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## JOHN STROEDER HAS LEFT HIS MARK IN THE GRIZZLY RECORD BOOK

by DAVE GUFFEY  
UM Sports Information Director

The Big Sky Conference Tournament will be the last collegiate basketball experience for John Stroeder, the big redhead from Port Townsend, Wash.

Stroeder, a 6-10, 240-pound center, will finish his career as one of the most prolific scorers and rebounders at the University of Montana.

After 26 games he ranks 10th on the Montana all-time career scoring list, having scored 917 points. The 9th-place career point leader has scored 927 points, so "Strodes" could break that barrier in the Big Sky tourney, to be held in Ogden, Utah, Feb. 29 to March 1.

An All-Big Sky pick the past two seasons, he is averaging seven rebounds a game, and has pulled down 564 rebounds the past four seasons. He should be one of the few players in conference history who is named All-Big Sky three times.

"I think blanking out everything from my personal life, and the coaching of Monty (head coach Mike Montgomery) -- he was the main man -- kept me going," said Stroeder. "Monty really got me working. He made me glad I came to the University."

He was the Grizzlies' "Most Inspirational Player" last season, as well as the team's No. 2 scorer and top rebounder. He ranks in the same spot this season, and is averaging 11 points a game.

"John has gained a tremendous amount of confidence since his freshman season," said Montgomery. "He has improved his skills every year."

Stroeder became a dominant force in the Big Sky since his sophomore season, when he played in all 28 games, and averaged 10 points and 7 rebounds per game. He has shot more than 50 percent from the field since that season, and maintains that statistic this season as well.

(over)



"I think I should have played a little better the last couple of years," said the personable Stroeder. "You get down on yourself after a bad game, and I think the attitude you have has a lot to do with the way you play. I think I've been more consistent this season, especially offensively. All I'm worried about now is finishing out the season with some wins."

"John has deserved all of the accomplishments and honors he has received," Montgomery said. "He has worked very hard, especially since his first year, to make himself a player."

"I think John has the potential to play pro ball," Montgomery continued. "If not in the NBA, then in Europe if he is interested in that option."

"The NBA is first on my list," Stroeder said. "I've got to go for it. I don't really want to play in Europe. The NBA is my dream. If I get a chance, I think I can prove I can play."

Stroeder was an All-American and all-state player while at Port Townsend High School. He was also team captain, an honor he has shared the past two seasons at UM. He was also the Washington state titlist in the discus his senior season in high school.

"The big difference between high school and college basketball is that the players are so much stronger and more physical," Stroeder said. "The inside game is a lot different. You have to adjust to the physical style, and of course the players are a lot bigger."

The 21-year-old Health-Physical Education major hopes to have an opportunity to play professional basketball. He eventually hopes to join his father, Tony, in the real estate business in Port Townsend.

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