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Grizzly Sports Column

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MISSOULA, MONTANA--"Moral victories are fine, but this Saturday we intend to chalk up a win on the scoreboard," Montana football coach Ray Jenkins told his Grizzlies early this week as they prepared to host Idaho University in a Homecoming tussle in Missoula. The Silvertips, fresh from two stronger-than-expected contests against Skyline foes, are hoping to improve on a 1-2 record this season.

Although the Silvertips dropped into a familiar Skyline position---the cellar---after a 14-12 loss to Utah State last Saturday in Missoula, Jenkins feels that his lads are due. "We played some good football against the Aggies, but not good enough to win. Idaho certainly isn't a weak team, but we've improved ourselves by playing two tough Skyline teams on successive weekends. Barring injuries this week, we should be at full strength."

Some personnel changes may be forthcoming. Sophomore guard Jim Bartell, a 200-pounder out of Glencoe, Ill., turned in a whale of a defensive game against Utah State and probably has moved veteran Larry Beddes out of a starting job this weekend. And it's still a tossup among three men at the left tackle spot--Mike Thomson, Ed Herber or Carl Schwertfeger. Jim Johnson and Gary Schwertfeger will continue to alternate at center, and Jenkins' other starters will probably be ends Dale Berry and Howard Schwend, tackle John Gregor, guard John Matte, quarterback Bob O'Billovich, halfbacks Pat Dodson and Terry Dillon, and fullback Gary Smith.

Other Silvertips due for more action on the strength of a good showing against Utah State are ends Gene Moe and Bill Bouchee, guard Jack Shevalier, quarterback John Schulz, halfbacks Jim Grasky, Rich Birgenheier and (more)
Paul Gustafson, fullback Gary Ekegren and handyman Ron Werba. Werba has seen increasing action as a blocking back and defensive performer.

Grizzly line coach Milt Schwenk, who viewed Idaho's 41-12 loss to powerful Washington last weekend, warns that the Vandals have an outstanding passing attack. Quarterback Sil Vial hit end John Pemberton with two scoring passes, one for 54 yards, against the Huskies, and end Reg Carolan is another top receiving threat. Vial and understudy Mike Mosolf also run the quarterback option well, while sophomore halfback Dawn Fannin can also scoot.

"Despite topheavy losses to Oregon and Washington, Idaho is greatly improved over the team that played us last fall," Schwenk summarized.

Offensively, the Silvertips still must show improvement in the passing department. Grizzly throwers O'Billovich and Schulz hit three of seven against Utah State for 47 yards, but also were thrown for sizeable losses on several attempts.

Grizzly end play was a weak factor against USU, particularly in defensive phases. The Utags gained considerable ground yardage around the Montana flanks, and one burst was an 87-yard scoring sprint by Utag ace Tom Larscheid. Strong linebacking partially compensated for this weakness, but Jenkins is hoping that his ends will get tougher.

Dodson and Dillon continue to dominate Grizzly statistics. Dodson has a 6.8 yards-per-carry average in three contests, with a total of 184 yards of rushing. Dillon has racked up 117 yards on the ground and Smith is next in line with 104 yards. Schulz has hit four of seven tosses, while O'Billovich has completed three of 11. Dodson is the scoring leader with 14 markers, while Dillon, Smith and O'Billovich have six points each.

(more)