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Grizzlies southward bound in big sky resolved to get on winning track

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GRIZZLIES SOUTHWARD BOUND IN BIG SKY
RESOLVED TO GET ON WINNING TRACK

MISSOULA---

It's that time of year for New Year's resolutions, and the Montana Grizzlies have just one as far as basketball is concerned: Get on the winning track!

The chore won't be that easy, however, since the Grizzlies' next action comes on the road Friday and Saturday nights against Weber State College in Ogden, Utah, followed by a single game with Idaho State University in Pocatello Monday night.

Weber State has a history of being tough anywhere, but especially so on their home court. The Wildcats ran up a string of more than 40 straight wins at home until Montana Bobcats got their number last season.

Coaches Ron Nord and Bob Cope have made some "drastic" changes in their starting lineup for the weekend tilts, trying to come up with what they call "the most reactive" starting five they could garner.

Don Parsons will continue to start at center. The 6-6 pivot man from Richland, Washington is considered the most improved player on the Grizzly squad through the first seven games, which brought the Tips to a 2-5 record.

Parsons has raised his scoring average to 13.3 points per game, getting 35 in the last two games in Evansville, Ind. He has led Grizzly scoring in two games this year, and has been the leading rebounder in five. He leads Grizzly retrieving with 8.3 per game.

Cope, who works mostly with the big men on the Grizzly squad, said Parsons has overcome the problem of "trying to do too much at center." Cope added that now Parsons settled down to doing well at the things he should do.

Starting forwards this weekend will be 6-8 sophomore Tom Jones, who had been more
the leading Grizzly scorer at guard.

Starting guards will be 6-0 senior Rick Johnston and 6-1 sophomore John Cheek

"These five have worked well together in practice, and we'll stick with them exclusively unless injuries crop up," Nord said.

Nord and Cope separately wrote down the names of the five players they thought would work best together as starters, and both wrote down the same five.

In Weber State, they will be facing a team that has won five and lost but one. The Wildcats own wins over Colorado State, 71-61; Pan American, 85-79; Hawaii, 68-57; Indiana State, 71-66, and Southwest Louisiana, 88-81.

The last two, at the time they played Weber State, were ranked in the top ten among the nation's small colleges.

Weber's only loss was a 73-67 decision at the hands of the University of Arizona.

Big scorers for the Wildcats, who have averaged 75 points per game, have been 6-0 transfer guard Justus Thigpen, who tallied 24.4 per game at Flint, Mich. JC while shooting over 60 per cent, and is scoring 14.8 a game for the Wildcats so far this year; 6-8 senior center Dan Sparks, last year's leading scorer who is at 13.7 per game thus far, and 6-7 forward Larry Bergh, a junior scoring at an 11.2 clip.

Other top scorers are 6-7 forward Ted Bryant, 7.7; 6-5 forward Nolan Archibald, 7.5; 6-7 forward Gus Chatmon, 7.2, and 5-10 guard Roger Reid, 7.2. All are expected to see lots of action against the Grizzlies.

Sparks is the leading rebounder with 10.8 per game, followed by Bergh at 7.3.

Others travelling for the Grizzlies will be forwards Greg Hanson, Mark Agather, Steve Brown, Sid Rhinehart, Max Agather and Ron Madeen and guard Stan Yoder.