2-16-2001

Game Day Kaimin, February 16, 2001

Associated Students of the University of Montana
Jared Buckmaster struggled with a digestive disease, poor eyesight and mononucleosis. Now he’s Montana’s go-to guy and he still doesn’t understand what all the fuss is about.

By Ryan Divish

Masterpiece

MONTANA vs. Idaho State
It seems pointless to write this considering he probably won't read it.

Jared Buckmaster hasn't read an article in any newspaper concerning the Griz basketball team yet. Why start now? He doesn't watch television highlights of himself although occasionally he'll watch the Don Holst show to see how uncomfortable his teammates look on TV.

The last time he picked up a stat sheet was around the third game of the season. He doesn't know how many points he averages per game and doesn't care to learn.

So why even write it? Why bother telling the story about a person who is more concerned with the graduate management admission test he is taking on Thursday than talking about himself and his career?

Because regardless of what he thinks or says, Jared Buckmaster is worth writing about, even if he doesn't read it.

Adversity
Defined loosely it means a stroke of misfortune. It's something that Buckmaster knows well and has dealt with. At the age of eight, he was diagnosed with Celiac Disease. It is the same affliction that his mother, Jan, and his brother, Justin, suffer from. It is a sensitivity of the small intestine to gluten, a protein found in most cereal grains but not in corn and rice. These cereal grains include wheat, rye, barley and occasionally oats.

If Buckmaster were to ingest the gluten in a bagel for example, his villi that are found on the lining of the small intestine and lead to deterioration of the tiny finger-like villi that are found on the lining of the small intestine and are essential for food absorption. This isn't something he can cheat; no matter how big of a pain in the ass it is. No gluten means no gluten. So even if his friends were eating a pizza, he couldn't just have one slice.

"If I get into (gluten) I don't know it," Buckmaster says. "If I ate a piece of pizza, I don't think I would get sick. But a couple days later I would be really tired or I wouldn't feel well. Basically what would be happening is my small intestine would be trying to fix itself."

Because of this process, any of the vitamins from the food Buckmaster consumed would not be absorbed into his body. "It basically destroys my immune system," Buckmaster says. "So every time I get into gluten my immune system gets shot because my body isn't able to get what it needs."

And there are long term effects that Buckmaster is very aware of because of his mother's battle with the disease. "I've seen how much it affected my mom's life," Buckmaster says. "She has had cancer three times and it's mainly due to celiac disease. So I know that if I am not careful I am going to pay for it."

And while it may not seem that big of a chore to the average reader, just think about how much gluten you consume in one day and remove it. And then try and eat a meal. "I eat a lot of rice and a lot of corn," Buckmaster says. "I buy some special foods. When we're on the road, I eat a lot of mashed potatoes and chicken."

Buckmaster's diet seems healthy compared to the typical college student's in which the four food groups might as well be tacos, pizza, burgers and beer.

Griz head coach Don Holst feels the disease kept Buckmaster from putting on the weight that Holst and his staff wanted.

"He can't eat bad and put on weight," Holst says. "His diet is so healthy it doesn't allow him to put weight on and gain the strength we wanted."

Playing Time
Despite Buckmaster's diet problems, he was completely healthy otherwise and turned himself into a solid college prospect at Portland's Jesuit High School. As a senior he averaged 20 points and eight rebounds per game while being named an all-Metro League selection and team MVP his junior and senior year. He came to Montana in a recruiting class that included juniors Shane Christensen and Buckmaster's current roommate Travis Greenwell.

Continued on page 7
Around the Sky

**Casey Temple GameDay Kaimin**

With three weekends of regular season Big Sky basketball left, Cal State Northridge and Eastern Washington are battling for the regular season championship and the honor of hosting the Big Sky Tournament.

The best game of the remaining regular season, and what should determine the Big Sky Championship, will pit Eastern Washington against Cal State Northridge on March 1 in Cheney, Wash. Eastern Washington sat atop the Big Sky for much of last season until the Griz won 10 of their last 11 games, including a season finale in Cheney, to steal the regular season championship from the Eagles.

But this year, the Eagles are hoping to sneak away with a championship themselves. Going into Friday’s game against Portland State, Eastern Washington was tied for first with Northridge with a record of 8-3. To add to its prospects of having the Big Sky a lesson about underestimation.

"They have done a great job all year," Portland State coach Joel Sobottka, who has lost three in a row against Eastern Washington, said on the Vikings’ Web site. "They have guys from a year who experienced winning, and winning on the road in particular." Those guys are guard Aaron Olson and forward Chris White, who have been playing gutsy basketball for first-year coach Ray Braswell, told Fox Sports.

Brian Heine, who leads the Big Sky in scoring (20.9 ppg) and rebounds (9.2 rpg), and Joel Sobotka have been winning, and winning the top of the conference, third place in the Big Sky standings. Northern Arizona’s (12-10, 6-5) success can be attributed to the play of Cory Schwab, who is averaging 16.5 points a game. Montana State (14-10, 6-5) has the trio of John Lazosky (11.4 ppg), Justin Brown (11.9 ppg) and Aaron Rich (9.4 ppg), Weber State, meanwhile, has four players who weigh more than 240 pounds and has three players from basketball mecca north-west Indiana.

While there’s a dog fight at the top of the conference, things are getting just as interesting at the bottom. UM, Idaho State and Portland State are all within one game of the sixth and final conference tournament spot. The best game of the remaining regular season, and what should determine the Big Sky Championship, will pit Eastern Washington against Cal State Northridge on March 1 in Cheney, Wash. Eastern Washington sat atop the Big Sky for much of last season until the Griz won 10 of their last 11 games, including a season finale in Cheney, to steal the regular season championship from the Eagles.

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Portland State appears to be in as good of shape as anyone. The Vikings have three of their final five games at home and one of their road games is against Sacramento State. "We have to protect our home floor if we want to be in the postseason tournament," Sobotka said on the Viking’s Web site. Portland State will need to ride the shoulders of forward Anthony Lackey if they want to see the postseason. Lackey is the only Viking player to average a double digit scoring average at 15 points a game. And though Idaho State seems to be on a roll after defeating Northridge 89-84 a week ago, we’re putting GameDay’s money that the final spot will belong to the Griz.

How can Montana State be the best three-point shooting team in the nation and still be the only reason Sacramento State has a notch in the win column? The Hornets won a 70-62 decision earlier this month against the kitty-cats. At least they have a victory, something the Bobcats couldn’t seem to come up with in football.

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11 Jordie McTavish  Guard
McTavish, a transfer who has genuine final four experience from his days with Utah, has been the Bengals’ most threatening player this season. Mr. McT (as we’re pretty sure he’d be called if he was a 7th grade science teacher) leads ISU in nine statistical categories.

30 Tim Erickson  Guard
Tim runs second in most ISU stat categories. Must be rough not being the big dog anymore. This week collegeinsider.com published a column "written" by Erickson. In it, he said the Bengals are “playing well as a team” this season. Yeah right, Tim, last time we checked “team” isn’t spelled “Jordie McTavish.”

21 D'Marr Suggs  Guard
Last month at Santa Clara D'Marr tied the ISU record for three-point field goal percentage (.857). Suggs scored a season-high 32 in that game against the Broncos. He could be a significant deep threat against the Griz, if that bum McTavish would pass him the ball.

34 Rashad Kirkland  Forward
Like McTavish, Kirkland transferred to ISU from another school. Rashad came from New Jersey. He's a solid player, but has a problem with fouls, eliminating himself from three games so far this season. If the rowdy Griz crowd can get in his head, perhaps he could be lured into early foul trouble.

43 Doug Silva  Center
At 6-11, Doug Silva is the lone starting big man on what amounts to a rather diminutive ISU team. The Griz have been relying too much on their outside game lately, and if they want to work the ball inside against the Bengals there’s only one way to go. Straight through Silva.

Head Coach: Doug Oliver
Assistants: Jay McMillin
Louis Wilson

Idaho State

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<td>Chad Tracy</td>
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<td>6-9</td>
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The Bengals rely heavily on their starters to do most of the work, but when they go to the bench they get a bulk of help from Tracy Labby, though, it appears as if he’s been on something of a cold streak. Let’s hope it continues.

Doug Oliver  Head Coach
Oliver, a graduate of San Jose State, has amassed a record of 14-39 during his two years as ISU’s head coach. Just between you and GDK, it’d be just fine with us if the Griz are able to carve another notch in coach Ollie’s loss column.
Montana vs. Idaho State

10 Shane Christensen Guard
A lot of people tease Scooter because he’s not the biggest player around. Don Holst says he can’t bench press a pretzel and teammates razz him about being able to use a Cheerio as a hula hoop. Of course, we here at GDK are mighty glad he’s on our side. With the chips down and time running out, Scooter’s the man.

33 Jared Buckmaster Forward
GDK has long admired Buck’s stylish knee-highs. This year we’ve also been pretty darn happy with his play as well. He’s stepped up this year to become Montana’s No. 1 outside threat. With the GDK cover story on his side, we expect big things this week.

34 Ryan Slider Guard
Slider can flat out fly. When it comes to rim-rocking, earth-shaking jams, we don’t know anyone better. Ryan played his best game of the season last week, hitting a clutch three-pointer to put the Griz up in OT against the Cats. Hey, when you’ve got hops like Slider, the sky’s the limit.

50 Dan Trammel Forward
Trammel, a JUCO transfer, debuted for Montana this season and has quickly become the Griz’s most-talked about player. He possesses what Holst calls the “most explosive” athletic ability on the team and has shown flashes of greatness in the maroon and silver this season. Look for Trammel and Silva to go to war inside.

40 Travis Greenwalt Center
Travis was key last year in the Griz’s late run to capture the regular season title. In 00-01 he’s already been Montana’s leading scorer in six games. Shutting down Greenwalt will be key for the Bengals if they have prayer of getting a win in the Adams Center.

Don Holst Head Coach
The Holster is one animated dude during games — he runs the floor more than some NBA big men. No matter what the score it’s a stone cold look that jacket will be off and Coach Holst won’t remain on the bench for long.

33 Jared Buckmaster Forward

34 Ryan Slider Guard

50 Dan Trammel Forward

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22 Kyle Keyes Guard
After sitting out the majority of two consecutive seasons Keyes is back in the lineup for Montana and ready to contribute. Kyle was instrumental in the Griz’s win against Sac State last week, clocking in with six assists and 11 points.

24 Brent Cummings Forward
Cummings is Holst’s newly appointed “defensive stopper.” Last week he held MSU’s Justin Brown to four points and earlier this season he limited NAU’s Corey Schwab to eight points. Not bad for a tender-footed sophomore from Pullman, Wash.

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Griz need win to stay in running for tournament seed

Ian Costello
GameDay Kaimin

Apparently, for the University of Montana men’s basketball team, March Madness is being temporarily preceded by February Frenzy.

The Grizzlies currently find themselves on the outside of the conference tournament bubble with four games left on the regular season schedule. With the Griz a game and a half behind sixth place Idaho State, head coach Don Holst is well aware of what his team needs to qualify for the Big Sky Tournament.

“We want to run the table,” Holst said following the Griz’s overtime win against Montana State on Saturday. “Like to” wins have virtually turned into “must wins” for the Grizzlies, who came into this weekend with a 4-7 conference mark. One more conference loss could spell trouble for the Grizzlies’ postseason dreams; two conference losses would be devastating. A fact that has led Holst to preach to his players a one-game-at-a-time attitude. An attitude that must be in place Friday when the Griz host the Idaho State Bengals.

“You want to avoid putting pressure on your players that it is do or die time,” Holst said.

“We understand that there is very little margin for error in terms of getting into the tournament.”

Getting into the tournament is a goal, but a long-range goal. Saturday night, for Montana, the goal is to get one back from the team that handed the Griz their worst loss of the season, 97-69, Jan. 18 in Pocatello. In that game the Bengals used a lethal outside attack, shooting 16 of 28 from beyond the arc, to blow open a game that Idaho State led by only six at halftime.

“They have a three-point barrage crew that makes them totally different to prepare for,” Holst said of the Bengals. “They’ll shoot a lot of threes, and (Jordie) McTavish is the key.”

Whether he duplicates his performance of five weeks ago, McTavish will most certainly one of the keys for the Griz defense that saw him shoot six of eight from three-point range and score 25 points.

The Montana defense will be relied on to stop both McTavish and his shooting buddies who burned the Grizzlies in the first game, and to keep the ball out of the hands of 6-11 senior center Doug Silva.

“Our guards are the key. They are going to have to play tough, on-the-ball defense,” Holst said. “But our inside guys have to be ready to, because they are not going to get any (double) help from our outside guys.”

For the seventh-place Grizzlies to continue their current two-game winning streak and stay in contact with a Big Sky Tournament seed (only the top six teams in the conference qualify for the postseason tournament) the Grizzlies must top sixth-place Idaho State.

“We feel we are better than our record,” Holst said, adding that they have dropped several games in the closing minutes that he feels they should have won.

Taking care of one game at a time means beating Idaho State. Then, and only then, Holst and the Grizzlies will start looking toward the next game.

Montana finishes its regular season with the game against Idaho State; a road trip next week with stops in Los Angeles to take on league-leading Cal State Northridge; and Flagstaff, Ariz. to take on Northern Arizona before returning home to host Sac State in the regular season finale on March 1.

Holst holds on to the hope that a trip to the tournament will still be a possibility two weeks from now.

“We would certainly like to have our last game of the season mean something,” he said.

Men’s NCAA-I ESPN Poll

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Nothing Special

He was originally supposed to red-shirt his freshman year, but head coach Elaine Taylor decided he needed a little more firepower to overcome the Grizzlies' lack of experienced players. Buckmaster began his freshman year in his first game against Valparaiso in Big Island Classic in Hawaii on Nov. 28, 1995. He had been a 18-years old for less than a month.

He ended up playing in 27 games and starting 13 of those games, averaging 7.2 points per game. His future seemed bright. His sophomore year he fully developed and started to play a lot of minutes. He had gone back to Portland inter and all the promise he had shown at 20 he had gained before freshman year. He lost his ass in the weight room and, sure enough, got up to 225 pounds. It was the most he had weighed and he was stronger than ever.

But mononucleosis struck him down early in his sophomore season. Instead of playing 25-30 minutes per game, he was sleeping 16-18 hours a day. He attended class when he could, slept in between, went to practice and slept some more. It was frustrating. It seemed to take all his energy to lift his body out of bed and even more to put his clothes on, let alone elevate for a jumpshot or fight through a screen. Hell, even walking to class was an ordeal.

"It was terrible," Buckmaster says. "I don't think I've ever fully recovered from it. I lost quite a bit of weight but even if you had strength and muscle you can't use it. It was like you were from it. I lost quite a bit of weight but you could normally knock down with his eyes closed. The low point came when he shot 11-11 from the field and lost his job. To not be part of the problem but to be the solution, it hasn't been exactly what he thought it would have won the game. Buckmaster so important to this team. He knows his college career is coming to an end. The realization came moments after Buckmaster so important to this team.

"I always liked to perfect my form," Buckmaster says. "But through it all he has remained a cool customer on the court. It's his vision was a little blurry. They bang him and bump him, hit his elbows when he takes a shot, and at time his isn't.

The losing eats at him, like the gluten. He can't sleep after losses. He continuously replays each possession and each shot in his head and over and over as if he could change the outcome if he thought about it long enough.

"After we lose games, me and Tray go home and talk about it 'til way too late and don't get any sleep," Buckmaster says. "I can't sleep after we lose a game because you know how important it was and for me being my last season. There aren't many opportunities left."

To make matters worse, he even went through a slight shooting slump early in the conference season. He made a few shots but he missed some that he would normally knock down with his final miss coming on a three-pointer that would have won the game.

Buckmaster has set his sights to be a leader — to be vocal is something he has never had to do since coming to UM. But through it all he has remained poised, never losing his cool. With exception of voicing his displeasure with three or four minutes to play, he's pretty cool customer on the court. It's that poise that Holst believes makes Buckmaster so important to this team.

"I had a talk with him a week ago and I told him you need to be my glue and hold this team together. To not be part of the problem but to be the solution," Holst says. "And in the past two games he has been so important. He might not have been Ole's player of the game but he has been important in terms of his poise in tough situations and a calming presence on the court."

He knows his college career is coming to an end. The realization came right before the season started. While it hasn't been exactly what he thought it would be like, Buckmaster remains positive. He knows how good this team can be. They just need to relax and remember they are basketball players, not robots. To go out and play loose and aggressive and make plays. If they believe in that, the Griz can make the tournament.

"Everybody knows we can do it," Buckmaster says. "If we put in the work, we know we could do it all year. We just haven't figured it out for long periods of time."

If the Griz are to have any chance in these last four games, they will need Buckmaster to be the glue. The presence that he has been throughout his career.

And, no matter what he says or thinks, is worth writing about.

Montana vs. Idaho State
Lady Griz look to spoil Bengals’ perfect Big Sky record

Bryan Haines
GameDay Kaimin

It has been almost a month since Idaho State came into Dahlberg arena and stunned Montana.

The Lady Bengals, sparked by junior Mandi Carver’s 24 points and 14 rebounds, upset UM 67-62. It was the first time that the Lady Griz had lost a conference game at home in over nine years.

Friday night Montana will be looking to return the favor. With a sweep of Montana and Montana State this weekend, ISU would clinch the school’s first ever regular season Big Sky Conference title. Head coach Robin Selvig would love to put that celebration for at least a week.

"Idaho State is playing the best ball in the league right now," Selvig said. "We are looking forward to going in there and knocking them off."

To do that though, UM will have to reverse its road fortune. While Montana has been rock solid at home, posting an 11-2 record in the Adams Center, its level of play has faltered off sharply on the road. Montana is 4-5 away from home and has dropped its last three road games.

well, you are not going to beat many teams no matter how good of defense you play," Montana will need to be on top of its game on both sides of the floor if it hopes to put a smudge on what has been a perfect season record all season long, shooting the ball has hindered you, Selvig said. "When you don’t shoot the ball well, you are not going to beat many teams no matter how good of defense you play."

Leading the way is Dillon, Mont. native Carver. A top candidate for the conference player of the year honors, Carver is averaging 13.9 points per game and 10 rebounds a contest. When Carver isn’t beating teams to death at one post, Toner is dropping in 11.9 points a game and scoring at 13.6 a game. Against Northern Arizona, Cooper hit 12-25 shots on her way to 36 points. With Linda Cummings adding in 12.3 a game, and center Laura Valley averaging 12.2 in her last five games, Montana has more than enough weapons on offense.

They have racked up 90 points twice, once against Robert Morris (94) and then again against Sacramento State.

Serving Daily from 3 pm!

Be sure to check out the Wilma Theatre page for showtimes and events!

- Bryan Haines

IT IS NOT THAT WE ARE TAKING BAD SHOTS OR FORCING THEM; THEY JUST AREN’T FALLING. WHEN YOU DON’T SHOOT THE BALL WELL, YOU ARE NOT GOING TO BEAT MANY TEAMS NO MATTER HOW GOOD OF DEFENSE YOU PLAY.

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