INCARNATE WORD AT MONTANA • KICKOFF: 6 P.M. SATURDAY • TV: ESPNU • WEDNESDAY, NOV. 25, 2026

GRIZZLY GAME DAY

Missoulian



A REAL GEM

OL DYLAN JEMTEGAARD STAYS MOTIVATED THROUGH TRAGEDY

BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Q&A WITH QB KEALI'I AH YAT, PAGE 3 • SPELTZ PICKS THE BIG SKY, PAGE 4 • ROSTERS, PAGE 5



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana offensive lineman Dylan Jemtegaard warms up before the college football game against Idaho State on Nov. 14 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula. The Washington native has played in 13 games over his two seasons with the Grizzlies.

'THE PILLAR OF MY LIFE'

Jemtegaard perseveres through death of father in 6-year college journey

FRANK GOGOLA
406 MT Sports

Dylan Jemtegaard was dealt an unexpected blow in April 2023.

He had just wrapped up spring football camp with the California Golden Bears a week earlier when the earth-shattering news hit. His father, Shawn Jemtegaard, died in a reported road rage shooting on April 22.

Dylan was left with a dilemma: return for his third season as a college football offensive lineman in fall 2023 or drop out of school to be with his family. His father was a blue collar worker and the sole provider for the family of eight.

"It was something that's always weighed on me heavy since the loss of my dad," Dylan said ahead of Montana's game against Incarnate Word in the first round of the FCS playoffs at 6 p.m. Saturday at Washington-Grizzly Stadium.

"The kind of guilt of putting myself first and putting my education first and maybe not giving my family all the support that they could need, but at the same time, trying to provide that kind of model for success hopefully that my siblings can strive for. It's certainly been a struggle."

Jemtegaard decided to stay on his full-ride scholarship at Cal, a prestigious academic school where he earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering while playing in six games as a backup over four seasons.

In 2025, he transferred to Montana, where he got another full-ride scholarship and has played in 13 games as a backup offensive lineman while working on finishing his Master of Business Administration this year.

Please see **JEMTEGAARD,** Page 6



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana quarterback Keali'i Ah Yat (8) scrambles against Montana State defensive end Zac Crews (36) during the college football game on Nov. 21 at Bobcat Stadium in Bozeman. Ah Yat has thrown for 3,532 yards and 31 touchdowns against six interceptions in 12 games this season.

'WHAT YOU DREAM ABOUT'

QB Ah Yat embraces leadership role going into 5th playoff game

CARSON CASHION
406 MT Sports

Keali'i Ah Yat entered his first playoff game for the Montana Grizzlies nearly two years ago in Brookings, South Dakota.

Then a redshirt freshman, the Grizzly quarterback and son of legendary Montana quarterback Brian Ah Yat, threw for two touchdowns in a losing effort to South Dakota State after splitting starts with Logan Fife throughout the 2024 campaign.

Now, with two regular seasons as the full-time starter under his belt, Ah Yat will guide Montana into the 2026 postseason against Incarnate Word Saturday in Missoula. It will be his fifth career postseason start. Across his first four playoff games, Ah Yat has thrown 10 touchdowns and three interceptions, two of those interceptions coming against the Jackrabbits in 2024, and is averaging 286.75 passing yards per game.

Ah Yat enters Saturday's first-round game just 6 yards shy of passing 9,000 career passing yards after a 2026 regular season that finished with 3,532 passing yards and 31 touchdowns to just six interceptions. He's also ran for four touchdowns this fall.

Ah Yat sat down with 406 MT Sports ahead of Montana's first-round playoff matchup against Incarnate Word at 6 p.m. Saturday in Washington-Grizzly Stadium. This interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

Please see **AH YAT,** Page 7

HOW WE SEE THE BIG SKY

BILL SPELTZ | 406 MT SPORTS

It's not easy getting up for the playoffs a week after getting your doors blown off by your rival.

That's the task at hand for the Montana football team Saturday night in a game that will air on ESPNU. The 11th-ranked Grizzlies will host 17th-ranked Incarnate Word seven days after dropping a 42-16 decision at Montana State.



FRANK GOGOLA

74-21

The Grizzlies would do well to focus on the positive first half they put forth in Bozeman, trailing the Cats 7-3 at the break. They might want to throw out the second half video, or at least not dwell on it.

The Griz are a good football team, make no mistake about it. It's just that they don't always play that way, especially on the road, where they're 2-3 this season.



BILL SPELTZ

74-21

The road part won't be a worry Saturday and the opponent is not defending FCS champion Montana State. However, Incarnate Word is no powder puff. The Cardinals are riding a six-game win streak and way back on Sept. 12 they gave 10th-ranked Northern Arizona a good test in Flagstaff before losing, 38-28.

Unlike the Grizzlies, Incarnate Word enjoyed a glorious Saturday last weekend. The Cardinals beat East Texas A&M, 66-3. Apparently East Texas A&M packed it in early this season because the team wasn't a punching bag in late August, playing Mercer (the 8th-seeded team in the playoffs) tough in a 23-15 loss in the annual FCS Kickoff game.



CARSON CASHION

72-23

You may recall Incarnate Word made the quarterfinals of the 2024 playoffs before being humbled at South Dakota State, 55-14. That result reaffirmed what most Montanans and Dakotans feel about the Southland Conference: It doesn't measure up to the Big Sky or the Missouri Valley.

If you're a Griz fan, the scariest thing about Incarnate Word might be its scoring potential. The Cardinals average 41.1 points per game, which is about three more than Montana. The Cards have also been better defensively, allowing 23.6 points per game to the Grizzlies' 29.4.



VICTOR FLORES

69-26

Montana fans may also be a little nervous when considering Incarnate Word's success passing the football. The Cardinals average close to 300 yards per game throwing the ball and about 182 yards running the ball.

But there again, we're talking about a Southland Conference team. Montana averages 300 yards per game passing and 175 rushing against tougher competition in the Big Sky.

Here's a look at Saturday's FCS playoff games involving Big Sky programs. Included are the final rankings for each team:



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana running back Eli Gillman (10) stiff arms Montana State defensive back Gianni Edwards (15) during the college football game on Nov. 21 at Bobcat Stadium in Bozeman. The Grizzlies will host Incarnate Word in the first round of the playoffs on Saturday.

No. 17 Incarnate Word (8-4) at No. 11 Montana (8-4), 6 p.m. TV: ESPNU/ESPN+. The Grizzlies' star senior running back, Eli Gillman, had a pedestrian performance against Montana State. He rushed for 62 yards on 16 carries with no touchdowns. Montana needs more out of him if it is going to make a deep run in the playoffs. If Gillman is gashing the defense, it takes pressure off Montana's quarterback. It also takes pressure off the Griz defense because those guys have more time to rest. Perhaps this will be the week Gillman delivers in a big game. If he doesn't, Montana will likely be in another shootout. We all know those games are a crapshoot. It's worth noting Incarnate Word has had success against Big Sky competition in recent years. In August of 2025, the Cardinals won a home game against Eastern Washington, 31-21. The crowd will play to Montana's advantage Saturday night — even if only 14,000 fans show up — and the weather may also help. Incarnate Word is located in San Antonio, Texas, where the forecast calls for a high of 71 degrees on Saturday. The forecast for Missoula Saturday calls for a high temperature of 42, with a game time temperature closer to freezing. That should help the Griz, although it doesn't guarantee anything. I remember covering the Grizzlies' playoff opener back in 2013 when they were pitted against warm-weather Coastal Carolina. The game time temperature was minus-5 and UM lost a stunner, 42-35. Montana should have enough firepower to fend off Incarnate Word but something tells me we're in for another close one since the Cardinals are coming in with a lot of confidence. **Bill Speltz:** Griz 37, Cardinals 31. **Frank Gogola:** Montana 38, Incarnate Word 31. **Carson Cashion:** Montana 38, Incarnate Word 28. **Victor Flores:** Griz 35, Cards 31.

Long Island (5-7) at No. 10 Northern Arizona (9-3): Long Island is just the third team to ever enter the FCS playoffs with a losing record. This year marks the Sharks' first postseason berth in eight seasons as a Division I program. They finished in a three-way tie for the Northeast Conference title and carry a two-game win streak into Saturday's game in Flagstaff. The Lumberjacks enjoyed their first nine-win season in 13 years, with victories over Montana and Idaho State on their resume. Northern Arizona averages 31.6 points per game and Long Island 15. The Jacks have won six of their last seven but they are beatable at home, dropping a 25-21 decision to Weber State two weeks ago in the Walkup Skydome. Northern Arizona hasn't won a playoff game since 2003, and their first-round triumph over McNeese State that year remains their only postseason victory. The Jacks will end the dry spell Saturday, in part because the Sharks don't have enough offensive firepower. **Speltz:** Jacks 30, Sharks 20. **Gogola:** Northern Arizona 42, LIU 21. **Cashion:** Northern Arizona 31, LIU 10. **Flores:** NAU 34, LIU 17.

No. 22 Idaho State (7-5) at No. 9 North Dakota (8-4): This could be a good one. Montana and Montana State football fans can attest, the Bengals are a tough out. They weren't quite good enough to beat the Grizzlies and Cats, but they did hold Idaho to five points in a win last Saturday. The Bengals may find comfort in knowing their first playoff game in 53 years will be contested in a climate-controlled dome. On the other hand, the Fighting Hawks have been mighty tough in the Alerus Center with a 6-0 home record. If I had to pick the underdog in any of the four playoff games involving Big Sky teams this week, this would be the one. But the Bengals, like the Montana Grizzlies, are a bit erratic on both sides of the ball. They'll need to put it all together to stun North Dakota. Two games stand out to me on the Fighting Hawks' schedule. They almost won at No. 7 Youngstown State on Halloween, dropping a 31-28 verdict, and they whipped No. 12 Illinois State in Grand Forks three weeks ago, 49-21. **Speltz:** Fighting Hawks 34, Bengals 27. **Gogola:** North Dakota 28, Idaho State 21. **Cashion:** North Dakota 21, Idaho State 17. **Flores:** UND 27, ISU 14.

No. 25 Western Illinois (8-4) at No. 14 Weber State (8-4): In their first season under head coach Eric Kjar, the Wildcats tied for second in the Big Sky standings at 7-2. That's impressive. Weber State closed the regular season with wins in six of its final seven games, including three victories over nationally ranked opponents. This weekend marks Weber State's first appearance in the playoffs since 2022. The Wildcats are pitted against a Leathernecks team that is riding a five-game win streak. But those wins all came in Ohio Valley Conference play. That league is a far cry from the Big Sky Conference. The Leathernecks have not traveled well this season, with a 3-3 mark on the road. They'll struggle to stay with the Wildcats in the rain Saturday afternoon. **Speltz:** Wildcats 28, Leathernecks 14. **Gogola:** Weber State 37, Western Illinois 30. **Cashion:** Weber State 35, Western Illinois 17. **Flores:** Weber 38, WIU 24.

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MONTANA GRIZZLIES

No.	Name	Year	Pos	Ht	Wt	Hometown
0	Monte Gillman	Jr.	RB	5-8	167	Dassel, Minn.
0	Gabe Stroud	Jr.	CB	5-11	185	Tyler, Texas
2	Hunter Haines	Jr.	S	6-2	212	West Linn, Ore.
2	Landon Ransom-Goelz	Sr.	WR	6-1	188	Trophy Club, Texas
3	Brooks Davis	Jr.	WR	6-0	180	Brentwood, Calif.
3	Jeilani Davis	Jr.	CB	6-0	201	Inglewood, Calif.
4	Luke Flowers	Jr.	QB	6-1	191	Rigby, Idaho
4	Dane Parker	Jr.	S	6-1	180	Puyallup, Wash.
5	Ian Finch	5th	WR	6-3	210	Missoula, Mont.
5	Hudson Schrader	Fr.	S	6-2	194	Los Gatos, Calif.
6	Chris Johnson II	Jr.	CB	6-1	190	Fort Worth, Texas
6	Legend Lyons	So.	WR	6-2	185	Covina, Calif.
7	Weston Adams	5th	WR	5-11	192	Shell, Wyo.
7	Kash Goicoechea	Jr.	S	6-1	199	Kalispell, Mont.
8	Keali'i Ah Yat	Sr.	QB	6-1	210	Kaneohe, Hawaii
8	Adama Fall	Gr.	S	6-3	210	Dakar, Senegal
9	Jordan Dever	Sr.	WR	6-0	175	Spokane, Wash.
9	Kougar Kappel	Fr.	S	6-0	178	Red Lodge, Mont.
10	Eli Gillman	5th	RB	6-0	215	Dassel, Minn.
10	Styles Goodman	So.	LB	6-2	230	Austin, Texas
11	Cameron Gurnsey	Sr.	WR	6-1	195	Butte, Mont.
11	Jayden Nicholas	Fr.	CB	6-0	168	Concord, Calif.
12	Elijah Brady	Sr.	CB	6-1	176	Seattle, Wash.
12	Gage Sliter	Sr.	QB	6-1	199	Kalispell, Mont.
13	Brock Beaner	So.	S	6-0	202	Anacortes, Wash.
13	Lekeldrick Bridges	Jr.	WR	5-11	175	Cedar Hill, Texas
14	DeAnte Gentry	So.	CB	5-11	170	Fort Worth, Texas
14	Korbin Hendrix	Sr.	WR	6-3	190	McKinney, Texas
16	Brady Jay	Fr.	QB	6-1	177	Moses Lake, Wash.
16	Braeden Orlandi	Sr.	S	6-1	200	Valley Springs, Calif.
17	Kade Boyd	Sr.	S	6-0	198	Billings, Mont.
17	Bridger Smith	So.	WR	6-1	178	Kalispell, Mont.
18	Devin Dunn	5th	DB	5-10	190	Chandler, Ariz.
18	Cody Schweikert	Jr.	QB	6-3	217	Columbia Falls, Mont.
19	Drew Price	So.	QB	5-10	179	Jacksonville, Fla.
19	Rodney Weatherspoon	Fr.	CB	6-0	170	Forth Worth, Texas
20	Sage Salopek	So.	CB	6-0	171	Seattle, Wash.
21	Ashton Paine	Sr.	DB	6-1	193	Tumwater, Wash.
21	Courtney Rogers	Fr.	RB	6-2	211	Blytheville, Ark.
23	Dane Kellner	Fr.	S	5-11	170	Honolulu, Hawaii
23	Dylan Paine	Gr.	RB	5-9	198	Tumwater, Wash.
24	Justin Eklund	5th	LB	6-2	235	Rocklin, Calif.
25	Brady Beaner	So.	S	6-0	191	Anacortes, Wash.
26	Chase Cook	So.	RB	5-11	197	Red Lodge, Mont.
27	Nohi Casco	Fr.	CB	5-11	195	Lahaina, Hawaii
28	Hashim Jones	So.	RB	6-0	200	Hartford, Conn.
29	Tanner Huff	Gr.	S	6-0	208	Butte, Mont.
30	Kade Cutler	5th	S	6-0	207	Phillipsburg, Mont.
31	Tanner Williams	Jr.	LB	6-1	218	Orange, Calif.
32	Peyton Wing	5th	LB	6-0	225	Sumner, Wash.
33	Taylor Jones	So.	LB	6-1	210	Missoula, Mont.
34	Parker Link	Fr.	S	5-10	191	Missoula, Mont.
35	Cooper Neer	Fr.	LB	6-3	202	Kennewick, Wash.
36	Garrett Speer	Jr.	DB	6-0	195	Sherwood, Ore.
37	Clay Oven	Sr.	LB	6-2	225	Billings, Mont.
38	Nai Mose	5th	LB	6-0	225	Euless, Texas
39	Fynn Ridgeway	Sr.	RB	6-1	208	Whitefish, Mont.
40	Colton Lentz	So.	LB	6-3	223	Nooksack, Wash.
41	Ryder Barinowski	Jr.	K	6-0	203	Whitefish, Mont.
42	Giovanni Pifferini	Sr.	DL	6-4	230	Placerville, Calif.
43	Cooper Cyphers	Fr.	DL	6-2	253	Fort Worth, Texas
44	Titus Rohrer	5th	TE	6-7	235	Bryan, Ohio
45	Wyatt Redding	5th	KP	6-1	212	Sumner, Wash.
46	Jo Silver	5th	KP	6-0	221	Fremont, Ohio
47	Jace Eastlick	Jr.	LS	6-3	222	Coeur d'Alene, Idaho
48	Isaac Keim	Jr.	DL	6-4	280	Kalispell, Mont.
49	Elijah Rincon	Fr.	DE	6-3	226	Hacienda Heights, Calif.
50	Sam Merriman	So.	LB	6-0	230	Seattle, Wash.
51	Spencer Tripp	So.	DL	5-11	268	Missoula, Mont.
53	Mac Olsen	Fr.	DL	6-4	253	Manti, Utah
54	Evan Pyron	Fr.	DE	6-3	244	Missoula, Mont.
55	Austin Buehler	Sr.	OL	6-5	295	Helena, Mont.
55	Zaiden Wallace	Jr.	DL	6-4	300	Ewa Beach, Hawaii
57	Jake Mason	Sr.	DL	6-2	265	Ferndale, Wash.
58	Solomon Tuliaupupu	Gr.	LB	6-3	260	Pomona, Calif.
59	Nui Tovey	So.	DE	6-3	250	Lake Oswego, Ore.
60	Wyatt Sandford	5th	OL	6-4	298	Coeur d'Alene, Idaho
61	Lincoln Hoefer	So.	OL	6-6	306	Everson, Wash.
62	Lincoln Senter	Fr.	OL	6-5	240	Great Falls, Mont.
63	Kaikoa Kanakaole	So.	OL	6-5	295	Kapa'a, Hawaii
64	Matt Hilden	Jr.	OL	6-6	304	Santa Rosa, Calif.
65	Dylan Jemtegaard	Gr.	OL	6-4	296	Yelm, Wash.
66	Ezra Meyer	So.	OL	6-5	292	Missoula, Mont.
68	Torin Jeske	Jr.	OL	6-6	295	Bozeman, Mont.
69	Trevor Steinbach	Jr.	OL	6-5	300	Sammamish, Wash.
70	Josiah West	Fr.	OL	6-6	317	Prosser, Wash.
71	Quinlan Hyatt	So.	OL	6-7	295	Spokane, Wash.
72	Jack D'Ambra	Gr.	OL	6-3	303	Wildomar, Calif.
74	Owen Liechti	Fr.	OL	6-7	250	Ankeny, Iowa
75	Dyllan Drummond	Jr.	OL	6-4	315	Tyler, Texas
76	Campbell Vandiver	Sr.	OT	6-8	285	Nashville, Tenn.
77	Carter Bowen	Sr.	OL	6-7	305	Dawson, Minn.
78	Lucas Freitas	Sr.	OL	6-6	310	Snoqualmie, Wash.
80	Malaki Davis	Fr.	TE	6-5	230	Tacoma, Wash.
81	Mariano Birdno	Jr.	TE	6-5	255	Flagstaff, Ariz.
82	Merek Fisher	Fr.	TE	6-6	238	Billings, Mont.
83	Dawson Hammond	Fr.	WR	6-0	176	Malta, Mont.
84	Grady Walker	Jr.	TE	6-4	235	Missoula, Mont.
85	Wesley Ehret	Fr.	WR	6-2	190	Belgrade, Mont.
86	William Snell	Fr.	WR	6-4	189	Billings, Mont.
87	Everett O'Donnell	Jr.	P	6-2	199	Melbourne, Aus.
88	Reese Brooks	So.	TE	6-4	230	Round Rock, Texas
89	Danny Sirmon	Jr.	TE	6-6	265	Missoula, Mont.
90	Tyler King	Sr.	DL	6-5	252	Happy Valley, Ore.
91	Cooper Buffington	So.	DL	6-4	275	Winfield, Iowa
92	Zekiel Seumalo	Sr.	DL	6-0	265	Kent, Wash.
94	Cole Harpole	So.	DL	6-3	240	Gunter, Texas
95	Manase Tupou	Jr.	DL	6-1	315	Kihei, Hawaii
96	Logan Knaevelsrud	So.	DL	6-4	252	Snoqualmie, Wash.
97	Hayden Schwartz	5th	DL	6-4	245	Jacksonville, Fla.
98	Derek Opitz	Fr.	DT	6-3	244	Helena, Mont.
99	Braydon Bailey	5th	DT	6-2	302	Kona, Hawaii

INCARNATE WORD CARDINALS

No.	Name	Year	Pos	Ht	Wt	Hometown
0	Christian Barney	3rd	LB	6-3	235	North Liberty, Iowa
0	Jamir Roberts	5th	WR	5-9	175	Owings Mills, Md
1	Mekhi Brown	5th	DB	6-3	230	Wauchula, Fla.
1	Lontrell Turner	4th	RB	5-11	190	Dallas, Texas
2	Isaiah Champagne	2nd	WR	5-10	180	Cecilia, La.
2	Jachai Pulley	4th	LB	6-1	230	Pasadena, Calif.
3	Tyrece Fairly-Diyem	4th	WR	6-2	240	Fresno, Calif.
3	Buddha Garrett	3rd	DB	6-0	200	Longview, Texas
4	Roy Alexander	5th	WR	5-10	205	Fort Meyers, Fla.
4	Declan Williams	5th	LB	6-2	245	Hamilton, Texas
5	Chase Carter	5th	DL	6-5	295	Brooklyn Park, Minn.
5	Zach Phipps	4th	WR	6-2	200	Diboll, Texas
6	Jacob Emmers	3rd	WR	6-0	190	Plano, Texas
6	Jeremiah Young	3rd	DL	6-0	255	Chandler, Ariz.
7	Patrick Batiste	4th	DB	6-0	175	Houston, Texas
7	Price Morgan	5th	WR	5-11	190	Round Rock, Texas
8	David Rasor	4th	QB	6-1	210	Newport Beach, Calif.
8	A.J. Tisdell	4th	DB	5-11	195	College Station, Texas
9	Emmett Brown	5th	QB	5-11	190	San Marcos, Calif.
9	Terrell Elliott	5th	DL	6-2	305	Garden City, Kan.
10	Isaiah Blair	4th	WR	5-11	194	Downey, Calif.
11	Cedric Lott Jr.	3rd	TE	6-6	220	Dallas, Texas
11	Chance Symons	4th	DL	6-3	250	Mitchell, Neb.
12	Jayden Hibbler	3rd	RB	5-8	180	Lubbock, Texas
12	Reece Sylvester	5th	DB	6-1	200	Houston, Texas
13	Daniel Berry	1st	WR	5-9	168	Pflugerville, Texas
13	Rome Jeffers	2nd	DB	6-0	195	Wylie, Texas
14	Patrick Bridges	3rd	WR	6-1	175	Sunnyside, Texas
14	Walt Gray	4th	DL	6-2	235	Wichita, Kan.
15	Jerome Baker Jr.	4th	LB	6-2	215	Detroit, Mich.
16	Jackson Fields	1st	QB	6-2	207	New Orleans, La.
16	Bukari Miles Jr.	3rd	DB	6-2	195	West Chester, Ohio
17	Jameson Garcia	4th	WR	6-1	200	Amarillo, Texas
17	Kaden Jammer	3rd	DB	5-9	180	Angleton, Texas
18	D'Arius Carmouche	4th	DB	6-0	170	Grand Prairie, Texas
19	Mikey Moshier	2nd	WR	6-2	215	Silsbee, Texas
19	Isaiah Pruitt	3rd	DB	5-11	195	Conroe, Texas
20	Braden Hay	5th	LB	6-2	230	Katy, Texas
21	Jabre Bevineau	5th	WR	6-3	185	Fullerton, Calif.
21	Keeson Wheeler	2nd	DB	6-0	190	Fort Walton Beach, Fla.
22	Jabrelle Asberry	2nd	LB	6-0	225	Fort Worth , Texas
22	Joey Bryson	5th	K	5-10	195	Lumberton, N.J.
23	Lamont Johnson-Burrell	4th	DB	6-3	190	Sacramento, Calif.
24	Jameer Dudley	4th	DB	6-2	210	Schertz, Texas
24	Damashja Harris	5th	RB	6-2	230	Tallahassee, Fla.
25	Keyon Butler	4th	RB	6-2	220	Fort Worth, Texas
25	Monty Hunt	5th	DB	6-0	175	McDonough, Ga.
26	Ethan Brown	1st	DB	6-0	200	Tyler, Texas
27	Tyree Roberson	1st	DB	6-0	175	Coppell, Texas
28	Tyrell Roberson	1st	DB	6-0	185	Coppell, Texas
29	Traveon Green	2nd	RB	5-9	195	Tomball, Texas
29	A.J. Williams	4th	DB	6-4	200	Hampton, Va.
30	Jordan Norwood	5th	LB	6-1	230	Highlands Ranch, Colo.
31	Pig Cage	5th	DB	5-9	200	Kenner, La.
32	Tomsen Vickery	2nd	DL	6-5	255	Dripping Springs, Texas
33	Marlon Cook	1st	DL	6-0	290	Houston, Texas
34	Leo Bisesi	4th	LB	6-0	235	San Antonio, Texas
35	Curtis Hood	3rd	DL	6-1	250	Fort Myers, Fla.
36	William Taylor III	1st	RB	5-9	195	Dallas, Texas
37	Ernest Acuna	1st	WR	6-1	173	San Antonio, Texas
38	James Montgomery	1st	WR	5-11	170	Austin, Texas
39	Ethan Chavez	2nd	DB	5-10	175	Deer Park, Texas
40	Ben Bays	1st	DL	6-5	240	Boerne, Texas
41	Justice Jordan	3rd	DL	6-2	220	Cincinnati, Ohio
42	Caleb Lewis	5th	DL	6-2	235	San Antonio, Texas
43	Connor Corwin	1st	LB	5-10	195	Frisco, Texas
44	Xavier Trotter	2nd	DL	6-3	280	Argyle, Texas
45	Logan Granville	4th	DL	6-3	285	Missouri City, Texas
45	Frank Riggins	4th	TE	6-4	280	San Antonio, Texas
46	Aidan Cardwell	2nd	TE	6-3	230	Junction, Texas
47	Dane Farley	4th	TE	6-1	240	Wylie, Texas
48	Efren Jasso	5th	P	6-2	245	Houston, Texas
49	Ethan Brumgard	3rd	K/P	5-11	185	Schertz, Texas
50	Jace Bardwell	3rd	DL	6-2	300	Flower Mound, Texas
52	Jonas Halbrook	3rd	LS	6-2	215	Humble, Texas
53	Andis Halfmann	1st	LS	5-10	150	Austin, Texas
55	Kam Newhouse	2nd	OL	6-3	325	Duncanville, Texas
56	Mike Stoker	4th	OL	6-6	310	Dallas, Texas
58	Colton Carter	2nd	OL	6-1	303	Fort Worth, Texas
59	Johnavion Dees	1st	OL	6-3	350	Troy, Texas
62	Cutter Smith	1st	OL	6-1	293	Lexington, Texas
63	Lamont Smith	2nd	OL	6-3	286	Elkhart, Texas
64	Ozzy Garcia	4th	OL	6-1	296	Donna, Texas
65	Easton Fulton	4th	OL	6-4	327	Rosebud, Texas
66	Hayden Henry	1st	OL	6-3	288	Beaumont, Texas
67	Chase Burns	4th	OL	6-4	294	Olathe, Kan.
69	Andres Barraza	4th	OL	6-4	342	Lubbock, Texas
71	Richard Grigg	2nd	OL	6-5	297	Austin, Texas
73	Matthew Lewis	2nd	OL	6-3	304	Richardson, Texas
74	Kunian Kuany	3rd	OL	6-3	290	Marshalltown, Iowa
75	Ryan Dirksen	5th	OL	6-6	322	Vancouver, Wash.
76	Kali'i Leomiti	1st	OL	6-3	347	Portland, Texas
77	Dylan Kirby	3rd	OL	6-6	300	Williamsburg, Va.
78	Adam May	4th	OL	6-6	305	Azle, Texas
79	Christian Fitchett	4th	OL	6-5	312	Cibolo, Texas
83	Jackson Smith	3rd	WR	5-7	160	Austin, Texas
84	Jackson Hancock	3rd	WR	5-10	170	Columbus, Texas
89	Evan Drake	2nd	TE	6-5	250	San Antonio, Texas
91	Lloyd Johnson	5th	DL	6-2	295	Hollywood, Fla.
95	Nick Rigas	4th	K	6-0	190	Dallas, Texas
96	David Brown	3rd	DL	6-1	305	San Antonio, Texas
99	Josh Gonzalez	5th	DL	6-3	315	San Antonio, Texas

Jemtegaard

From Page 2

Before losing his father, he was already determined to set an example for his siblings. All five of them — two brothers and three sisters — are younger than him and the oldest is 17 years old.

"It was always a motivation for me just to even show them that it was possible," he said. "Show them to set goals that you might think are ridiculous and just do your best to throw yourself right at it.

"From our background, it's difficult to make it to where you're getting a master's degree for free, so I'd like to think that I showed them the ropes for how they can pave their way through success. That's always been something that's in the back of my mind."

Dylan Jemtegaard pursued engineering because he was inspired by seeing his father in the construction field as a sheet metal worker. He liked watching things being built and liked the teamwork and project management required.

His father wanted better for him than to be a physical laborer in life, so getting a college degree was the way to go. He would think back to that when he went through a rigorous curriculum and had the added struggle of not finding anyone else on the Cal football team who was in the same major.

"His work ethic was a big thing that I learned," he said. "He was swinging the hammer and breaking his back. I watched him get up at 5 a.m. and come back after dinner almost every day my entire life and he never really took the time to complain.

"I'm the oldest of six, so I was super grateful for how much time he was still able to give all of me and my siblings and show us so much love. So, I've always just tried to take a perspective of there's always someone with worse issues and to really appreciate what I have and use that as a motivation."

Football wasn't always at the forefront for Jemtegaard. His family moved around Washington when he was in elementary school until they settled in Yelm, where he remained until he left home for college.

He described the city of approximately 12,000 about 60 miles southwest of Seattle as a place where the two things to do are play sports or get in trouble. He took the sports route, but it required a push at first.

"I was always kind of a little geeky kid, didn't get out much," he said. "They saw this big kid just coming to class and they thought it was kind of a waste of space. They came up to my parents, and they were begging them, make this kid come out to tryouts. I was like, no, please, I don't want to play any sports. They made me go out. I fell in love with it, loved the sport."



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana offensive lineman Dylan Jemtegaard is honored on Senior Day before the college football game against Idaho State on Nov. 14 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in Missoula. The Washington native played in six games over his first four college seasons with the Cal Golden Bears.

Jemtegaard and his father had developed a special relationship through sports, particularly on the football field.

His father coached him for a period in youth football after he started playing the sport in sixth grade. His father then watched on as he became a two-year starter on the Yelm High School varsity team.

"He was living vicariously through me by the time it was time for me to put the cleats on," Dylan said. "He really enjoyed that. I wasn't a huge sports guy when I was really getting into it. So, his love for the game and me seeing how much he liked it was also something that kept me going.

"So, even if I didn't love the game at all times, I knew that he loved the game for me and that I was going to do it for him regardless. So, now that he's not here, you know, I still think every day I love the game because he loved the game and he taught it to me."

Jemtegaard was a multi-sport athlete who also played basketball and competed on the track and field team throwing shot put and discus. His focus shifted to football when he started getting recruited after he matured physically and began training at Ford Sports Performance in Bellevue, Washington.

First came offers from Ivy League teams, then higher-level FCS teams, then Mountain West teams and then a Pac-12 offer. He chose Cal because it was his most high-level academic and athletic option, and his own love for football had been growing over the years.

"We're not in it for bashing heads," he said. "It's the relationships, it's the wins, it's the losses, it's the blood, sweat, and tears that you put in with everybody around you, and getting to know the coaching staff on a higher level. It's those kinds of rewarding experiences that I think lead you to play in college football."

Jemtegaard was sidelined his first college season in 2021. He tore the MCL, MPFL and meniscus in his knee during a fall camp practice, rehabbed for six months and returned for spring camp ahead of the 2022 season. Having missed out on early development contributed to not playing his second year.

He finally saw the field in 2023, the first season since his father died, as he appeared in six games on special teams and as a backup offensive lineman. The friendships he built at Cal and the relationships he found at Montana have continued to push him through losing a parent, something fellow seniors Jack D'Ambra, Nai Mose and Weston Adams have all experienced.

"Not a lot of people in the college scene have the opportunity to say that they have 100 of their closest friends at their back at any given moment," he said. "But you can say that as a Griz football player. You could say that, I know for me, as a Cal football player. The families that I've had have allowed me to continue to do what I need to do at the highest level."

Jemtegaard didn't play in a game in 2024 and entered the transfer portal. He was looking to attend another school to start a graduate degree and wanted to find a team that was competing for championships.

He joined a somewhat established Griz offensive line in 2025 and was a backup who appeared in six games. This year, he had been taking first-team reps at center in fall camp as the Griz had to find five new starters.

As they shuffled things around, he has been the backup right guard throughout the season, appearing in seven games. Offensive line coach Brent Myers has appreciated the smarts and leadership he brings to the room.

"Perseverance is a huge word that I've kind of fallen back on in my last five, six years now," Jemtegaard said. "Just putting your head down and working through it, no matter what's come my way. I think the experiences that I've had in my college career have really shown me that no matter what — whether it's injuries, traumatic loss, setbacks in the lineup — you can get through anything with hard work and determination and your brothers around you."

When he had hit the transfer portal, he had looked in the mirror and told himself there was no way he could skip out on an opportunity to continue playing. He said that to himself again when he had the opportunity to receive a medical waiver to return this fall for a sixth season.

He also wanted to finish his master's degree that he started last year, another notch in setting a good example for his siblings and bettering his outlook in life. He believes his father would be proud of him but at the same time would tell him not to be complacent when he still often thinks about him.

"Every single day, nearly every moment," he said. "That was the pillar of my life and the hero. It's never a passing moment where I don't try to live my life in the model that he would appreciate."

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Ah Yat

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Q: The last time we talked for one of these Q&A's was last December during the 2025 postseason run. What has changed the most in your life since then?

A: First and foremost, I would say my leadership. Not being afraid to speak on the field and let my voice be heard from what I see, just preaching what the coaches are telling us. So I'd say one, being a better leader on the field, and just I think I'm just being more mature, growing into a man.

Q: Have you had more of a sense of comfortability this season in your second year as the full-time starter?

A: Oh for sure. Going into my fourth year, there's a ton of comfortability just with the guys and the program, knowing what to expect every day. There's a ton, but I can't be satisfied and be complacent with that, have to keep working.

Q: Were there any games this year, or even last year, that you feel like were big learning moments?

A: Every game has its own learning experiences. I can't really think of one more than another. I mean, North Dakota was a big learning game last year with the adversity and then coming out with a win. But every game has new experiences, new things to learn from, and I just take the good and the bad from each one.

Q: What have you tried to add to your game this season?

A: I think I just wanted to be better at my deep ball and really be explosive in the passing game. I know we had a lot of short runs into long runs last year with Mike (Wortham Jr.), so I think it's being more explosive in the passing game and just being more efficient.

Q: I was going to ask about Mike, because now you've got Brooks who's an elite wide receiver in his own right. From playing with and throwing to those two over the past two seasons, what similarities and differences have you noticed?

A: I mean, they're both amazing. They're both great receivers. They're both explosive. They're both playmakers with the ball in their hands. They're both special receivers, special players. I was fortunate enough to play with both of them, I'm fortunate to have those as my receivers.

Q: What has it been like seeing Brooks' ascension this season?

A: He's just everywhere. He worked tremendously hard throughout the offseason. I think his strength and his ability to go after the catch has been amazing. I think he's just working hard and everything has gotten better.



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana quarterback Keali'i Ah Yat (8) scrambles during the college football game against Montana State on Nov. 21 at Bobcat Stadium in Bozeman. Ah Yat has rushed for 301 yards and 19 touchdowns in 43 career games.

Q: It's felt like you've been a little more willing to break off for runs recently than maybe earlier in the season. Is that something you're conscious of or is that more just related to the game scripts week to week?

A: I mean, yeah, I pick my shots for when I want to run and when I don't. That's not something I'm predetermining or saying I'm doing this one game and this other game. I mean, I'm just playing football, and I guess the chips fell that way where I wasn't running as much early on in the year. But every game is different.

Q: Seeing Eli's success this year and looking back on his decision to stay in Missoula, how special has that been?

A: It's amazing. Not a lot of people would have done what he has done, staying here for all five years. It speaks to the person he is and just the legacy that he's built here, and I know everyone in Montana's very blessed to have him.

Q: How excited are you for another playoff run with Montana?

A: I can't wait for playoff football. I mean, that's what you dream about.

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



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

Montana quarterback Keali'i Ah Yat (8) passes during the college football game against Montana State on Nov. 21 at Bobcat Stadium in Bozeman. Ah Yat has thrown for 8,994 yards and 72 touchdowns against 21 interceptions in 43 career games.



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