10-23-1999

Game Day Kaimin, October 23, 1999

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was for Alaska, which is where this tale begins.

Just outside of Anchorage in a town called Eagle River. Not quite the same Great White North of Jack London, polar bears or sled dogs, but still whipping winds, six month days, six month nights. It is here we find the beginnings of a Grizzly running back named Yohance Humphery who is tap dancing around defenders with a football in his hands, perhaps like no other runner ever has at Montana.

is for breakout season, which is what Humphery is having. In six games, he has galloped for 691 yards, caught 19 passes for soccer again.

is for greatness, which is what resulted from that soccer divorce.

is for honorable mention USA Today All-American, which Humphery was named in high school. "The coaches put me at running back, and I pretty much took it," Humphery says. "I played some wide receiver and on defense, but I always liked running with the ball most."

Did he ever. As a high school senior, Humphery ran for 1,200 yards in only eight games, was all-state on both offense and defense and took his team to a state title.

My father was raised in Watts and Compton. He didn’t want to bring his family up in that type of environment, and he asked for a transfer. We moved to Alaska when I was seven. It was quite a change."

"My father was raised in Watts and Compton," Humphery says. "He has that competitive look in his eyes every game (that) I love."
Grizzlies hope to avenge '97 home loss to Eagles

Scot Heisel

"Home-field advantage" is a term used loosely throughout the world of sports. Every team — from an NFL powerhouse to a little league cellar dweller — believes there is a certain edge gained when playing on familiar ground.

For Montana football fans, however, it's more than just an edge. It's a statement. The Grizzlies are 41-2 at home since the 1994-95 season. They've lost just seven games in Washington-Grizzly Stadium this decade.

While numbers like that might make more than a few teams around the nation cringe at the thought of playing in Missoula, there's at least one team that has fared pretty well in the Garden City. Three of the Grizzlies' seven home losses in the '90s have been the work of the Eastern Washington Eagles.

In 1997, the Montana defense gave up 653 yards of total offense and 20 fourth-quarter points to the Eagles. The 40-35 loss ended the Grizzlies' 30-game home winning streak. UM was the second-ranked team in the nation at the time.

"They pretty much dominated us," said linebacker Rylan Jollymore, who was a sophomore at the time. "They ran all over us. They're tough. They always play us tough."

And "tough" is a good way to describe this season's Eagle attack. Most Big Sky teams would be happy to have a running back who averages over 100 yards per game. The Eagles have two.

Sophomore running backs Jesse Chatman and Jovan Griffith have brought some punch to an Eagle offense that saw its star quarterback, junior Fred Salanoa, go down just weeks into the season with a knee injury.

But rushing defense hasn't been a problem this year for the Grizzlies. They are leading the league in that category and have held up nicely against the likes of Cal State-lem this year for the Grizzlies. They are currently vying with UM and Portland State for the top spot in the league. It's a crucial game for the Grizzlies, but that's nothing new:

"Every game is important for us since the Portland State loss," Humphery said. "Every game is a pinnacle game. We just have to put that aside and do what we came to do."

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Montana vs. Eastern Washington
Saturday.

And running back Yohance Humphery returned to practice on Wednesday after suffering a bruised hip against the Portland State loss," Humphery said. "Every game is a pinnacle game. We just have to put that aside and do what we came to do."

Drawing the Shades

This multimedia production addresses the issue of sexual violence by incorporating drama, music, and a slide presentation revealing the true stories of four survivors.

Performance Dates

Wednesday October 20th
Tuesday October 26th
Wednesday October 27th

Urey Lecture Hall 7-8pm

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Travis Walker
WEDE RECEIVER
4 - 109, SENIOR FROM PLENTWOD, MONT.

We all saw Travis pull off the stellar double-pass to Drew Miller during the Grizzlies victory over NAU. Drew was only a few steps from sneaking in for a score. Two weeks before, Travis pulled off a similar feat, this time against Cal State Fullerton. "The Claw," as he is known, is quick on his feet and always looking for ways to pick up extra yards. His ability to find open receivers and make big plays has been a key factor in the success of the Grizzly Offense.

Calvin Coleman
5 - 10, 175, SOPHOMORE FROM NICEVILLE, FLA.

"The Claw" has collected 29 tackles this season, 22 of them unassisted. He's also got one interception, complete with a return for 16 yards. Remember when we told you about how Travis and Calvin raced each other and Calvin won by two whole tenths of a second. That makes him the fastest man on the Griz. Beware "The Claw."

Grizzly Defense

Kickoff Return Team
Zikmund 81
Freshman Zikmund, from Harlowton, is in the process of making the transition from high school running back to college wide receiver. This season he's also made his presence felt on kickoffs, averaging 26 yards per return.

Grizzly Defense

Offense

Numerical Roster
Probable starters in BOLD

1 Tanner Hancock WR 5-8 175 Jr.
2 Michael Smith WR 6-0 180 Fr.
3 Troy Young FS 6-0 180 Sr.
4 Jeramy Watkins WR/PR 6-0 175 Sr.
5 John Growden QB 6-1 200 Fr.
6 Andy Fendrick QB/FS 6-3 195 Fr.
7 Drew Miller QB 6-1 200 Fr.
8 Jim Farris WR/Rtx 6-0 190 Jr.
9 Jason Miller FS 6-2 220 Jr.
10 Chris Lupsis QB/FS 6-1 180 Fr.
11 Chris Schwoegy RB 6-2 195 Fr.
12 Nick Walker RB 6-2 195 Fr.
13 Calen Thomas CB/DB 5-10 165 So.
14 Jeff Shoate CB/DB 5-11 180 Fr.
15 Dio Miles WR 6-2 190 So.
16 TJ Oakley WR 5-8 165 So.
17 Seth McDaniel RB 6-0 190 Fr.
21 Yohance Humphrey RB 5-10 190 So.
22 Tim Tate RB 6-0 195 Jr.
24 Brandon Cherri CB 5-10 165 Fr.
25 T.J. Sharp RB 5-8 185 So.
26 Tony Brown CB 6-1 200 Jr.
27 Damon Parker CB/DB 5-7 175 Fr.
29 Matt Thompson IWR 5-8 160 Jr.
30 Chris Drinkwater CB 5-10 175 Fr.
31 K. Happen K 6-1 177 Sr.
32 Dallas Nel LG 6-0 190 Fr.
33 Joe Barshop RB 6-0 190 Fr.
34 Brad Overza RB 5-10 180 Fr.
35 Andy Pete DE/LB 6-3 245 Jr.
36 Jeff Bailey FB 5-9 215 Jr.
37 Russ Ojima LB 6-0 200 Fr.
38 Pat McGinnis DE 6-0 215 Fr.
39 Matt Shenoo ILB 6-1 225 So.
40 Adam Bouder ILB 6-2 220 Jr.
41 Spencer Frederick TE 6-0 240 So.
42 John Fregin FB 5-11 220 Fr.
43 Jacob York LB 6-1 225 Fr.
44 Drummer Johnson LB 6-1 220 Jr.
47 Vince Huntsberger SS 5-11 190 So.
48 Dan Ojeda LB 5-8 195 Jr.
49 Jeff MacKenzee LB 6-1 218 Fr.
50 Brad Watson LB 6-1 210 Fr.
51 Ryan Jolyome ILB 6-2 235 Sr.
52 Chris Webb OL 6-4 245 Sr.
53 Chris Chambers LE 6-2 195 Fr.
54 Tony Pauser DE 6-1 215 Fr.
55 Marcus Wilson OLB 6-1 230 Sr.
56 Jeremy Osborn LB 6-0 215 Jr.
57 Corey Mettes DT 6-1 260 Jr.
58 Jendelh Schonherr DT 6-1 270 Fr.
59 Casey Ryan OG 6-4 225 So.
60 Dansie Olscher OG 6-3 225 Jr.
65 Matt Thuesen OG/GC 6-4 295 Jr.
66 Brian Peter DT 6-2 250 Fr.
67 Kamakana Kaimuloa DT 6-4 295 Jr.
68 Paul Moore LG 6-2 265 Sr.
69 Clay Short LG 6-2 275 Sr.
72 Kyle McFarland DT 6-4 300 Jr.
73 Thacher Szalay OG 6-5 295 So.
74 Chase Raymone OT 6-8 285 Jr.
75 Eric Rogers LT 6-6 265 Fr.
76 John Shangary DE 6-1 265 Jr.
77 Leif Thorsen OLT 6-4 295 Jr.
78 Rock Sanchez WR 5-9 170 Jr.
81 Troy Zikmund WR 5-11 185 Jr.
82 Travis Walker WR/PR 6-1 200 Fr.
84 Randy Atienza WR 6-0 190 Fr.
85 Clay Haines WR 5-10 180 Fr.
87 Jeff Panico WR 6-1 170 Jr.
89 Brad Johnson TE 6-5 240 Jr.
90 Curt Collins GT 6-0 260 Jr.
91 D.J. Cebula DT 6-2 295 Jr.
92 Tyler Martin DT 6-2 295 Sr.
94 Justin Klein DE 6-3 295 Sr.
95 Kelley Bryant DT 6-2 295 Sr.
96 Casey Williamson DE 6-3 295 Jr.
97 Horatio Fernandez DE 6-3 215 Fr.
98 Jason Flores TE 6-3 215 Jr.
99 Justin Brandin DE 6-3 205 Jr.
Offense

Jovan Griffith

Lend your hand.

Eastern Washington 1998 RECORD • 5-5 OVERALL, 4-4 BIG SKY
1999 RECORD • 4-3 OVERALL, 3-1 BIG SKY

Offense

Jovan Griffith

Lend your hand.

Defensive line
5-9, 197, Sophomore from Lompoc, Calif.

You want scary? Griffith runs the 40 in 4.5 seconds, a 235-pound, 6-foot-4-inch presses 335 pounds, has a 30.5-inch vertical leap and is the conference’s fourth ranked running back. He averages 6.4 yards per carry and his 117 total yards per game has him in prime position to be EWU’s Wt straight 1269 yard rusher. This is the stuff that weeps defensive coordinators up at night. Plus, Griffith just celebrated his 20th birthday. Yesterday, Montana will have no chance to spoil the party to get the “W”.

Eastem Washington vs. EWU Defense

Last season, Lentz sacked 10 tackles as Montana escaped with a 33-27 victory. This year Montana ranks the nation’s leading tackler, collecting 74 stops in five games. He was honored for having the “big hit” of the week against the Griz in ‘97, when the Eagles went on to win the “big hit” of the game’s second half.

Defensive line

4-3, 265, Junior from Spokane, Wash. Allen is second in the Big Sky Conference in sacks, having sufficed the QB 8 times already this season. This could mean the best things for Montana’s Drive Miller and his ailing shoulder. The Griz have been pleased as punch so far this season with the output of running back Vincent Humphrey, but he has his work cut out for him when it comes to eluding Allen, who already has 15 tackles for losses in the ‘99 campaign. If Yo-Yo can stay away from J.F.A., Montana might march to victory.

Numerical Roster

Probable starters in BOLD

1. LeVar McClary
2. Mario Sweet
3. Julian Williams
4. Lamont Brightful
5. Nick Reynolds
6. Joe Leven
7. Suzuki Charter
8. Jesse Chatman
9. Richard Nascimento
10. Peter Gomme
11. Lance Holmestad
12. Ela Martin
13. Troy Griggs
14. Jeff Baker
15. Trina Read
16. Anthony Griffin
17. Mike Coppley
18. Brad Packer
19. Troy Griggs
20. Lance Hattemer
21. Dave Kimball
22. Greg Beiser
23. Mike Olesen
24. Britt Lentz
25. Jovan Griffith
26. Pat Elltml
27. Patrick Edwards
28. Jovan Griffith
29. Zach Kimball
30. Wayne Timmons
31. Donald Ball
32. Sam Minch
33. Ryan Chiocho
34. Luke Vincent
35. Shaun McLain
36. Lavone Howard
37. David Kimball
38. Greg Beiser
39. Mike Coppley
40. Britt Lentz
41. Adam Zeiger
42. Broc Packer
43. David Alcala
44. Lance Knaevelsrud
45. Joe Leven
46. John Kane
47. Lance Hattemer
48. Jovan Smith
49. John Knaevelsrud
50. Jerry Miller
51. Hiram Phillips
52. Lance Hattemer
53. John Knaevelsrud
54. Nick Reynolds
55. Chris Polinder
56. Adam Chamberlain
57. Chris Samms
58. John Kane
59. Lance Knaevelsrud
60. Josh Martin
61. Amos Peniston
62. Adam Chamberlain
63. John Knaevelsrud
64. Brian Baugher
65. Scott Johnson
66. Robert Hall
67. Dario Moreno
68. Luke Fritz
69. Kutt Sigur
70. Tim Gutmann
71. Kevin Levington
72. Travis Elliott
73. Lance Balvis
74. Nick Bates
75. Dan Cunley
76. Elliott Smith
77. Adam Keller
78. Joe Zelnicki
79. Romanowski
80. Lance Gibson
81. Jeff Allen
82. Tyler Kneadtsrud
83. Marvin Smith
84. Kyle Determan
85. Dan Cunley
86. Elliott Smith
87. Adam Keller
88. Joe Zelnicki
89. Romanowski
90. Lance Gibson
91. Jeff Allen
92. Tyler Kneadtsrud
93. Marvin Smith
94. Kyle Determan

Kickoff Return Team

Brightful 4
Lend your hand.

Jovan Griffith

Offense

Jovan Griffith

Lend your hand.

Passing

Romewo 197, Sophomore from Lompoc, Calif.

You want scary? Griffith runs the 40 in 4.5 seconds, a 235-pound, 6-foot-4-inch presses 335 pounds, has a 30.5-inch vertical leap and is the conference’s fourth ranked running back. He averages 6.4 yards per carry and his 117 total yards per game has him in prime position to be EWU’s Wt straight 1269 yard rusher. This is the stuff that weeps defensive coordinators up at night. Plus, Griffith just celebrated his 20th birthday. Yesterday, Montana will have no chance to spoil the party to get the “W”.

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Kickoff Return Team

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Eastem Washington vs. EWU Offense

Lend your hand.
Matt Gouras
GameDay Karmn

This year the Big Sky leads the nation in scoring and coaches seem to agree why — the league simply has more talent.

So far, the conference's teams are averaging 34.2 points per game. If that mark stands, it will easily beat the previous conference record of 31.3 points per game set in 1984.

"Never has the conference as a whole scored this much," said Eric Capper, the Big Sky Conference's assistant commissioner in charge of media relations. "It's the highest output in all of Division I-AA."

Teams might finally be catching up with the high-flying ways of the Montana Grizzlies. Historically, other teams had to emulate UM or get left in the dust, said John Volek, head coach at Sacramento State.

"Montana sets the standard of what everyone else wants to become," he said.

Volek said prominent defenses are no longer blame for the high scores. They are just as good as ever, but the offenses are getting better and more diverse in their attack.

Teams built defenses to stop Montana, Volek said. This required a defense capable of stopping wide-open sets — shotgun formations with four or five wide-outs. He said that over the past few years, teams have amassed defensive lines with athletes capable of playing sideline to sideline.

"Teams have been recruiting for speed at these positions, but now they may be a little light," he said. This required a defense capable of stopping wide-open sets — shotgun formations with four or five wide-outs. He said that over the past few years, teams have amassed defensive lines with athletes capable of playing sideline to sideline.

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This year, the league is seeing a bunch of talent-ed runners heat up on these lines.

Matt Gouras
GameDay Karmn

"I think there are, simply put, a lot of talented players out there. The sentiment that the conference is in better shape overall, I-AA football is getting better athletes than ever," he said.

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The Big Sky Conference currently boasts three Payton Award Candidates. They are UM's Miller, Sac State's Roberts and PSTTs junior quarterback, Jimmy Blanchard. The Payton Award is given annually to the premier player in Division I-AA.

Bob Cole, UM offensive coordinator, agrees with the sentiment that the conference is in better shape than ever.

"I think there are, simply put, a lot of talented players on offense this year," he said. "I just think, overall, I-AA football is getting better athletes than they did in the past."
Nothing gets much better than college football Saturdays, especially in Montana. The air is crisp. The sky is blue. You get to the stadium early to enjoy all the tailgate parties. You enter Washington-Grizzly Stadium and watch the Griz run out of the tunnel. Drew Miller tosses 10 or 12 touchdowns. Tyler Martin gets four sacks. "Cotton Eye Joe" rings through Washington-Grizzly Stadium and the crowd goes nuts. The Griz win, you go home happy (maybe drunk) and then watch Oregon and Arizona play the late night game on FOX.

In my opinion, that's not a bad day.

But do you know what the players do on Saturdays besides playing the actual game? We don't just show up around noon and strap it up. No, there's a lot of preparation that goes into gameday. The stuff we do almost borderlines some kind of sacred religious ritual. So here's a rundown of what goes on before kickoff.

8 a.m. — Clock radio alarm goes off. I'm tired as hell, but ready to hit. I get up and check the weather. I see that it's sunny and thank God because playing (and standing) through an entire game in the cold is hell.

8:05 a.m. — Jump in the shower to wake myself up and get ready for the long day ahead.

8:20 a.m. — Put on my UM sweatshirt that I wear at every home game, brush my teeth, but don't shave. I don't know what it is, but I just have this thing about not shaving. Like most athletes, you want to keep everything the same and in the process you become superstitious. It's ridiculous, I know, but I swear it works.

8:50 a.m. — Begin to walk over to campus with my buddy and teammate Adam Boomer. He's usually not too talkative on gameday, so the walk is kind of boring.

8:55 a.m. — Boomer flags down Marcus Wilson and game cleats. Everything is wrapped up neatly.

9:05 a.m. — Eat breakfast, courtesy of UM Dining Services. Breakfast usually includes scrambled eggs, bacon, ham, pasta, french toast, steak, fruit, pastries and cereal. Some guys eat a lot, some don't at all. Guys talk a lot, joke and the environment is pretty loose. Coaches are reading the Missoulian, wanting to read the last minute comments.

9:30 a.m. — Just finishing off my seventh piece of bacon and am about full. I gotta eat a lot because I won't get any food for another nine hours.

9:45 a.m. — Start walking to McGill Hall for chapel. This is when guys quit talking or complaining that they wish they could play the game at that very moment. Anxiousness is probably the best word to describe gameday, and this is when that anxiety starts setting in.

10 a.m. — Father Jim Hogan asks us to relax and close our eyes to pray. The room is deathly silent in prayer, as if we were the Egyptians praying that God doesn't send another swarm of locusts.

10:05 a.m. — Father Hogan gives his message to the team, which is quite good today. He reads from the Bible and applies it well to our task at hand.

10:10 a.m. — Still listening and praying, but I can taste the bacon in my mouth and I'm extremely thirsty.

10:16 a.m. — Congratulate Father Hogan on a good sermon and head downstairs to the gym for walk through. I find a drinking fountain finally. Our walk through consists of the first 20 plays we want to run. Coach Cole calls them out and makes last minute comments on each play then, in his most eloquent terms, tells us to beat the other team.

10:27 a.m. — Walk down to the locker room, past all the Budweiser trucks unloading. See Bruce Wallwork and "Smoke" setting up the stage. Joke with Dan Oriozotti, but he punches me in the arm. He seems preoccupied, so I don't tease him anymore.

10:30 a.m. — Receive all my game gear: jersey, gloves, socks and game cleats. Everything is wrapped up neatly.

10:45 a.m. — Mill around for awhile because I'm going to have that damn uniform on for four hours today. Try to use the toilet but every one is being used.

10:55 a.m. — Still bored. Dream that Natalie Portman is in the stands today. Grab a piece of gum off the counter. Now I have minty fresh breath (for the opponents' benefit, of course).

11:01 a.m. — Put my pants on. Try to use the toilet again, but every one of them is full and the smell is worse than last time.

11:30 a.m. — Have positional meeting with the receivers. Coach gives a little pep talk and we turn in our scouting reports.

11:50 a.m. — Pretty much ready to hit the field. Socks are pulled up, my jersey is tucked in. Guys are looking in the mirror making sure everything is in place. Guys also roll up their sleeves to show off their arms. Glad I don't have to waste my time rolling because they're huge anyway.

12:01 p.m. — Specialty players hit the field and we circle up to stretch. Some of the hardcore, non-tailgating fans are there to watch.

12:05 p.m. — Catch some balls. Drop one. I'm pissed, but not too much.

12:28 p.m. — Rest of the team comes out and we run around the endzone and get into our lines. I wave and blow kisses to all the kickoff groupies in the stands. They go nuts.

12:43 p.m. — Coach Dennehy brings us together and gives a speech that I can never hear or understand. We head up the tunnel.

12:50 p.m. — Sit in the locker room while others yell inspirational phrases like, "War!" or "They're going down!" or "Let's bury their f---asses and p--- on them!"

12:52 p.m. — Guys get together for another prayer. I go off in a corner and think, pray and hope for a good game.

12:59 p.m. — Coach Dennehy calls for the captains and then kneels with us in prayer. Everybody is serious. Guys hold hands. At that moment, the team is literally one unit and is more close now than at any other time.

1:02 p.m. — We file into the tunnel. The lights are shut off and you can feel the electricity going through the air. We all chant (can't tell you what it is) and some jump around. Honestly, this is probably the most exciting part of the day. You feel like a giddy little kid who is getting out of the car in the Disneyland parking lot. Some act like a caged animal, slapping, quivering or hopping.

1:04 p.m. — Somebody starts up the smoke machines and everybody goes crazy and sprints onto the field. When I get to the smoke I take it slowly because I can't see a thing. But once I've cleared the smoke I'm met by 19,000 cheering fans. I feel good. I forget about the drop in temperature.

1:05 p.m. — I can't say for sure that we always kick off right at 1:05, but it's close. But the game is underway and I usually walk off the field happy. I've only experienced two losses since I've been here.

So there you have it, our pre-game ritual. It's pretty tedious, boring at times and drawn out, but in my opinion, it's a pretty good day.

By Matt Thompson

A look at the the game from a player living it...
Yohance Humphery from A to Z

"Durability was my biggest question," Dennehy said.

"But he has held up, and Yo has really been a go-to guy for us, and done a great job."

T is for rushing touchdowns, which Yohance is scoring in bunches. He is on pace to break Montana's record of 14 set by Dave Dickenson in 1995.

U is for unprecedented, which is what Yohance is doing, running for more yards as a sophomore than many UM backs have run for in a career.

V is for victories, of which Montana needs four more to assure a home playoff run, a Big Sky Championship and a shot at a ring that Yohance says he "wants more than anything."

W is for the wall in the locker room closest to the offensive line, on which hangs a chart, made up by Raynock, that keeps track of Humphery's rushing yards each game. On the chart is the name Steve Caputo, who owns the school record for rushing yards in a season with 1,253. Next to his name is Humphery's, with an empty box waiting to be filled in that reads: NEW SCHOOL RECORD.

X is for X-rays, of which Dennehy and Cole started this season hoping and praying Yohance wouldn't have to get. "I think our biggest question was could he go a whole season and stay healthy," Dennehy says. "Durability was my biggest question. But he has held up, and Yo has really been a go-to guy for us, and done a great job."

Y may as well be for Yohance, the African name that means God's gift.

Z could be for zeal or zest, which could describe Humphery's play this year. But it could also be the zip and zag manner which he is running through defenses. But in this case, we will simply say Z represents zero, as Yohance Humphery zeroes in on one of the finest seasons a Grizzly running back has ever had.