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11-9-79
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GRIZZLY BASKETBALL TEAM
IMPROVING; FIRST GAME
SATURDAY, NOV. 24th

MISSOULA--

"Progress is definitely being made," says University of Montana basketball coach Mike Montgomery about his 1979-80 team's first couple of weeks in practice.

"All of our new people are progressing daily," he said. "They're picking up the fundamentals of the program, and the things we are trying to do here."

"Our effort on the floor has been good," the second-year coach continued. "However, we are still not executing nearly well enough offensively or defensively. We're going to have to make considerable progress in the next two weeks in order to be ready for our opener."

The Grizzlies' initial game this season is Saturday, Nov. 24, against Athletes in Action (Canada). Tipoff for all UM home games is 8 p.m., with preliminary contests set for 5:45 p.m. in Dahlberg Arena, located in Harry Adams Field House.

Montgomery said he was pleased with the efforts of lettermen Blaine Taylor, Tim McCauley and Craig Zanon at the guard spots. "As expected they have played consistently," he said.

"Craig Larsen, who has just begun practicing this week, will make rapid progress," he said. "He has shown great ability, and plays with great intensity."

Redshirt Tim Knight (6-7) and veteran Marty Green have played well at the forward slots, according to Montgomery, and "have the ability to get the job done for us."

(over)

GRIZZLY BASKETBALL TEAM IMPROVING--add one

Rod Brandon, who has been hampered with a deep thigh bruise, should begin practice again next week, "and will greatly upgrade the forward position."

Newcomers Brian Morris and Richie Edwards (6-4) also drew praise from Montgomery. "Both have been showing they are capable of getting the job done at guard."

"Also in the frontline, Greg Crutcher (6-3), Jim Caler (6-5½) and Dave Johnson (6-11) are improving," he noted. "They all have excellent attitudes, and will give us good frontline depth."

Grizzly center John Stroeder (6-10), a two-time All-Big Sky Conference pick, has been slowed with a knee injury, but should be ready to begin practicing again soon.

"Areas of improvement at this point have been the offensive board play, better fast break opportunities and the ability to apply pressure if needed," Montgomery pointed out. "Areas of concern are offensive timing and recognition, defensive tenacity and defensive board play."

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