

SACRED HEART AT MONTANA • KICKOFF: 1 P.M. SATURDAY • TV: MTN • THURSDAY, OCT. 16, 2025

GRIZZLY GAME DAY

Missoulian

THE BUTTE FLASH

Mining City
upbringing fuels
senior Tanner Huff

BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Q&A WITH DE JAKE MASON, PAGE 3 • SPELTZ PICKS THE BIG SKY, PAGE 4 • ROSTERS, PAGE 5

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BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana safety Tanner Huff (29) celebrates during the college football game against Cal Poly on Oct. 11 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula. The Butte native was the Hauck Family special teams award winner as a junior in 2024.

HUFF IS A REAL GEM

Butte native stars as special teams ace for Grizzlies

FRANK GOGOLA | 406 MT Sports

Tanner Huff raced down the home sideline toward the south end zone at Washington-Grizzly Stadium, beat his man and took out the Indiana State punt returner by diving at his legs before popping up in celebration.

One week later, as teammate Kenzel Lawler went to wrap up an Idaho punt returner around the legs, Huff went flying toward the upper body to ensure a complete takedown with no possibility of escape near the north end zone.

The next week, Huff raced down the field on a punt and was in position to take a toss to prevent a touchback after Ian Finch fielded a bouncing ball and was about to have his momentum carry him into the end zone at Idaho State.

Such is the life of a high-level special teams contributor for Montana, where that third phase is embraced and where Huff, now a senior, has found a home by relying on lessons learned in his upbringing in tough-as-nails Butte.

“With that blue collar mindset growing up there – that’s what they have, it’s a mining town – just helps a lot,” he said prior to No. 4 Montana’s game against Sacred Heart at 1 p.m. Saturday at Washington-Grizzly Stadium.

“Especially this program, how we’re tested all the time, we’re told we need to have a blue collar mindset as well and come with our lunch box ready to go.”

For Huff, special teams is all about playing for the name across the chest of his jersey and not the one on the back. Being able to change a game at any moment is something he embraces. He especially loves the hitting aspect.

Combine that toughness with his speed and Grizzlies head coach Bobby Hauck called him “the Butte Flash” as he has starred again this fall after being the Hauck Family special teams award winner as a junior last season.

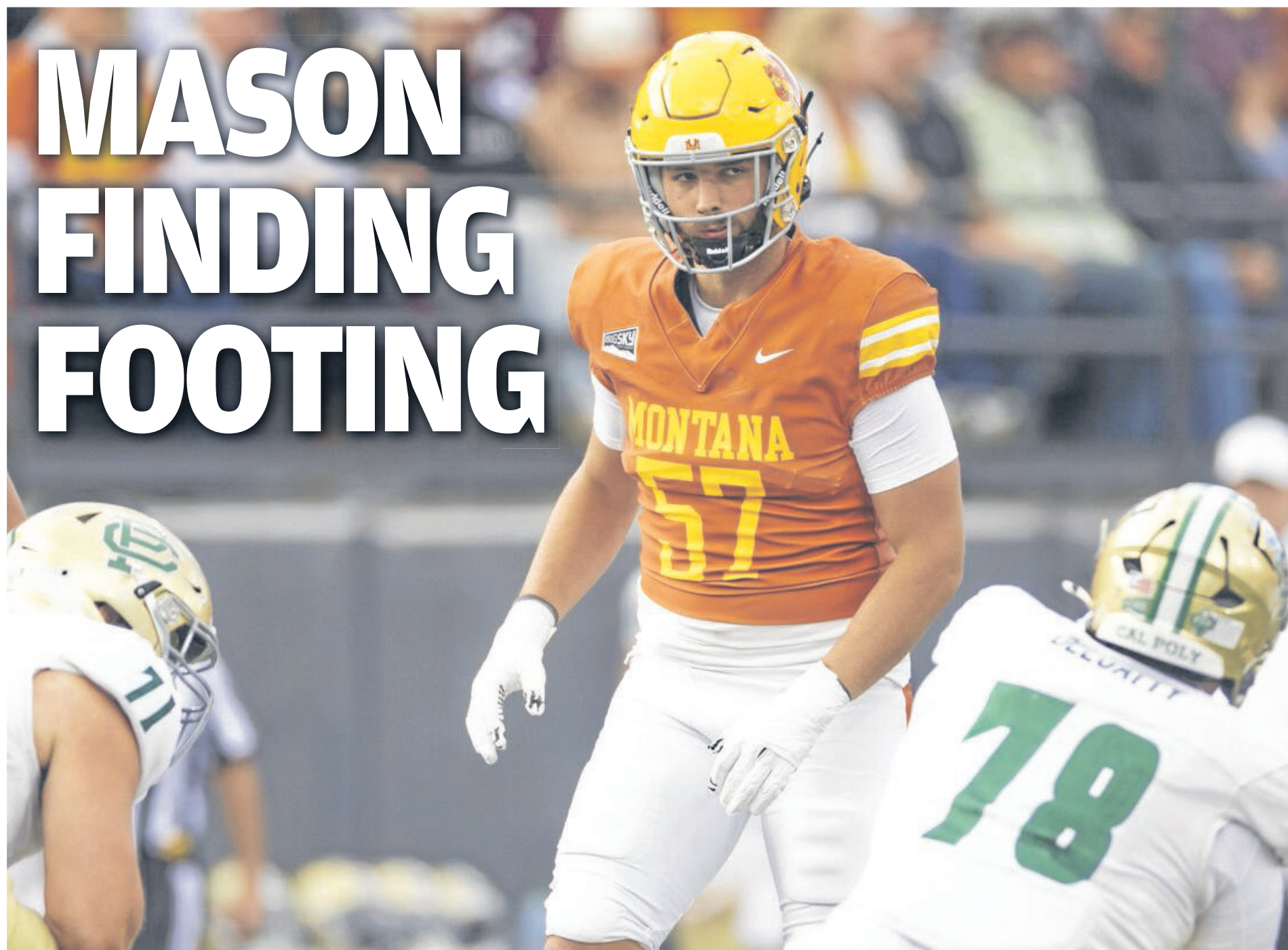
Hauck had coached Colt Anderson, “the Butte Missile,” an All-American safety who went on to the NFL. Anderson was “a huge idol” for Huff, who followed in the former walk-on’s footsteps over a decade later by testing himself at UM.

“I love being from Butte,” Huff said. “I take a lot of pride in it. It’s amazing. The community is tight knit, like here in Missoula. If something happens, there’s a family that’s willing to help out the other.”

“It was instilled in me right away. Just got to be tough and don’t show emotion to it!”

Huff had to quickly learn to be tough with two older siblings. It was his older sister, Taylor, who he credited with building up that toughness in him at a young age.

See HUFF, PAGE 6



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana defensive lineman Jake Mason (57) looks on during the college football game against Cal Poly on Oct. 11 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula. The sophomore had a career-high four tackles in the win at Idaho State earlier this month.

Washington native contributing more as defensive end

CARSON CASHION | 406 MT Sports

Grizzlies defensive end Jake Mason has begun to carve out a role on Montana's defensive line in his sec-

ond year in Missoula.

A Ferndale, Washington, native who transferred to Montana from Washington after the Huskies' 2023 national championship appearance, he tallied a career-high four total tackles, including 1.5 tackles for loss, against Idaho State.

His last tackle of the night came in the fourth quarter as the Bengals held a 3-point lead. Already at the Montana 33-yard line, ISU running back Dason Brooks

took a handoff needing just 1 yard for a first down. Mason brought down Brooks for a 1-yard loss, setting up a third-and-2 and an eventual turnover on downs after a fourth-down stop.

Eight minutes later, Michael Wortham found the end zone from 9 yards out, giving Montana the game-winning score.

Mason sat down with 406 MT Sports ahead of Montana's game against Sacred Heart at 1 p.m. Saturday in Washington-Grizzly Stadium. This interview has been

edited for brevity and clarity.

Q: You recorded a season-high four total tackles against Idaho State as well as 1.5 TFLs. What do you think contributed to your success?

A: Just trusting the game plan that our coaches gave us. They put us in a great spot to go out there and succeed over the weekend. That was probably the biggest thing for me.

See MASON, PAGE 7

HOW WE SEE THE BIG SKY

BILL SPELTZ | 406 MT Sports

This week's opponent for the fourth-ranked Montana Grizzlies is a football team you may not have even known exists. If so, you're not alone.

The Sacred Heart Pioneers haven't made big headlines in 26 years since moving up from NCAA Division II, losing in all four playoff appearances. Plus they're from the East Coast (Fairfield, Connecticut) and they're an independent — at least until next season when they join the Coastal Athletic Association.



**BILL
SPELTZ**

54-5



**CARSON
CASHION**

53-6



**FRANK
GOGOLA**

52-7



**VICTOR
FLORES**

51-8

rushing and 218 passing in a 42-35 overtime loss.

Last Saturday wasn't quite as balanced because Sacred Heart had so much success running the ball in a 32-14

Sacred Heart plays its home games at a stadium that seats 3,334 fans. Amazing to think they're in the same subdivision as the Griz, who welcomed a sellout crowd of 26,347 for homecoming last Saturday.

Maybe the most noteworthy nugget about Sacred Heart, other than its respectable 5-2 record, is that its head coach is in his 14th season. It's hard to find many FCS coaches like Mark Nofri who have stayed in the same place for so long. Either they move up or they get canned.

Nofri is a feelgood story. He came back from a colon cancer diagnosis in 2015 and his team is on track for its first winning season since 2021.

Sacred Heart has enjoyed impressive offensive balance lately. Three weeks ago, the Pioneers piled up 253 yards rushing and 213 passing in a 35-31 home win over Delaware State. One week later at Central Connecticut State, they had 219 yards



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana linebacker and Missoula Sentinel grad Geno Leonard (31) sings the fight song along with teammates after last Saturday's home win against Cal Poly. The Grizzlies will host Sacred Heart this Saturday.

home win over Howard. The Pioneers piled up 329 yards on the ground and 147 via the pass.

One reason the Grizzlies need to be paying attention in their first meeting with Sacred Heart is the Pioneers are a scoring machine. Over the past four weeks, they have averaged 33.3 points per game.

The place the Pioneers call home is a 375-year-old New England town known for its beautiful coastline. The population is around 60,000 and the area has consistently high rankings among wealthy towns in the U.S.

For fans of movies from the 1980s and 1990s, it may interest you that Meg Ryan (think "Sleepless in Seattle" and "When Harry Met Sally") was born and raised in Fairfield. Former tennis star James Blake was also raised there.

No matter how you look at Saturday, it's hard to bet against the Grizzlies. Sacred Heart has to travel cross country and may have trouble adjusting to Missoula's elevation (3,178 feet). Plus the Grizzlies have the better offense, defense and special teams on paper.

But Montana will need to guard against complacency with a nationally televised game at Sacramento State slated for next week. That intriguing contest will air on ESPN2.

Here's a look at Saturday's Big Sky Conference games:

Sacred Heart (5-2) at No. 4 Montana (6-0), 1 p.m. TV: Scripps Sports. How much has playing at elevation mattered for the Grizzlies' opponents in Montana's last

few home games? It's a matter of opinion, but consider North Dakota blew a fourth-quarter lead at Washington-Grizzly Stadium on Sept. 13 and last week Cal Poly sank like a stone after building a 9-0 halftime advantage. It's still hard to tell how good the Grizzlies are this season. Some feel they have a bad habit of playing to the level of their competition. They looked vulnerable in their one road game at Idaho State two weeks ago but they looked mighty good in the second half last Saturday with the help of 26,000-plus fans at home. There's no sense in nitpicking too much when the Griz have a perfect record. They'll win again this week because, well, they always win at home. Sacred Heart will put up some points but not nearly enough to pull an upset. **Speltz:** Grizzlies 42, Pioneers 30. **Cashion:** Montana 66, Sacred Heart 14. **Gogola:** Montana 52, Sacred Heart 13. **Flores:** Griz 45, Sacred Heart 14.

Northern Colorado (1-1, 3-3) at Sacramento State (1-1, 3-3), 7 p.m. TV: ESPN+. Staunch Griz fans might keep an eye on this game since Montana plays at Sacramento State a week from Friday. Yes, that's right, a week from Friday under the lights in a California showdown. The Hornets are an interesting bunch. They played second-ranked South Dakota State tough in Brookings in the opener for both teams, then a week later nearly knocked off FBS Nevada in Reno, dropping a 20-17 verdict. Sac State hasn't been nearly as impressive in recent weeks. The Hornets lost a 32-24 home

decision to Cal Poly three weeks ago but did bounce back nicely after a bye week, dumping Weber State in Ogden last Saturday, 55-27. Northern Colorado is also intriguing. The Bears scored a signature win last week when they knocked off then-11th-ranked Idaho in Moscow, 49-33. Two weeks prior, UNC lost at home to Idaho State, 26-18. This Hornet-Bear battle could be a close one and I'm going with the home team on homecoming.

Speltz: Hornets 32, Bears 23. **Cashion:** Sac State 31, Northern Colorado 20.

Gogola: UNC 41, Sac State 34. **Flores:** UNC 41, Sac 38.

No. 24 Idaho (0-2, 2-4) at Eastern Washington (1-1, 2-4), 5 p.m. TV: ESPN+. Hard to believe the Vandals are still ranked after losing three games in a row (Sept. 20 at San Jose State, Sept. 27 at Montana and last Saturday at home against Northern Colorado). It says something about the lack of depth when it comes to quality FCS teams. It's become the same thing every year, with North Dakota State, South Dakota State, Montana State and Montana dominating (throw maybe one other team in there occasionally). I enjoyed it more back in the days when James Madison, Appalachian State and Richmond were also strong contenders. The first two are FBS teams now. It's also kind of sad that Eastern Washington has fallen so far. The Eagles won the FCS title 15 years ago, in case you forgot. They beat winless Portland State in Cheney two weeks ago, but I'm betting they'll have trouble stopping the Vandals, who are hungry for their first league win. **Speltz:** Vandals 37, Eags 30. **Cashion:** Idaho 27, Eastern Washington 17. **Gogola:** Vandals 35, Eags 27. **Flores:** Idaho 35, EWU 24.

Weber State (0-2, 2-4) at Portland State (0-2, 0-6), 3 p.m. TV: ESPN+. Is this the week the Vics get their first win? It's possible sure. But they've lost every game except their clash at Eastern Washington by double digits. The Wildcats, on the other hand, had wins at McNeese State and at home against Butler in September. They've shown more potential and I'm picking them to win on the road. **Speltz:** Wildcats 27, Vics 18. **Cashion:** Portland State 28, Weber State 21. **Gogola:** PSU 28, WSU 24. **Flores:** PSU 31, Weber 27.

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

MONTANA GRIZZLIES ROSTER

No.	Name	Year	Position	Height	Weight	Hometown
0	Monte Gillman	R-Fr.	WR	5-8	162	Dassel, Minn.
0	Terahiti Wolfe	R-Fr.	S	5-11	173	Kahala'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 Oven	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 Hoefler	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-So.	OL	6-5	316	Beaverton, Ore.
80	Jamall 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	Connerville, 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 Sirmon	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

SACRED HEART PIONEERS

No.	Name	Year	Position	Height	Weight	Hometown
0	Ben Evee	Jr.	WR	6-2	171	Randolph, Mass.
0	Kenny Selby	Sr.	DB	5-11	193	Vineland, N.J.
2	Peter Schanne	Sr.	DL	6-3	255	Fairfield, Conn.
2	Curtis Whiting	Sr.	RB	5-10	202	Hackensack, N.J.
3	Matt Kling	Gr.	K	6-1	201	Canton, Ohio
3	Kevin McGuire	Gr.	WR	5-9	186	Los Angeles, Calif.
4	Elijah Ford	Gr.	WR	6-3	192	Coatesville, Pa.
4	Daimon Jacobs	Jr.	S	6-0	184	West Chester, Pa.
5	Gio Boone	Jr.	LB	6-1	193	Severn, Md.
5	Steven Dowdy Jr.	Fr.	WR	6-0	171	Bronx, N.Y.
6	Kyle Hall	Jr.	LB	6-0	192	Rahway, N.J.
6	Logan Lyson	Jr.	TE	6-3	242	Oceanside, N.Y.
7	Dameon Crosby	Fr.	QB	6-0	200	West Valley, Utah
7	Tyler Jameson	Sr.	S	6-2	218	Lawrence, N.J.
8	Luke Hackett	Jr.	LB	5-10	196	Gaithersburg, Md.
8	Jason Palmieri	Jr.	WR	5-10	182	Beacon Falls, Conn.
9	Teagan Brown	Sr.	WR	6-1	195	Severn, Md.
9	Michael Costigan Jr.	Gr.	QB	6-1	203	Wayne, Pa.
9	Kymari Latney	So.	S	6-0	193	Springfield, Mass.
10	Jahqir Haley	Sr.	DB	6-1	184	Hammonton, N.J.
10	Dean Hangey	So.	WR	6-0	173	Downington, Pa.
11	Myles Hamilton	So.	LB	6-2	225	Linden, N.J.
11	John Michalski	Jr.	QB	6-2	203	Staten Island, N.Y.
12	Amier Burdine	Jr.	DB	6-1	180	Reading, Pa.
12	Patrick Sullivan	Fr.	QB	6-2	200	Bel Air, Md.
13	Trey Eberhart III	Gr.	RB	5-9	204	Beaverton, Ore.
13	Jayden Miller	Fr.	DB	6-2	175	Amityville, N.Y.
14	Maximus Mongelli	Gr.	DB	6-0	195	Roslyn, N.Y.
14	Jack Snyder	So.	QB	6-0	177	Canton, Ohio
15	Jaden Haly	Fr.	QB	5-11	180	Myrtle Beach, N.C.
15	Elijah Nyahkoon	Sr.	OLB	6-1	197	Providence, R.I.
15	Nicholas Yanchuk	Jr.	RB	6-0	212	North Attleboro, Mass.
16	Merv Amazan	So.	WR	6-3	197	Waltham, Mass.
16	Matthias Lighten	So.	DB	6-4	174	Linden, N.J.
17	Miles Ellis	Gr.	DB	5-10	180	Richmond, Va.
17	Payton Rhoades	Gr.	WR	6-2	194	Lindale, Ga.
18	Ryan Deitelbaum	Fr.	WR	5-10	165	Naugatuck, Conn.
18	Zac Fearon	So.	DB	6-0	187	Shamong, N.J.
19	Todd Lambertson	Fr.	QB	6-2	195	Toms River, N.J.
19	Ryan McDonald	Fr.	S	5-10	193	Philadelphia, Pa.
20	Ryan Moore	Sr.	DB	5-11	200	Wyndmoor, Pa.
20	Mitchell Summers	Fr.	RB	5-7	155	Greensboro, N.C.
21	Tyshawn Moore	Fr.	DB	6-2	160	Richmond, Va.
22	BJ Lowery	Jr.	DB	5-10	173	Richmond, Va.
22	Tristen Pena	Jr.	DB	5-9	180	Stratford, Conn.
23	Chuck Webb	So.	RB	6-0	204	Roanoke, Va.
24	Justin Bloise	Sr.	WR	5-11	163	Nantucket, Mass.
24	George Inge	So.	DB	6-0	185	Pemberton, N.J.
25	Christian Aquino	Fr.	WR	5-11	175	Lindenhurst, N.Y.
25	Drew Kozak	Fr.	WR	5-10	165	Wappingers Falls, N.Y.
26	Charlie Bywalski	Fr.	WR/DB	6-1	190	Pittsburgh, Pa.
27	Ashton Davis	Fr.	DB	5-9	180	Brandywine, Md.
28	Logan Booker	Jr.	DB	6-0	211	Corning, N.Y.
28	Cooper Brushwood	Fr.	WR	5-10	180	State College, Pa.
29	Dylan Attard	Fr.	RB	5-10	205	Manhasset, N.Y.
29	Shakeel Johnson	Jr.	DB	5-10	173	Little Egg Harbor Township, N.J.
30	Dajuan Martin	Fr.	LB	6-2	224	Pleasantville, N.J.
31	Evan Alcide	Fr.	LB	6-1	225	Fallston, Md.
31	Michael Sbuttoni	Sr.	P	5-9	193	Ballston Lake, N.Y.
32	Jack Leuth	Fr.	LB	6-0	210	Sellersville, Pa.
33	Eli Jordan	Sr.	S	6-1	202	Mason, Ohio
34	Sean Guffey	Fr.	LB	6-2	220	Arlington, Va.
34	Cole Snider	So.	RB	5-10	214	Branford, Conn.
35	Mike Deitelbaum	Jr.	LB	5-11	203	Naugatuck, Conn.
35	Jalen Sutton	Fr.	DB	6-0	170	Hamden, Conn.
36	Igor Rzaaz	Jr.	K	5-11	190	Lindenhurst, N.Y.
36	Reese Tanner	Fr.	LB	6-0	215	Scranton, Pa.
37	Nolan Doerrie	Fr.	LB	6-2	242	Dix Hills, N.Y.
37	Sody Gantt	Fr.	DB	6-0	186	Cinnaminson, N.J.
38	Tom Costigan	So.	LB	6-0	217	Wayne, Pa.
39	Ryan Bockett	Fr.	K/P	6-1	215	Souderton, Pa.
39	Peter Costigan	Jr.	RB	5-11	183	Wayne, Pa.
40	Austin Hartman	Jr.	RB	5-5	182	Neversink, N.Y.
40	Cam Hughes	So.	LB	6-0	222	Brewer, Maine
41	Ayomide Cooper	Fr.	DL	6-2	228	Aurora, Colo.
41	Jack Hayes	So.	P	5-9	138	Andover, Mass.
42	Zach Hathaway	Sr.	DL	6-1	210	Southport, Conn.
42	DJ Williams	So.	RB	5-10	193	Youngstown, Ohio
43	Nick Verbitsky	Sr.	LB	6-0	220	Ridgefield, Conn.
44	Andrew Boyle	Jr.	LS	6-3	213	Verona, N.J.
44	Quincy Eutsay	Gr.	DE	6-2	240	Roxbury, Mass.
45	Josiah Aidoo	Fr.	OLB	6-2	245	Baltimore, Md.
46	Tristan Counter	Jr.	OLB	6-1	230	Redding, Conn.
46	Jack O'Sullivan	So.	P	6-4	219	Pearl River, N.Y.
47	Ryan Palmieri	Jr.	DB	5-10	190	Gibsonia, Pa.
48	Tom Ligji	Jr.	RB	5-9	192	Wolcott, Conn.
48	Ryan Lukis	Fr.	LS	5-11	175	Denville, N.J.
49	Ryan Gilchrist	Jr.	LB	6-1	216	Norwalk, Conn.
49	Nathan Tapley	Fr.	TE	6-4	240	Ocean City, Md.
50	Patrick Knewitz	Jr.	LS	6-1	200	Millburn, N.J.
51	Alex Torres	Jr.	LB	6-0	213	Granville, N.Y.
52	Ben Hughes	Fr.	DL	6-0	235	Arlington, Va.
54	Bayo Gbowu	Gr.	DL	6-0	245	Oceanside, N.Y.
55	Josh Fitzgerald	Jr.	OL	6-4	290	Youngstown, Ohio
55	Chase Shallow	Sr.	DL	6-0	298	Sudbury, Mass.
56	Gianni Principato	Gr.	OL	6-4	285	Linden, N.J.
56	Frank Siroufo	Fr.	DE	6-3	240	Lynbrook, N.Y.
57	Chase DeSanto	Fr.	OL	6-4		



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana safety Tanner Huff (29) celebrates during the college football game against Cal Poly on Oct. 11 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula. The Butte native has 11 tackles this year, including a career-high seven solo takedowns.

HUFF

Continued from page 2

Backyard games, like basketball, could turn into a fight, he said. He knew it was just sibling rivalries and they would always be there to support one another when needed.

Still, being able to stand up for himself was the message he got from his parents. Like his siblings, he had the competitive gene and went on to be all-state in multiple sports at Butte High.

"They made me who I am today," he said. "I couldn't thank them more than I can do. They'd bully me and I just got told to keep going. If you want to play with the big dogs, you got to be a big dog."

Toughness is a requirement at Montana that Huff had already been preparing for in the Mining City. In addition to being an all-state football player who finished sixth in Butte High history for career tackles, he was a wrestler.

He took the mat in the 205-pound weight class as a senior and qualified for state. He'd head from those grappling sessions straight to the weight room, a place where he credited his siblings with emphasizing its importance.

That all helped him grow his toughness both physically and mentally even more coming into NCAA Division I football.

"It definitely took it to another level, the mental aspect as well," he said. "Like I related to practices as winter condo, so just getting through wrestling. If I can make it through wrestling practice, there's no way that I can't make it through a winter condo session."

It was on the track where Huff aided his cause in getting a Griz offer. He won the Class AA 100- and 200-meter dashes and ran a leg on the title-winning 4x100 and 4x400 relay teams as a senior. He even placed fifth in the javelin.

He flipped his commitment from NAIA Montana Western about two weeks after

the state performance in Missoula. Bringing that athletic speed to UM, it took him that first year to get up to mental speed with the early learning curve.

He moved from receiver to cornerback to safety over the years while earning a spot on all four special teams units. He's gotten off to a hot start this fall and is on pace to have a career year in the tackling department.

"It's been everything and more," he said. "It was a dream come true when I committed. But then being here, you just got to step it up another level. Just don't take it for granted because this is what I worked my whole life for."

"I love it here. It's everything that I hoped for and more. It's kind of hard to put words into it. Just love being in Montana, being with my teammates."

When he arrived in Missoula, he didn't know how people made it five years in the program. Now in the back half of his final season, the time flew by faster than he imagined while also earning a degree in

business management.

He proved to himself he had the toughness to belong. He's playing at "an elite level," said Hauck, who came up with the nickname, which Huff hadn't heard before but found fitting because it highlights his "God-given abilities."

Throughout the journey in the Garden City, he's been grateful to still have the Butte community in his corner cheering him on while he gives them and all Griz fans something to cheer about.

"They'll always call, text, get in touch and say how proud they are of me, and it means a lot," he said. "It's family, friends, coaches and just cousins."

"They have my back if I ever need anything. I just want to make sure that they know that I have their back as well."

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.

MASON

Continued from page 3

Q: It felt like the Griz pass rush began to get home to the ISU backfield as the game progressed, was there anything that changed for the unit?

A: Partially some of the play calls, but also really just getting after it. It's been the biggest thing, especially in our group, not giving up on the play if you're blocked. Almost throwing a tantrum when you get an opportunity to go rush the passer, that's been the biggest thing for us. We've been working on as a group continuing to rush the passer even if we're being blocked, not giving up on the play.

Q: You spent your true freshman season with the Washington Huskies on their run to the College Football Playoff National Championship game. What was that experience like for you?

A: Coming in, it was a brand-new experience for me because, you know, coming out of high school, you don't really know what to expect when you get into college. It was eye-opening for me. I was very blessed to be able to play with those guys that I got the opportunity to play with. It kind of really opened my eyes to what college football was like, and it's special to play with guys like that when we have a team that successful.

Q: Once you got to Montana, I believe you started as a nose tackle before transitioning to the edge this season. What caused the change?

A: That would be as far as depth goes. Last year I was more needed at nose (tackle), and this year we were kind of thinner on the edge as we got into that transfer portal window. They bumped me out and I was able to keep my weight where it needed to be.

Q: Where do you think you've grown the most as a player in your time at Montana?

A: Definitely the use of my hands and my technique has been great — not great, it's still a work in progress — but it's been better than what it was last year. Just the point of attack, extension and block destruction have been the biggest things for me.

Q: What was your adjustment to Missoula like?

A: It's quite a bit like my hometown actually. We've got mountains around. It's a little hot in the summer, but it's in a little colder in the winter. But I've enjoyed it so far. It's been awesome.

Q: I was looking at Ferndale on a map, and it's closer to Vancouver than Seattle. Does that make you a Canucks fan?



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana defensive lineman Jake Mason (57) stands on the sideline during the college football game against Cal Poly on Oct. 11 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula. The sophomore is in his second year with the Grizzlies after he transferred from Washington.

A: No, Kraken fan. If I had to be a hockey fan, I'd be a Kraken fan. Huge Mariners fan though. Go M's.

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

A: Scheels is new to me. We don't really have anything like Scheels back home. The closest is probably Dick's Sporting Goods, but, I mean, Scheels is way nicer. As far as eating, Kobe Steakhouse has been cool, and then obviously down in Lolo, I'm big fan of the Lolo Creek Steakhouse, too. It's been good. It's nice having Chick-Fil-A in your hometown. We don't have one up north yet.

Q: What are you doing in your free time usually?

A: Usually a little bit of video games. I like to play golf with my roommates. I think that's fun. And then we go out on the river from time to time.

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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