Hi-Line Athlete Profile: Brandt Montelius, Northern Football
It's Brandt's time to shine bright
By George Ferguson
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MSU-N senior Brandt Montelius is making the most out of his final season

The Montana State University-Northern football season is quickly entering the stretch run. The Lights are sitting at 4-3 overall, and but now have three straight home games to close out the 2013 regular season.

The final stretch of games against Carroll College, Montana Tech, and Rocky Mountain College (senior day) will make or break what chances the Lights have at a post season. Earlier this season Carroll defeated the Lights 31-3 in Helena, and Rocky defeated the Lights 23-13 in Billings, but if senior wide receiver Brandt Montelius has anything to say about the final stretch, the Lights will hopefully close the season with an epic run into the NAIA postseason.

Montelius stands in at 6-2, 190 pounds. He came to the Lights from Big Sky High School in Missoula five years ago, and was a redshirt freshman before making his mark on special teams, and finally earning a spot as a starting receiver for the last three seasons. This year, Montelius continues to be on quadruple duty, as he not only catches passes, but also plays on kickoff, kick return, and punt return for head coach Mark Samson and the Lights.

And there is no doubt that Montelius is a key contributor to the best season the Lights have had since he has arrived. It is also Montelius' best season to date, with three more games left to play.

With a shot at a seven-win season, Montelius is one of senior quarterback Derek Lear's favorite, and most trustworthy targets. Montelius is second on the team with three touchdowns this year. He is also third on the team in receiving yards with 301, while also averaging 43 yards per game through the air, and averaging almost 16 yards per catch. Those are standout numbers for any wide receiver, but are especially impressive on an offense with several other notable, and standout receivers in the lineup.

Montelius was impressive in high school, and is impressive now. He comes from a very strong football background, and even had the opportunity to play alongside older brother, and former Lights' running back Justin Montelius at the prep and collegiate levels.

And now there are just three home games left in Brandt's career, a career that has really blossomed over the last two years. And on Saturday, as the Lights host Carroll, Montelius hopes to leave yet another lasting impression on Blue Pony Stadium, and the MSU-N program.
Here's five questions with the MSU-N senior as Northern gets ready to play its biggest rival Saturday afternoon.

**HDN:** This is your final season with the Lights, but also your best, what is the biggest difference compared to past seasons?

**Montelius:** "This year I think we have a new group, but we are older. Myself, Derek (Lear), and OJ (Orin Johnson) are all in our fifth year, and I think we are just hungrier than we were last year too. We hold each other accountable and all really strive to win. But everything is coming more natural, and when you have a quarterback (Lear) throwing to you for five years, things start to come easier. He knows the speed of his receivers, and knows when we are coming out of our breaks, and I really think the timing between the quarterback and receivers is at an all-time best."

**HDN:** I know you have close ties with the University of Montana's standout linebacker Jordan Tripp, does he ever try to give you advice on your game?

**Montelius:** "He gives me a call after every game, or I give him a call after every game and we just catch up on how each of our games went. He actually came down to our Carroll game and we got him a sideline pass and he was down there helping me out. He loves the Lights too, and he loves seeing how we do, but that is mutual. But he has helped me out a lot. When I went back to Missoula over the summer I ran routes against him because coming out of the slot like I do, I face a lot of linebackers. He has taught me how to get off of the jam, and just showed me what linebackers like to do against receivers, and how to counter that. He helps me out and I help him out a lot, we feed off of each other and we have been great friends since day one."

**HDN:** After a three-game winning streak followed by a two-game losing streak, how do the Lights get back on track with three games at home to end the regular season?

**Montelius:** "We had a meeting about this last night (Monday), and we just kind of said that we were going to hold each other accountable. We need to stop playing as individuals and come together as a team. We need to make adjustments at halftime and not come out in the third quarter and lay an egg. Hopefully we can get it going after the half because we have had that one bad quarter, and we need to fix that."

**HDN:** What emotions do you have now that your final season of college football is nearly over?

**Montelius:** "I have actually given that a lot of thought. We haven't made the playoffs since I have been here and we also haven't beaten Carroll once. My biggest goal right now is to get a win over Carroll in this next game and hopefully make the playoffs. There is nothing better than making the playoffs, and out of five years, I would like to get there at least once."

**HDN:** What was it like getting to play both high school and college football alongside your brother Justin?

**Montelius:** "I can't even explain it, it was probably the best time of my life. We lived together, we were best friends, and playing next to each other I was picking him up and he was picking me up. There was nothing better than a brotherly connection in sports, and I played baseball, basketball, and ran track and field with him. But this last year when he moved back to Missoula, I have missed that."