I might only be 37 years old, but in some ways, I'm old fashioned, and I'm also set in my ways.

Needless to say, I'm not always big on change, especially when it comes to sports. But change in sports is inevitable and in the world of college athletics, it's even more likely. This day and age, it's seems like changes are happening in college sports almost daily.

And those changes don't exclude the Frontier Conference, which directly affects athletics at Montana State University-Northern.

So when I found out recently that the Frontier added a ninth football member in the College of Idaho, which is re-starting football after a 35-year hiatus, I was more than thrilled with that change.

I have to give Frontier commissioner Kent Paulson a lot of credit because he's certainly going out and finding ways to improve what I already believe is the best athletic conference in the NAIA. Paulson and Frontier presidents and athletic directors spearheaded the addition of Dickinson State University to all Frontier sports a little over a year and a half ago, while they also got Southern Oregon to join as a football only member as well.

It may not seem like much, but the addition of DSU as a core Frontier member and SOU as a football member is a big deal.

Especially, DSU, which is a peer institution with the rest of the schools in the Frontier Conference. Dickinson was a natural fit for the Frontier as it had already developed rivalries with the likes of Northern, Rocky Mountain College and Carroll College in football, as well as basketball and volleyball rivalries with almost every Montana member in the league.

Dickinson was also a natural fit for the Frontier because the school has the facilities of a top-notch Frontier athletics program. The school just built a beautiful new football stadium and track complex, to go with its other outstanding facilities.

To me, that adds up to a school you want in your conference and now the Frontier has the Blue Hawks. In fact, it's only a matter of weeks until the Blue Hawks finally begin competing in the league in volleyball and football.

Adding SOU and the C of I as football only members also makes sense to me. With DSU and SOU playing football this fall, the schedule was altered so it's now not a true round robin schedule any longer. The addition of C of I, and hopefully one more football school before 2014 means the Frontier is one step closer to two important things — no more round robin scheduling of any kind, and a second automatic bid to the NAIA football playoffs. Those two things would be huge for the conference, because if there's one thing I've seen over the years, the Frontier gets the short end of the stick when it comes to national tournament bids in football, basketball and volleyball.

More schools in the league could certainly change that.

There were some complications to adding new out-of-state school, especially with travel costs, travel distances, budgets and scheduling.

Those are things I don't envy the league's athletic directors and coaches trying to figure out.
However, from what I can now see as the future of the Frontier, I think the good of adding three new schools, and hopefully one or two more, certainly outweighs they challenges adding those schools has created.

Aside from just having new schools in the league, it also brings new excitement. For years, Frontier football schedules barely ever changed. It was the same old look with the same teams playing on almost the same days each and ever season. That is no longer the case and with C of I now coming in 2014, there will be even more new and fresh games for Frontier football fans to see each and every week.

In the case of volleyball and basketball, the new Frontier will also start a lot earlier, in fact, the volleyball season is extended by a week, and the Frontier basketball season for some teams will now begin before January. More meaningful games in December? That's exciting to me anyway.

Yes, the Frontier has certainly changed in its seems like it changed almost overnight. And while there are people like me, who sometimes resist change all together, the changes to the Frontier Conference are ones I am welcoming with open arms.

I'm excited about the new schools in this league, the new games that will be played and the new rivalries that will be born. I'm excited for August to get here so the new Frontier can officially begin.

Instead of fighting the changes, I'm changing my ways and getting excited about them.