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Bob Smith: Into the record book

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BOB SMITH: INTO THE RECORD BOOK

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University of Montana junior fullback Bob Smith has wasted little time getting his name in the UM record book.

It took the 5-11, 202-pounder less than 15 minutes to break into the records section. In fact, 14 minutes and one second had expired in Montana's season-opener against Simon Fraser when Smith crossed the goal-line to complete an 80-yard touchdown jaunt.

The run is the longest from scrimmage in the 77-year history of football at the University.

Roy Malcolm held the record on the strength of a 79-yard dash against Montana State in 1949.

Last Saturday, in his fourth game as a Grizzly, the transfer from Spokane Falls Community College, Spokane, Wash., eclipsed another UM mark.

He carried the pigskin 34 times against Northern Arizona, two more times than Arnie Blancas and Steve Caputo carried against Weber State in 1970 and 1971, respectively.

Smith amassed 166 yards in his travels against Northern Arizona and clearly established himself as UM's number one fullback.

His emergence as the starter has been slowed by injuries.

In spring practice he did not participate in any contact until late in the Alumni-Varsity game which capped spring football activities.

He entered the contest in the fourth quarter, gained 57 yards and gave the varsity a 17-14 win with a tackle-breaking 18-yard run in the final four minutes.

"We knew he could be a good fullback after that run in the spring game," UM coach Jack Swarthout commented. "He hadn't scrimmaged at all until that game and we didn't know anything about him except for his junior college accomplishments."

At Spokane Falls, the Pasco, Wash., native earned honorable mention All-America recognition, was the team captain, winner of the Inspirational Player award and was

nearly a 1000-yard rusher

BOB SMITH--2.

The UM coaching staff was anxious to see Smith perform when the team reported for fall practice, but he pulled a groin that hampered him throughout the pre-season.

In the Simon Fraser contest he injured his right shoulder and missed practicing the week preceding the North Dakota game.

"He comes to play," Swarthout says of Smith. "He is ready when game day rolls around."

Swarthout said the sociology major is as good as any fullback he has had at Montana. "He is a strong runner, with good quickness and the ability to run to daylight. He can also pick up yardage on his own by carrying tacklers and breaking tackles," Swarthout said.

Smith had nine carries of nine yards or more in the Northern Arizona game and came close to breaking a long scoring run on several occasions.

Montana opens its home schedule Saturday against undefeated South Dakota and the hard-charging fullback will have his work cut out for him. The Coyotes swarming defensive unit, which is known as the "super shrimps", has limited four opponents to 267 yards rushing. Smith has 329 yards in four games.

"We do not intend to suffer the same fate as Northern Iowa," Swarthout said. In 50 attempts the Iowans gained 73 yards and lost 73 yards for a net rush total of zero against the Coyotes last Saturday. South Dakota won 19-7.

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