12-9-2000

Game Day Kaimin, December 9, 2000

Associated Students of the University of Montana
Front & Center

Three separate injuries kept quarterback Drew Miller off the field for much of his senior season. Now that he’s back, Drew says he’s ready to win it all.

Story by Ryan Divish
By Ryan Divish

"The white line's gettin longer and the middle's gettin colder. I'm much too young to feel this damn old..."

—from the song "Much Too Young," by Garth Brooks

You could see it as he walked off the field last Saturday. Mised in with the ever-present limp of a man whose body ached at every step was just a hint of a swagger. A swagger that said, "I wasn’t a presesent All-American candidate and nominated for the Payton Award for nothing."

A swagger that said, "I have been knocked down, knocked around and even knocked out, but I am still here no matter how much it hurts."

A swagger that said, "I’m not leaving the game anymore. I will be here for the rest of the season because lifting a National Championship trophy over my head will numb any pain I have felt this season."

It had been awhile, but as Drew Miller walked off the field last Saturday, minutes after dicin the Richmond Spider’s sec-
dinary for 99 yards and three touchdowns and more important-
ly, with the exception of one play, playing the whole game, the
swinger was back. And no matter how much pain he was in, walk-
ing off the field never felt so good. "It felt good," Miller said. "I felt like I was me again. I was making the plays that I’ve always made and making the throws I am used to making."

"Senior Dream

There wasn’t anything that was supposed to be. Senior year was sup-
pored to be a dream—a team full of stars, a Payton Award nomination and scores of expecta-
tions. A national title perhaps, All-American status possibly, con-
ference MVP definitely. In the beginning it looked like Miller’s dream season would come to fruition. Sure there was the
bumpy start against Holbra in which he threw for 304 yards. Scoring 10 points in a loss at Washington-Grizzly Stadium was enough to make Griz fans pre-
pare for Armageddon.

One week later against Idaho, Drew found himself in the "zone.
Everythin he threw was right where he wanted it to go. He could hit a streaking Jimmy Farris on his left shoulder, over a defender without Farris so much as breaking a stride. He could thread a pass through a three-
hole hole and hit Ela Molder in traffic—a ball thrown with max-
velocity yet still easy to catch. And as he walked off the Martin
Stadium turf, the swagger was there. The Griz had defeated Idaho 45-38 and he had thrown for 50 passes in the game, com-
pleting 33 for 505 yards and five touchdowns. Everything was clicking for him and more importantly, for the Griz.

The Griz offense exploded a week later against Cal Poly with Drew throwing for 311 yards and four touchdowns.
The first conference game came and went with Drew throw-
ing for 286 yards and three touchdowns against Eastern Washington. A week later 390 more yards against Sacramento
State. Everything seemed right. The team was winning, despite a rash of injuries to Drew’s team-
mates. More importantly, he was staying out of the trainer’s room. After missing one game last sea-
son and part of two others to injuries, the last thing Drew
wanted to go through was the ordeal of playing hurt and miss-
ing games.

"For the first four or five games, I was completely healthy," Miller said. "I hadn’t been in the training room besides for little things like sore feet or things that everybody gets."

But then came the play against Cal State Northridge. Late in the first half, just as he released the ball, a Northridge defender plowed into him. His arm was going one way, the defender the other. Drew landed awkwardly on his right side. An intense burning pain shot through his shoulder. It was just like the time in eighth grade when he had broken his collar-
nbone. As he walked off the field, he couldn’t decide what hurt worse—the pain of the injury or the possibility that his season and his career might be over. "I couldn’t believe it," Miller said. "I had a lot of emotions going through my head. I was really depressed and very frus-
trated. I was completely unsure of the future. When you’re on the plane on Saturday night and you’re thinking: I’m not going to know until Monday. How am I suppose to last that long? That unsettling feeling is ter-
rible.

 Luckily, his career wasn’t over. It wasn’t a broken collar-
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He pushed to get back sooner. A rematch of last sea-
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Mountaineers excited for third-straight road game

Chad Dundas
GameDay Kaimin

Logic might dictate that, for the No. 13 Appalachian State Mountaineers, the most enticing factor of a Dec. 9 trip to Missoula, Mont, would be the Mountaineers, the most enticing of the No. 13 Appalachian State

"It has to be," Moore said of his team's weekend tour of the Garden City. "So they're all pretty excited about it.

The wonders of modern travel aside, Moore seems a bit more dubious about his team's security by Moore's Lou Holtz-esque penchant for underestimating his team's chances. Experts agree, ASU is definitely the better team for the game between two accomplished teams. Moore expressed some concern about the health of starting ASU quarterback Joe Burchette. The 6-4, 235-pound sophomore brushed a finger on his throwing hand in the Western Kentucky game. Back-up senior Dan Jeremiah, who saw action in six games this season, is expected to relieve Burchette at times this week.

"Burchette will play, I think," Moore said. "He'll be fine, but he probably won't play the whole game."

The Griz and the Mountaineers kick off Saturday at noon.

A third of our players haven't even ever been on a plane, so they're all pretty excited about it.

— JERRY MOORE, MOUNTAINEER HEAD COACH

If the Griz win Saturday, look for a special GameDay Kaimin to be published Dec. 19.
Grizzly Offense

T.J. Oelkers
Wide Receiver
5-8, 170, junior from Helena, Mont.

T.J. Oelkers' stature and build are throwbacks to the days of old (well, 1995) when undersized powderkegs like Matt Wells blew holes in opposing defenses. It's nice to see that short guys from Montana can still run with the big boys. This season T.J. made the most of his time, snagging 26 passes while the winner is sitting home polishing his award. So there.

Defensive End
6-3, 235, senior from Helena, Mont.

Andy Petek
Before you Great Falls folks start sending us letters, let us just say that it's a coincidence that both of this week's spotlighted Grizzlies happen to hail from Montana's capital. Yes, it's a coincidence so much so that it's a coincidence that Andy Petek picked this season to start eating O-Linemen for lunch. Petek finished second in voting to the Buck Buchannon Award (highway robbery if you ask GDK), but this week he's playing for the right to advance to the finals while the winner is sitting home polishing his award. So there.

Montana
No. 1
2000 Record: 12-1 Overall, 8-0 Big Sky (1st)
1999 Record: 9-3 Overall, 7-1 Big Sky (1st)

Offense

Numerical Roster

1 Tanner Hancock WR/KOR 5-8 175 SR
2 Michael Westbrook WR/KOR 6-0 190 JR
3 Trey Young FS 6-0 180 SO
4 Dave DeCoite QB 6-1 180 FR
5 John Edwards QB 6-1 185 SO
6 Andy Thompson WR/KOR 6-0 195 SO
7 Drew Miller QB 6-1 190 FR
8 Jon Ferris WR 6-0 190 SR
9 Jason Miller WR 6-2 190 FR
10 Chris Lumpkin WR 5-8 170 JR
11 Courtney Johnson WR 5-10 170 SR
12 Calvin Coleman CB 5-10 190 JR
13 Demerous Williams CB 5-10 195 SO
14 Tanner Hancock WR/KOR 5-8 190 SR
15 T.J. Oelkers WR 5-8 170 JR
16 Scott Wildig RB 5-10 180 FR
17 T.J. Oelkers WR 5-8 170 JR
18 John Edwards QB 6-1 200 SO
19 Mike Mahoney CB 5-10 190 FR
20 Korey Towe TE 6-2 220 JR
21 Yohance Humphry RB 5-10 190 JR
22 Kyle Scholle SS 6-0 190 FR
23 Damon Parker RB 6-1 190 SR
24 Denny Williams RB 6-1 210 JR
25 Chris Snyder RB 6-0 190 FR
26 T. J. Humphry RB 5-10 170 JR
27 Brandon Malcom RB 5-10 175 JR
28 Joel Rosenberg CB 5-10 185 FR
29 Mike Mahoney CB 5-10 170 FR
30 Korey Towe TE 6-2 220 JR
31 T. J. Oelkers WR 5-8 170 JR
32 Joel Rosenberg CB 5-10 185 FR
33 Matt Steinau LB 6-1 200 JR
34 Ben Driskalder LB 6-1 195 SR
35 Mike Mahoney LB 5-10 170 FR
36 Jimmy Farris WR 5-10 190 FR
37 Andy Petek DE 6-3 235 SR
38 Dee Hibert LB 5-10 195 JR
39 Mike Mahoney LB 5-10 170 FR
40 Ben Driskalder LB 6-1 195 SR
41 T. J. Oelkers WR 5-8 170 JR
42 Adam Boomer LB 6-2 240 JR
43 Spencer Frederick TE 6-3 240 JR
44 John Petek TE 6-2 230 JR
45 Jacob Yoe LB 6-0 205 JR
46 Yohance Humphry RB 5-10 190 JR
47 Dan Cruz LB 5-11 200 JR
48 Jeff Nickelson LB/DE 6-4 220 FR
49 Joel Rosette LB 6-1 210 FR
50 Chris Wells LB 6-3 220 SO
51 Joel Rosette LB 6-1 210 FR
52 Chris Wells LB 6-3 220 SO
53 Joel Rosette LB 6-1 210 FR
54 Chris Wells LB 6-3 220 SO
55 Eetu Ooster LB 6-1 210 FR
56 T. J. Oelkers LB 6-1 210 FR
57 Joel Rosette LB 6-1 210 FR
58 Jeramiah Butenschoen DT 5-8 260 FR
59 Jeramiah Butenschoen DT 5-8 260 FR
60 Casey Price CB 6-4 255 JR
61 T. J. Oelkers LB 6-1 210 FR
62 Jordan Small CB 5-10 190 JR
63 Luke Rober CB 6-4 250 JR
64 Jordan Small CB 5-10 190 JR
65 Eetu Ooster LB 6-1 210 FR
66 Brian Pelc OL 6-3 220 JR
67 Kamakana Kamuloa OL 6-4 295 JR
68 Danny Fleischman OL 6-5 240 JR
69 John Cahill DT 6-2 285 FR
70 Matt Steinau LB 6-1 200 JR
71 T. J. Oelkers LB 6-1 200 JR
72 T. J. Oelkers LB 6-1 200 JR
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Grizzly Defense

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Defense

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Yolance Humphery
Defensive End
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Wilcox 7

doesn't look like a tight end, does he? Well, don't believe your eyes. Daniel is the best TE in the Southern Conference, coming up 44 catches for 716 yards on the season.

2000 Record • 10-3, 6-2 Southern Conference (third)
1999 Record • 10-2, 7-1 Southern

Offense

Troy Albea
Wide Receiver

5-0, 200, senior from Lincoln, Ga. When the Mountaineers go to the air, Albea is their primary target. He leads the team in scoring with 56 points and has gained 754 yards receiving this year. A first-team selection in the SoCon, Albea also has 28 carries to his credit for 215 yards. If conditions at Washington-Grizzly Stadium are favorable on Saturday, ASU might go to Troy early and often, to test the theory that the Griz can some­times be soft on the pass. Let's prove them wrong.

Joe Best
Linebacker

5-11, 245, senior from New Bern, N.C.

Joe is very good, but the selected sports writers and SIDs who decided the Buck Buchannon award didn't think Joe quite lived up to his name. Although he was one of 16 final­ists for the award that honor's the most accomplished defensive player, Best failed to finish in the top three. He's second on the team in tackles, tallying 122 in 12 games and has made first-team all-conference in the SoCon.

Defensive Roster

CB
Du'Shon Martin 9

FS
Steve Kitchens 29

WR
Rashad Slade 5

T
Wayne Smith 70

G
Joe Patrick 65

C
Tyler Elkins 58

G
Larry Brock 65

T
Billy Young 79

TE
Daniel Wilcox 7

WR
Troy Albea 2
Georgia Southern, Delaware match up in repeat of ’97

Casey Temple
GameDay Kaimin

On Monday, Georgia Southern coach Paul Johnson asked his players how many of them remember their loss to Delaware in the 1997 playoffs. Only four hands were raised.

“We’re a very young team,” Johnson said of his team, which is led by a talented group of juniors and sophomores. “We have only four or five seniors who play for us, so that game is not on our minds.”

Delaware, on the other hand, is senior-led and remembers the 1997 win well. A home victory against McNeese State by a field goal what it’s like to be in the playoffs. These players know what it’s like to be in the playoffs.

“We came so close to a National Championship in ’97 when these seniors were freshmen,” Delaware coach Tubby Raymond said. “That season was invaluable experience. Many of them played important roles in helping the Blue Hens’ only defeat was to New Hampshire.”

But Raymond said they have yet to play as well in the playoffs, which should scare opposing coaches after the Blue Hens’ impressive defeats of Portland State and Lehigh in the first playoff game.

“Leading the way is Jamin Elliot, who had six receptions for 162 yards and a touchdown against Lehigh. The running attack is just as strong, using five different backs throughout the game. The Blue Hens’ offensive line didn’t give up a sack and rushed for 357 yards against a talented Portland State defense.”

“Their special teams are just as explosive, with ‘99 Walter Payton Award winner and 900 runner-up, running-back Adrian Peterson. Peterson, who has never been held to under 100 yards rushing in his career, amassed 349 yards rushing and three touchdowns in the first two playoff games.”

“We have to do is contain him and make sure he doesn’t run all over us. For us to win, we need to have a really big day from our defense.” But Peterson isn’t the only offensive threat the Hens have to worry about. Quarterback J.R. Revere is the unswerving hero of the offense, rushing for 94 yards and three touchdowns against Appalachian State, the Griz’s opponent Saturday.

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Though Georgia Southern is young, they are experienced. Many of them played important roles in helping Georgia Southern win the National Championship last season.

“Last season, we had our ups and downs and there are times we haven’t played very well,” Johnson said. “This isn’t one of the most talented teams we’ve had, but we’re hungry. They’ve overachieved all season.”

Fast fact: Paul Johnson, Georgia Southern’s head coach, received his master’s degree in science from Appalachian State, the Griz’s opponent Saturday.

GDK Prediction: This game will be a shoot-out, but in the end, experience wins out over youth and talent. Delaware wins 41-38.
Glenn ‘humbled’ by national award

Courtney Lowery
GameDay Kaim

The phrase “nice guys finish last” just doesn’t apply to head coach Joe Glenn.

In fact, it is Glenn’s gregarious and sincere personality that has elevated his Grizzlies to the top spot in the I-AA and garnered him the award for the best coach in the country.

“I don’t think there is any doubt about it,” assistant coach Dave Doeren said. “It’s this winning attitude he has — and it rubs off on everyone around him.”

Before running onto the field before home games, Glenn takes the time to slap the outstretched hands of the pep band waiting in the tunnel at Washington-Grizzly Stadium.

He also has a knack to scale the walls of a stadium to congratulate fans in the stands above. He even makes time for a chat with a fan, a player, a coach or a reporter — and he never forgets a name.

“As far as coaches go across the country, he stands out in that regard,” said assistant athletics director Marie Porter.

“When we say ‘working with the fans’ and working with the media,” the thing is, that I don’t think that’s work to him. That is simply Joe Glenn. He’s a people person.”

When Glenn accepted the Eddie Robinson Award Monday, it marked a special day in history for Montana football. He is the only Montana coach and the only I-AA’s coach of the year. He’s been known to scale the walls of a stadium to congratulate fans in the stands above. He even makes time for a chat with a fan, a player, a coach or a reporter — and he never forgets a name.

“Joe’s personality is just so dynamic that people are hearing about him all across the country,” Porter said.

It’s not that coaches in the Western United States aren’t good enough to get the award; typically just they don’t get enough exposure, Portman said. But Joe Glenn is a different story.

Glenn has the stats to prove he is worthy — a 10-1 record in his first year at UM and a first-country,” Porter said. But “its not just for me, it says a lot about our defense this year. There’s 10 other players out there doing a really good job. They just happened to pick me.”

Glenn is a different story.

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“In other I-AA awards, UM defensive end Andy Petek finished on the heels of Western Illinois’ Edgerton Hartwell for the Buck Buchanan award for the league’s top defensive player.

Petek, who leads the Griz with 25 sacks and 81 tackles, gathered one more first place vote than Hartwell’s 23, but Hartwell edged Petek in total points 215 to 183 to win the award.

“It’s an honor, something I’ll always look back on,” Petek said. “But its not just for me, it says a lot about our defense this year. There’s 10 other players out there doing a really good job. They just happened to pick me.”

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Great Expectations

Continued from page 2

Drew Miller has thrown for 6,520 yards and 50 career touchdown passes, ranking him 5th on UM's all-time passing list.

Every second he stays in the pocket, waiting... waiting... waiting for that receiver to break free, only to be pumped up by an opposing lineman. The soreness that comes over his body every Sunday after being slammed to the cement-like ground making it difficult to get up off of bed, the hours of painstaking, slow moving rehab to get back in the lineup for them, for his team, for a championship.

That's how he will discredit his doubters — a trip to Chattanooga, a national championship and ultimate redemption. Playing With Shadows

He won't admit it, but there is a shadow that looms over Washington Grizzly Stadium. A shadow that was No. 16 and in his senior year, did everything Drew wanted to do. Dave Dickenson will forever cast a shadow on Grizzly QBs. Drew doesn't consider it negative, but as a set of expectations to live up to — expectations that are no higher than the ones he holds for himself.

I just put a lot of pressure and expectation on myself... I think you will always be playing under (Dickenson's) expectations. The list goes on and on. There have been so many great quarterbacks and obviously, Dave is the one everyone remembers.

But Miller and Dickenson are nothing alike. Drew is the consummate pocket passer with a right arm that seems to have been struck by lightning. Dickenson was the technician with an above average arm and the ability to make something out of nothing. Both have experienced success and both are part of a storied Grizzly quarterback tradition. A tradition that Miller hopes to add to.

"Because there has been so many great quarterbacks, the expectations are high," Miller said. "This town and this state expect a lot out of the quarterback. Both have experienced success and both are part of a storied Grizzly quarterback tradition. A tradition that Miller hopes to add to."

I feel like I just got here," he said. "I wish I would have came here out of high school. This is a great program. If I could do it over again I would.

And if he would have came here his freshman year, he would've most likely redshirted, which would have made him a redshirt junior this year, a prospect which makes him draw a wistful smile.

"That would have been sweet," Miller said. "But I am happy with the way it has worked out.

A Perfect End

The individual accolades would have been nice. Certainly good for his football resume which he hopes will be good enough for a pro career in the game that has consumed his whole life. And if not, something like his dad or maybe a sport agent. But there is business to take care of. Two more games are all he needs to make it through. Two more Sundays of getting up sore as hell from a Saturday pounding. Two more times, he will drop his body out onto the field and make it to the end without any more punishment.

Two more wins and he will have the ultimate goal: a national championship. And no matter how much those two wins hurt, all the pain and hurting will be gone along with the limp. Only the swagger will remain.