoula this season.

Thinking back to his why kept him going. Making new friends helped him feel more comfortable. He ended up following one of his friends on the team into majoring in anthropology at academically-focused Georgetown.

He's now working on a second degree, this one in criminology. He wants to go into law enforcement. The multitude of experiences across the country has him open to traveling anywhere to begin a career that will better his life.

Wherever he goes, he'll carry his father's ukulele that he was gifted in high school as well as the sentimental tattoo he sees every day.

"My family means everything to me," he said. "Everything that I do, I always think about my family. They're pretty much my why. They keep me going. They keep me on my feet."

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.

Buehler

From page 3

A: The lifting, they lighten it up a little bit because it's a long season. They're not killing us every week. Honestly, the diet's probably heavier because it's getting towards the point where you start to drop weight a little bit.

Q: Montana's offensive line has been a major point of growth for this year's squad, how cool has it been getting that recognition?

A: I mean, it's awesome. It's great that we get recognition. I'm glad that we're all coming together and working well as a unit.

Q: How much has (offensive line coach) Brent Meyers impacted the group this season?

A: He really makes sure we understand the scheme, like why we're doing what we're doing, which is really helpful. And then he's just making sure that we're being physical.

Q: Do you have any memories from the first few practices with him, anything that stands out?

A: I remember his wife getting here a couple weeks ago. That was awesome. He introduced her to all of us, and that was the first time we met her, so we were all pretty happy.

Q: How much fun is blocking for Eli Gillman?

A: It's awesome. I mean, he probably is the best running back from Montana, and we're happy to get to block for him.

Q: I'm sure you grew up coming to a lot of Griz games based on your your parents. Are there any specific games you remember that were the loudest, or just kind of the most impactful on you growing up?

A: I think it was my 12th birthday. They were playing



Montana offensive lineman Austin Buehler (55) prepares for a play during the college football game against Northern Colorado on Oct. 3 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula. Buehler is a Helena native who played for Capital.

SHANNA MADISON,
MISSOULIAN

MSU at home, and it was snowing and it was cold, and I remember they just put some belt to them. It was awesome.

Q: How much fun was the Helena Capital state title run?

A: It was awesome. I mean, a great group of guys, it was a great way to end your high school career.

Q: Where do you see the biggest points of growth for you as a player over your time here?

A: Definitely just me putting on weight, getting stronger, and just getting more comfortable with my technique and how I play.

Q: Are there any foods that are super helpful

when you're putting on weight?

A: Whole milk is really helpful. Even when you're full, you can keep drinking milk, so that helps.

Q: You grew up around this university as a fan and as a kid coming to these games. Now that you're as involved as you can get with Griz football, is there anything that's changed in your view of UM?

A: I mean, it's a grind. College football is a grind. It's competitive, it's physical, and that's how I like Montana.

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

A: Fishing, hunting,

that's about it.

Q: Have you gotten any hunting in during shoulder season?

A: I have not done any, no. I'm hoping to maybe

on our bye week, we'll see.

Q: Have you got any favorite fishing spots?

A: Rock creek, Blackfoot, Bitterroot. Those are probably my favorites.

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

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