Montana to play Wyoming in annual Billings fray

University of Montana–Missoula. Office of University Relations
MISSOULA, SEPT. Two similar offenses will clash Saturday afternoon in the annual Billings fray between Wyoming and Montana State University. The big question, of course, is which team has the better multiple-type offense.

"Wyoming demonstrated that they can move the ball in their game with tough Kansas State last weekend. We did the same against Utah for one half," Montana coach Ray Jenkins commented.

"If we correct the mistakes we made against Utah, and play 60 minutes of tough football, we stand a chance to beat the Cowboys," the mentor added.

Playing 60 minutes of top-notch ball is a large order, considering Montana's depth problem.

The Grizzlies' only lapse against Utah—a third quarter letdown—cost them two touchdowns and the ball game against the Utes.

The brightest spot in the Grizzly camp this week has been the return of several injured players. The Silvertips will take a healthy squad to Billings.

Fullback Joe Pepe rejoined the squad Tuesday. Although he hasn't engaged in contact yet, trainer Naseby Rhinehart pronounced him ready to play. Sophomore guard John Latte, who missed the Utah trip because of illness, also returned to the squad. Veteran halfback Matt Gorsich suffered a pinched arm nerve in the Utah battle, but should see action at Billings. Tackle Tom Kane, injured two weeks ago, also has returned to practice.

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Jenkins announced a partially re-shuffled starting lineup against the Cowpokes.

Starting ends will be Tom Sorenson and Pete Muri. Muri was advanced from the second string after a good offensive game against Utah, in which he scored Montana's only TD by taking a 55-yard pass from Bruce Olson.

Tackles will be tough Charlie Moore and Dick Leenhouts. Moore also turned in a good game against Utah, and Leenhouts has shown good improvement.

Guards will be Stan (The Ram) Renning and Dale Sparber. Renning played one of the best games of his career against Utah, and Sparber is coming fast. The center will be steady Nick O'Brien.

Olson will probably get the starting quarterback nod. Veterans Bob Everson and Larry Iyers will start at tailback and wingback, respectively.

Billings fans will have a chance to see a native son, Jim Neal, open the game at fullback. Neal was the top rusher in the Montana-Utah game, and also showed well as a punter. Twice he saved Montana from the brink of disaster, once getting off a 35-yard boot after jumping for a high pass from center, and once running for a first down after getting a low pass from center.