



Walking the Sideline

By J.P. Plutt

FOOTBALL

Rivalries

When Butte Central dropped off the Dillon Beaver schedule for this season due to Central moving to a different conference I really didn't care. In fact, I thought it would be a good change.

When Dillon squared off against Anaconda two weekends ago the intimacy of rivalries hit me and I was suddenly wishing we had Central coming up on the schedule. It's been an incredible rivalry, certainly Dillon's most intense football date every year since the Maroons dropped down from Class AA and the Beavers moved up from Class B in the early 1970's.

I had played in the rivalry, my brothers had played and now it looks as though my son won't get to enjoy the playoff-type intensity the game brought to a regular season game. Throughout the history of the rivalry, the game almost always had playoff implications. In Butte or Dillon, huge crowds attended the annual battles.

I can't believe I'm writing this but I wish we were playing the Maroons this season.

Homecoming weekend: It's definitely going to be football crazy in Southwest Montana this weekend. In Homecoming games, Western takes on Rocky Mountain College Saturday at 1 p.m., Lima takes on the Roberts Rockets Saturday at 1 p.m., Twin Bridges draws Philipsburg Saturday afternoon at 1 p.m., and Sheridan hosts West Yellowstone Friday night. Although it's not a Homecoming game, Dillon plays host to Hamilton Friday night at 7 p.m. in a game featuring two teams in desperate need of a victory to keep their playoff hopes alive.

Too big: UM-Western Tommy Lee has done a marvelous job of recruiting. When I watched his team in preseason workouts I thought this team has a shot at a national championship. It had been a disappointing season until the team broke loose Saturday with a great performance. Playoff hopes are still a possibility although the Dawgs will likely have to run the table in the conference and most likely travel to Carroll College and knock off the Saints. Western currently has three losses and although I'm an optimist, Southern Utah lies ahead on the schedule. In the early season, Southern Utah handled Weber State of the Big Sky Conference so a Western victory there, though possible, would be viewed as a major upset. We found out last year that four losses, despite the quality of competition, can keep you out of the playoffs.

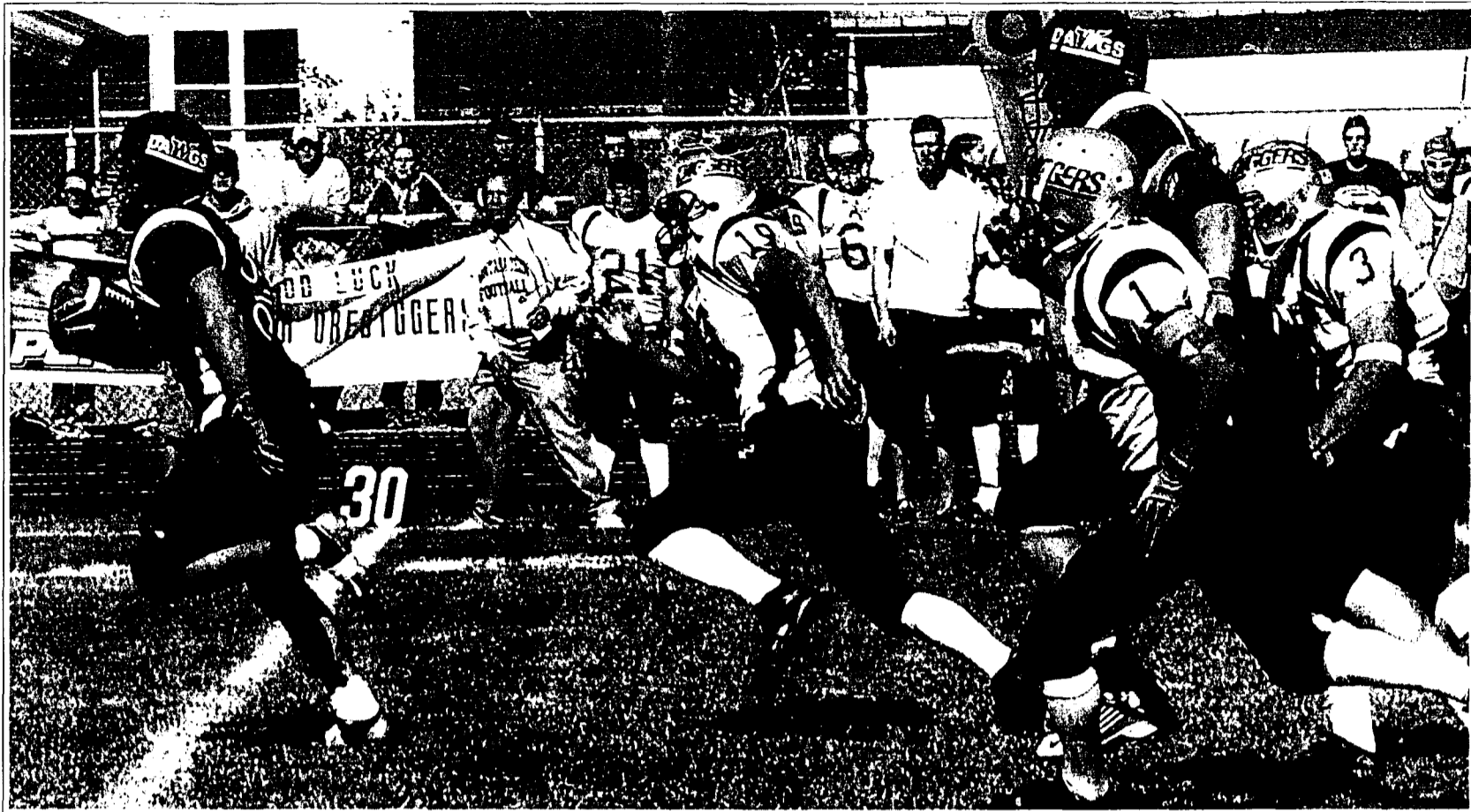
Anyway, getting to the topic. When I look at a high school program I automatically count up how many players the opposition suits up that weigh over 200 pounds to determine if the team "has size". As hard as it is to believe, the magic number on the college level has become 300 pounds. Western currently lists nine players over 300 pounds on their roster. Coach Tommy Lee on Monday related that a key to the team's success on Saturday was in part because some of their linemen have lost weight during the early part of the season.

When camp opened, center Abraham Apilado weighed 347 pounds, left tackle Cory Monroe tipped the scales at 342, and left guard Darrel Bryce at 368. All three have lost 16 to 18 pounds and according to Lee have played much more effectively at the lower weight.

DFL notes: Coaches, don't forget the mandatory coaches meeting this Thursday night, 7 p.m., at B.W. Lodge Gym. We'll address a number of issues that will affect play through the playoffs so it is important that you attend.

DFL parents: We have a growing lost and found collection at the concession stand. Stop in and check through the stuff.

Parents in general: Sometime this summer we had four DFL referee shirts disappear from our inventory. I don't care who has them or why. I just need them back. If those black and white striped shirts have been through the laundry, please drop them off at the Tribune. No questions, just thanks from the DFL.



Off to the races

He can do it all. UM-Western's Josh Shrum breaks loose on a 48-yard sprint to the end zone to give Western a 14-0 lead in the second quarter and set the pace for a Bulldog victory. A year ago Shrum led the nation in kickoff return average and set the school single season touchdown record. He continued to impress Saturday with 153 rushing yards and two scores and 67 receiving yards and another touchdown to earn the Frontier Conference "Offensive Player of the Week". J.P. Plutt photo

Hungry Dawgs whip Tech

By J.P. Plutt

The UM-Western Bulldogs we've been expecting all season finally showed up at Vigilante Field Saturday and pummeled the 24th-ranked Montana Tech Orediggers, 34-14. The Dawgs controlled all three phases of the game—offense, defense, and special teams—in the dominating performance.

"It was time for us to put everything together and play with some intensity, some focus, some excitement," said UM-Western coach Tommy Lee. "That's exactly what we got from our guys Saturday. They were very hungry. We needed that to beat a good Tech team."

Tech came in as a team that featured the running game and used success on the ground to generate passing yardage off play action. Western stuffed the plan, allowing just 79 yards on the ground. On the other side of the ball, the Dawgs pounded out 237 yards rushing and added 241 passing yards for nearly 500 total yards.

Senior running back Josh Shrum set the tone with an impressive 48-yard run to the end zone for Western's second score and a 14-0 lead. By day's end, Shrum had rushed for 153 yards and two touchdowns and caught four balls for 67 yards and another touchdown.

As always in football it starts up front and Western's massive offensive line controlled the trenches as the Dawgs pounded out 237 rushing yards and added 241 passing. Caleb

Drinkwater added 63 rushing yards on 15 carries.

Travis Blome, Western's sophomore quarterback, overcame an interception on his first pass of the game to finish strong and leave no doubt that he's the man in control of the Western huddle. Blome's confidence level appeared high and he finished the game completing 18 of 31 passes for 215 yards and three touchdowns.

Senior slot receiver Dallas Mock hauled in six throws for 90 yards and the games opening score, a 25-yard strike. Shrum folloed two minutes later with his big run to the end zone for Western's 14-0 lead.

Tech scored with 3:13 left in the second quarter on a 34-yard run by bruising fullback Adam Cotton. The 'Diggers cut the lead to 14-7, but would not score again until 36 seconds left in the fourth quarter.

Blome connetered with Josh Illig for a 10 yard score at the end of the first half and tossed a sideline pattern to Shrum for a 15 yard, third quarter score. Early in the fourth quarter, Shrum capped an 11-play, 78-yard drive with a two yard scoring plunge.

It was Western all the way. On the defensive side, end Nik Rewerts earned Frontier Conference "Defensive Player of the Week" accolades with six solo stops, two assists, two quarterback sacks, and three tackles for loss. In addition he forced a fumble.

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UM-W men win hometown rodeo

By J.P. Plutt

The UM-Western men finished the fall campaign in fine form with a victory in their hometown rodeo and a strong lead in the Big Sky Region standings. The Dawgs traditionally rally in the spring after giving up points in the first half of the season so Western the confidence level is high on campus.

"We ended up just where we wanted to be," said UM-W coach Olie Else. "I'm really pleased. This is a talented, deep men's team."

The Erickson brothers, Mac and Chase continue to lead Dawgs with contributions at both ends of the arena. Mac won the bareback and placed in the bulls and made it back to the short go in the steer wrestling. He's got the potential to score in every event but saddle bronc. Chase added a second in the bull riding and a third/fourth split in bareback as the brothers totaled 225 points between them and went one-two in the men's all-around.

Tate Dempewolf, the header, and Matt Robertson, the heeler, continued their domination of the team roping event with a first in the average. Both hands made it back in the calf roping but didn't hit on this particular weekend.

Western's other team points from their first place total of 345 came from Jabe Anderson who placed in the steer wrestling short go. Shawn Downing didn't score this weekend but maintains a convincing lead in the region bulldoggin' standings.

As has been the case all season, Western independents shone brightly. Jarrett Monroe had missed the early season recovering from a July accident in which he cracked a vertebrae. In his first rodeo back he won the saddle bronc and made it back in the team roping. Come spring, he'll be a force in bull riding.

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UM-Western Hall of Fame to induct five

By Wally Feldt, UM-Western information director

Five former Western Montana College athletic greats will be enshrined Saturday night at the 23rd Annual University of Montana-Western Alumni Association and Booster Club Hall of Fame Banquet. The ceremony will be held at the Lewis-Clark Room on the UM Western Campus.

The 2004 inductees include Mike Cutler, Manny Garza and Dan Olson in football, Shawn Fossen in wrestling, and Jess Martin in rodeo. All five competed for the Bulldogs in the 1990s.

Mike Cutler--Football

Mike Cutler, a native of Phillipsburg, is a 1994 graduate of Western with a degree in Secondary Education. Cutler was recruited as a running back and played two seasons in the Bulldog backfield, earning second team All-Conference honors his freshman season and first team honors his sophomore season. Cutler moved to defense his junior season and earned first team All Conference honors. His football career was put on hold in 1992 due to a farming accident. Cutler returned to the Bulldog lineup in 1993 and earned first team All-Conference and All-District and All American honors. In May of 2003, Mike was faced with his biggest challenge, when he was diagnosed with Leukemia. In the Fall of 2003, he underwent a stem-cell transplant in Seattle. The donor was his sister Kara. At press time, Mike was on his way to Seattle for his yearly checkup. Mike and his wife Jody are the parents of Sydney Garza, age 4 and Kade, age 2.

Manny Garza--Football

Manny Garza, a native of Belt, is a 1994 graduate of Western with a degree in Secondary Education with emphasis in sports medicine. He received his Masters degree in 2001. During his Bulldog career, Garza earned All-Conference honors as both a kicker and a wide receiver. In 1993, he also earned All-District and second team All American honors. In 1993, Garza was third in the nation in receiving, averaging seven catches and 105 yards per game. He set school records in career catches, career receiving yards, most catches in a season, career points scored, most career PATs and tied the record for most. Garza works as an athletic trainer and teacher at Helena High School. This past summer, he was

married to Jana Romasko.

Dan Olson--Football

Dan Olson is a 1994 graduate of Western with a degree in Secondary Education. In his Bulldog career, Olson earned first time All-Conference his freshman through junior seasons and second team his senior season. He was selected the Bulldog MVP and captain his junior and senior season. Olson was a preseason All American pick in both his junior and senior season. He is currently teaching and is the head football coach at Rampart High School in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Dan and his wife Windy are the parents of one son, Tyler.

Jess Martin--Rodeo

Jess Martin, a native of Drummond, came to Western on a football scholarship. In the Spring of his freshman year, Martin ended his football career and turned to rodeo. In 1992 he was the Big Sky Region saddle bronc champion. At the 1992 CNFR, he won one go around finished third in the nation. In 1993, he finished second in the region to qualify for his second straight College National Finals Rodeo. At the CNFR, he won the third go around and finished seventh in the nation.

Martin has qualified for the National Finals Rodeo four times, the Dodge National Finals three times. He is a five time qualifier for the Pace Picante Tour Finale and an eleven time qualifier for the Montana Circuit Finals Rodeo. In addition to his rodeo career, he is in partnership with Lynn and Fred Hirschey in raising bucking stock for rodeos.

Shawn Fossen--Wrestling

Shawn Fossen transferred to Western from North Idaho Junior College. In 1993, he was the 118 pound National Runner-up and All American. The following year, Fossen won the national 118 pound title as Western won the NAIA National Championship. He was the Bulldog team captain in 1994 and voted by his teammates as the Outstanding Wrestler of the Year. Fossen graduated in 2002 from MSU-Great Falls with a degree in Surgical Technology. He is currently a Certified Surgical Technologist at Benefis Hospital in Great Falls. Shawn and his wife Dena Wagner-Fossen live in Great Falls.