2-19-2000

Game Day Kaimin, February 19, 2000

Associated Students of the University of Montana

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.
Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/studentnewspaper

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.umt.edu/studentnewspaper/9302

This Newspaper is brought to you for free and open access by the Montana Kaimin at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Montana Kaimin by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.
When it comes to leading Montana into battle, Sam Riddle and Shane Christensen keep the Griz on point.

By Chad Dundas  Page 2

GRIZZLIES  vs.  Northern Arizona
“Shane, probably a little better scorer and Sammy is probably a little better with experience. Both boasted impressive credentials: Christensen had played in 26 games for the Grizzlies last season but had started only one; Riddle had spent the past three years as the state’s most exciting high school player. Neither had yet demonstrated the ability to lead a Division I basketball team on a consistent basis. The slightly older Christensen was given the starting job, but Riddle would see significant playing time as well. “The coaches believe in me more than me believing in myself,” Riddle said. “I have that also. I might not show it on my face, but you’ll see it in my play.”

“Jesus, Scooter, at least D him up if you’re going to play him,” hollers assistant coach Todd Schmata, a wide smile making its way across his face. “Noah, let’s just have fun.” Riddle says. “Everybody knows all we do all day is screw around.”

They both laugh and so do I, because the statement seems so absurd. You want to understand these two? Know this: On a team with something to prove after its first three years as the state’s most exciting high school player. Neither had yet demonstrated the ability to lead a Division I basketball team on a consistent basis. The slightly older Christensen was given the starting job, but Riddle would see significant playing time as well. “The coaches believe in me more than me believing in myself,” Riddle said. “I have that also. I might not show it on my face, but you’ll see it in my play.”

Riddle is a performer, he can’t help it. It runs in the family. His father was an original member of the Mission Mountain Wood Band. His parents encouraged his artistic growth his whole life. He sings. He plays piano. He defies gravity. He is far and away the most dangerous kind of athlete, the kind you don’t see coming. His slight build, short stature and freckled skin tones simply don’t seem capable, at first glance, of the feats that have become indicative of his game. You just don’t expect him to drive on you, shred your defense like cheddar and dunk on you. Scooter has kept a unusually low profile. His hushed demeanor and subdued attitude set him apart from the stereotype of his professional contemporaries as out-of-towners. Montana was good enough to keep him playing, but he wasn’t much for strategy. He now recalls that his favorite sport, Christensen, in fact, is quick to speak up when the subject is his fresh. “I’m just playing having fun. I’m just playing to make anybody feel bad.”

Riddle etched his name into local sport lore by so dominating the competition at the high school level that some people thought he was alief, arrogant. His game was an anomaly in the state of Montana AA, which is traditionally known for its tough defense and well-disciplined offense. Riddle’s sheer talent made his maverick tactics highly effective, and his confident swagger made him highly visible. While he collected scoring titles and MVP awards, he also garnered more than his fair share of criticism, mostly from opposing players and their parents. There were also reported personality clashes with his teammates. Hayward, himself a UM alum, who took a decidedly more old-school approach to the game. But amid the pressure, Riddle continued to thrive, seemingly undaunted. “People who have a negative opinion of me don’t know me at all,” he said. “If they see me make a nice move or a nice pass and then do a dance or something, all I’m doing is trying to have fun. I’m just playing the game the way I think it should be played. I’m just trying to make anybody feel bad.”

Christensen has been a ball hog for nothing. He now recalls that his favorite sport, Christensen, in fact, is quick to speak up when the subject is his fresh. “I’m just playing having fun. I’m just playing to make anybody feel bad.”

When I step on the court I see a guy and I think, you’re not Gary Payton, Damon Stoudamire, Greg Anthony, Trajen Langdon. Big strong guys. I was sing my own tune and my own way against those guys. That gets your adrenaline going. So now, when I step on the court I see a guy and I think, you’re not Gary Payton, so go ahead.

Since coming to Montana, and even after winning the starting point guard job, Scooter is building a new life for himself. He has moved to Los Angeles and is now living in a small studio apartment. He is still the same person he was in high school, but he has matured and grown. He is no longer the same player he was in high school, but he has matured and grown. He is no longer the same player he was in high school, but he has matured and grown.
Griz look to ambush Lumberjacks

Ryan Divish
Gameday Kaimin

If one doesn’t get you, the other one will. Stop one, the other steps up. You just hope both don’t get you at once.

The Big Sky Conference is filled with dynamite duos. But none sets a more deadly inside-outside combo than Northern Arizona’s Ross Land and Dan McClintock.

The two seniors lead the red hot Lumberjacks into the Adams Center to face an equally hot University of Montana men’s basketball team Saturday with serious title implications on the line.

Land and McClintock account for almost half of the Jacks’ 71 points per game and both rank in the top-10 of NAU’s career scoring list. The two combined for 42 points in an 85-72 defeat of the Griz on Jan. 20.

Land, the conference player of the week, has been particularly hot. The 6-5 shooting guard has scored 69 points in NAU’s last two games. He averages almost three three-point baskets per game and will be looking to exploit UM’s 2-3 zone.

Montana coach Don Holst said that in order to shut down NAU, the Griz must recognize where Land is on the court at all times.

“They run a bunch of stuff for him,” Holst said. “Against a zone, they’re going to try get him off some baseline screens, and they even screen the top of the zone. And he’s just lights out.”

While Land is bombing away from the parking lot, McClintock is taking up real estate inside. The seven-footer gave the Grizzlies a ton of problems in Flagstaff, scoring 18 points with seven boards and three blocked shots.

But NAU is not a two-man team.

“They’re real solid,” Holst said. “I expect they’ll play real strong man-to-man defense and rebound. They’re one of the better defensive teams in the conference.”

UM leads the conference in three-point shooting at 40 percent a game and shot a scorching 77 percent (10-13) from behind the arc last weekend. They face a tough test in the stingy Jack defense. NAU leads the conference in three-point field goal percentage defense, holding teams to less than 30 percent from behind the arc.

NAU’s duo of Land and McClintock will lock horns with Montana’s trio of Matt Williams, Mike Warhank and Jared Buckmaster.

Williams has been the most consistent Grizzly and leads the team in both scoring and rebounding. The red-hot Buckmaster has emerged as a major outside threat to go along with Warhank. The play of Montana’s point guards has been strong of late. Shane Christensen and Sam Riddle have done a solid job splitting time at the point. Senior Dominique Davis is playing in his final home game — along with Warhank and Williams — unless, of course, Montana can win the regular season title and host the conference tournament.

Westside Lanes
& Fun Center
Vegas Night
Every Saturday Starting at 9p.m.
(check in by 8:30)
Karaoke
• Win cash nightly
• Bowl 3 games
Feb. 19th
8:30pm-1:00am
Call for reservations
(must be 18 years of age)
Call 721-5263 for more information
1615 Wyoming, Missoula

GO GRIZ!

Arby’s
10% Discount on Game Day
with Game Ticket
(Appplies to full price items only)
2900 Brooks • 3115 N. Reserv • Town Pump/Milltown

PAPA JOHNS

CARRYOUT SPECIAL
One Large One Topping
$6.99
Carryout Only

Missoula
1760 Brooks
(406)721-7272
FREE DELIVERY AND CARRYOUT
14 Adam Lopez Guard
Adam, NAU’s point guard, is averaging a modest 8.3 ppg. Like Sen. John McCain, he hails from Arizona, but the similarities don’t end there. Adam had a career high of 11 points against Western Carolina. McCain should have his own career high in South Carolina if he beats Bush Saturday. The point? Current events are everything, kids.

23 Ross Land Guard
Aside from having perhaps the dumbest haircut in the Big Sky Conference, Ross has been pretty boss, scoring 17.2 ppg. We’re all about bad puns here at GDK, so when we say 3-point land has been “The Land of Ross,” listen up. In his career, he’s shot an ungodly 48 percent from downtown.

21 Cory Schwab Guard
Cory spent two years at a junior college, but was an honor roll student in high school. That means one of two things... either he was soul searching or his game was sorry. His stay at Evergreen State fixed all. He’s third on the team in scoring at 9 ppg.

32 Billy Hix Forward
According to the NAU media guide, Billy is “the unsung hero” and “does all the little things” for NAU. He also “improves each year” and has “potential for a big play. That’s all fine and good if you’re Billy’s parents, but all writers know that usually means you’re a goofy white guy with no game. You go, Bill!”

50 Dan McClintock Forward
Not only is Dan a pro prospect, but he’s also a criminal justice major. That should come in handy if he sticks around Arizona since the NAU football team usually picks up a handful of “personal fouls” every summer. Dan scores at a 14.5 clip for the Jacks.

Mike Adras Head Coach
First year coach Mike Adras’ motto at NAU has been “recruit to shoot,” which aside from sounding like the newest slogan from the boys at the NRA, has worked wonders. The Jacks are one of the best 3-point shooting clubs in the country.
Montana vs. Northern Arizona

Starting lineups

10 Shane Christensen Guard
Coach Holst says that Christensen weighs as much as a chicken. The media guide puts him at 150 pounds. That's one big chicken. His mad skills and a knack to knock down the three under pressure makes him a shoe-in against any chicken.

14 Mike Warhank Guard
Mike might not go down into Grizzly folklore as the swiftest of athletes, but there's no doubt that the senior from Great Falls can shoot. Against Eastern Washington two years ago, Warhank set a school record with nine three pointers.

33 Jared Buckmaster Forward
The key to Buck's success might be in the knee-high socks. We haven't seen socks that high since junior soccer. But hey, if you're a 6-8 forward and you can hit the long ball, who cares.

54 Dominique Davis Center
'DN'que wants to be an elementary teacher. Will his kids be intimidated to see the 6-9 former center walk into their first grade classroom? Davis claims there's no need to be scared, because he'll do anything they do — from goofing around to watching cartoons.

50 Matt Williams Forward
Matt might be the top player in the Big Sky, but Williams won't take credit. He claims his success is because of his teammates. Maybe Harold Arcpneaux at Weber State can learn a little something about humility from this Grizzly great. Or was Harold too busy getting schooled last Thursday?

12 Sam Riddle Guard
The Riddler keeps defenses guessing with his crazy moves and shifty passes. We love, we love it, can't get enough of it. NAU better keep an eye on his toes if the Lumberjacks don't want to get cooked like a side of bacon by "White Chocolate."

52 Dan Carter Center
D.C. rooms with The Riddler, so you know that he's got some tricks up his sleeve. Don Holst said he does "Cadillac work," and while we're not quite sure what that means, we're pretty sure that we like it.

Don Holst Head Coach
OK Big D, we've seen your tattoo, we've heard about your daughter's coaching tips, now what we really want to know is ... these days do you ever think about last year, sporting that now-famous mustached grin, recall those "We Want Don" signs, and think, "Hey, doesn't everybody?"

Assistants: Jim Sampson Todd Schmautz Larry Krystkowiak

Montana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gary Lynch</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6-3</td>
<td>Fr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shane Christensen</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6-1</td>
<td>So</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam Riddle</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6-0</td>
<td>Fr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Warhank</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6-3</td>
<td>Sr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyle Keyes</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6-1</td>
<td>Sr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brent Cummings</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>Fr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoran Mozicaivic</td>
<td>F-C</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>Jr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jared Buckmaster</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>Jr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan Slider</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6-5</td>
<td>So</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travis Greenwalt</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Jr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Card</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>Fr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt Williams</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>Sr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan Carter</td>
<td>F-C</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>Jr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominique Davis</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6-9</td>
<td>Sr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of course, seeing him play was a pleasure. With his offensive productivity, Udoka has been a key player for the Vikings this season. His scoring and rebounding have been consistent, and he has been a valuable asset on the court.

The Grizzlies have been in a rut recently, but Udoka believes they can turn things around. "We have the talent and the experience to make a comeback," he said.

For now, the Vikings are focused on securing a spot in the tournament. With Udoka leading the way, they have the potential to go far. As Sobotka said, "He's our key player, and we need him to step up and play well."
It's your life. Don't become a parent before you're ready. We offer a wide range of affordable birth control products. All confidential.

219 East Main, downtown Missoula 728-5490

Insurance Welcome
Caring, affordable, confidential
Planned Parenthood®
of Montana

Students with ID - 10% OFF

Complete Custom Headwear & Embroidery Service

Located in Rockin' Rudy's
237 Blaine
Missoula, MT 728-7815

We have all your intramural team uniform needs, including a complete alphabet for Greek organizations.

1001 N. Russell (800) 378-2632
Missoula, MT 59808 Fax (406) 549-0038

Sundays
Large 2 Item Pizza $7.99
(No to go orders, Please)
5pm-10pm

Mondays
All You Can Eat Spaghetti served with Garlic Toast Only $4.95

Continually voted BEST SPORTS BAR in Missoula.
Just across the Footbridge from U of M
835 E. Broadway 721-1212

We offer Drinks, Free Pizzas, Dart Board, Pool Table, Video Games, & Indoor ATM Machine
just felt like home here."

Riddle himself admits that the pressures of the college game set him back at first. But he insists that it was his own apprehension, not the heightened exposure or increased skill level that was initially problematic.

"I'm happy now," he said. "But I think I just recently started breaking through a mental block. I just figured I have to stop thinking so much and start playing like I know how to play. It's just a matter of getting used to the system, I guess. I can adapt to any situation. (My teammates) have been great as far as not picking on me. I knew that I wasn't going to come in and dominate right away, but I thought I would have a chance to be one of the better point guards in the league. I think you're just starting to see glimpses of that now."

Indeed, Riddle's minutes have been steadily increasing throughout the season. His 23-minute, nine-assist outing against Weber State seemed to get him on track with the rest of the team, according to Holst.

"Sam's starting to make a little move," Holst said. "I think his last three weeks have made him a guy I can trust and bring in earlier in the game for longer periods of time."

He also added that he feels that Riddle is playing beyond his years.

"He's definitely ahead of where he should be right now, as a freshman," Holst said. "I'm very pleased with him because he's started to play as well as I thought he could his first year."

Despite the fact that, on the surface, their personalities seem to be in direct contrast, you get Riddle and Christensen together and they can become eerily similar. They often finish each other's sentences, or just blurt out their responses to a question in unison.

"He's like my brother on the team," Riddle says. "Scooter and I know a lot about each other now. He's probably the closest person to me on the team. He and I are just really good friends and I hope we stay that way for the rest of our lives."

Riddle drives on Scooter and scores, then turns over the ball and Scooter does the same to him.

"We're very competitive with each other at practice," Scooter says. "We get out there and there isn't anymore, 'Hey, how are you doing? What's up?' It's more like, 'It's time to play.' I go out and try to kill him and he tries to kill me, and that's the way it should be. As soon as we step off the lines, we're the best of friends."

My photographer takes a break to replenish his film, but Christensen and Riddle don't notice. They continue to launch drives and shots against one another's half-hearted defense.

Having seen and heard enough to satisfy my own purposes, I get up and quietly make my exit out a side door.

Behind me, the game goes on.

— Kevin Van Valkenburg

Editor's Note:
Game Day Kaimin is a free basketball program entirely put together by the staff of the Montana Kaimin, the student newspaper of the University of Montana. It's students writing about students, and it's completely free. If you have a suggestion or would just like to drop us a line, we'd appreciate it. Write me an e-mail (sportsscribe@yahoo.com) or call 243-4310. We're listening.

www.MontanaGrizzlies.com

The site will give you paws