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### Game Day Kaimin, March 8, 2003

Students of The University of Montana, Missoula

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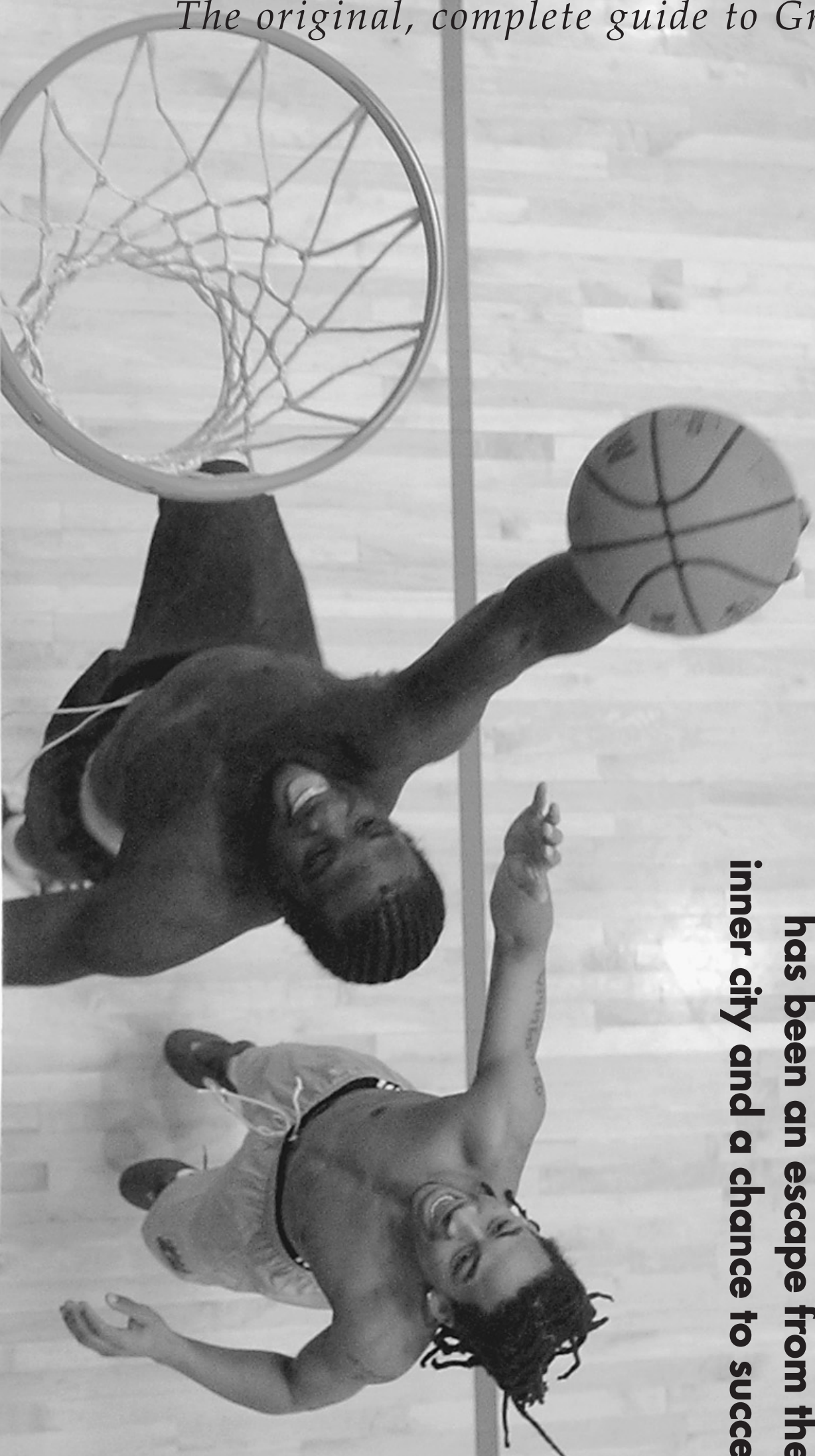
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# Game Day **KAIMIN**

*The original, complete guide to Grizzly athletics*

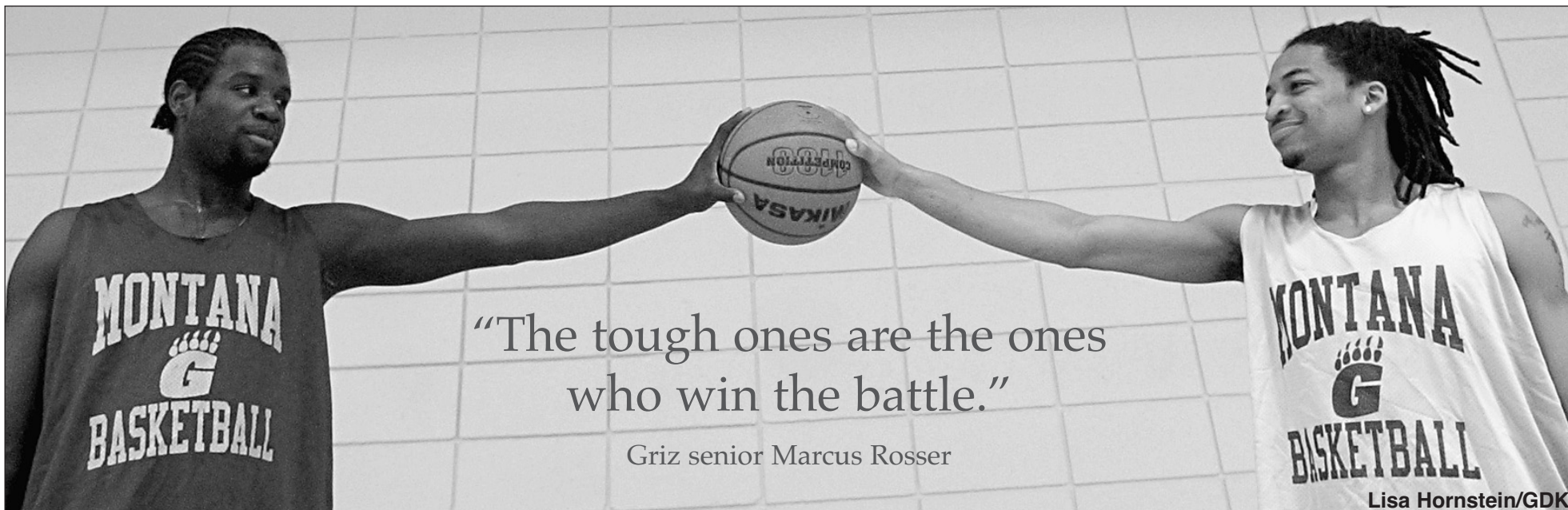
## **The Chosen Ones**

**For Griz seniors Marcus Rosser and David Bell, Montana basketball has been an escape from the inner city and a chance to succeed.**



Lisa Hornstein/GDK

## **MONTANA VS. Sacramento State**



# The Chosen Ones

Kristen Inbody  
GameDay Kaimin

**W**ith the outcome of the game riding on a single play, UM senior David Bell wants the ball. He knows fellow senior Marcus Rosser can get it to him.

"I like it when it comes down to the wire," Bell said with a huge smile. "I'd rather us win big, and it not come down to making one game winning shot, but I like the excitement."

The excitement is not just in winning but in hearing the crowd scream in the last minutes of the game.

"It's not intimidating. It's exciting. You live for moments like those with a big crowd," Rosser said, re-living beating Montana State, Stanford and Idaho State in the final seconds. "The larger the crowd, the more exciting the game, the more joy I feel."

The game is better when it's close, Rosser said.

"It brings out what college basketball is all about. The tough ones are the ones who win the battle," he said. "God, I love it."

Rosser and Bell are the tough ones. They are the ones to trust in the battle for a victory. They trust in themselves, and they trust in each other.

The pair are hundreds of miles from everything they knew, but their friendship has helped them survive the culture shock of coming to Montana from the inner city, Rosser from Philadelphia, Pa., and Bell from Oakland, Calif.

They can understand each other in a way no one else possibly can.

"We can relate because of our backgrounds," Bell said. "We grew up in the same atmosphere so we understand the struggles. From there we just connect like nobody else."

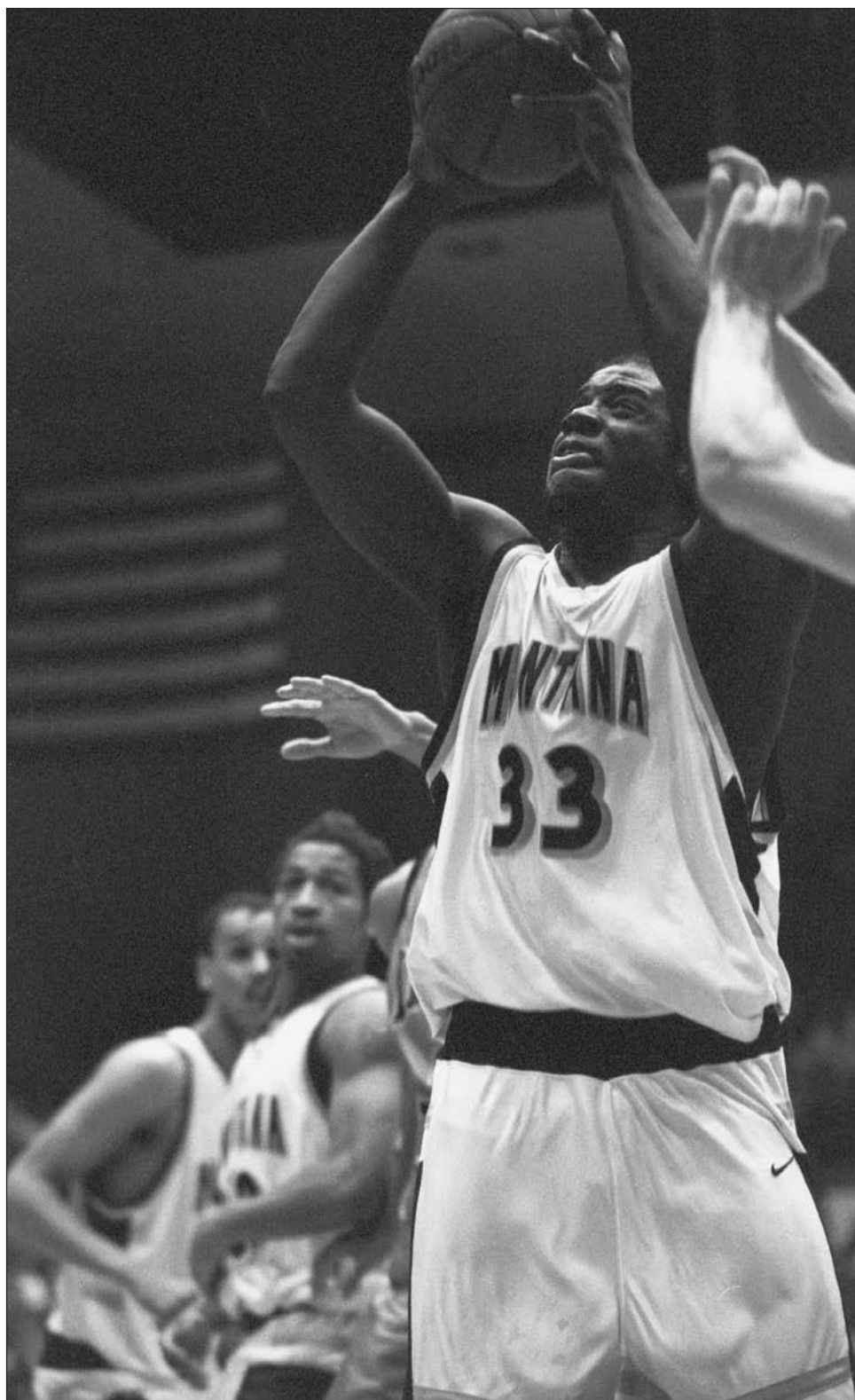
Rosser said, "In a lot of ways we're the same. We like the same music, wear the same clothing style and we're both laid back."

The two spend 15 hours together every day. They share the same apartment, the same major, the same goals and the same role as senior captains of the Griz basketball team.

The connection they have carries from their day-to-day lives on to the court, where they play with a fluid partnership.

"Marcus is like a big brother to me. I don't know how that happened since he's younger," Bell said. "He knows I have his back. We talk about a lot of things. We help each other out."

During the Sacramento State game last weekend, Rosser proved he takes his big brother role seriously. When Bell got fouled hard, "I jumped in the guy's face. 'Leave my little brother alone' is how I approached the guy," Rosser said. "He's my little brother who's older than me. I'm big-



Forward Marcus Rosser reaches for two during an Idaho State/Griz game in the Dahlberg Arena in February. The Griz defeated the Bengals 69-65. Sean Sperry/GDK

ger so I got his back. I'm here for him. You could say I'm his body guard on the court and in life."

Out of the cluster of men standing under the basket with their arms outstretched, Rosser, a 6-foot-7 forward, reaches beyond them and gets the rebound.

Rosser and Bell have excelled where so many from their neighborhoods have failed. But it hasn't been easy.

Rosser still dreams he's back in West Philly, in the old neighborhood laying up

shots with the guys.

Four of those guys are no longer around. In the past year, Rosser lost three friends to shooting deaths and another Philadelphia friend was sent to prison for life.

His aunt was sick through much of the season and died the day of his road game in Eastern Washington. His grandma is sick with a kidney infection and high blood pressure.

"It's hard," Rosser said. "It's really hard when I'm losing friends and family, especially when I'm so far from home."

Nearly 2,000 miles separate Rosser from his family.

"Sometimes I feel drained, but I know I'm here for a reason. UM is giving me a free education, so I know I've got to go out there and represent well," Rosser said. "That's where mental toughness comes in. I'm not going to let the University down."

Rosser is majoring in social work and sees himself back in Philly within the next 10 years.

"Every time I go back home I see the younger kids with drugs and robbing people, negative things," Rosser said. "They're growing up fast. We're talking ages 10, 12. They definitely need a hand."

He wants to give back to his neighborhood, because "I've been blessed by the game of basketball," Rosser said. "I was the chosen one from a violent neighborhood. I got the chance to do something positive. I got to be healthy and strong."

Bell, too, grew up in a violent neighborhood with drug deals across the street from his house and prostitutes on his corner.

"Off the court I was surrounded by a lot of things I could have gotten into deep," Bell said.

However, Bell has something going for him that Rosser doesn't, he said. He has two parents and a stable home.

"Within my family it feels like I'm the chosen one," Bell said. "I got to get out of the inner city. Now I can help my family get out if I get the opportunity to play after this for some money."

**With the last minute ticking away, Rosser passes to Bell.**

The final moments of his senior year will be slipping by when Bell steps on to the court for the last home game of his senior year Saturday against Sac State.

"I'm going to be thinking about what I'm doing this for," Bell said. "I'm doing it for all the people who have supported me, for all the sacrifices my parents made to get me this far. I'm doing it for myself."

He'll be thinking back to the Montana State game two weeks ago, the highlight of his season. With the Montana Grizzlies down 63-61 against arch rival Montana State, Bell made a tough layup while drawing a foul off a drive with 38.1 seconds left in the game. Bell then sank the free throw to put the Grizzlies up 64-63.

"At the beginning of the year we knew we should be the best team," Bell said. "Then we were struggling and it came down to playing for third place against Montana State."

Rosser, too, will be thinking about MSU.

"With a win against Montana State there was a feeling inside of me that felt like we had won some kind of championship, a feeling that said, yes," Rosser said.

Continued on Page 7

# Who's that? They rock!

*Pep band's antics amuse, annoy during basketball games*

Marina Mackrow  
GameDay Kaimin

**D**ahlberg Arena, the home court of the University of Montana Grizzlies, is filled with the usual sounds of game day. Students are trying to find seats, public announcements are resounding over the PA system, and the team's warm-up music is blasting.

All this is interrupted — an interruption that makes any conversation attempts futile.

The disturbance is the opening crescendo of the University of Montana Pep Band.

Its presence at every home game for both the Griz and the Lady Griz is hard to miss.

"Our goal is to create excitement and provide entertainment for the crowd before and after the game," director Scott McKenzie said.

In fact, men's basketball head coach Pat Kennedy said the pep band adds to the arena's atmosphere.

"When I'm walking out of the locker room with two minutes before the game, they are always playing," Kennedy said. "That's when I feel the environment and I get fired up."

The band prides itself on being vocal and intimidating the opposing team. During opposing team introductions at men's games the band yells, "Who's he? He sucks!"

However, when UM's athletic department told the band saying "sucks" during the women's team introductions was derogatory, the



Trumpet players Jonathon Knutson (left) and Jarom Hein share music while the University of Montana Pep Band plays during a Lady Griz basketball game last semester in the Dahlberg Arena. Lido Vizutti/GDK

band started saying "Who's she? She's lame!" and "Who's she? She's less than average!"

"Cleaning it up was no problem," band member Karl Ortman said. "We just had to be more original."

The band showed off its originality during the Sacramento State University women's team introductions by playing off Sac State's winless record with "Who's she? She's 0-11!"

There are parameters for what the band can yell. McKenzie said there is no cussing and no sexist

or derogatory remarks are allowed.

"Originality is the key," McKenzie said. "We succeed when we get the players to laugh on the opposing team's bench or get into the heads of the players."

Since the band sits just a few feet away from the visiting team's bench, it can be heard. The band members know this and use it to their advantage.

The band's intimidation techniques get different responses.

UM junior trumpet player Jarom Hein said an opposing

coach once congratulated the band for taking his team out of the game because the band had gotten so into the players' heads.

"What we try to do is help the team win games," Hein said.

The taunts sometimes earn the band a one-finger salute from opposing players, said Ortman, a senior who plays the sousaphone (which looks like a big tuba).

One team, the Northern Arizona Lumberjacks, even mooned the band during the game, Hein said.

Players are not the only ones to get involved with the pep band. Visiting fans often exchange words with the band. Hein said sometimes the fans complain, but other times it's good-hearted fun.

"They are doing it in a fun way," McKenzie said about the band's taunts. "It's not in a mean or derogatory way. They are just college students having fun."

For Ortman and Hein, having fun is why they are at the games. It's not the "minimal, small amount" of money they make doing it, Hein said.

"We do it because we love it," Hein said.

This year McKenzie has 27 musicians signed up, but the number present at each game fluctuates.

"Almost all of them are music majors so they are involved in other music activities on campus," McKenzie said.

The pep band does not have real rehearsal time together before games. In the beginning of the season, they rehearse twice together. After that the musicians are on their own. However, McKenzie said more than half of the members have participated before and about 90 percent of them were in the marching band during football season.

The pep band and the marching band differ in a number of ways, said McKenzie, an assistant to the

marching band. Since the marching band performs outside, numbers are important to what it is creating. The pep band can be smaller but still be loud since it is inside.

The marching band practices more than the pep band to prepare for half time shows. The pep band does more activities since it performs at every home game.

Students and coaches enjoy the loud and rowdy pep band.

"Our band is as powerful and loud as any other in the Big Sky Conference," Kennedy said. "They are located there for a reason: to play during the time outs."

Even though the students sit right next to the pep band, they don't mind the noise.

"I think they rock," UM sophomore Jace Christensen said.

"They are a fun, spirited bunch."

Christensen, a marketing and broadcast journalism major, likes the pep band's antics, especially its version of "If You're Happy and You Know It Clap Your Hands" when a visiting team member fouls out. The band changes the words to, "If you foul out and you know it clap your hands."

Christensen said everyone should join the band in its taunting.

Hein expressed concern for the Griz fans' perception of the band. He said the pep band has been doing the same thing for years, but now that both teams are expanding a fan base, the pep band is receiving more complaints from Griz fans.

However, during the five-week intersession when the majority of students leave Missoula, the pep band is still there, cheering for the Griz and taunting the other team.

"We are relied on as fan support," McKenzie said.

Heckling and taunting are not the only forms of support the pep band shows the Grizzlies.

McKenzie said the band has 30 charts to play from, but what is played on a particular night depends on the instruments present.

The most commonly played songs include "Tear the Roof Off," "School's Out" and "Beer Barrel Polka," which the band sings along to. "Up With Montana" and "Montana" are also played.

McKenzie's favorite songs to play are "Hey Baby," "Hush" and the band's version of "Respect."

Ortman's favorite song to play is "CC Rider" while Hein's is the theme from "Shaft."

Kennedy said the pep band is terrific and very professional.

"I think they do just an outstanding job," he said. "I admire them."

On Saturday night, when the Griz take on Sac State in the first round of the Big Sky Conference tournament, some teammates will not be suited up in maroon and silver basketball jerseys and carrying court shoes. Instead, these team members will wear maroon and silver T-shirts and carry instrument cases.

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## THE OLD POST

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**12 Kevin Criswell**

**Guard**

This week, Mr. Criswell was named the Big Sky Conference Freshman of the Year, but we here at GDK already knew how special this young man is. In tournament play, look for him to perform some magic.

**20 David Bell**

**Guard**

Mr. Bell, this week, was named to his second straight all-conference team unanimously. Against the Hornets we expect Mr. Bell to have some more razzle-dazzle up his sleeve.

**33 Marcus Rosser**

**Center**

Mr. Rosser continues to rebound his way into the Griz history books. This weekend, GDK predicts a solid double-double for Mr. Rebound.

**55 Victor Venters**

**Forward**

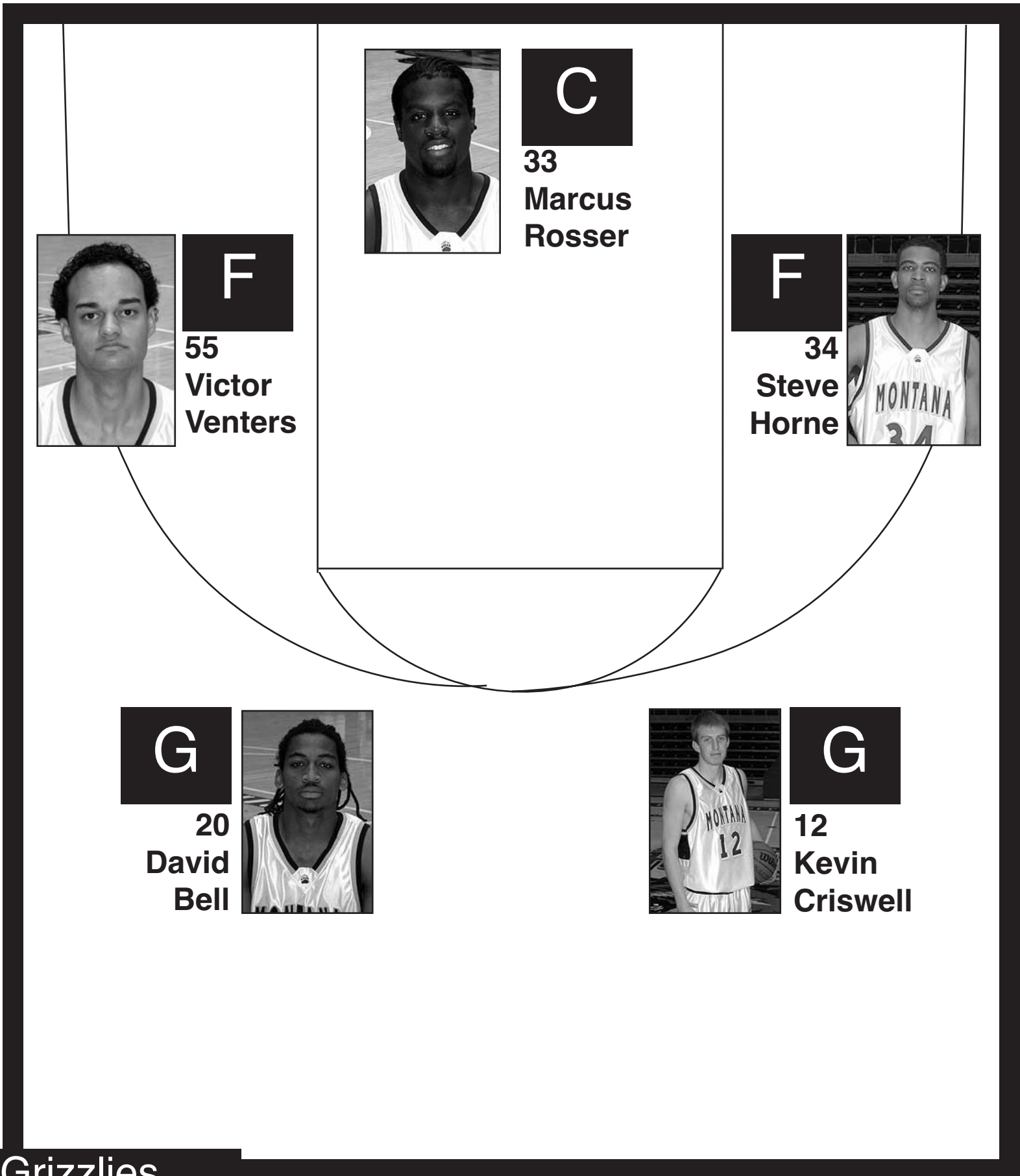
Everyone in Griz Country knows that Mr. Venters has the sweetest post moves this side of the Continental Divide. But the question is, will the Hornets be ready for his shake?

**34 Steve Horne**

**Forward**

Mr. Horne is a junior college transfer and in his first year as a member of the Griz, fans have come to expect his solid all-around play. Against Sac State, GDK predicts some more heroics.

# MONTANA GRIZZLIES



## Montana Grizzlies

00	Seyfert, John	RS	F-C	6'9"
4	Riddle, Sam	JR	G	6'0"
10	Mansell, Derrick	JR	G	6'2"
12	<b>Criswell, Kevin</b>	<b>FR</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>6'2"</b>
20	<b>Bell, David</b>	<b>SR</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>6'1"</b>
22	Hays, Jeff	RS	G-F	6'5"
24	Cummings, Brent	RS	F	6'7"
30	Chavez, Mike	FR	G-F	6'7"
33	<b>Rosser, Marcus</b>	<b>SR</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>6'7"</b>
34	<b>Horne, Steve</b>	<b>JR</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>6'6"</b>
40	Dlouhy, Matt	RS	F	6'6"
44	Pederson, Ryan	JR	F-C	6'9"
52	Easley, Corey	FR	F	6'8"
54	McKay, Chris	FR	C	6'11"
55	<b>Venters, Victor</b>	<b>JR</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>6'8"</b>



**Head Coach Pat Kennedy**

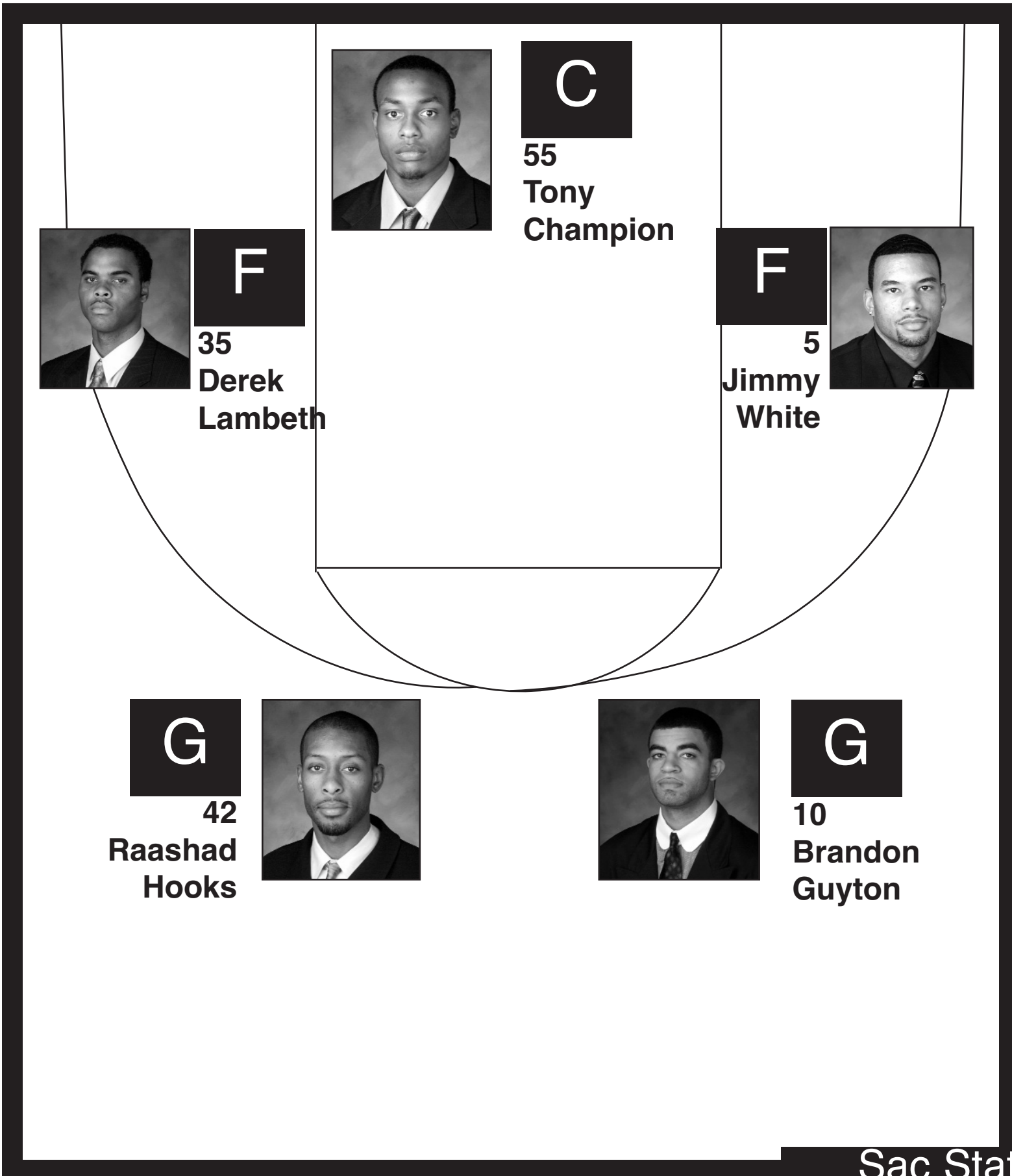
In his first season at the helm of the Grizzly program, Mr. Kennedy has led his team to a third place finish in conference play. Nevertheless, expect to see some run and gun Saturday, which is a Kennedy trademark.



**10 Derrick Mansell**  
**Guard**

Mr. Mansell provides the Griz with strong defense off the bench. On Saturday, GDK predicts that he will set-up Mr. Rosser for a crowd-pleasing alley-oop.

# SAC STATE HORNETS



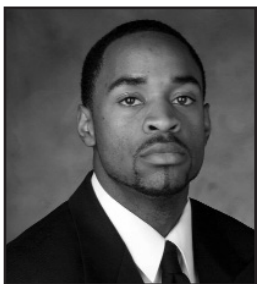
**42 Raashad Hooks**  
**Guard**  
 Mr. Hooks is truly the backbone of the Sac State squad. He leads the team in assists (112) and is second in scoring (9.9 ppg). But against the quicker Griz back-court, we expect problems for Hooks.

**10 Brandon Guyton**  
**Guard**  
 Mr. Guyton comes into this match-up averaging 8.4 points per game, but with a season-high of 22 against Idaho State a few weeks ago, Guyton is capable of some big numbers.

**55 Tony Champion**  
**Center**  
 Mr. Champion is provides the Hornets with their muscle in the middle. At 295 pounds and nearly seven feet tall, he will be a load for any one who guards him, but GDK expects Mr. Champion to have problems guarding the quicker Mr. Rosser.

**35 Derek Lambeth**  
**Forward**  
 Mr. Lambeth is the reigning conference player of the week after he led the Hornets to their first ever berth in the post-season tournament. Look for him to have his hands full Saturday with the Griz.

**5 Jimmy White**  
**Forward**  
 Mr. White is a native of Las Vegas. Mr. Lambeth and Mr. White are the only two members of the Sac State team that have started all 27 games thus far. Therefore, look for him to continue to be the catalyst for the Hornets.



**20 DaShawn Freeman**  
**Guard**

Mr. Freeman is a freshman from Berkeley, Calif., and as a newcomer, he has provided the Hornets with a spark off the bench, averaging 5.7 points per game.



**Head Coach**  
**Jerome Jenkins**

Mr. Jenkins enters his fourth year at the helms of the Sac State program. This year, marks the first year in the program's Big Sky history that it has qualified for post-season play.

## Sac State Hornets

1	E.J. Harris	RS	G	6'3"
2	Jameel Pugh	RS	F	6'5"
3	Emir Medunjanin	JR	G/F	6'6"
5	<b>Jimmy White</b>	<b>SR</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>6'6"</b>
10	<b>Brandon Guyton</b>	<b>JR</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>6'1"</b>
14	Cedric Thompkins	JR	F	6'7"
20	DaShawn Freeman	FR	G	5'11"
21	Derrick Kibler	SR	G	6'0"
24	Joe Dawson	SR	G	6'1"
30	Joel Jones	RS	G/F	6'5"
32	Djibril Diop	JR	C	6'10"
33	Leo Cravey	SR	G/F	6'7"
35	<b>Derek Lambeth</b>	<b>SR</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>6'5"</b>
40	David Joiner	JR	G/F	6'6"
42	<b>Raashad Hooks</b>	<b>SR</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>6'3"</b>
44	Chris Lange	FR	F	6'8"
50	Nick Gooding	FR	F	6'7"
55	<b>Tony Champion</b>	<b>JR</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>6'10"</b>

# Scouting Report

## Sac State makes unlikely playoff appearance

Myers Reece  
GameDay Kaimin

The Sacramento State Hornets are going to the Big Sky tournament for the first time.

Saturday's contest against the Montana Grizzlies on UM's home court signifies a reversal in direction for Sac State's basketball program, mostly thanks to head coach Jerome Jenkins.

Jenkins, in his third year at Sac State, said he is trying not to let the hype of the upcoming big game affect his or the team's nerves.

"We don't feel any pressure at all," Jenkins said. "We're just happy to be here."

On paper, Sacramento State's statistics don't look like they belong to a playoff team. The Hornets are second to last in scoring offense, last in scoring defense, last in three-point percentage and near or at the bottom of the conference in a variety of other categories.

That's only on paper, though.

Sac State has proved it knows how to make enough big plays to put itself in the position to win games. Freshman point guard Dashawn Freeman leads the conference in steals and on any given night can make a big hustle play on defense to give Sac State momentum.

Junior Brandon Guyton and senior Raashad Hooks have the ability to hit clutch outside shots near the end of the game.

Then there is senior leader Derek Lambeth, an unsung hero of the Big Sky conference, who gained some recognition in the final week of the season by being named Big Sky Conference co-player of the week with Montana's David Bell.

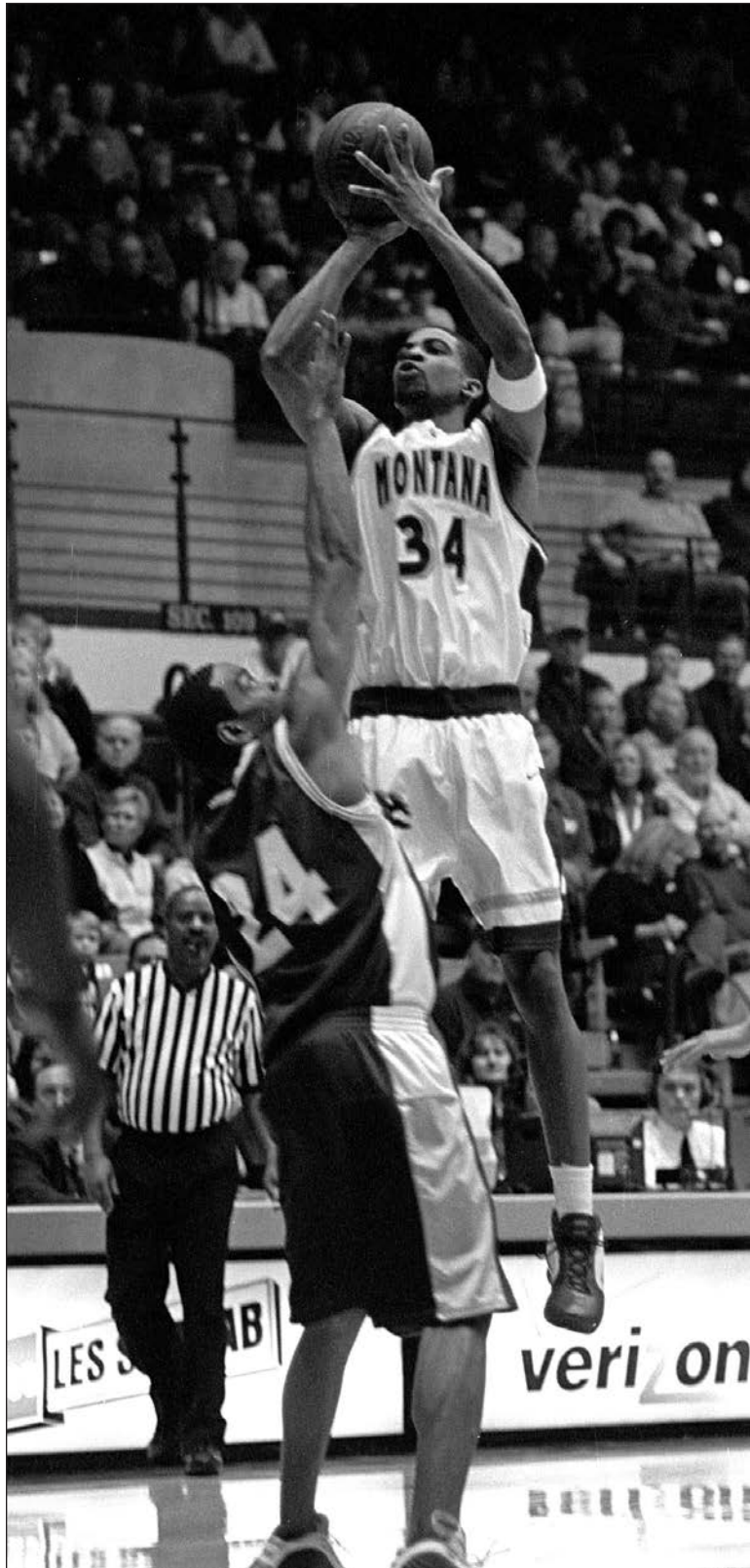
Lambeth scored 21 points in a loss against Montana last week and then put on a show against Montana State in the final game of the season. Lambeth scored 23 of his 25 points in the second half to push Sac State past the Cats and into the playoffs.

Lambeth leads the team in scoring, averaging almost 13 points per game, and is second in rebounding.

"He's been a big inspiration to not just the program but Sacramento, too," Jenkins said of Lambeth. "He's a complete player now, which can be credited to his hard work in the offseason."

Senior Jimmy White anchors the Hornets in the middle, leading the team in rebounds at 6.1 per game and leads the conference in blocked shots, swatting away 1.3 per game.

Hooks leads the team in assists at 4.2 per game and is



Lisa Hornstein/GDK

Junior Steve Horne extends over MSU's Josh Barsh during the annual Cat/Griz battle for Big Sky supremacy in February in the Dahlberg Arena. The Griz defeated the Cats 66-63.

second on the team in scoring average at 9.9 points per game. White is third on the team in scoring at 9.5 points per game.

Despite Sac State's generally poor statistics, the Hornets did lead the Big Sky in steals per game at 8.59. The Hornets use their speed and quickness in a persistent man-to-man defense to rattle opponents

and force turnovers.

The Hornets rely on their half-court defense to create offense on the other side of the court.

"We try get some stops in our half-court defense and then try to make some baskets on the other side," Jenkins said. "We think if we can get stops we'll be all right."

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### EDITOR'S NOTE:

Welcome to GameDay Kaimin, a product of the Montana Kaimin, UM's student-run paper. It's really the only thing you need. It has stories, pictures and other vital information, including the all-important roster. AND IT'S FREE! All this wonderful good-

ness just for you, our fans — because we care just that much.

So enjoy GameDay. Enjoy the game. Heck, why not even enjoy a hot-dog?

It's playoff time. Stand up and make some noise!

Scandals, lies, and startling revelations... a no-holds-barred farce!

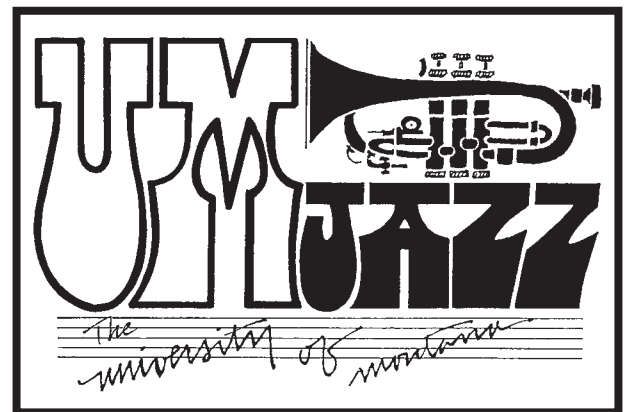
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# Working together

*"I'm doing it for all the people who have supported me, for all the sacrifices my parents made to get me this far. I'm doing it for myself." — Griz senior David Bell*

Continued from Page 2

Rosser told his teammates in the locker room that the MSU game wouldn't be their last home game. He wanted another game for UM's fans. With the win in Sacramento, Rosser was able to bring back one more game.

"Walking out on to the court for the last time, I'm thinking, this is possibly the last Division I game I play. I'm just thinking, remember this so I can remember what college basketball was all about," Rosser said. "I get a shiver. Man, this is it."

**Bell marches down the court with a calm confidence that seems out of place with the sound of the roaring crowd.**

Bell and Rosser are shy guys — the kind more likely to quietly lead by example than to give stirring speeches — so taking on the leadership role senior status requires was a challenge.

Bell is one of the top scorers in the Big Sky Conference, averaging 19.4 points per game, but he's looking to lead in another way.

"I'm becoming more and more vocal," Bell said.

"This year I know what I have to do to be the leader. I'm the coach on the court I think," Bell said. "The coach tells me things I reflect on and then tell the team in my own way. It's easier for them to understand. I'm like an extended coach."

Bell sought to become a better player this season so he can play at the next level; his last goal is to lead the Griz to the main event.

"Kennedy taught me to set up my teammates more, shoot the threes and get stronger with weightlifting. It's really helped my game," Bell said.

Last year, Bell was pegged as a high scorer and weak defender. He's worked on that.

"In the beginning I thought that I'd be the leading scorer. In the middle I questioned that when

we weren't winning any games. I tried to get away from me scoring to setting up my teammates," Bell said. "It's a way to make the whole team stronger. In the beginning it was just me and Kevin (Criswell) and Steve (Horne) just getting a lot of shots. Now we're more balanced, and that way teams don't know who to guard."

For Bell, now there's one goal left, the NCAA tournament.

"I have to carry this team to where we need to be — in the tournament — where we should be," Bell said.

Rosser's goals for the season have already been reached.

"First I was to lead the team in rebounding, which I'm doing, and in blocks, which I'm doing. The third goal was to reach the post-conference tournament," Rosser said.

There are three wins between the Griz and the NCAA tournament.

The first hurdle is the Hornets of Sac State.

The Griz have defeated Sac State twice this season, but that's precisely why it will be harder the third time, Bell said.

"They're going to have a good game plan for us from having played and lost to us twice," Bell said. "They'll change a few things to get around our zone. We'll just have to adjust."

"We'll beat them," Bell said. "We have a few players who are going to step up for this game on Saturday. I'm sure coach Kennedy has something ready for them."

Saturday's game will finally show what level the Griz should have played at the whole year, Bell said.

Sac State's weak shooting abilities and ineffectiveness against the zone give Rosser hope.

"It's going to be a win," Rosser said. "I don't care if it's by one point. We just gotta get a win."

Bell is hungry for No. 1 ranked Weber.

"For them to be the best team



Lisa Hornstein/GDK  
Marcus Rosser (right) and David Bell goof around in a game of one-on-one in the Student Rec Center on Tuesday afternoon. The two are alike in many ways — they share an apartment, the same major and the same roles as seniors on the team.

tells us we really should be the No. 1 rank. We'll prove it by winning the conference," Bell said. "We really had them beat here last time. We just had a lapse."

The game marked a turning point for the team, and Rosser and Bell were there to help the team regroup.

"The year was a learning experience," Bell said. "We haven't played to our best potential yet, but we're definitely going that way."

The team has a chance to take the Big Sky title, Rosser said.

"Basketball is a sport where anything could happen," Rosser said. "We go one game at a time, one possession at a time. In this conference anything could happen."

From the Big Sky title, anything is possible.

"Once we're at the NCAA we know anybody can beat anybody," Rosser said. "We know we can be one of those dangerous teams if

we make it."

**Bell passes to Rosser and runs behind him.**

Their changing role as leaders wasn't the biggest adjustment for Rosser and Bell. Just being in Montana was a complete change from their inner city back-grounds.

Rosser took the train from Philadelphia to Missoula in August 2001.

After riding a train for two and a half days, Rosser crossed the border into eastern Montana. He was suddenly very afraid of what Missoula would be like.

"It was just flat," Rosser said. "I was like, where is everything?"

When he reached Glacier Park, "I knew this was going to be some place good," Rosser said. "Glacier Park. That's when I really thought I wasn't even in America anymore. The mountains were so big. Everything was so fresh and the trees were green."

Both Bell and Rosser were surprised by the diversity of Missoula's population.

"There's so many different kinds of people," Rosser said. "In Philly, it's all black people."

UM is more than Bell expected, he said.

"People are more diverse than I thought," he said. "People know a lot more about things that are beyond Montana."

Bell had never heard people say "brrr" before coming to Montana.

"I was surprised at how nice everybody is. I'm still not used to people coming up to me and talking," Bell said. "I didn't know how people would take what I said, if people would understand me."

Neither Rosser or Bell have hunted, fished, hiked or skied in Montana.

"I'm a city guy, I guess," Rosser said.

Rosser came to Montana to do something different than what anyone in his family has ever done.

"Once I make it here I know I can be fine anywhere," said Rosser, who before Montana played at Kansas City Community College. "Sometimes you have to make choices. I definitely miss everybody though."

Bell's first two years of college were at Porterville College, just a couple hours from his Oakland home.

He went home every weekend. For his first few months in Montana, he just wanted go home.

A bit coddled by their close-knit families, Rosser and Bell had to grow up in their two years in Montana.

"I learned to be more responsible. I learned how to be more independent," Rosser said. "I learned how to be a man, especially so far from home. It taught me how to handle tough situations."

**Rosser swings the ball around his hips for a handoff to Bell in a sweet move they call the "Highriser Connection."**

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Continued on Page 8



# Winning the battle

Continued from Page 7

Bell and Rosser have played together so much during the past two years that they've developed some plays on their own during the off-season.

The "Highriser Connection" is named after the second-floor apartment they share.

"He gives me a signal, and then I'll do it," Rosser said.

Neither man had hoop dreams as a child. They've compensated for a late start with intense focus.

Bell started playing basketball in the fourth grade.

"I was real quiet," Bell said. "My parents wanted me to not just be a passive person so they put me into a sport. It just kind of happened."

At age 11, Rosser moved in with his older brother Anthony, a professional boxer. Rosser, too, boxed. He also played football as a quarterback and safety.

From boxing he learned to be aggressive and grew strong hands. From football he learned leadership.

Then Rosser grew five inches in one year and found himself in a basketball body.

**Bell, a 6-foot-1 guard, stands in the shelter of Rosser's sizable frame to take the three-point shot that would mean a win for the Griz.**

When Rosser and Bell stood on the court for Senior Night against MSU, they stood with a few of the people who mean the most to them.

They stood with their team and their coaches.

Assistant coach Wayne Tinkle has been more than just a coach to the pair.

"He's like a big brother for me," Rosser said.

Last year was the first year Bell, Rosser and Tinkle were together, so they have a natural connection.

Tinkle has seen the pair mature into more diverse players and step up as leaders.

"I know (Bell) is a better decision maker so if the game is on the line, we know he can make the right decision, not necessarily to shoot but maybe to set up another teammate," Tinkle said.

Rosser, too, is a man they can trust with the game.

"Marcus is willing to do the dirty work to get David open and get him the shots. They have a nice chemistry out there," Tinkle said.

"We'll miss them. They're two guys you can always count on for a smile," Tinkle said. "I'll miss the heart they had. They were the first to volunteer for community events. They really represent the University and the basketball program well."

Bell's parents, David and Gail, stood with him as the crowd cheered him.

"We haven't missed hardly any games since he was 12 years old," Gail Bell said. Tuesday night she and her husband pooled their money so they could make it to the game once they heard the Griz were in the playoffs.

She was so proud to stand with him, but she's even prouder of the man her son has become.

"He can make decisions on his own and be comfortable with them. That's all we've ever wanted," Gail Bell said. "A mother can tell when her son says something, and he's grown up. He's a grown

man now."

She doesn't want her son to feel he needs to use his resources to help his family out.

"We can take care of ourselves," she said. "I want him to use everything he has to grow and then come back to the neighborhood. He does not need to help out Mom and Dad. He's sweet, but we would rather he takes care of himself, learn about life and come back to show other kids they can do it, too."

Faith and the family's attitude have made Bell the man he is on and off the court.

"God and my family," Bell said. "When it all comes down to anything I'm doing, That's what it's for. It's what's important to us both."

With Rosser stood Mick and Sharron Hanson, who have helped fill the void in his life while his family is thousands of miles away.

Mick Hanson, director of financial aid, first met Rosser when he was trying to clear up financial aid issues. When issues came up in other areas of his life, Rosser found he could again turn to Hanson.

"His door has always been open," Rosser said.

Rosser comes into Hanson's office, sits on the couch beneath the basketball poster he's autographed, hangs his head and tells Hanson the latest chapter in his life.

"Most students would have given up a long time ago," Hanson said.

"You don't know what he's gone through," Hanson said, beginning to tear up. "For him to say I've helped is really rewarding."



Matt Hayes/GDK

With the final seconds of the Cat/Griz game running down, senior David Bell leads the victory celebration as he pumps up a sold-out crowd at the Dahlberg Arena in February. Bell finished the night with 19 points including the game winning shot.

It's been a roller-coaster of a year for Rosser, Hanson said.

"Marcus has got the biggest, brightest eyes when he's happy. Marcus's eyes dance," he said. "When he's sad, we can both shed tears pretty quickly."

Rosser was looking for someone who would care and help. He was honored to fill that role of a father figure far from home, Hanson said.

"My wife and I have three kids of our own, but there's room for a lot more. Marcus filled a spot in my heart," Hanson said.

Rosser's heart is that of a gentle giant, Hanson said.

Hanson, too, is proud of the young man he stood up with on Senior Night.

"He was a good student. He's better now. He was a good basketball player and he's even better now," Hanson said. "I've seen tremendous growth in the way he carries himself on and off the court."

While the Hansons stood at Rosser's side, his brother, Anthony Rosser, still hopes to someday see in person his brother playing college basketball.

Anthony Rosser said when Marcus feels torn by a need to be

at home with his family and friends, he tells him "You aren't missing anything here."

He told Marcus to choose his own destiny.

"He wanted to stay home, but I thought it would be better for him to see the world," Anthony Rosser said. "All the negatives he would be surrounded by are so easy to get caught up in."

Marcus Rosser wants to continue his basketball career, ideally in Europe.

"I want to play wherever I'm needed at or wanted at, hopefully overseas somewhere," Rosser said. "I would love to continue my basketball career. If not, I know I'm a good person, and I'll end up somewhere I can be happy with." Montana has been a good preparation for living abroad, he said.

"From Philadelphia to Kansas City to Montana I know I can go about anywhere and be happy," Rosser said.

Bell, too, wants to play somewhere for a paycheck.

"It wouldn't matter where I played," Bell said. "I know this isn't the last time someone will hear my name."

**He shoots, he scores.**

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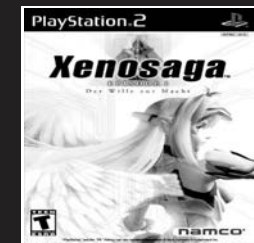
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