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### Montana basketball team to play Idaho State and North Dakota

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FROM: BOB GILLULY  
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MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

MISSOULA, MONTANA—Montana's Grizzlies, who last weekend learned one of coach Frosty Cox's oldest axioms the hard way, host two "new" opponents this weekend in Idaho State and North Dakota. Although Montana has played teams from both schools in the past, it's been about a decade since the Grizzlies hosted either outfit.

Cox, a taskmaster for defensive play, maintains that any team can win basketball games if it holds the opposition to 60 points and manages to hit 35 percent of its shots in a given contest. This held true last weekend, when the Silvertips split two tussles with Montana State. In Friday night's encounter, Montana hit only 31 percent of its shots and gave up 71 points in a 71-66 loss to the 'Cats. Things were reversed Saturday night—the Grizzlies scored 40 percent from the field and came out with a 63-54 win over the MSC crew.

Thus, in compiling a 2-1 record so far, the Silvertips have given up an average of only 60 points a game, and that's the way Cox wants it. Improvement in defensive play and rebounding are the definite highlights of the young Montana season.

But Cox still worries about poor ball handling and the periodic scoring drouths his Grizzlies are experiencing. Twice last weekend the Grizzlies went four minutes without scoring from the field, and poor passing also was evident. "We still have to iron out a lot of individual mistakes," he summarized.

Greatest improvement in the past week has come from center Steve Lowry, a 6-7 pivot man who has shown great agility for his size. Lowry is the best rebounder on the team, and the sophomore from Red Lodge also forged into the team scoring leadership on the basis of a 35-point output in the two MSC contests. Lowry, who seemed hesitant in shooting earlier this season, hit 11 of 25 shots against the Bobcats.