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Bob Beers thrilled with being selected as Montana's only first team All-American in history

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BEERS THRILLED WITH BEING SELECTED AS MONTANA'S ONLY FIRST TEAM ALL-AMERICAN IN HISTORY

MISSOULA--

Bob Beers, University of Montana junior linebacker, was naturally happy about being selected for the Little All-America first defensive unit, but he was even happier when he was informed that he is the first Grizzly football player ever named to an All-America first team.

Being an All-America selection in nothing new to Beers, who transferred to the Missoula school from Columbia Basin Junior College in Pasco, Wash., where he was named to the first All-America JC team last year.

"I'm real happy," Beers said Thursday, "but I couldn't have done it without the other guys on the team and the coaches. I hope I can do it again next year, but it doesn't matter as long as we have a great season."

No one will deny that Beers earned the distinction. The 5-9, 200 pounder from Beaverton, Ore., just outside of Portland, averaged 18 tackles per game while calling the signals for the Grizzly defensive unit which led the Big Sky Conference in both total defense and rushing defense.

His great pursuit and savage hitting paid off by making him the leading tackler in every Grizzly game this year. Beers showed the ability to fight off blockers, no matter how big, to make tackles. His best performances were a 21-tackle output against Utah State, the most for either team, and a 19-tackle performance against Northern Arizona.

Beers had the support of several coaches in his bid for All-America honors this year.

Utah State's Chuck Mills called him "a good competitor who hustles all the way," and went on to say, "he gave us all we wanted and then some."

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BEERS THRILLED WITH SELECTION

Page 2

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Weber State mentor Sarkis Arslanian called Beers "pound for pound the finest linebacker I've seen for many years."

Montana coach Jack Swarthout said Beers is the best linebacker any of the coaches at Montana has ever coached, while South Dakota coach Joe Salem said, "if there is a better linebacker in the country, then I want to see him--but not play against him."

Beers was one of three Big Sky players named to first All-America recognition. The other two, tailback Don Hass of Montana State and fullback Lee White of Weber State, are both seniors, while Beers will be back for another go next year.

Montana's last All-America selection was also a linebacker. Wayne Harrington, who like Beers was an All-America junior college linebacker, only at Yakima, Wash. JC, was named to the second Little All-America team in 1965.