11-10-2001

Game Day Kaimin, November 10, 2001

Associated Students of the University of Montana
Andy Thompson carries on a family tradition in football that goes back nearly 50 years.

All in the family

MONTANA VS. Weber State
Get in where you fit in

"Since I've been a Junior in high school, I've never really been told what position I was going to play. It's always been what the team needed. I've never had set in my mind where I should be playing."

By Chad Dundas

In the fall of 1998, Eastern Washington head coach Mike Kramer sat in the Thompson family living room in Walla Walla, Wash., and told Andy Thompson he could see him playing strong side linebacker in the Big Sky Conference. Andy Thompson, then a high school senior, just smiled and nodded at the man.

When the coach's recruiting trip was over and Kramer had left, Andy looked at his parents and said: "Well, I guess I'm not going there."

"Would he?" Thompson was 6 feet 2 inches, 185 pounds and a standout high school quarterback. The line of share participants in the Northwest was courting his school and eventually found major schools were showing some mild interest.

Linebacker? Kramer was obviously off his rocker.

Eventually, the University of Montana Grizzlies won the recruiting battle over Andy Thompson's Eagles were left out in the cold.

Both moved on. Not long after, Kramer split EWU for the Big Sky, and is currently in the process of turning around a program that once seemed on the verge of collapse at Thompson's door. Well, Andy starts for the Big Sky's best defense ... at strong side linebacker.

"I won't give the guy any credit," jokes Mark Thompson, Andy's brother as a Griz wide receiver. "I've changed my mind about (their fame). You just didn't really think you could beat them."

Thompson's program at the University of Montana was in the process of turning around. "They recruited Andy as a quarterback, and he was doubly impressive, Matt says. "He was my best friend," Andy says. "We're always very realistic about it," Mark says.

The coaches around him always been a family deal for Thompson.

Andy's grandfather, Roy, started coaching at Astoria High School in Oregon in 1962. He went on to win the Beaver state's prep championship in 1961 with Roseburg High School, and Norman Turner, who in turn threw the ball to a wide receiver named Bobby Moore. Moore would later change his name to Ahmad Rashad.

The coaching staff at Oregon at the time was a who's who of future football greatness with the likes of John Robinson, George Seifert, John Jumper, Cunningham and Bruce Synder on board.

After graduation, Mark started coach at Portland State, under Mouse Davis, the inventor of the run-and-shoot offense. Davis taught his offense to Rice, like the Hawxin's June Jones, former Houston Oilers coach Jack Pardee, NFL journeyman and current HBO television personality Jerry Glavine and the Denver Broncos' Mike Shanahan.

Future NFL quarterback Neil Lomax maxed at PSU during Mark's three-year stint there. When Davis took a job with Roger Thacker's program at the University of California, Mark Thompson left for the state of Washington.

Coincidentally, the man who took over for Davis at PSU was a guy named Reed. In 1981, while Reed was still five years away from revolutionizing Grizzly football — and by extension, the entire Big Sky Conference — Mark began coaching at Walla Walla High, where he still mentors the O-line. He also owns his own insurance business.

The Thompson brothers — Andy, older brother Matt, and younger brother David — became mainstays at Walla Walla High's practices as soon as they were old enough to be trusted on the sidelines. Mark says Andy became a ball boy at age 6 and never really left practice until he graduated from Walla Walla High, where he still mentors the O-line. He also owns his own insurance business.

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Backups to take stage when Griz battle Weber

Carl Hennell
GameDay Kaimin

Although Saturday's Griz game against Weber State could be dubbed the "battle of the backups," points could come at a dime a dozen.

Both starting quarterbacks will probably nurse injuries on the sidelines as both defenses try to cover up their weaknesses.

The Griz (5-0, 8-1) defense has been the team's bread and butter in a conference full of offensive firepower, but the secondary is currently pocked with injuries. And WSU (-2-4, 2-3) is second in the Big Sky Conference in passing.

"We lost Joel Rosenberg. He's an incredible athlete. He's an incredible athlete," said Griz coach Joe Glenn (21-36-2). "We lost Joel Rosenberg. Vernon Smith wasn't healthy. Johnnie (Peoples) isn't practicing this week. And when you don't practice all week, it shows come game time."

Fortunately for the Griz, the quarterback responsible for leading the Wildcats to a second-ranked passing attack will be on the bench. Insert the 6-6 sophomore Tate Bennett, who has completed only 40 of 85 passes for 473 yards with five interceptions and three touchdowns, and it's a good bet the Griz will see a heavy dose of senior running back Johnnie Gray III.

At 5-9, 185-pounds, Gray averages more than 200 yards per game. His 1,259 rushing yards places him second in the nation. And with 41 receptions, he is WSU's primary receiver.

"He faster than the dickens," said Glenn. "The thing he can do that's scary is he can just about out-athlete anybody on the whole field. He'll start right, he'll stop in front of an outside zone, then reverse his field and beat everyone around back to the corner and run 75 yards for a touchdown and nobody else can catch him. He's an incredible athlete."

Gray is in front of Yohance Humphrey by 80 rushing yards this season. With 1,179 rushing yards, Humphrey needs 99 yards to break his 1999 single-season UM rushing record. With 241 career points, he is 9 points away from the UM record.

"I'm hoping that after they buy to Butte and stay there Thursday night, then come over to Missoula Friday, by the time kickoff comes Saturday, after their four-overtime win last Saturday, that wears on them a little bit," Glenn said.

UM leads the series 28-11 and has won 10 of the last 12 meetings.

The last time the Wildcats ventured to Missoula, in 1999, the Griz mauled them 81-22 and out-gained them 717 to 332 yards.

"That was the longest afternoon in my life," said WSU coach Jerry Graybeal.

Last year, the Griz escaped with a 30-28 victory after WSU scored two second-half, special teams touchdowns. Humphrey rushed for 197 yards and three touchdowns.

"The one thing about Montana is that they always find a way, and have a tremendous will to win," said Graybeal. "They are as good a home team as there is in the country and have some of the best, if not the best, fans in Division I-AA."

Yo Humphrey jukes an Eastern Washington defender.
**Montana 2000 Record • 9-1, 6-0 Big Sky**

**Offense**

### Branden Neill

Quarterback

6-3, 215-pound junior from Great Falls, Mont.

Branden Neill is gaining fans around Missoula at a rate not seen since... well, since last season when John Edwards proved himself to be capable in relief of Drew Miller. Here at GDK, we like the way the voice of the Griz Mick Holien said it when he quipped: Is there a quarterback controversy in Missoula? No, we just don't know anyone sniffing out and destroying pesky running backs, when it comes to a 215-pounder, it can be a big problem. When it comes to the water, or on the artificial turf, as the case may be, when it comes to big problems. When it comes to the water, or on the artificial turf, as the case may be, the Griz can be a big problem. When it comes to the water, or on the artificial turf, as the case may be, the Griz can be a big problem.

### Calvin Coleman

Cornerback

5-10, 189-pound senior from Niceville, Fla.

The Claw busted out of his "slump" last weekend with an interception for a touchdown that changed the whole nature of the Griz's game against Idaho. It's Calvin's senior year and we know that with just a couple of regular-season games left at Washington-Grizzly Stadium, he'll turn it on for the home crowd. His mission, along with the rest of the Griz secondary, will likely be in stopping WSU's John Gray from catching balls out of the backfield and also shutting down wide receiver Damon Greenberry.

### Numerical Roster

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Lavender Stigers</td>
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**GRIZ DEFENSE VS.**

### Vinny Humbersteller

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### Andy Thompson

6-4

### Matt Steinau

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### Cory Proctor

6-4

### Johnnie Peeples

6-4

### Jonny Varona

6-4

### Herbert Fernandez

6-4

### Dan DeCoite

56

Word on the street is, you don't want to be leveled? Honestly we're still feeling bad for Dane from last week, when he took a huge shot from a big, nasty Idaho DT. We're not winners.

**Montana GameDay Kaimin, Saturday, November 10, 2001**

### Defense

**2000 Record • 13-2 overall, 8-0 Big Sky**

The Griz are still coming off the program's first road win since last season when John Edwards proved himself to be capable in relief of Drew Miller. Here at GDK, we like the way the voice of the Griz Mick Holien said it when he quipped: Is there a quarterback controversy in Missoula? No, we just don't know anyone sniffing out and destroying pesky running backs, when it comes to the water, or on the artificial turf, as the case may be, when it comes to big problems. When it comes to the water, or on the artificial turf, as the case may be, the Griz can be a big problem.

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Matt McFadden

Wildcat Defense

Offense

Running back

5-9, 180-pound senior from Palo Alto, Calif.

Joe Glenn calls Johnnie Gray the "premier offensive performer" in the Big Sky Conference. Personally, our vote goes to him for that honor because he's the guy we have to stop to control the game. Anyway, the Weber State offense pretty much lives and dies on the legs of JG III; he's racked up 1,259 yards this season. He's also the Wildcats' leading receiver with 41 catches. With the Grizzly secondary bungled up just a bit, the big guy from Fort Hall will have to step up and step Gray early for UM to shut down WSU.

Defense

Strong Safety

6-2, 215-pound senior from Sandy, Utah

Weber State was not going to let him go, the Weber State defense has been poor this year. But that said, Mr. Sigoda's here been the leading tackler on WSU's stinker season. The way Montana throws the ball, it's certain that he'll get plenty of chances to add to his 62 tackles. Spencer also has five pass deflections on the year, which should be enough to keep backup quarterback Brandon Neil and the Grider wide outs on their toes. Sigoda's forced two fumbles, so yo Humphrey better take care of the ball when the Grizz put it on the ground.

Numerical Roster

1. DeAndre Harrington
2. James Peterson
3. Spencer Sigoda
4. Justin DeFour
5. Matt McFadden
6. Colter Bolton
7. Marcus Thurman
8. CB
9. Spencer Sigoda
10. DT
11. Randy Spencer
12. LB
13. LB
14. DT
15. LB
16. LB
17. FS
18. Carderick P Foman
19. John McFadden
20. Matt McFadden
21. CB
22. LB
23. DT
24. LB
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Ian Costello
GameDay Kaimn

The Montana State Bobcats won’t know until after their game against Idaho State has ended if their Kate-Moss-slim hopes of a Big Sky Conference title still exist. To have any chance of winning their first conference title since 1984, the ‘Cats must beat ISU and 3-6 Weber State must upset No. 16 Northern Arizona Saturday.

But first and foremost for the ‘Cats championship dreams is getting past Idaho State. Montana State has dropped its last two conference games. A 35-28 loss to Northern Arizona and a 33-22 loss to Portland State all but did in playoff hopes for the Bobcats. The losses have threatened to ruin Montana’s championship season.

However, the Bobcats are still in the mix for the conference title. A Weber State upset next week means the ‘Cats have the easy path to the championship. The loss of Northern Arizona means No. 16 NAU is in.

If both MSU and Weber win, Montana State has a chance to come away with a victory. If the ‘Cats are to stay in the game, they will need the effort of running back Ryan Johnson, who has rushed for 1,168 yards and nine touchdowns this season. Walter Payton Award and GDK Prediction: 43-28 ISU. Northern Arizona vs. Sacramento State Dreams of a conference title have faded, but don’t think that Northern Arizona believes the season is over. Currently standing as the No. 5 playoff prospect from the Big Sky, the Lumberjacks can go on a long way toward asserting themselves a spot in the playoffs with a win over Sacramento State Saturday.

NAU comes into the game with a record of 7-2 and No. 16 NAU thinks he will win it. Chapman is to believe the media or the coaches, these were the two teams that were going to fight it out to help the Griz carry the Big Sky banner into the post-season. Portland State has two conference losses, the Griz own the head-to-head tie breaker with the Vikes and EWU has three conference losses, meaning that any hopes of a conference title have evaporated for both.

The only reason to care here is Jesse Chapman. The senior running back from Eastern Washington is clearly the favorite for the Walter Payton Award and GDK thinks he will win it. Chapman has rushed for 186.8 yards per game, good enough to be the No.1 rusher in the land. PSU and quarterback Justin Wood boast the top-ranked passing game in the Big Sky but it is tough for a good passing team to beat a great rushing team; they just don’t get the ball enough times. GDK Prediction: Chapman at least 200 yards, Wood at least 300. 38-35 EWU.

Dreams of a conference title have evaporated for both. If one conference title still exist, Montana State all but did in playoff hopes for the Grizzlies. The loss of Northern Arizona means the Grizzlies can keep this one close is to forfeit and take the 1-0 lose. Northern Arizona wants to get out to help the ‘Cats win the Big Sky banner into the post-season.

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Scouting Report:

Bryan Haines
GameDayKaimin

Today they are the Pride. Two years ago they were the Flying Dutchmen. But whatever Hofstra may be known as next year doesn’t matter, because to folks here at GameDayKaimin, they will forever be known as “the bastards who beat us at home in the pouring rain and freezing cold in last season.”

Of course, after that 10-9 loss, Montana went on to win 15 straight before falling in the national title game to Georgia Southern. Hofstra didn’t do too badly last year either. The Flying Dutchmen went 9-4 last season, losing in the 1-AA quarterfinals to eventual champion Georgia Southern 48-30.

New season and new name, same results for Hofstra this season. The Pride have won seven in a row since falling to Rhode Island 26-35 in the second week of the season. When Hofstra beat Delaware in week six, it was the first time since 1967 that Hofstra has beaten the Blue Hens in a row since falling to Delaware 26-35 in the second week of the season. Hofstra has 9-4 last season, losing in the 1-AA quarterfinals to Georgia Southern.

That seven-game winning streak has put the Pride at No.3 in the nation, right behind national powers Southern and Georgia Southern. Opponents’ defenses have been murdered by the Pride this season, and all the evidence points to “The Butler,” as in Rocky Butler. Hofstra’s Payton Award candidate and preseason All-American has ripped through defenses with stunning efficiency this season, throwing for close to 2,900 yards and a staggering 26 touchdowns in nine games thus far. The senior signal caller has completed 174 of 276 passes while throwing only three interceptions. Butler has thrown for more than 300 yards in all but two games this season, including a career-high 392-yard, three-touchdown effort against the University of Massachusetts.

Butler’s favorite targets this season have been Kahlil Roy and Charlie Adams. Roy has caught 58 balls for 1,092 yards and 13 touchdowns while Adams has 50 receptions, 937 yards and nine scores.

When Butler isn’t airing it out, Trevor Dimmie has been solid running the ball. Dimmie has rushed 129 times for 597 yards and nine touchdowns.

With Butler doing his best to make sure that the Payton Award goes do not to a running back this season, Hofstra’s offensive numbers have been ridiculous. The Pride is averaging an absurd 38.1 points per game. St. Louis Rams, eat your hearts out. Hofstra has scored more than 40 points three times this year, including an arena-football-like 51-44 win over Maine University.

It’s a good thing that Hofstra is scoring more than Wilt Chamberlain did, and GDK doesn’t mean on the basketball court either, because its defense has been less than stellar. The Pride have not taken too much pride in stopping people, giving up close to 24 points per game and 400 yards in offense to teams. When tackles are made, and judging by opponents’ offensive numbers it doesn’t happen often, Todd DeLamielleure has been in on a lot of them. The senior linebacker has made 100 total tackles, 57 of them on his lonesome. DeLamielleure is a graduate student from Duke, and a smart one at that. First of all, he transferred from the laughing stock of D-1 football to one of the top teams in D-2. DeLamielleure is also pretty good at reading quarterback’s eyes as well, as he showed in picking off three passes.

GDK loves the numbers that the Pride are piling up on offense, but that shaky defense will not cut it come playoff time. If the holes are plugged in their defense, it could be a short trip for head coach Joe Gardi’s Pride.
"That was a dream, that was something I always wanted to do. With the coaches saying ‘We think you can be the quarterback, or at least compete for the job.’ Yes, I was very excited."