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Game Day Kaimin, September 14, 2002

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IN THE SHADOWS

Senior defensive tackle Curt Colter watches and waits to heal from a leg injury while doing all he can to stay in the game.

by Courtney Lowery
Defensive tackle Curt Colter dives over Furman players to collide with the ball carrier during the Division I-AA championship game last year in Chattanooga, Tenn.

"The quiet leader"

"I'M NOT A STANDOUT PLAYER. BUT I'VE DONE MY JOB."

— INJURED SENIOR DEFENSIVE TACKLE CURT COLTER

Story by Courtney Lowery
Photos by Lido Vizzutti

Curt Colter sits gingerly. For a man of his size, at 6-2, 295 lbs, sitting gingerly does not come easily, but the pain shooting through his eyes says he has no choice in how he sits anymore.

"It's pretty bad," he says, showing a deep contusion on the left side of his thigh. "See." Indeed, his leg ripples in places where there should be no ripples and the whole thigh is a reddish blue. Then he shows his knee. As he pushes above his kneecap, the fluid squishes back and forth. It makes your stomach turn just a little, but not his.

"Told you," he says proudly, like a little boy showing his new black eye. He just knows he's tough, and you don't question.

He has an ease about him, despite the pain, which seems to be a common theme with him. "He just has his own intensity," says fellow defensive tackle Kyler Noel. "He has his own mindset. He'll just go out there and do whatever he sets his mind to do."

Now that he's on the sidelines, the honor's candidate only has one thing to set his mind to — playing again.

It's only a few more games before he's ready. Only a few more games.

He's still listed in the roster as "questionable," as he has been for weeks. But frankly, he's not questioning a thing. He knows it will be back, regardless.

It all started last spring with a run-of-the-mill knee injury. But, the pain and swelling persisted and in July, doctors took a clamp of fatty cartilage from his knee the size of, "This," he says, holding up his fist, roughly the size of softball. By fall camp, he felt ready to go, and even had the possibility of earning a thing. He just knows he'll be back, regardless.

"He just lightens things up," Noel says. "He's not a real 'ra-ra' guy," Hauck says, "But he does his job and players below him take note.

Colter says players often come him for advice. "He's pretty crafty in there," Hauck says. "And he communicates with them in his own way."

Regardless of losing standouts like Vince Huntsberger, Calvin Coleman and Matt Steinau from last season, the Grizzly defense is performing just fine. The depth and youth of the line is where the strength lies. There's Tim Bush and Ike Mincy. There's All-American candidate Ciche Pitcher and solid freshmen galore.

It's week by week, hoping that one of the many injuries to his left will heal.

"It's been a whole project," he says with a laugh, lifting the brace on his knee.

"Yeah, it hurts," he says, "I couldn't sleep for a while."

Wednesday, his foot was swollen after turning over his flip-flop on the way back from therapy. He takes that as a good sign — at least the fluid isn't in his knee anymore.

But even from the sidelines, Colter is still an asset. His mental game has always been his strongest, he says, and his five years of experience staring at offensive lines and reading keys is where he's hoping to help the team while he recovers.

"He's pretty crafty in there," Hauck says. "And he doesn't pass that on to the younger players."

Hauck calls him a "quiet leader," a leader who does his job and players below him take note.

"He's not a real 'ra-ra' guy," Hauck says. "But he communicates with them in his own way."

Colter says players often come him for advice.
Glenn to see familiar faces against the Bears

Bryan Haines
GameDay Kaimin

Standing across the sidelines from the Griz on Saturday will be the Northern Colorado Bears, but they will be more than just another opponent for head coach Joe Glenn. To many of the players starting for the Bears, Glenn’s house was a place to eat pizza, shoot hoops and shoot the breeze with him and his son, Casey. The Bears’ coaches were, at one time, winning national championships with Glenn, or playing under him. 

“I have a tremendous amount of respect and actually love for this team coming in here,” Glenn said. “I am a little bit closer to these players than just a coach and player. I am kind of a father and a friend.” Glenn held the head coaching job at Northern Colorado for 11 years before coming to Montana.

Many of the starters on this year’s UNC team are men Glenn recruited to come and play for him at Colorado. Many of those same players were also over at his house goofing off with his son, who was on the UNC team for two years and would have been a senior on this year’s team. He now plays for Carroll College in Helena.

“I don’t think it will make too much difference for us,” said Ray Dalton, the Bears’ head coach. “It is just our players playing their players.”

Glenn knows that putting those emotions aside and getting ready to play won’t be easy for either of them. How does Glenn plan to do it?

“Get your emotions out and get ready to play,” Glenn said. “I am going to put blank faces in those helmets because I am close to so many of them.”

If there is one advantage for Glenn and his staff to having coached at UNC for so long, it is the fact that they have a pretty good idea of what the Bears are going to do come game time.

One wrinkle that the Grizzlies will have to prepare for is the Bears’ use of two different quarterbacks. A red-shirt senior, Mark Passard, who was recruited by Glenn, will start for UNC. Passard threw for two touchdowns and 172 yards as the Bears beat Western Washington 31-0 last weekend. Junior transfer Steve Cutlip will also see action behind center Saturday.

Cutlip, who played last season at Colorado State, fired a 65-yard touchdown strike against Western Washington and had 135 yards passing as the two split time. Both will play about half the game against the Griz, Dalton said, even though Cutlip suffered bruised ribs after taking a sack last week.

If Northern Colorado is to establish the running game then Tyler Hawkins must run better than he did against Western Washington last week. The half-back gained only 60 yards on 15 carries, though he did find the end zone once during the game. On the other end are two stellar seniors in George Carroll and Eric Nelson. Nelson is already averaging more than 40 yards receiving this season.

Having his offensive line create holes and hold blocks is an area of concern for Dalton. “I don’t know if we can match up with them. I have no clue,” Dalton said. “There is a big difference between our program and theirs.”

Defensively, the Bears held Western Washington to just 120 total yards of offense in the shutout. However, the Griz will probably be one of the strongest offenses the Bears will play all season. Despite what appears to be an obvious advantage for the Griz, Glenn is doing everything he can to keep his players focused.

“We don’t wear an insignia on our helmet saying ‘We are I-AA and they are Division II,’” Glenn said. “Our kids can see that they are big, strong and talented.”
Dane Oliver
Wide Receiver
5-8, 155 junior from Monmouth, OR
Oliver fought for the starting "Z" receiver spot this year and proved to be a good investment as he made some key catches last week and scored on a 19-yard touchdown pass vs. John Edwards for his first collegiate touchdown. Oliver is sure to become a household name in the Griz's arsenal for the next two years.

Trey Young
Free Safety
6-0, 200 senior from San Diego, CA
Defensive team captain, Trey Young, returns for his senior year to lead the Grizzlies' defensive backfield. Young packs a punch in the flats with one forced fumble and two fumble recoveries so far this season. Northern Colorado is going to need bear mace to stop this 200-pound Grizzly.
Bears Defense

Hassan Raashad 36

Scott Tongren 33

Reed Doughty 6

Ryan Vixens 18

Bears Offense

CB
Steve Frye 55

LB
Dusty Hoffschneider 95

DE
Anthony Dunn 4

LB
Cabel Rohloff 46

SS
Ryan Vixens 18

Reed Doughty 6

Hoffschneider 95

This two-time Colorado State football Player of the Year started his college career with 17 tackles, highlighting a semester of seven tackles. Most likely he will try to do the same thing against the Griz, but he will be in a defensive line that isn’t as deep as ours.

Northern Colorado

Offense

Mark Passard
Quarterback
6-2, 200 senior from Westminster, CO

Mark Passard won the Bears’ first game of the season with 11 of 17 passing for 172 yards. Last week Passard doubled his career touchdowns, drawing two scores and connecting with George Carroll and Justin White in the second quarter. Let’s see if Passard has time to complete a pass, facing the speed of the Griz defensive end. Watch for Mr. Passard.

Defense

Anthony Dunn
Defensive End
6-4, 257 senior from Manassas, VA

Last week Dunn led the Northern Colorado defense, holding Western State to 120 yards total offense. Only three of those yards were on the ground. Dunn was named to the All-NCC first-team squad as a sophomore and junior. Last year Dunn started three games for Northern Colorado, yielding five sacks. Dunn, at defensive end, has also averaged two picks a year for the past two seasons.

Numerical Roster

Probable Starters in Bold

1 Paul Robinson JR DB 5’11 195 lbs Lingle, WY
2 Steve Clyde JR DB 6’0 220 lbs Arvada, CO
3 Nick Ellis SR WR 6’3 175 lbs Northglenn, CO
4 Nick Egan Jr DB 5’11 185 lbs Grand Junction, CO
5 Anthony Dunn JR DE 6’5 347 lbs Manassas, VA
6 Danz Petersen SO DE 6’6 305 lbs Colorado Springs, CO
7 Reed Doughty FR DB 6’1 185 lbs Johnstown, CO
8 Mark Passard SR QB 6’2 205 lbs Westminster, CO
9 Adam Matthews JR RB 5’11 180 lbs Northglenn, CO
10 Eric Arredondo SR WR 5’11 185 lbs Arvada, CO
11 Mark Siedzik JR DB 5’10 170 lbs Denver, CO
12 Tony Christensen JR DB 5’8 200 lbs Littleton, CO
13 Steve Mullen SO DB 6’1 185 lbs Aurora, CO
14 Nick Ragan FR DB 5’11 180 lbs Elizabeth, CO
15 Jared Jackson SR WR 6’0 190 lbs Longmont, CO
16 Brad Harvey JR DB 6’0 205 lbs Denver, CO
17 Mike Vixens JR LB 5’10 210 lbs Denver, CO
18 Eric Vixens JR DB 6’2 205 lbs Lingle, WY
19 Andre Wilson JR RB 5’11 210 lbs Denver, CO
20 Mike Vixens JR LB 5’10 210 lbs Denver, CO
21 Jamie Scott JR DB 5’10 205 lbs Colorado Springs, CO
22 Chad Haider SR WR 6’1 180 lbs Aurora, CO
23 Mike VanManen JR RB 5’10 195 lbs Pueblo, CO
24 Mark VanManen FR LB 5’11 210 lbs Aurora, CO
25 Josh Yeater FR FB 5’11 220 lbs Greeley, CO
26 Nate Lahiffe FR LB 5’10 210 lbs Aurora, CO
27 Anthony Dunn JR DE 6’5 280 lbs Westminster, CO
28 Josh Stewart JR QB 6’3 212 lbs Westminster, CO
29 Mike VanManen SR DB 5’10 195 lbs Pueblo, CO
30 Mark VanManen FR LB 5’11 210 lbs Aurora, CO
31 Dusty Quick FR RB 5’9 179 lbs Fort Morgan, CO
32 Greg Gebhardt FR DB 6’0 185 lbs Loveland, CO
33 Mark VanManen FR LB 5’11 210 lbs Aurora, CO
34 Mike Vixens JR LB 5’10 210 lbs Denver, CO
35 Justin White SR TE 6’4 251 lbs Littleton, CO
36 Hassan Rashad SR CB 6’0 190 lbs Denver, CO
37 Jared Jackson SR WR 5’11 190 lbs Longmont, CO
38 Mike VanManen SR DB 5’10 195 lbs Pueblo, CO
39 Ron Scott 39

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Northern Colorado

2002 Record • 1-0 Overall, 0-0 North Central
2001 Record • 7-4 Overall, 4-4 North Central

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The Grizzlies have begun their quest for a second straight national championship in dominating fashion. After handing Hofstra their first scoreless game since 1978 with a 21-0 victory, the Griz followed up with a 45-7 thrashing of Albany, N.Y. Now the Griz are set to host Northern Colorado this weekend, with kickoff at 1:05. As each week passes, including all of last season, the Griz continue to show that they might be in the wrong league. With a current 16-game win streak, Joe Glenn's squad looks to be a step above the rest of the Division I-AA field. But, hey, that's the rest of the nation's problem.

As long as they're in Division I-AA, they'll continue to do what they do best: win. No team has been able to stop them from doing so, and Northern Colorado will probably be no exception. Led by last week's Big Sky Conference Offensive Player of the Week, John Edwards, the Griz will go home with 16 straight wins under their belt.

GDK prediction: 31-7 'Cats

Sam Houston State (1-1) at Northern Arizona (1-1)

Now this should be a game to watch. Northern Arizona is not currently in the top 25, but is definitely a top-25 caliber team. Sam Houston State is ranked 14th in the Sports Network poll, and like Northern Arizona, would be higher if not for an early loss. The Lumberjacks are looking to average last season's loss to Sam Houston State in the first round of the I-AA playoffs, the two teams' only meeting ever. Sam Houston State wants to creep into the top 10, where they hope to stay all season.

The Lumberjacks have had difficulty putting points on the board this sea­son, but hope that quarterback Clint Womack can get on track and lead the offense. It's easier said than done against a solid Sam Houston State squad. GDK thinks that even if Womack does get his groove back, it simply won't be enough. Sam Houston State is ready, which is highly unfortunate for the Lumberjacks.

Don't expect a blowout, but do expect a blemish on the Big Sky Conference's resume.

GDK prediction: 24-17 Sam Houston State

Western State (0-1) at Weber State (0-1)

This game, unlike the one against Northern Arizona, carries no importance and should be as exciting as bridge night at the senior citizens' center.

Western State is a weak, little Division II opponent that can win pride just by keeping their losing margin to a minimum. Weber State is a team with firepower on offense, and absolutely nothing on defense. That's all right though, because they won't need defense to win this one.

Junior quarterback Tate Bennett threw for 345 yards and three touchdowns in the first game of the season. Unfortunately, the defense couldn't make any stops, get any tackles, or really do anything at all, and Weber State lost the game.

Western State doesn't have a strong offense but is more than capable of scoring on Weber's pathetic defense. However, Bennett should have another big day that will result in a Weber win. It won't be pretty, it shouldn't be exciting, and it's definitely not important. It's still a game, though, and there has to be an outcome.

GDK prediction: 41-26 Weber State

Idaho State (1-0) at Utah State (0-2)

Idaho State exploded out of the gates in their first game of the season, led by a running game that compiled 257 yards. Idaho State punished Montana-Western 48-7, which is, granted, no huge accomplishment no. 16 Northern Arizona. Sacramento State is the only team in the conference not playing this weekend, and that's probably a good thing if the Big Sky wants to lose only one game. Sac State has lost 10 straight games dating back to last year.

Whatever happens, when all of the final whistles have blown and the weekend is over, the Montana Grizzlies will find themselves ranked number one in the nation because when winning becomes routine, and routine becomes habit, it's hard to break a good habit.
Bryan O'Connor
GameDay Kaimin

Following a tough loss to the Vanderbilt Commodores last Saturday, the Furman Paladins are keeping their heads up and focusing on the rest of their schedule, their new head coach told the GameDay Kaimin.

The Paladins, under first-year head coach Bobby Lamb, opened their season against the Commodores and sustained a 49-18 loss in Tennessee. The Commodores are now led by former Furman coach Bobby Johnson.

Lamb took over as head coach of Furman after 16 years as an assistant coach for the Paladins.

Lamb said his seventh-ranked team is looking forward to some conference play after being overpowered by the SEC Commodores. But the team has a tough schedule ahead, playing Richmond, Appalachian State and Georgia Southern.

Lamb said he is looking to his offense — especially the backs and receivers — to be the strong point for the Pale­dins.

One of his favorite targets, senior flanker Bear Rinehart, caught seven passes for 127 yards against the Commodores. Rinehart had a strained hamstring in pre-season practice, but appeared to have healed well by the season opener. Sophomore split end Isaac West also hauled in seven passes for 82 yards.

"(Napier) is like a coach out there on the field," Lamb said. "He's our leader and we all have a lot of confidence in him."

Lamb said he and his coaching staff were a little concerned with Napier's nine interceptions last year, and worked with him in the offseason to improve his accuracy.

As far as the loss Furman suffered against the Griz in the 2001 I-AA championship, Lamb said it is not figuring into this year's team's motivation. "In August I told the team, 'we laid that to rest, it's in our past,'" Lamb said. "That was last year's team. This is a new team and we have to find our own identity."
Continued from page 2

"I give them little pointers and give them little mental tidbits before a game," Colter says. "There's a lot of that that's intangible that no one ever talks about. Things like what to think during a game, how to clear your head."

It's not easy being on the sidelines. After starting all last season and just starting to come into his own during the playoffs, it's just not easy.

That's how he puts it. It's not devastating. His world hasn't ended, it's just not easy.

"It's a hard pill to swallow, but I'm not going to throw in the towel," he said. "I'm going to make the best out of this."

Sure, it scares him that he's missing a possible return championship season, but he's confident he'll be back soon. He's put too much in to give up now, just when he feels like he's starting to shine.

Colter red-shirted his freshman year. Again, there he was on the sidelines, not a place he likes to be. His brother, DJ, was playing defensive tackle for the Griz at the time. Colter was in the shadows of his brother, he was homesick, having a tough time and he started to rethink playing football.

But he stuck with it, and in the end he says it's been worth it, not because football has been his life but because he's loved every minute he's been on the gridiron.

Last year, in Chattanooga, he never knew it better.

"While everybody was just jumping around, hugging the trophy, I took a walk by myself," he said. "I just kind of walked around, hugging the trophy, I took a walk every minute he's been on the gridiron."

He's played sports his entire life. As a kid, his brother and he would clear the furniture out of the family living room in his tiny town and wrestle. He got his first pair of shoulder pads in third grade. He earned 12 letters at Hysham High, four each in football, basketball and track.

It's funny, because he says he loves sports and no doubt he does. You can see it in his eyes when he starts to talk about games, plays or highlights he remembers. He says he'd do anything for a competition, but there's something different about him, something that distinguishes him from the stereotypical athletes who are only athletes, who only talk about their lives in terms of wins and losses.

Sure, he admits that, "The thing with me is that I love to win, it doesn't matter if I'm playing checkers or ... I just love to win."

And, he admits to doing what all small-town kids do: playing all sports growing up, sometimes just to pass the time.

But when asked about what's been the best about his five years in Missoula, he doesn't want to talk about football.

"It's hard to explain," he says, squinting his eyes. "The last five years ... A lot has changed. Coming from a small town, I've opened my mind a lot more. My perspectives have changed."

He's taking it in stride, injury and all.

"I'm not going to let this go to my head," he said. "I just gotta wait for my time, because things like this, I don't have any control over. I told one of my lineman that I'd rather be out there running, conditioning and puking."

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