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GRIZZLIES TO FACE RUGGED LUMBERJACKS; NAU WITHOUT TOP RUNNING BACK

MISSOULA---

Montana and nationally-ranked Northern Arizona University, both beset by key injuries, will face each other on the Dornblaser Stadium gridiron Saturday at 1:30 in a game that may have many similarities to the Montana-Weber State game played in Ogden, Utah Sept. 30.

The Grizzlies will be outweighed even more than they were against Weber State, a team they edged 13-12.

But the Lumberjacks are coming to the Garden City without their top running back, sophomore Chris (Thunder) Thornton, who called it quits this week after a hamstring muscle, injured two weeks ago against Western Illinois, failed to respond to treatment.

Thornton reportedly will transfer out of the Flagstaff School at the end of the current semester, but his travel plans are uncertain.

Saturday's clash will be the second time the two schools have met in football. Last year, NAU trounced the Silvertips, 34-8 in Flagstaff, with Thornton, eligible to play for the Lumberjacks as a freshman, leading the way.

The Lumberjacks are sporting a nationally ranked 5-2 record, with wins over North Dakota, 39-10, Whittier College, 46-29, Omaha 41-13, Western Illinois, 34-0, and last week over Long Beach State, 26-21. Their two losses have been to Weber State, 28-29, and Eastern New Mexico, 0-7.

Montana's record is better, but the Grizzlies, 5-1, have not shown the powerful offense displayed/far by the Lumberjacks. The Arizona school, however, does consider Montana its biggest threat this season in perhaps working toward a post-season bowl invitation.
Montana Coach Jack Swarthout and his assistants hope that the Grizzlies perform even better than they did in the win over Weber State a month ago. The Grizzlies outhit the bigger Wildcats, and outgained them on the ground.

The loss of Thornton could be damaging to the Lumberjacks, but the Grizzlies can expect to see a lot of Thunder's replacement, 195-pound sophomore Joe Warner. Warner, against Long Beach State, rambled for 205 yards on 31 carries, scoring once and catching three passes for 41 yards.

Quarterbacking duties for the Lumberjacks are shared by junior Jim Velasquez and senior Ted James, both excellent passers. The two have combined to complete 73 of 149 passes for 1,038 yards and nine touchdowns.

The Arizona eleven has a powerful fullback in 202-pound Gary Barnes, who is carrying for a 4.7 average going into Saturday's fray.

Montana lost two defensive tackles for this week in the Idaho State game. Starter Bob Graham and replacement Mike Nicosia are nursing knee injuries, and the spot will be filled by sophomore Ole Hedstrom, with help from junior Fred Tubbs.

Hedstrom's starting spot in the offensive strong guard position will be taken over by either junior Butch Ortiz or junior Ell Dudley.

Montana assistant Wally Brown says the Grizzly coaching staff thinks their offense can score against Northern Arizona's defense, but that the outcome of the contest may depend on how well the Montana defense can contain the powerful Lumberjack offensive machine.

It will be the final home game for the Grizzlies, and the final game to be played on Dornblaser Stadium, which will step out in favor of a new University library.

The Grizzlies, already well ahead of last year's 1-8 record, could be on their way to the finest University record since 1947, when they won 7 and lost 4 under Coach Doug Fessenden. A win Saturday would make this a certainty.

Offensive starters for Montana will be ends Jim Kelly and Ron Baines, both juniors; tackles Lon Howard, junior, and Wes Applet, senior; guards Ortiz or Dudley and Herb White,
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all juniors; center Rick Sparks, junior; quarterback Ed Steiner, senior; halfbacks Willie Jones, senior, and Rick Strauss, junior, and fullback Bryan Magnuson, senior.

Defensively, the Grizzlies will start with ends Ken Jernberg, sophomore, and Larry Huggins, senior; tackles Hedstrom and John Stedham, both sophomores; middle guard Mike McCann, sophomore; linebackers Bob Beers, junior, and Rich Unruh, sophomore; and defensive backs Gary Smith, senior, and Mick O'Neill, Mace Gray and LaRue Nelson, all juniors.

Lumberjack offensive starters will be ends Jim Fuller and Sonny Campbell; tackles Arnold Lane and Ted Nelson; guards Ozie Slade and Gary Wedemeyer; center Mike Danielek; quarterback Velasquez; halfback Warner; flanker Rich O'Hara, and fullback Barnes.

Defensively, Lumberjack Coach Andy MacDonald will start ends Bill Hanna and Bud Wiedoff; tackles Larry Small and Terry Keeton; linebackers Ernie Redmond, Don Sam and Bob Smith; rover Jim Fuller; halfbacks Al Circosta and Chick Harris, and safety Bruce Branstrom.

The 12 Grizzly seniors playing their last home game are quarterbacks Jim Searles and Steiner; halfbacks Jones, Smith, and Don Molloy; fullbacks Magnuson and Rod Lung; tackles Graham and Appelt; ends Huggins and Gib Brumback, and punter Dewey Allen.