



PRESENTS

MONTANA FOOTBALL

HALL OF FAME

MINDSETS OF GREATNESS



2023 INDUCTION BANQUET

SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 2023

Billings Hotel & Convention Center | Billings, Montana

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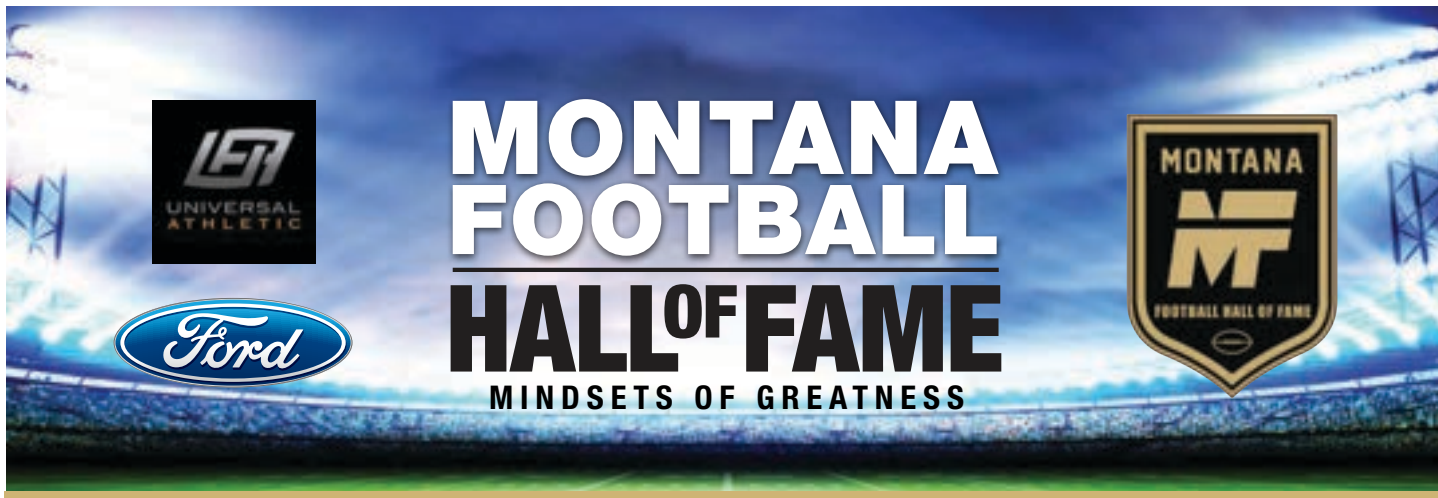


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Congratulations Montana Football Hall of Fame Inductees!

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Current Montana Pro Football Hall of Fame Board



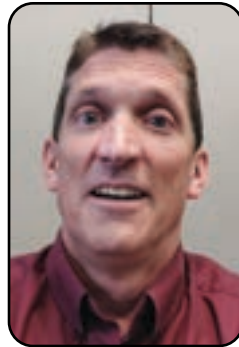
Rick Halmes
Chairman



Steve Solberg



John Lagerquist



Jim Hauck



Chris Byers



Michael Bazemore



Jason Walker



Colter Nuñez



Tarra Grazley-Pfister



Bob Barone



Bill Dolan



**"Supporting Mindsets Of Greatness"
Since 2016**



**Rick Halmes awarding Montana
Ford dealers foundation corporate
support award to Eric Harkins.**



**Western Security bank has won the
"Early Birdie" trophy twice.**



HOW THIS ALL BEGAN

By Rick Halmes, Chairman MTFHOF



A group of former Eastern Montana football players got together in 2009 led by Gene Brosovich, Bart Templeman and Rick Halmes with the intent to create a psuedo alumni group of former EMC football players. Eastern Montana College is now MSU Billings, which started as Eastern Montana normal school, then Eastern Montana College, then MSU Billings since 1994. Many universities across America today where football is played were normal schools, in short, teachers schools, teaching the basics or normal “skills” at that time.

Football was played on the Billings campus from 1948 to 1978 when it was discontinued. All the trophies and awards related to football were taken out of the athletic building display and placed in storage under the swimming pool. Many trophies and awards were lost due to moisture. In the early 90’s, former basketball coach Mike Harkins and his son Mike Harkins, Jr, retrieved any football items that could be salvaged. Most of those photos and trophies that were saved are on display today in the foyer of Alterowitz gym encased in trophy cases built with funds from former football player Bart Templeman. Bart spent time in the San Francisco 49ers camp in 1966. In fact, 10 players from 1962 to 1972 played on NFL or CFL teams, beginning with Rick Duncan in 1962 and ending with Lynn Ahrens from Wolf Point in 1972.

Halmes, being a center on the EMC team from 67 to 71 could only think of “huddle up”, so the name “Big Huddle” was born. Most of these gentlemen were in their late 60’s at the time, many have passed away these past 13 years. Our goal was to reunite football players of all EMC era’s, then to see if we could influence the return of football to the Billings campus. After years of newspaper interviews, talks in front of Billings civic clubs and others, and working through 7 chancellors in 13 years we realized that the timing was not yet right for football at MSUB. We had financial commitments of over \$3,000,000 just by word of mouth at that time. Our goal was to raise \$20 million if needed to build a stadium on campus to drive the recruitment



of student athletes and traditional students to campus.

While we were working on being a spokesman for MSUB football, we thought about other ways we could create positive news for our sport. In 2014, Big Huddle hosted an honors banquet for coaches that had coached teams to over 200 victories each. During that banquet, we learned that none had been in the same room together before. At times, conversations got very emotional. Mike Gear, from Sidney, who had an incredible run of 7 state championships, was noticeably shaken when apologizing to his wife for coaching football during the birth of their children, Jim Oberweiser of Drummond was so humble about his success, and of course the 2 deans of Montana Football coaching are Don Schillinger with 318 wins in Baker and Jack Johnson of Great Falls CMR with 340 wins.

When we learned that 140 to 160 football student athletes went from Montana high schools to a collegiate program it created curiosity about how many Montana high school or college athletes went on to the NFL or CFL; we found over 250 at that time. 62 Bobcats, 140 Grizzlies, 32 Montana high school athletes like Pat Donovan and Pete Lazetich who both ended up playing at Stanford University after Victor Lindskog of Roundup had been a Cardinal several decades earlier. All 3 are on the 100 yr Stanford team. In addition, 9 players from EMC, 2 from RMC, 1 from NMC, and 5 from Carroll are listed. Then add the coaches, like current Raiders coach Tom McMahan from Helena, and you add up to 20 more pro contributors. Legendary Packer great Jerry Kramer and 9 year Oakland Raider guard Wayne Hawkins were both born in Jordan, Montana in the same year, however, they never attended any school in Montana.





Nomination and Selection Process:

1. ELIGIBILITY

- a. A player is eligible for consideration 5 years after his last year of professional football played or immediately upon retirement if NFL or CFL career is 10 years or more.
- b. The player must have played a minimum two years high school or 1 year of college football in Montana.
- c. The player must have been associated as a player, coach, manager, or have provided a specialty such as trainer, broadcaster or agent with a professional NFL or CFL football team. Any position other than player will be submitted as a supporter.

2. NOMINATION

- a. Any fan may nominate an eligible player or supporter.
- b. The Montana Pro Football Hall of Fame Selection Committee will be polled annually for eligible players. (Hall members may be added to vote on future inductees after induction)
- c. The nominee's football accomplishments are of prime consideration. Additionally, pre- and post-football records as a citizen are evaluated. Nominees should extend the values of football to community and country. Thus, experiences and achievements before, during and after professional football are important, as well as academic honors and college degrees.
- d. Nominations are to be submitted in writing to Montana Football Hall of Fame by June 30. **Montana Football Hall of Fame, Box 22743, Billings, MT 59102.** Nominations to be received by September of any year. Selections will be announced each October.

3. SELECTION

- a. Selections will be made by Montana Pro Football Hall of Fame board.
- b. All nominations to the MTFHOF board will be vetted by the selection committee by August 31 annually. Nominees will be narrowed down to the 8 finalists who have the most points and weighted accomplishments after football. Those 8 selections will again be vetted by the board.
- c. Those selected 8 members to be inducted will be in 3 categories; 1. Legacy (deceased players); A Support category, such as broadcasters, trainers and coaches; and a Player category for retired players still living.
- d. By Governor, Yellowstone County and the City of Billings proclamations induction ceremonies are to coincide with the last Saturday each June as Montana Pro Football Hall of Fame day.

4. POINTS

A point system created by Big Huddle member Hugh Smith in 2017 has been a great help toward objective selections of nominees. Because Montana High School and college coaches have had so much impact on those athletes that move on to pro levels, we wanted to weight our point system to those coaches. As an example, a high school player that moves from a Montana high school to a Montana college then goes on to the pros receives 9 pts. A high school player that goes from a Montana high school to an out of state college then to the pros receives 6 pts. An out of state high school player who attends a Montana college then goes on to the pros receives 3 pts. Then longevity, football contributions, community involvement all add points to a nominee as well.



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Montana Football Hall of Fame

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MONTANA FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME



JUNE 2023 INDUCTION





Master Of CeremoniesEd Garding
EmceeSpencer Larsen



Ed Garding

Ed was the president and CEO of First Interstate BancSystem from 2012 through 2015. In January of 2016 he retired from that position but continued to represent First Interstate as the Corporate and Government Relations officer until 2021. Mr. Garding began his career with First Interstate in 1971 and held several management positions throughout his career.

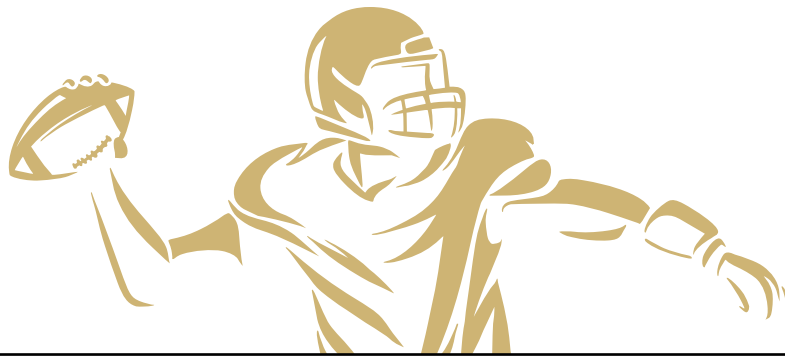
Ed is currently serving as the Interim Dean at the College of Business at Montana State University Billings. Ed is married to Becky and has four grown children, three grandchildren and one large dog.



Spencer Larsen ENGLEWOOD, CO

A sixth-round draft pick from Arizona, Larsen worked at linebacker and fullback in training camp before becoming a full-time fullback behind Peyton Hillis. Injuries at linebacker and running back " where the Broncos have lost five tailbacks, four of them for the year, forced coach Mike Shanahan to devise the plan for Larsen's two-way duty Sunday against the Falcons.

Spencer lives in Billings Montana with his wife Ann and their 5 children. He spends most of his free time coaching kids sports or enjoying the outdoors. He is also very active in his church community. He is Senior Vice President of Morgan Stanley Wealth Management Yellowstone Group in downtown Billings



2023 Advisory Council



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BOBBY BEERS

Robert (Bobby) Beers is a Montana native born into a football family. Born in Butte, raised in the Big Hole Valley, Bobby learned the game at a young age mentored by his father, Bob, who was inducted into the MTFBHOFF in 2021. Bobby himself played football at Montana Western in college going onto gain All American honors and then pursued a coaching career. The younger Beers has coached across the United States at the collegiate and professional levels as well as enjoying some time mentoring players at the High School level around Montana. His work at the professional level spans a couple different leagues and he found himself scouting for the Denver Broncos until he decided to come home to Montana, taking over the Athletic Department at Rocky Mountain College. While football and athletics are no longer his primary professional focus, Bobby makes sure to stay active in the athletic scene around Montana where he can have a positive impact on young people's lives. Beers still lives in Billings with his wife Cindy and their three children Megan (17), Emily (14) and RJ (8).



GRADY BENNETT

Head Coach, Special Teams Coordinator and Wide Receivers

This is Mr. Bennett's 31st year of teaching. He began his career in education in 1991 at his alma mater, Flathead High School and moved to Glacier High School when it opened in 2007. He has taught business his entire career shifting his focus from technology and multimedia courses to primarily accounting and personal finance courses enjoying freshman college and career readiness courses as well. Mr. Bennett has been a head football coach the past 12 seasons leading Glacier High to it's first state championship in 2014. Before he became a head coach, he was an assistant for 13 at Flathead High. He has also been an assistant basketball coach for 23 seasons with both the boys and girls programs. He loves the outdoors, especially backpacking and mountain biking.

Grady started college at Montana State, then left the Cats to play quarterback for the Griz in the late 1980s, Bennett is now Glacier's head football coach and does TV color commentary at Griz games for Cowles Media, so while he has straddled the fence, he knows most Montanans have to choose a side. Grady's teams never lost to the Bobcats.

VOLUNTEER CONTACT LIST

ADVISORY BOARD:

Ed Garding, Bobby Beers, Grady Bennett

AREA COORDINATORS:

Missoula; Jim O'Day

Bozeman; Bill Lamberty

Butte; Ray Ueland

Great Falls; Jim Larson/Mark Samson

Helena; John Lagerquist/Jason Walker

VOLUNTEERS

Blazers And Golf: Lynne Greenberg

Airline Reservations: Elaine Poser

Hotel Reservations: Elaine Poser

Contacts At Billings Hotel: Cheri Milne, Reservations, Sara Hillner; MTFHOF Liason

Shuttle Service: Jim Hauck

MTFHOF Event Coordinator: Elaine Poser

Tech Coordinator: Chris Byers

Banquet Program: Ed Garding

Banquet Table Set Up: Becky Garding

Tables And Ticket Info: Janet Schuh

VIP Host/Color Commentator: Spencer Larsen, Morgan Stanley

Universal Athletic Blazer Ceremony: Lynne Greenberg, U.A. Representative: Larry Aasheim

Universal Athletic MTFHOF Rep.: Corey Peterson

Photographs: Ron Hunter

Shadow Box Displays: JD Greaney

Big Sky VCR: Chris Munson

Printing: UltraGraphics



Induction Program | June 24, 2023

Social Hour 5 to 6pm

5:45 Start to table seating

WelcomeEd Garding
Montana Football Hall of Fame Committee

National Anthem.....Kristi Ostlund

InvocationTuff Harris
Montana Football Hall of Fame 2016 inductee

Introductions.....Ed Garding
Montana Football Hall of Fame Committee

AuctioneerDavid Allen

200 Plus Win Football Coaches Tribute

Auctioneer of Footballs.....David Allen

Inductee Presentations.....Emcee Spencer Larsen

Red Carpet Jason Walker and Alex Eschelman

2023 Inductees

Al Wilson Bio by Bill Lamberty

Lynn Ahrens Bio by Bob Townsley

Dan Rambo Bio by Bob Townsley

Dallas Neil..... Bio by George Geise

Mike Person Bio by Colter Nunez

Colt Anderson Bio by Colter Nunez

In Memoriam:

Sonny Holland, and Allen Reynolds





SPEAK UP SYMPOSIUM

What a difference some people make when they Speak Up! At last year's Montana Pro Football Hall of Fame inductions, inductees Dane Fletcher and Robert Doore spoke to the hearts of last year's audience about their challenges as student athletes who deal with mental wellness. Their openness moved many folks to challenge the Montana Pro Football Hall of Fame to include a mental wellness program at this year's MTFHOF event. We asked for help, those folks pictured here responded to help create this year's added event, the first annual Speak Up Symposium. . . .a safe place to discuss difficult issues.



Tuff Harris
Presenter



Dane Fletcher
Presenter



Lucas Swensson
Presenter



Danny Desin
Presenter and
Planning Committee Member



Malia Kipp
Presenter



Jim O'Day
Presenter



Jerry Girard
Presenter



Darla Tyler McSherry
Moderator



John Langaliers
Planning Committee Member



April Clark
Planning Committee Member



Jenny Dow
Planning Committee Member



John Dorr
Planning Committee Member



Sarah Music
Planning Committee Member



David Allen
Planning Committee Member



Dave Nordel
Planning Committee Member



Rick Halmes
Planning Committee Member



Speak Up Symposium Planning Committee

MONTANA FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME

MINDSETS OF GREATNESS

Since 1926 more than 220 Montana student athletes have gone on to the NFL or CFL.

2016 Inductees



Allyn Sonny Holland earned the designation of “The Greatest Bobcat of All Time” in addition to his other nickname of “Grizzly Killer”. Holland made a living out of beating the University of Montana both as a player and a coach. As a freshman center and linebacker out of Butte High School, Holland starred on MSU’s 1956 National Championship team. An All American, his teams as a player beat the Grizzlies 4 consecutive years. In his first year as a head coach, Sonny won a high school state championship with the Great Falls High Bison in 1966 and a Frontier Conference Championship with Western Montana College in 1969. Holland returned to his Alma Mater as a coach in 1971. By 1977 he led the Bobcats to another National Championship and 6 more victories over the Grizzlies.

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Kane Ioane Who knew when Ioane left Billings Skyview High School for the MSU Campus in Bozeman that he would become the only 4 year All American in Bobcat History. As one of the hardest hitting and assignment sound safeties to ever play in the Big Sky Conference, Ioane’s teams won 2 Big Sky Conference titles after the Bobcats had suffered through a horrendous stretch of losses called “the Streak”; which ended with Kane! After a brief stint with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Ioane coached Bobcat defensive players for 11 years. Kane served as a defensive coach with the University Of Washington Huskies in Seattle, and is now with Boise State in Idaho.



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Harvey Munford Back in the early 1960’s, Harvey Munford wasn’t merely different for Billings. He was freaky, mercurially, stuff-of-legends

different. It had little to do with Munford’s coal black skin, though certainly he was a first; athlete or otherwise, at the then named Eastern Montana College. What made Munford so special was his skywalking ability on the basketball court. That’s why the L.A. Rams signed him, as a kick blocker in 1965!

Jan Stenerud has had two reoccurring dreams during his 70 years. The NFL Hall of Famer from Montana State University grew up as a prodigious skier in Norway before being spotted by MSU basketball coaches kicking footballs on campus. Today, Stenerud is the only enshrined kicker in Canton. One dream was to stand on top of a ski jump ready to feel the exhilaration from flying. The second dream was being in an NFL locker room, not able to find a shoelace so I could go out and kick. “I wake up before trouble in both cases” says Jan.



Bill Lazetich dubbed “Lazzo” by his teammates, Bill was prolific with anything related to a ball. Growing up in Anaconda, he later polished his skills with the Grizzlies in Missoula when the school was known as Montana State University. Lazetich and his team finished the 1938 season by beating U. of Arizona in Tucson. Drafted by the Cleveland Rams, Lazzo had his career shortened by an injury on Okinawa as a Marine in WWII. Lazzo coached high school champions in football and basketball in Montana. His last championship was coaching Billings Senior basketball in 1967.

Pete Lazetich Pete had a record setting high school career with Billings Senior. Pete was an All American defensive



tackle at Stanford University where he dubbed his defensive teammates the “Thunderchickens”. Pete’s college career included performances that helped get his team to the Rose Bowl where Stanford beat Ohio State 27-17. Pete was then selected in the 2nd round of the 1972 NFL draft by San Diego. Pete now lives in Reno, NV.

Milan Lazetich After a highly successful high school career in Anaconda, Milan made a big impression on Montana State University football fans when he ran back his first kick off return 90 yards for a touchdown. After a Navy career in WWII, Milan transferred to Michigan where it was suggested he was their most valuable player earning first team All America honors. Milan was drafted by the Cleveland Rams where he helped them to win 10 games. He moved with the team to Los Angeles in 1946 and had a great game in the 1950 NFL Championship game, sacking Hall of Famer Otto Graham and recovering the fumble.



Pat Donovan From Helena Catholic High, to Helena High, and then Stanford University, Pat was twice an All American. Donovan was stunned to be drafted early in the 1975 NFL draft by Hall of Fame head coach Tom Landry and the Dallas Cowboys. As a defensive end at Stanford, Donovan knew that Ed “Too Tall” Jones and Harvey Martin, both All Pro defensive ends with Dallas were returning to the team. Sports Illustrated chose Donovan as the 4th best athlete ever from the State of Montana. Landry moved Donovan to offensive tackle, where he had a Pro Bowl career. Pat was one the 1975 “Dirty Dozen” rookies who helped take Dallas to the Super Bowl in their rookie season. Donovan lives in Whitefish, MT, as a land developer.

Brian Salonen As a star athlete for the Great Falls High Bison in 1980, all of his home state thought he would follow his father Bill's trail to Montana State University in Bozeman. Salonen fooled them all and chose the Grizzlies. Since that time, U of M has won 25 of 30 games over the Bobcats and 15 conference championships. Salonen set receiving records for a tight end at U of M with 150 catches for 1882 yards. After graduation, Salonen was drafted by the Dallas Cowboys. When he offered to play offense and defense, Coach Landry signed him to a professional contract in 1984. Salonen is a financial planner in Missoula.



Mitch Donahue A 1986 graduate of Billings West High School, Mitch also played in the Montana East-West Shrine game. Donahue took his outstanding work ethic to the University of Wyoming where would become an All WAC and All American defensive end for the Cowboys before entering the NFL. In 1989 and 1990, Mitch was the WAC defensive player of the year. As a senior, he finished 4th in the nation in the prestigious

Outland Trophy voting. Drafted by the 49ers, Donahue was traded to the Denver Broncos where he finished his NFL career. Donahue has a construction business in Billings, and now looks forward to watching his son Dylan Donahue play linebacker for the NFL New York Jets.



Dave Dickinson One of the greatest football players EVER for coach Jack Johnson at CMR High School in Great Falls, Dickinson was actually cut from his junior high team.

Because of Dickinson's tenacity, the Big Sky Conference and University of Montana reaped the benefit of his skills. Dickinson was 33 and 7 as a starter and led the team to the 1995 National Championship. He finished with a completion percentage of 67.3% and a total of 11,080 yards. Dickinson is now the head coach of the CFL Calgary Stampeders where he coached them to the Grey Cup Championship game in 2016 as a first year head coach.

Chris Horn Rocky Mountain College in Billings, MT had little idea that a small receiver from an 8 man football team in Idaho would set most future



receiving records for the school. Even more, Horn set himself apart with such dominance, that after 3 seasons of arena football league honors, he became a free agent signee of the NFL Kansas City Chiefs in 2004.

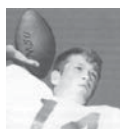


"Tuff" Harris Born Chester David Harris in Crow Agency, MT, Tuff has grown up to be somewhat of a legend. He grew up on both the Crow and

Cheyenne Reservations with his Hungarian mother and Cheyenne and Crow father. Tuff made a decision by 5th grade that he wanted to be a NFL football player. After graduating from Colstrip High School, Harris opted for the University of Montana where he expected to play receiver. After his red shirt freshman year, first year coach Bobby Hauck switched Harris to defensive back where he became an instant starter. Tuff's NFL dream came true in 2007 when he signed with the Miami Dolphins. Harris is now a Christian pastor with Faith Chapel in Billings and leads a ministry of "One Heart Warriors".

— Player bios compiled by Colter Nuanez, Skyline Sports, and Mick Holien

2017 Inductees



Dennis Erickson This legendary coach has been EVERYWHERE in the sport of football, yet he says he has not been anywhere quite like the Treasure State. From his playing days at Montana State University, to his first head coaching job at Billings Central High School, to the years of winning at every college level including National Championships with the Miami Hurricanes and NFL coaching stints with the Seahawks and 49ers, Erickson says his life fundamentals came from people he met in Montana in the 1960s.

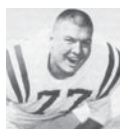
Harley Lewis Without this man's tenacity, it is hard to imagine that Washington/Grizzly Stadium on the campus of the University of Montana would have become the icon that it is today. A Butte native, Lewis was the U of M head track coach when the school needed an athletic director. With U of M President Neil Bucklew, head football coach Larry Donovan and a \$1 million gift from Dennis Washington, football became an on campus reality in Oct. 1986.



Naseby Rhinehart Nas was a humble, quiet man who grew up in a not-so-quiet Milwaukee ghetto. He was the only one of nine children to receive a college education

coming from his predominantly black neighborhood. He was recruited by big time schools but chose Montana to play football in 1930. After Naseby's nine varsity sport letters, he became U of M's athletic trainer "until he could find something better" and stayed for his professional lifetime helping create a national curriculum for athletic training, before retiring in 1982.

Bob O'Billovich This Butte native has accomplishments on the whole North American continent. "Obie" to his teammates, was all-conference in 3 sports for 3 years at the University of Montana. Offered professional contracts by both football and baseball teams, Bob chose to try out the CFL with the Ottawa Roughriders. This began a career spanning over 50 years in the CFL winning championships as a player, coach and general manager. Obie still resides in Oakville, Ontario with frequent trips to Butte and the Treasure State.



Mike Tilleman From Zurich, MT and Chinook High School, few Treasure State athletes have taken a rural toughness and work ethic to the NFL like Mike Tilleman. He was so young when he signed with the Minnesota Vikings in 1965 that his Dad had to sign the contract. Mike was chosen by the New Orleans Saints in the NFL's first expansion draft, where he

was the team MVP in 1970. After a trade to Houston, Norm Van Brocklin, head coach of the Atlanta Falcons, traded high draft picks to get Tilleman in 1973 where he was an All Pro. Mike and his wife Gloria are small business owners in Havre and Chinook, MT.

Bill Kollar Bill loves his life as the Denver Broncos defensive line coach even though he has coached All Pros like J.J. Watts in Houston. When Kollar was attending Montana State University in the early 1970s, he terrorized offensive linemen for three years. Freshmen did not play varsity in those days. Kollar was dominating his senior year of 1973—he was an All American, played in both the East-West Collegiate Shrine game and the National Senior Bowl where he was the MVP. Bill's wife, Jan, is a graduate of Great Falls High School.



Kirk Scrafford A product of Billings West High School and head coach Wally Sims, Kirk went on to excel as an offensive tackle at the University of Montana. Scrafford spent nine years in the NFL with the Bengals, Denver Broncos, and 49ers. Scrafford separated football "business" from football family. In one of Scrafford's first starts as a Cincinnati Bengal, on the road, Kirk was responsible for blocking perennial All Pro Howie Long.

2017 Inductees, continued

Scrafford was never as big as some at his position, weighing only 275 his first year as a Bengal. After blocking Long on a play, Hall of Famer Long said to Kirk "Shouldn't you be playing baseball somewhere"?



Tim Hauck This Big Timber High School standout might be the definition of "over achiever". Football coaches at every level overlooked Hauck's football desires. When the University of Montana denied him the chance to walk on, Hauck went to a small college to get more experience. Hauck again called U of M and this time they let him try out....the rest is history. He is a legendary "hitter" that led the team in tackles and then went on to spend 14 years in the NFL as a player and is currently a secondary coach with the Philadelphia Eagles.

Dwan Edwards Not every football player from Columbus High School dreams of playing



in a Super Bowl, not even Dwan Edwards. He did play in Super Bowl 50 as a Carolina Panther. Edwards had an extraordinary 11 year NFL career. Dwan thought his collegiate career would be in basketball, not as a 6'3" 300 lb defensive tackle for Pac 10 Oregon State who was then on his way to being drafted 51st overall by the Baltimore Ravens in 2004. Dwan and his wife Kelsey and family currently live near Charlotte, NC.



William "Wild Bill" Kelly

Kelly led Missoula County High School to its first football championship in 1921. A multi sport star, Kelly was electric on the collegiate field while attending the University of Montana. In a game against the Washington Huskies, Kelly brought the crowd to its feet by returning a kick-off 75 yards for a touchdown...twice... the first was called back by a penalty. The NFL was only a few years old when Kelly arrived to play for New York Yankees football team, then moving on to the Frankford

Yellowjackets in 1929 before finishing his career with the Brooklyn Dodgers football team in 1930. Kelly died a questionable death in 1931 while watching a football game.

Aldo Forte Aldo ventured from Chicago to Missoula, MT, following the first African American, Jim Dorsey and then Naseby Rhinehart to the Grizzly gridiron. In 1937, Forte's Grizzly team received national acclaim by having a defense that only allowed 19 points to be scored. The Chicago Bears chose Forte in 1940 where he played on NFL Championship teams in both '40 and '41. After serving in WWII, Forte played a season for Detroit and then the Green Bay Packers. Forte finished his NFL career as a coach for Detroit from 1950 to 1965 during which time the team won 3 NFL championships.

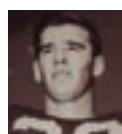


— Player bios compiled by Colter Nunez, Skyline Sports, and Mick Holien

2018 Inductees



Sam Jankovich FROM DARK, COLD MINE SHAFT TO CEO OF THE NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS How did this young man, a hard rock miner from Butte Montana, rise from the depths of a mine tunnel to one day stand beside two Presidents and among two National Championship college football teams?



Terry Dillon GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN Like so many others, Tom Hauck walked the banks of the Clark Fork River searching and searching to no avail. It seemed surreal that a hero could be gone so soon. Terry Dillon, Grizzley and Minnesota Viking great had vanished.



Bill Glennon BILL HAD A DIFFERENT DEMEANOR. HE WAS ORNERY AND HE WAS TOUGH." "Let me tell you about Bill Glennon," said Bill Sprinkle of Helena, a former teammate on the University of Washington Huskies who was a lifelong friend. "He was a guy you would call a very prideful person, and a tremendous, tremendous competitor. He wouldn't be denied. Ever. He had the ultimate faith in himself.



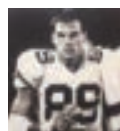
Guy Bingham A CARING, SINCERE, REASONABLE MAN ... LUCK HAS VERY LITTLE TO DO WITH HIS SUCCESS A ninth-round pick (260th selection) of the New York Jets in 1980,

"Bing" played nine seasons in the Big Apple before closing out his professional career with three years in Atlanta and two years with the Washington Redskins.



Sam McCullum GIVING BACK TO THE GAME THAT HAS BROUGHT HIM SO MUCH McCullum was the first athlete to play high school football in

Montana and go on to play in the Super Bowl. The Kalispell Flathead alum was one of the first former Bobcats to get drafted into the NFL after becoming one of the first African-American standouts in Northwest Montana.



Rocky Klever A FOOTBALL RENAISSANCE MAN...In every sense, Rocky Klever was a football Renaissance man. Exceptionally versatile and athletic, he excelled at any position the coaches asked him to play. This innate ability would prove to be his standing trademark throughout his football career from the "Last Frontier" to the "Big Sky" and to the NFL.



Doug Betters MOST DECORATED UM DEFENSIVE PLAYER; INTEGRAL MEMBER OF MIAMI'S FABLED KILLER Bs. One wouldn't find an

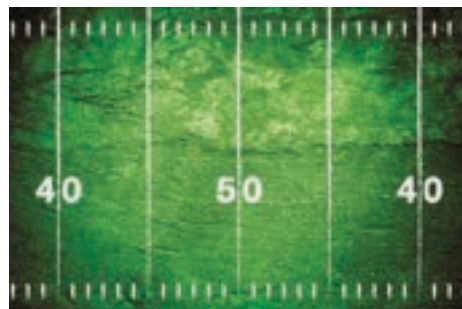
argument from Grizzlyville that Doug Betters, while he played but two years at the University of Montana, is the most decorated defensive player in school

history. Not only was Betters an integral member of the fabled "Killer B's defensive front that brought Miami to Super Bowl XVII and XIX but he won the NFL's Defensive Player of the Year Award in 1983, was named to the AFC Pro Bowl teams in consecutive seasons in 1983 and 84 also when he was the Dolphin's Outstanding Defensive Lineman.



Casey Fitzsimmons FROM 8-MAN HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TO A CAREER IN THE NFL. "He's very special," Carrol head coach Mike Van

Diest said. "He was Mr. Everything at Chester High School and probably could have played basketball in the Frontier Conference as well. We were just blessed to get him here in football.. "He had that gleam in his eye. He was a competitor and a tough kid." Fitzsimmons played at Carroll College from 2000-03 and went on to a stellar career with the Detroit Lions. In eight NFL seasons he caught 70 passes for 549 yards and five touchdowns.



2019 Inductees

Ralph Vernon Scott

From Hardin, MT, Ralph Scott spent “days of hell” in WWI. Scott came back from Europe with “trench foot”, the blistering boils of mustard gas, and he had been wounded by a machine gun bullet.

Scott was fortunate to return from Europe, let alone become an All American football player at Wisconsin.



When Scott finished his college career, legendary George Halas was forming the Decatur Staley’s football team, the precursor to the NFL Chicago Bears franchise.

Walter Camp, the “Father of American Football” noticed Scott at Wisconsin and named him to his All American team. Halas had noticed Scott’s notoriety and called on Ralph to join his upstart football team in 1921.

In 1925, the NFL was launched. Halas signed the Galloping Ghost, Red Grange, to his Bears roster along with Ralph Scott and others. The Bears won the initial NFL Championship in 1926, the Scott family of today still has that championship football with the autographs of Halas, Scott, Grange and others.

Milton Popovich

Born in Butte in 1915, Milton Popovich excelled in multiple sports while growing up in Butte.

John Campbell, while a sports columnist at the Missoulian, said Popovich was “one of the most colorful and magnetic figures in all of Montana Sports History.”



After starring at Butte High, Milt took his talents to the Montana Grizzlies where his successes continued. His first touch against the Trojans of USC ended up in a 79 yard kickoff return that got called back. He scored many touchdowns and kicked many extra points while in the Grizzly uniforms. Poppo always said one of his fondest memories was being captain of his 1937 team.

Milt was a 2nd round draft pick of the Chicago Cardinals in 1937. “The Butte Bullet” played his entire career with the Cardinals. Life after football was a lifetime of service as a firefighter and volunteer in his hometown of Butte.

Ken Staninger

Known as “the Natural” while growing up in Missoula, Ken had a knack for succeeding and winning. Staninger lead his Missoula Sentinel Spartans football team to a state co-championship tie with Great Falls High in 1966.



When Ken became the first professional agent in the Northwest, he was thought of as a kind of maverick. Later, it became apparent that he really was a trailblazer helping many University of Montana athletes and others get into professional football. Mark Rypien, a client and Washington Redskins Super Bowl quarterback, actually nicknamed Staninger as “Stinger”.

In an agents career cut short by cancer in 2013, Stinger helped 135 mostly small school athletes carve out professional contracts.

Louis “Sonny” Lubick

For 15 years, Sonny Lubick was the inspiration, the face and the force of Colorado State Football. He transformed a perennial also ran program into a perennial classy contender every year. His philosophy was that winning followed doing things right, it was dubbed “Sonny’s Way” born of being born and raised in Butte, MT.



Sonny’s father Matthew loved sports, so it was easy to follow his father’s path. After athletic success in high school, some under the mentoring of Jim Sweeney, Sonny went to work for the Anaconda company before going to Western Montana College for his education degree. A rail car mishap at ACM cut short Lubick’s athletic career.

Lubick’s coaching career began at the request of legendary athletic director, Sam Jankovich at Butte High in 1962. Sonny moved through high school ranks, moved on to the college ranks at Montana State U, Colorado State, Stanford, Washington State, University of Miami, where their teams won 2 national championships, and then Colorado State came calling again. For the next 15 years, Sonny’s leadership created bigger fan bases, bowl wins, and solid recruiting of athletes. Lubick’s record was 108-74, second highest win total in CSU history behind Harry Hughes.

Bob McCullough

As an athlete at Helena High, McCullough says he never imagined D I collegiate football or playing in the NFL. Bob earned 8 letters in football, basketball and track at Helena High, he also played baseball. A standout at Colorado, Bob helped the 1961 Buffaloes to the Big 8 Championship game. Then came the undrafted try out in the fall of 1962 with the Broncos.

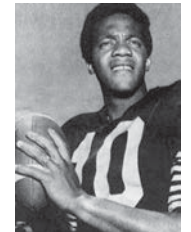


“I played offensive guard and linebacker at Colorado; I was brought into the Broncos camp as a linebacker. One day, while in rookie camp, a high draft pick from Kentucky threw his helmet in frustration and quit. Jungle Jim Martin, the D line coach asked me if I had played offensive guard. When I said yes, I made the team.”

McCullough played four years for the Broncos, beginning with his selection to the 1962 AFL all rookie team. At 6’2, 245, Bob started all 56 games on the schedule. Retirement came after a broken neck. Spud spent 12 more years in Denver, working as a color commentator and starting a second career with Morgan Stanley as a stock broker. Bob and his wife Judy reside in Helena.

Paul Champlin

Every locality has its own sports heroes, Pittsburgh, PA, was no exception. Paul Champlin and Mercury Morris were childhood friends, competitors and eventually NFL football players, Champlin with the San Francisco Forty Niners, Morris with the Miami Dolphins.



Paul’s mother once said of all her children, all she had to do for Paul to know what he was up to was to furnish him a ball, of any kind! Paul excelled in football, basketball and baseball throughout his K-12 years. When it came time to select a college, Champlin got linked with Eastern Montana College in Billings, MT. Paul’s mother called him to their kitchen table one day and asked him, she said “Paul, I looked through all the EMC brochures and catalogues, I did not see one black person; do you know what you are doing?” Paul said he replied to her, “yes mother, I am going for football, to get an education, and to get to the NFL”.

Paul boarded a bus in Pittsburgh headed to Montana in 1965. He said he was OK through Ohio, Indiana, and Wisconsin;

— Player bios compiled by Colter Nuñez, Skyline Sports, and Mick Holien

2019 Inductees cont.

but, when he got to Fargo, crossed North Dakota and the Eastern Montana prairies, culture shock started to set in. When Paul got to Apsaruke Hall on the EMC campus, he made friends with other players. During Paul's 4 years at EMC, his numbers went up every year, yardage, touchdowns, yards per catch and numbers of receivers. By Paul's senior year, the Rams and Forty Niners were regularly in touch with him. In the NFL 1969 draft, the Niners took him in the 7th round. Racism was still an issue at some positions in the NFL, when Paul got to the Niners camp, they asked if he would move to a receiver or D back spot, Paul maintained his position that he was a quarterback.

Barry Darrow A graduate of CMR high school in Great Falls, MT, Barry Darrow's path to the NFL seemed like it may never happen. Barry badly injured a knee his sophomore year, missed most of his junior year and was hobbled his senior year. Not sure how his large frame, 6'7, 240 lbs would hold up, Barry played football at Western Montana College his freshman year. Things went well, Barry moved on to the University of Montana to finish his collegiate career. Barry was part of two 10 and 0 teams, now inducted into the Grizzly Hall of Fame.



Darrow was a late draft pick of the San Diego Chargers in 1973. His line coach was legendary Green Bay Packer Forrest Gregg. Gregg was selected as the Cleveland Browns head coach in 1974, Darrow went with Gregg to Cleveland. Darrow started 47 games for the Browns until sidelined by another knee injury. While anchoring the Browns right side at tackle, their local newspaper, the Cleveland Plain Dealer sports page had a headline "As Cleveland's right tackle goes, so goes Cleveland."

Darrow and his wife Suni live in Missoula where he has been working in the lumber industry.

Mike McLeod While Mike McLeod was growing up in Cheyenne, WY, he was a Green Bay Packer fan. Why not, Mike's father Jim, coached at Cheyenne Central High School with Joe Dowler, brother of Packer receiver Boyd Dowler. At the time, McLeod was not even thinking of his playing with the Packers in later life.



Winning was part of who Mike McLeod is. His father Jim was originally from Havre, he won a national championship

with Montana State in 1956, his teams at Cheyenne Central won 17 championships between football and track. So Mike had a competitive nature early on; his Cheyenne East high school team won a state championship, when he got to Montana State in 1976, his team won a national championship, while playing defensive back for Edmonton, his teams won 3 Grey Cups. Then came the transition move to the Green Bay Packers of the NFL.

Mike's career in Green Bay was not as long as he wanted; he does say "it provided one of the great memories of my standout football career. Mike and his wife have two sons and a daughter, they reside in Bozeman where McLeod runs McLeod Insurance and Financial Services.

Thatcher Szalay In 2019, at his Montana Football Hall of Fame induction, Thatcher may have moved the audience more than any other inductee with his heartfelt sincerity. That may be because of the manner in which he grew up. His father was a logger about 40 miles out of Whitefish, MT. Heat was from a wood stove so Thatcher spent a lot of time chopping wood while growing up.



"I was always outside getting my hands dirty, it wasn't until my junior or senior year of high school I even knew you could get an athletic scholarship", he says. "I guess the work ethic I learned from my parents carried me through."

Even though Szalay did not watch TV, he knew about the NFL. Many aspects of football intrigued him; fortitude, toughness, commitment and relentlessness of the sport were attractive to him. He says commitment is special, every play, every block, "commit 100% to knocking the shit out of anyone on the other side".

While attending University of Montana as a Grizzly, Thatcher was a three year starter, he was a two time All American, as a captain, his team won the 2001 National Championship; it seems that Szalay loved wearing his Grizzly uniform with other members of that family.

Szalay was drafted by Cincinnati, then played for the Ravens and Seattle. He and his wife Katie now live back in the Flathead Valley.

Jon Borchardt Nicknamed "Lurch" by his Montana State University teammates, Jon arrived in Bozeman as a 6'5 205lb skinny kid from Minneapolis. MSU assistant

coach Mick Delaney said "he was just bare bones".



Borchardt grew into a massive offensive tackle for the Bobcats, teammate Butch Damberger said "he was like playing next to a Bulldozer, I just went along for the ride".

Interestingly, Jon's teammates talk as much about his intelligence as his physicality. Jeff Muri says Jon was always the smartest guy in the room when analyzing film. Borchardt was an honors student with a 3.76 GPA in microbiology. Chuck Karnop, MSU trainer at the time, said conversations with Borchardt were largely about the physical body and its anatomical functions.

Jon was a two time first team All-Big Sky selection before being named a first team All American after his senior season. Jon was selected in the third round of the 1979 NFL draft. When Knox left Buffalo to coach the Seahawks in 1975, he traded for Borchardt to help the other Seahawk linemen. Jon ended his NFL career after 9 seasons in 1987.

Scott Gragg Scott loved basketball, at 6'8", that is understandable. When he signed with the University of Montana Grizzlies, he was their tallest player ever; and boy could he play football. He used his freshman season with the Griz to get stronger and bigger, he went from 250 to 280 lbs in 1990. Gragg could do somersaults in the end zone after a touchdown, a feat he could still do as a 300 pounder!



Portland State, Idaho and Montana offered Gragg football scholarships his senior year in High School in Oregon; when asked why he chose Montana he quickly replied Don Read! As a junior and senior, Gragg's Grizzlies went 10-2, 11-3 in those seasons of 1993 and 1994, in both years he was named an All-American.

Gragg was the first Grizzly to ever be invited to the Senior Bowl and he also played in the East West Shrine game that year.

Gragg was drafted in the second round by the Giants in the 1995 draft. In 11 NFL seasons, Gragg played in 172 games, starting 149 of them. Scott and his wife Toni are back in Silverton. Their daughter is Anna and their son is Brian.



2021 Inductees



Victor J. Lindskog

The 1940's players "played on offense, defense. Then back to offense. plus kicking and receiving."

As a rugged center and linebacker, Vic Lindskog

played on the Philadelphia Eagles when the Eagles won NFL Championships, in 1948 and 1949. Lindskog was later chosen to the Eagles half century team.

Victor J. was born on December 3, 1914 in Roundup, Montana. In High School he was active in basketball, tennis and track, notice there is no mention of football, graduating in 1932, he worked in the local coal mines before moving to Cut Bank a year later to work in the oil fields.

Lindskog became involved with the sport of boxing in Cut Bank, showed promise as a fighter. As a result he was sent to train under highly respected boxing guru, George V. Blake in Los Angeles.

Lindskog's professional aspirations were short-lived. His last known fight came to be on June 1938.

Lindskog's athletic attributes caught the eye of Ralph Reynolds., a Stanford University alumni. The rest is history, he moved to Palo Alto with his wife and a son on the way. Coach Clark Shaughnessy moved the 200 pounder to center. The T formation was innovative at the time and required the center to snap the football in what we call the shotgun formation today.

After two All American years at Stanford, he played in the East West Shrine game. The NFL Philadelphia Eagles drafted Vic in December 1942,

In the fall of 1944, Lindskog was a 29-year-old rookie playing center and linebacker. After the 1951 championship, Linskog retired as an All Pro. Many contribute the great success of legendary Eagle Chuck Bednarik to Lindskog's tuteledge.

Lindskog stayed in professional football as a coach and scout, receiving 2 Super Bowl rings in San Francisco, retiring in 1985. Vic died in Bedford, TX, in 2003 at age 88.



Dan Carpenter

HELENA — Former Helena High, University of Montana, and National Football League kicker Dan Carpenter set records

at all three levels – high school, college and professionally – and is only the fifth Helena to play in the NFL. And now Carpenter, who was selected to the Helena Sports Hall of Fame in 2015, is set to be enshrined in the fifth annual Montana Football Hall of Fame, becoming just the third Capital City griddier to be so honored.

He set HHS' kicking records for the longest field goal in 2003, of 53 yards, eclipsing Ben Chaet's 1999 standard of 49 yards. At the time he graduated, Carpenter shared Helena's marks for field goals in a game (two), season (five) and career (10), in addition to ranking No. 2 in career PATs (44) and third in season PATs (26). And he stands No. 3 in punting average, at 40.3 yards per kick, At the University of Montana from 2004-07, Carpenter was a four-time All-Big Sky Conference selection, and was twice named first team FCS All-American. As a freshman, he was part of the Griz's 2004 national runner-up squad. Carpenter left Montana as the FCS' record-holder with 75 field goals, and as the Big Sky's all-time leading scorer with 413 points, while tying for most extra point kicks, at 182 PATs. His senior year, he was successful on 82.6% of his field goals, connecting on 19-of-23 attempts. He booted 71 punts for the Griz as well, producing a 41.8-yard average.

When Carpenter was signed by the Miami Dolphins in 2008, he joined John Dolan, Earl "Pruney" Parsons, Bob "Spud" McCullough and Pat Donovan as the only Capital City gridders to play in the NFL. Donovan and McCullough have already been added to the Montana Football Hall of Fame. With the Dolphins from 2008-12, Carpenter set the franchise record for the longest field goal of 60 yards. He was chosen for the 2008 PFWA All-Rookie team, breaking into the league with a perfect 40-for-40 in extra point attempts. The next year he was selected to the 2009 Pro Bowl.



Kenny Amato

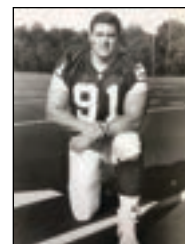
From his earliest moments in football, Ken Amato possessed the skill that would lead to a nine-year NFL career.

"In little league, I was probably 10 years old, we were in practice and coach said, 'We've got to find a long snapper,'" Amato recalled. "He tried everybody on the team and just said, 'Throw the ball between your legs as hard as you can,' and that's what I did. I did it good enough, and he said, 'OK, you're the long snapper.'"

A quarter-century later, Amato had leveraged that important moment during his childhood and all the hard work and dedication that followed into a long, winding adventure. After a handful of years away from the game he loves he played for the Tennessee Titans from 2003-11 as the team's long snapper, and after another year off he completed his third season on the Dallas Cowboys coaching staff in 2019. A life of football makes the Montana State alum part of the Class of 2020 for the Montana Football Hall of Fame. While it was always adventurous, Amato's football journey was never a straight path. It featured many key junctions. After a strong senior season at Miami's Braddock High School, his best opportunity to play college football was at Moorpark College near Los Angeles. His reward for two good junior college seasons was a last-minute scholarship to play at MSU. And even as a brilliant long snapper it was nearly five years between his final college game and his professional debut.

And at the heart of it all was a team meeting at Montana State shortly after he arrived in Bozeman.

"When we got him here, (offensive line and long snapper coach Jim) Michalczik stood up in front of the whole team and asked, 'Who here can long snap?' So he gets a couple of guys to raise their hands and they're working with him. But Walter (Glover, an MSU offensive lineman and teammate of Amato's at Moorpark) told Michalczik, 'Kenny didn't raise his hand but he can long snap,'" Amato remembered more than two decades later.



Shane Collins

FINDS RELIEF IN MONTANA FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME DECISION!

When MTFHOF board chair, Rick Halmes, called Shane Collins at home and left a

message about postponing the 2020 induction banquet until 2021, he did not expect the reply he received from Collin's wife Lisa. Her message was; "this is a big relief for Shane, he has had trouble trying to write his speech". Considering the fact that Collins has had an extra 6 weeks to write his speech, because of the covid 19 concerns, Lisa's comic relief was welcome. Halmes had been told that Collins was very shy, even though he was a high second round draft pick of the NFL Washington Redskins in 1992 and he was also considered the best player to ever wear his number 83 at Arizona State University.

2021 Inductees cont.



Steve Okoniewski hails from Bremerton, Washington and has made Green Bay, Wisconsin his home for most of the last three decades. But the former University of Montana All-American offensive

tackle knows one thing for certain: coming to the Last Best Place changed his life for the better.

His path from the University of Washington to Everett Community College to Missoula launched a six-year professional career that led him to Atlanta, Buffalo, Green Bay and St. Louis.

And that strong affinity for the Treasure State also helped Okoniewski launch his second career as a high school coach and administrator. After retiring from the NFL and Canadian Football League in the summer of 1978, he began his second career in Deer Lodge. He moved to Wibaux for a short time before returning to Wisconsin. Yet Okoniewski longs for Montana every day.



Travis Lulay The whole thing started with a surprising conversation in his high school coach's office late in the fall of 2001, when Montana State offensive coordinator Don Bailey took

an unplanned trip to have a peek at a quarterback he had been hearing about.

"He was recruiting (future Bobcat receiver) Brandon Roosevelt and took an impromptu trip by my high school to meet me," recalls Travis Lulay, whose high school coach summoned Lulay to his office that day nearly 20 years ago. "By the time I got into (the) office, Bailey was halfway through the state championship game from a couple weeks before and he looked at me, kind of excited and with big eyes, and said 'Who's recruiting you?!'"

When Bailey heard that Lulay had no other Division I scholarship offers, the offensive coordinator perked up.

"I told him, 'That's absurd, but that's good for us. We'll getcha!'" Bailey said. "We knew we were going to (sign) a couple of quarterbacks. I was recruiting the Oregon-Washington area, and I told Coach (Mike) Kramer I was heading down to St. Regis High School in Oregon to look at Travis Lulay but that I had appointments in Portland later that afternoon. After (Bailey

and Lulay) visited for about a half-hour I cancelled my other visits and called Kramer and said, 'I've got my guy.'"

And so began one of the most memorable Bobcat careers of the modern era. That college success in Bozeman set the table for a life in football, including three years fighting for a chance with the Seattle Seahawks, an adventure to Germany and an outstanding career in the Canadian Football League. It also led to Lulay's recent induction into the Montana Football Hall of Fame.

In Canada, Lulay threw for nearly 300 yards in a win over Edmonton in the conference semi finals, then threw for 320 yards and two touchdowns in front of 50,000 fans at BC Place to clinch the Grey Cup Championship. He capped his brilliant season with Grey Cup Most Valuable Player honors.



Bob Beers
FORMER GRIZ
ALL-AMERICAN
LINEBACKER
HAD A CAREER IN
FOOTBALL FOR
ALMOST HALF A
CENTURY

If you ever get a chance to talk to Bob Beers and follow his nearly half-of-a-century-long career path in football, you might want to grab a road atlas before you start.

During his various career stops in the sport he's had jobs as an assistant coach at the college level; as a head high school coach; two years in the World League; one head position in the Arena League; and as a scout in the National Football League for three different teams.

In that time, he lived (in order) Montana, Oregon, Germany, back to Montana, the Netherlands, Colorado, Michigan, Texas, back to Montana again, and finally back to Texas.

His journey began in his birthplace of Barnesboro (now called Northern Cambria), Penn., a coal-mining town with a population of around 2,500, located in the western part of the state.

"It was a real football mecca – football was kind of the big thing there in the coal miner's eyes," Beers said. "But my dad (Bob) wanted to get us out of there, so he took a job and moved us (along with his mom Rita and brothers Ed and Wes) out west to Beaverton, Ore. when I was about 10 years old.

"After high school, I attended Columbia Basin College, our first game was against Boise. Our starter at linebacker got hurt before the game so I got the start, and that was it," he said. "After that the coaches said forget baseball, so I just stuck with football. Size was not that big of a deal in that era," said Beers, listed as 5-9/5-10, 185-to-195 pounds.

"My sophomore year I was being recruited by a lot of different people," he said. "Idaho and Oregon were recruiting me but Washington State said I was too small. I said, 'I've heard that before.' It was right about then that I got drafted into the Army and Wally (Brown) got me into the ROTC program -- so that's kind of how I ended up here (in Montana). We had Wally and Jack Elway here, Pinky Erickson was here and Bill Betcher – we had some really top-notch coaches."

His first season at Montana was as a junior in 1967, playing for first-year head coach Jack Swarhout. It was memorable for him, as a teammate and as an individual. Montana went 7-3 for its first winning season in 18 years (since going 5-4 in 1949). Beers led the team in tackles in all 10 of its games, and averaged 18.0 stops per game. He was the school's first-ever first team All-American selection and the initial winner of the UM's Golden Helmet Award given annually to UM's "hardest hitter on the team."

He was a first team All-Big Sky pick in 1967 and in 1968. He was a first team All-American in 1967 and an honorable mention pick in 1968. He was inducted into the inaugural Grizzly Football Hall of Fame in 1982. He was named to the Big Sky Conference's Silver Anniversary all-defensive team in 1988.

Beers coached high school football, collegiate football, European league football before returning to the NFL Denver Broncos as an exec and a scout



Marty Mornhinweg first came to Montana in August 1980 to attend the University of Montana on a football scholarship. Marty would spend the better part of 6 years on campus, the first 5 as

a player and 1 as a coach. He enjoyed the people and the area so much that 30 years later, he and his wife Lindsay built a house overlooking the Bitterroot river, where Marty and his family love to spend time. "Montana is a special place to the



2021 Inductees cont.

Mornhinweg Crew. I am honored to be inducted into the Montana Football Hall of Fame,” said Marty Mornhinweg.

Born in Edmond, Oklahoma to Larry and Darla Mornhinweg, the 58 year-old grew up in Oklahoma; Houston, Texas; and Holliston, Massachusetts before settling in San Jose, California at the age of 13. In 1980, Marty joined a football program eager for success and wins at the University of Montana. This included the first playoff appearance in the school’s history playing for Head Coach Larry Donovan and Quarterback Coach Joe Glenn.

Here are some of Marty’s achievements while attending the University of Montana:

- Four-year starter at quarterback
- Established 15 passing records (individual and team)
- Finished his career ranked 1st in school history and 2nd in Big Sky Conference history in career passing yards and total offense
- Two-time Steve Carlson Award Winner (Team MVP)
- Two time All-Big Sky
- 1st Team All-American Strength Team

(NSCA)

- Guided UM to a 7-3 record in 1981 - Only the Grizzlies sixth winning season in the previous 32 years
- Led Montana, in 1982, to their 1st Big Sky Championship in 12 years and their 1st ever NCAA Division 1AA playoff berth
- Mirage Bowl M.V.P. (Japan, 1984) - threw for 425 yards and two touchdowns vs Army.
- Inducted into the University of Montana Hall of Fame in 2009



Brent Musburger

His authentic and distinctive style has made him one of the most accomplished and distinguished voices in sports broadcasting history.

For nearly fifty years, Brent Musburger has covered championship events in nearly every major sport, including the Super Bowl, the World Series, the NBA Finals, the Final Four, The World Cup, the Indianapolis 500, the Masters, the US Open Tennis Championships, and the Little League World

Series, and he has done it across multiple media platforms for CBS, ABC, ESPN, CBS Radio Network and ESPN Radio.

Revered as “one of the best story-tellers to ever grace the sports booth,” Musburger has delivered many of the most iconic and memorable moments in sports history to our living rooms. His down-home style made him relatable and enduring to his audience, much like an “old friend”. His style and love of sports can be traced back to his childhood in Billings, Montana.

Born on May 26, 1939 in Portland Oregon, Brent moved with his parents Cec and Beryl Musburger to Billings in 1940, where Cec opened a store called Appliance Mart. Cec became quite involved in the sports community as a baseball umpire and founded the Billings Little League Baseball Program in 1952. Brent and his younger brother Todd, played in those early year teams as Dave McNally did, who later on became four-time 20-game winner and win two World Series rings with the Baltimore Orioles.



KENT PAULSON

When Kent Paulson graduated from Outlook High School in 1969, who would have known the impact he would have on all sports in Montana for the next 50 years.

From Outlook to Western Montana College in Dillon is about as far a commute as one can make in our state. Kent played basketball for the legendary Casey Keltz and ran track for the Bulldogs as well.

Kent received his education degree in 1973, his masters in 1979, and his administration degree in 1980 from the University of Montana.

Paulson met his wife Joan at a Bobcat-Grizzly game in Bozeman where Joan was acquiring her nursing degree. They were married in 1974.

Kent started teaching and coaching at Charles M Russel High School in Great Falls where he coached basketball and track for 20 years. He and Joan started their family there, Kale, Krista and Kurt. Kurt just stepped down as head basketball coach at Carroll College after a very successful career.

Paulson spent 2 years in Troy before becoming an administrator at Whitefish Schools where he finished his education career.

Paulson began as Frontier Conference commissioner in 2009 until announcing his retirement earlier this spring. Kent is the longest tenured commissioner in it’s history. His awards are numerous; established the Swede Kenison Award, increased scholarships, the national association of intercollegiate athletics award of merit and NAIA Charles M. Morris administrator of the year.



2022 Inductees



Blaine Richard McElmurry was born October 23, 1973, in Helena, then played high school football in Troy, Montana, where his father was the acting coach.

Played collegiately for University of Montana from 1993 to 1996

Joined the NFL in 1997 with the Green Bay Packers, played in the 1998 Super Bowl, then finished his career with the Jacksonville Jaguars

Blaine and his wife, Kristine, started McElmurry Homes in Missoula in 2003

Currently resides in Missoula with wife and daughters, Ashley, a sophomore track star at the University of Nebraska, and Audrey, who is a track standout at Sacramento State.



Dane Fletcher, Bozeman, Montana State University, New England Patriots

He Played College Football At Montana State, and was signed by the New England Patriots as an

undrafted free agent in 2010. Fletcher also played for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers

As a redshirt senior in 2009 Fletcher was named team captain and finished the season with 67 tackles, seven sacks, and two blocked kicks, earning first-team All-Big Sky honors as well as being named the Big Sky Defensive MVP. He was named as a finalist for the Buck Buchanan award as the nations top defensive player in NCAA FCS Division

Fletcher was born in Bozeman and attended Bozeman Senior High School

Fletcher owns and operates a gym called "The Pitt" in his hometown of Bozeman, Montana. He and his wife Dani welcomed twin boys, Hawkin and Tuck, in fall 2018



Jim Sweeney, Montana State Football Coach James Joseph Sweeney was an American football player and coach, the head coach at Montana State

University, Washington State University, and California State University, Fresno, compiling a career college football record of 201–153–4 .

Born in Butte, MT, Sweeney was the youngest of seven children of Will and Kate Sweeney; his father was a hard-rock miner who emigrated from Ireland.

After a collegiate football career at University of Portland, Sweeney returned to Montana to coach at Butte Central for a season. He was its head coach from 1952 to 1955, then at Flathead in Kalispell from 1956 to 1959.

Sweeney moved up to the college ranks in 1960 as an assistant coach at Montana State in Bozeman under Herb Agocs and was promoted to head coach in 1963.

Coach Sweeney won 3 Big Sky conference championships in his five seasons with the Bobcats. Sweeney moved up to the Pac 8 Conference at Washington State, where he started with a one-year contract at \$20,000 in 1968.

After 2 seasons leading Fresno State, He spent the 1978 season with the Oakland Raiders in John Madden season, and the 1979 season with the St Louis Rams under Bud Wilkinson.

Sweeney returned to Fresno State as head coach in December 1979 for 17 more seasons, where he won 8 conference championships, helping build "Bulldog Stadium"

Sweeney married his high school sweetheart, Lucille and they had nine children.



Marv Sunderland, Chester, MT, Northern Montana College NMC running back 1962-1965, New Orleans Saints 1967, Calgary Stampeders 1968.

Coached at Chinook 1968, Hardin H.S.

1969 North Dakota State, 1970 to 1975.

NFL Scout for 39 years with the Jets, Patriots, and Tennessee Titans 1998 to 2002, New York Giants, Where he was director of player personnel in charge of college and professional scouting for the 2000 Super Bowl Giant.



Robert Doore (Rides at the Door), Browning, MT, Washington Football Team (former Redskins)

Robert was the highest ranking Native American in the National Football

League since Jim Thorpe was the NFL President in 192. As the former Director of Guest Experience at FedExField in the Washington, DC, Maryland, and Virginia area.

He was born in Havre, raised on the Blackfeet Reservation in Browning, MT, and is a proud member of the Blackfeet Nation.

Played for the Browning Indians Big Red Football team who were the first to make it to the playoffs in school history and was coached by Pat and Steve Schulte of Butte.

His uncle Doug Davis, played on Montana State's 1984 national championship football team, this instilled a passion in Robert.

A former Public Affairs Director, Mr. Doore also is a former International Ambassador bringing a Native American perspective on issues facing indigenous people of the United States and throughout the world.

Robert is a Business Executive and a private business developer and owner. He is the President & CEO of Chief Mountain Sports and Consulting, a professional business firm offering training and consulting services in the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), Leadership Development, and Customer Service Standards.

Robert chaired the DC Sports Teams Committee, sits on the International Youth Sports Committee and former member of the National Board for Minority Business, and Children and Families.

Mr. Doore is an educated professional with a background that includes A.A. in Natural Resource Management from the Blackfeet Community College (Tribal College), a B.S. in Business Management and a Master's degree in Business Administration and Project Management from the University of Mary.

Robert and his family live in Denver, Colorado and he continues to work in Pro



2022 Inductees

Sports and Entertainment. You will find him coaching youth sports in his spare time.



Rock Gullickson,
Moorehead Minnesota,
Montana State

Gullickson began his NFL career with the New Orleans Saints as the strength and conditioning coach from 2000-2005 and

worked for the Green Bay Packers from 2006-2008. He was named NFL Strength Coach of the Year in 2007

While at Green Bay, Rock mentored hall of fame quarterback Brett Favre. Gullickson finished his career at University of Tennessee after spending the last 17 seasons in the NFL, including the last seven with the Los Angeles Rams organization.

Before moving to the NFL, Gullickson spent 22 years in college. He was the strength coach at the University of Louisville from 1998-99 and at the University of Texas from 1993-97, after spending time at Montana State University in the mid 80's.

Rock and his wife Terri are retired living in

Oregon.



Shann Schillinger,
Baker, MT, University
Of Montana, 2006-
2009

Shann Schillinger born May 22, 1986 in Baker, MT,

He played for his uncle Don Schillinger who

had the second most high school football wins in Montana at 318.

He was a four-year letterman in football, and his varsity teams had an overall record of 49-1. He was a two-time all-state selection.

Shann was an East team captain in the Montana Shrine Football All Star game in 2006.

He earned the Tony Barbour Award as the player which best exemplifies Grizzly football. He had 90 tackles and started every game as a senior, when he was named All-Big Sky, first team.

He was drafted by the Atlanta Falcons in the sixth round of the 2010 NFL Draft.



Dane Storrusten, a Great Falls native, is currently an award-winning Creative Director at the NFL in Los Angeles, CA with his wife Theda and 3 children; Ryan, Austin, and Izzy.

Dane manages a team of creative talent that help elevate the NFL fan experience across all media platforms including NFL network shows, original content, digital media and more. Storrusten and team also support and lead league brand initiatives (i.e. NFL 100 campaign of 2019) as well as craft new team brand identities and uniform designs. The most recent was crafting a new identity and uniform set for the relocated Los Angeles Chargers.

Storrusten and team recently won a 2020 Sports Emmy Award for collective work on the NFL 100 campaign of 2019—a year long campaign that celebrated the leagues 100 year anniversary which spanned television, film, digital media, social media, and event applications at Draft and Super Bowl.

Storrusten plans to remain with the league and help continue to push the company to be a leader in the sports media space.



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2022 Gatorade Player Of The Year

TALON MARSH

HARD WORK PAYS OFF FOR
HELENA CAPITAL SENIOR



A Class AA state wrestling title, a Class AA state football title, chosen as the Montana Gatorade Player of the Year award for football –and now a tribute from the Montana Pro Football Hall of Fame. To top things off, Talon chose Montana State University to extend his football and academic career.

Gatorade indicated in their press release that football was not the only criteria, “The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Marsh as Montana’s best high school football player.”

Talon’s coach at Helena Capital was Kyle Mihelish.

2022 Gatorade Coach Of The Year

KYLE MIHELISH

Kyle Mihelish - 27-year MT coach, Kyle Mihelish, has been the head mentor at Helena Capital since 2015. His Bruins have made the playoffs every year and the state semi-finals 3 times before securing the 2022 AA Title. He assisted Pat Murphy at Capital from 2005-2014 with the Bruins playing for 6 state titles and winning 4. Mihelish was the defensive line coach for Carroll College and part of the 2004 National Championship.



Montana Football Trivia



Answer’s On P. 67

1. This star Carlisle Indian School athlete from the Crow Reservation scored on a 103-yard kickoff return using the infamous “hidden-ball trick” in a college football game against powerful Harvard while playing for Pop Warner.
2. The state’s only native NFL Hall of Famer hails from this remote town in Montana’s “Big Dry”.
3. Though the honoree never played in the state, this tiny outpost was briefly renamed for this eventual Hall of Fame quarterback when he was starring in the NFL.
4. What city did the Redskins play in before they moved to Washington?
5. What team won the NFC East division championship in 1985?

-406mtsports.com





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TRIBUTE TO 200 Win Coaches

Jack Johnson, CMR High School	340
Don Schillinger, Baker.....	318
Tim Racicot, Frenchtown.....	258
Jim Stanton, Billings Central	241
Jim Oberweiser, Drummond	233
Swede Dahlberg, Butte	222
Mike Gear, Sidney	222
Bob Cleverly, Ennis.....	218
Ed Rohloff, Miles City	217
Terry Thomas, Dillon	211
Paul Klaboer, Billings West	210
Ron Kowalski, Cut Bank.....	206
Scott King, Malta.....	206
Mike VanDiest, Carroll College	203



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SONNY HOLLAND

BOZEMAN – Sonny Holland, who won national championships in football at Montana State as both a player and head coach and remains one of the most revered figures in MSU history, died Saturday, December 3rd in Bozeman. He was 84.

Montana State confirmed Holland’s death to MTN Sports on Sunday prior to releasing an official announcement. Called “The Greatest Bobcat of Them All,” Holland was a Butte native who won a national title with the Bobcats in 1956 as a center and again in 1976 as head coach. Holland led the MSU football program from 1971-77, winning a pair of Big Sky Conference championships in that span.



ALLEN REYNOLDS

Allen Michael Reynolds was born on 12/17/1991 in Great Falls, Montana to Pat and Wes Reynolds. He passed away on 11/19/2022 at his home.

He was educated in Great Falls and graduated from CMR in 1990, attended RMC in Billings and graduated in 1997.

He is survived by 2 daughters Makala & Madison Reynolds, his faithful companion Hopper, his mother Pat of Billings and sister Staci of Kansas City, his Great Aunt Betty Osterholm, Aunt Carol Trawick, Aunt and Uncle Bev & Don Huffman, several cousins and many friends that all meant the world to him.

Allen was preceded in death by his father Wes, Maternal and Paternal Grandparents and Uncle Frank Chesarek.

Allen grew up on Riverview Drive in Great Falls on a very close knit street. Through his life he faced numerous physical limitations but never let that limit what he participated in. As a child his sister Staci and the neighborhood kids were his protectors on the play ground.



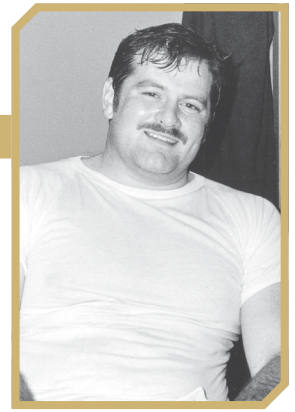
Allen was an avid sports fanatic and his teams were the CMR Rustlers, Great Falls Dodgers, RMC Bears, Billings Mustangs and the U of M Grizzlies. He participated in sports organizations on the managerial side since he was not able to participate on the activity side. He was a proud alumni of Rocky Mountain College and served the RMC athletic program through his college years. His first job was bat boy for the Great Falls Dodgers and he later traveled with the team as a “Clubby”. He was Assistant General Manager for the Dodgers before moving to Billings. He was outgoing and Public Relations was his calling.

Allen volunteered with the Chase Hawks Memorial Association and the Billings Police Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association.

Allen had a special relationship with his mom Pat who was there to help him as his health changed through the years. There was also a special relationship with daughters Makayla and Madison and so many of his friends from his high school and college days to newer friends that were all part of his social circle.

Allen inspired this Montana Pro Football Hall of Fame idea over coffee with Rick Halmes in 2016. Dave and Craig Dickenson were two of Allen’s best friends.





★ AL WILSON ★

B.C.'s BEST – Wilson turns successes at Montana State into legendary CFL career

By BILL LAMBERTY

In the years since his football career ended in 1986, honors and recognition poured into Al Wilson's life. The British Columbia Lions, his Canadian Football League club, retired Wilson's No. 52 jersey and he was inducted into the CFL Hall of Fame, the B.C. Sports Hall of Fame, and the B.C. Lions Wall of Fame. A street – Al Wilson Grove – and park Alan Wilson Park was named in his honor in his hometown of Duncan, B.C.



Aug. 1969

Before professional football glory, Al Wilson starred at Montana State. And before that, his football roots grew in his hometown of Duncan, British Columbia, playing on a loosely organized club team. And through it all, his career was aptly summarized by a nickname he picked up early in his professional career with the BC Lions.

Dirt.

"That had to do with some off-field antics and there's probably only one teammate alive that remembers how it originated," he says with a hearty laugh. "It had nothing to do with football, and it will remain a secret.

Regardless of its origins, his playing style helped the moniker stick.

"The reporters loved it. They said, 'He was always rummaging around in the dirt as an offensive center,' and I let them believe that," Wilson remembered.

From the beginning, when he was coached by local PE teachers who "lined me up at defensive end and said chase the football," Wilson was willing to do football's dirty work. "I was pretty good at that. No one ever taught me arm-under or arm-over or anything like

that. But I loved to play."

Wilson came to Montana State as a defensive end, but his career path was altered by one of Bobcat football's greatest figures.

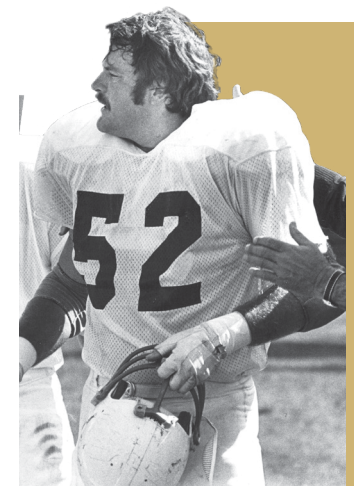
"Joe Tiller made me into an offensive guard," Wilson said. "So, I played three years at offensive guard on varsity for the Cats. It was Joe Tiller, who went on to be head coach for the Purdue Boilermakers, who moved me to the offensive line and taught me to play the game of football."

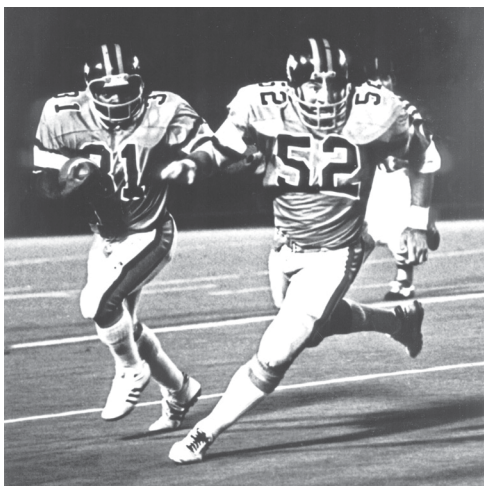
A tight end during his formative years, Wilson started at tackle for most of his sophomore season before moving another couple of feet toward the ball in the spring of 1970, when he "was the team's most consistent offensive lineman" as a guard during spring drills. He started at guard for the next two seasons, earning honorable mention all-league honors in 1970 and Second Team All-Big Sky plaudits in 1971.

"He was a really solid football player, a solid offensive lineman," said Gary Kimmett, a Bobcat safety and Wilson's former MSU teammate. "We did all sorts of things (offensively) in '71 but he was a real solid run blocker. He was strong and square and blocked really well. I had to go against him in (certain) drills, and he was good. He was a leader of the team as a captain."

Bobcat assistant coach Frank Smith, who eventually enjoyed a legendary career as head football coach at the University of British Columbia with time spent as a CFL assistant, noticed Wilson during his high school years.

"Frank Smith, who turned out to be the great UBC head coach for years and years, was the running backs coach at Montana State," Wilson recalled. "This was his area, and he recruited me to





Montana State. I remember his scouting report on me was, 'He's got great hustle and lousy technique.'"

The Bobcats won the Big Sky Conference in 1968, when Wilson played

on the freshman team, and the experience remains imprinted on the native Canadian.

"I was so awe-struck to be at Montana State," he said. "I came from a small resort town of Duncan, and the varsity team was Paul Schafer, Dennis Erickson, (Mike) Vollmer, (Tony) Welzanbach, and those are some great names from back then."

Wilson's freshman year coincided with the final season of the Big Sky's first dynasty, with the Cats claiming four of the league's first six titles.

"They won the Big Sky Championship, and the hype was just unbelievable," he said. "I couldn't believe the fans and how they were caught up in it. I had never been exposed to that, and it was all just a circus to me. I was awe-struck so I kept my nose clean and went to school, and it was like drinking from a fire hose. What the hell is all this? But I enjoyed it."

Even as a novice transitioning from freshman football to the varsity in 1969, Wilson understood his prospects at defensive end were limited.

"When I moved up to varsity the defensive ends were Gary Gustafson, drafted by the Kansas City Chiefs, and Eric Wheeler, undersized but quick-as-lightning defensive end, and there was no way I was going to unseat them."

That's when Tiller interjected, proposing the move across the line of scrimmage. Consistency at his new position led to early playing time.

"Wilson was the most consistent offensive lineman during the spring," wrote legendary Bobcat Sports Information Director Ken Nicholson in MSU's 1970 football media guide. Wilson started "most games in 1969" and remained a starter throughout his Bobcat career.



Things weren't all laughs for Wilson and his fellow 1971 captain and three-year starter Bob Banaugh, a walk-on safety from Missoula. "The experience of losing was no fun whatsoever," Wilson said of the program's only three-year record of losing teams from 1953 to 1988, "but Bob and I worked hard. There were six of us from our freshman year that made it all the way through to our senior year. That wasn't a real positive experience in our lives, but we loved playing the game so we kept going."

While Wilson was adjusting to life at an American college, he also transitioned to a new set of rules. "It was one less person (on the field)," he said, "and I found the line of scrimmage, when you're nose-to-nose, was easier because (the opposing defensive player) was right there. When you're a yard off the ball they might not be right there. There was more room to maneuver."

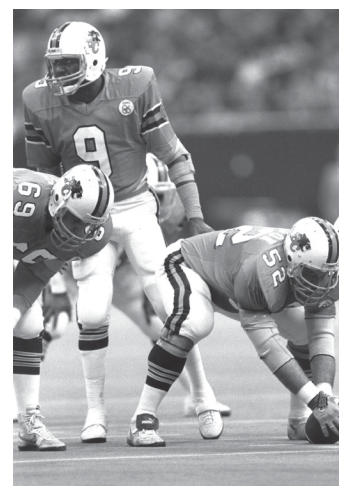
Just as Wilson landing at Montana State came nearly by accident, so to was his entry into the CFL. Although Calgary expressed interest in signing him and included him on its negotiation list, the Lions "owned me, they absolutely owned me," Wilson said. So when BC inked a list including American college players from LSU, Tennessee, Alabama and Washington State, included in the transactions was Alan Wilson, Montana State.

"They had all these high-profile players they were bringing in," he said, "and they signed me. But they owned me. They offered me a contract that amounted to about \$10,000 and said, 'Sign here.' And I said 'Why not? Let's see what happens.' And 15 years later they told me to get off the field."

The early stages of his professional career mirrored Wilson's entry to college football.

"I was a backup for the first eight games (with BC), and Willie Postler was starting at center. We were in Toronto and Don Moorhead from Michigan was our quarterback. Everyone likes to goof around after warmups and I was snapping the ball to Moorhead just for fun, even running patterns from the center position, and the head coach came over and said to Moorhead, 'Can he get the ball up there?' And he said, 'Yeah, he gets it up fine.'"

From that moment, and an injury to Postler a few weeks later, sprung Wilson's



opportunity. "Postler sprains his ankle the next game, so they put me at center and that's how I wound up there."

The Lions won five games in both 1972 and 1973 and didn't log a winning record until 1977. But once the organization found its bearings, things took off. BC didn't experience another losing season until after Wilson retired.

Wilson's career followed that same arc. He earned either Western Division or CFL all-star honors – or both – every year from 1975 to 1981. Every season from 1976 to 1978 he was named the DeMarco-Becket Memorial Trophy Winner as the top offensive lineman in the Western Division, and in 1977 was named the CFL's top offensive lineman by earning the Schenley Award.

From his rookie season through 1981, Wilson compiled an amazing Iron Man streak, playing in 167 consecutive games. And then, in a game in 1982, "An offensive tackle lost the defensive end to the inside," but when his teammate recovered, he "drove (the defensive lineman) down and both of them took out my left knee when I was engaged with the nose guard."

That play ended his streak, and his 1982 season.

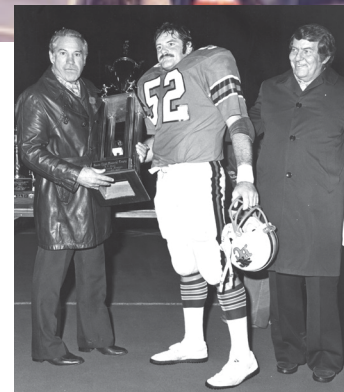
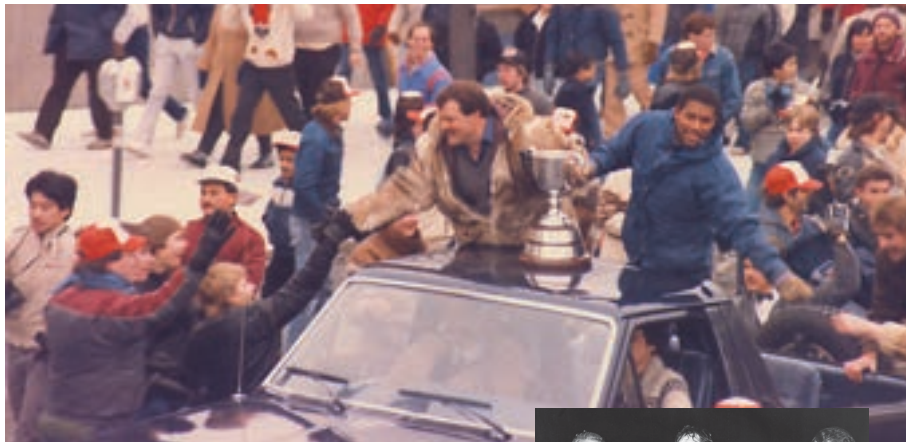
"That was the only major injury that put me out of a game," he said, "but I had broken toes and stretched ligaments; things that they know how to tape and throw you back on the field. You don't realize the bangs and the dozen elbow chips I have in my arm that the doctor said, 'It's not worth the effort to take them out, Alan, you might have a harder time recovering,' so you live with them for the rest of your life. If you talk to guys that played in the line you have (nagging injuries) that you play with and that just become arthritic later on."

The season after Wilson returned from his injury began a glorious era in Lions football. BC lost the Grey Cup to Toronto in 1983, lost to Winnipeg in the West Finals in 1984, then won the organization's first Grey Cup in 31 years in 1985.

"I got to play in some of the great years of the CFL," he said, "when the CFL built the new stadiums and I got to play in front of 60,000 fans, that was special. And then a financial crisis sort of hit and the fan base eroded across the league. Joe Kapp was one of the interim GMs that came up here, and that's when I got to meet him. He was on the great '64 team that won the Grey Cup up here, and in '85 we were the next team that won it, and there has been five or six since then."

BC lost to Edmonton in the 1986 West Finals, and after that Wilson hung up his helmet. As a reward for his outstanding career Wilson earned induction into the CFL Hall of Fame, the BC Sports Hall of Fame, and was named the BC Lions all-time center and one of the league's top 200 players of the modern era in 2006.

From a career that began at "Old Gatton Field, which was just



that bleacher" to glory in his native Canada, Wilson has remained a loyal Bobcat.

"I've been back for several Homecomings, lots and lots of Homecomings, and the new stadium is great. That old field was just bleachers, but everybody loved the Cats. That football team was really something, I never had so much status as when I was a letterman with the Cats."

He and Banaugh, with whom he captained the 1971 Bobcats, have enjoyed adventures together through the years.

"He meets me at Homecoming every year, and last year he called me up after Homecoming and said, 'You know something Al, I want you and I to go to a Bobcat-Grizzly game, that's on our bucket list. It's in Missoula next year (2023), and we want to go to the one in Bozeman (in 2024). We'll be 74 years old if we both make it, and I've traveled, I've been to Europe a dozen times, Hawaii 25 times, but I'm really looking forward to going to the Bobcat-Grizzly game in Bozeman with Bob in a little over a year from now."

Wilson also credits his former fraternity mates for providing a strong link to MSU.

"The guys I stay in touch with regularly are my Phi Sig fraternity brothers Dick Harte, John McGowan, Denny Matzinger, Duane Vick and Dennis Switzer just to name a few and Bob Banaugh (Co-Captain of the 71 Cats) this is my greatest and strongest connection to Montana State, Go Cats !!!

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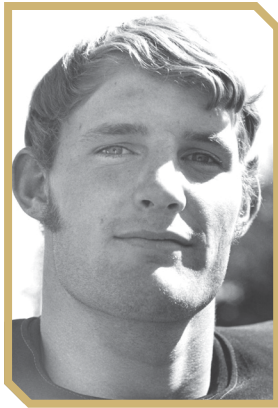


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★ LYNN AHRENS ★

At the conclusion of the 1973 National Football League draft, Lynn Ahrens was one of four players from Montana colleges to be drafted. Ahrens along with two others were picked by the same team, the San Diego Chargers. University of Montana defensive end, Cliff Burnett was drafted in the 10th round, Ahrens from Eastern Montana College was next in the 12th and future Montana Football Hall of Fame Inductee Barry Darrow, an offensive tackle from the University of Montana followed in the 17th. The fourth Montana player was Jim Hann, a University of Montana linebacker, who was picked by the St. Louis Cardinals in the 16th round. Interestingly enough, the Chargers had on their roster former Stanford great via Billings Senior and future MTFHOF inductee, Pete Lazetich, and Ron East formally from Montana State.

Son of William and Marion Ahrens, Lynn was born in Wolf Point, Montana and along with his younger sisters, Linda and Denise, was raised on the family farm located southeast of Wolf Point across the Missouri River near Vida. Lynn's parents each had 6 siblings and the large family of grandparents, uncles and aunts all farmed or worked in and around Wolf Point.

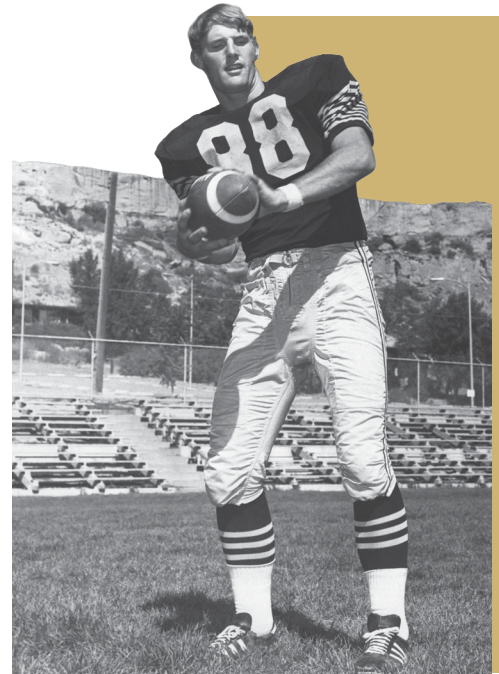
Ahrens got into sports early in junior high as did his friends. "John and Willy Weeks, Harvey Langager, Bruce Ericksen, and I played sports together . . . all the way from junior high through high school," said Ahrens. "We weren't rabble rousers or out chasing girls, no fancy cars, our focus was on sports achievement."



Ahrens added that although they like all sports, "Basketball was the big thing around Wolf Point, more so than football."

To his point, in the 1967-68 season, Ahrens' junior year, the Wolf Point Wolves basketball team under Coach Ron Harcharik entered the divisional tournament with a 15-4 record. The former Class B School defeated Billings West, 69-64 in the

championship game and earned a trip to the state tournament in Bozeman. The Wolves beat Anaconda in the first game, 61-55 to face Great Falls High School in the second round. It would take two overtimes for Wolf Point



to seal the deal, defeating the Bison 82-79. The Wolves then faced the number one ranked team in the state, the Kalispell Braves, led by big sophomore, Brent Wilson. Coach Harcharik's club out-rebounded the Braves 43-26 and went on to defeat Kalispell, 71-55, to capture the 1968 Class A State Championship.

The following year, Ahrens became a regular on a team that returned three starters. The Wolves didn't lose a step as they proved to be a force in the league with their fast-breaking offense and man-to-man defense. Their only losses during the regular season were a pair of 1-point losses to Miles City and Great Falls Russell. Wolf Point earned their way to another trip to the state tournament before being eliminated in the second round by eventual state champions, the Laurel Locomotives, 46-40

On the gridiron, Wolf Point didn't have the success of the basketball teams, as they struggled to break .500. By his senior season Ahrens stood 6'4 and weighed 185 lbs. and earned first team all-conference and Class A All-State Honorable Mention honors at tight end.

"I didn't think much about college until my senior year," Ahrens said. "I was getting interest from colleges, which inspired me to play football somewhere. EMC (Eastern Montana College) was good at the time, so I called coach Bob Lee, who told me I could play right away,



Ready to get ball rolling

New EMC coach Stan Kondracki greets four hopefuls he's counting on to lead the Yellowjackets back into the thick of the Frontier Conference race. From the left: Doc Sargent, Paul Snyder, Lynn Ahrens, Dan Kober and Kondracki. Eastern and Rocky figure to field well-stocked and improved clubs after ambitious recruiting.



Another sign of spring

Head coach Stan Kondracki greets Lynn Ahrens, who is expected to lead the Yellowjackets back into the thick of the Frontier Conference race. From the left: Doc Sargent, Paul Snyder, Lynn Ahrens, Dan Kober and Kondracki. Eastern and Rocky figure to field well-stocked and improved clubs after ambitious recruiting.



so I just wanted to keep the ball rolling at Eastern.”

When Ahrens hit the practice field in 1969 as a freshman, he was listed as number two at the tight end position. By the end of the season he became number one and earned All Frontier Conference Honorable Mention honors.

Over the next three seasons, Ahrens, who was a highly-touted pro prospect as early as his sophomore year, became a three-time first team all-conference at tight end, and garnered NAIA All-American Honorable Mention honors his junior year. His biggest game came against Carroll College in 1971, catching 8 passes for 200 yards and scored 2 touchdowns as EMC blanked the Saints, 28-0.

In 1972, the Yellowjackets’ defense was shorthanded, and the towering tight end was asked to play outside linebacker as well. Double duty didn’t faze the senior. For the season he led the EMC in receiving with 26 catches for 353 yards and proceeded to be a force on defense earning first team all conference and made first team NAIA All-American at linebacker.

Ahrens also lent his size and athletic abilities on the hardwoods. “Basketball coach Mike Harkins, asked me to play basketball, they were short a big man due to injuries. I had been nicknamed the ‘Tree’ in football camp, nearly all my teammates called me ‘Tree’ for all 4 years. No one on the basketball team ever knew my real name.”

“I didn’t really think about football after college until pro scouts started showing up during my junior



year,” Ahrens said. “Gil Brandt of the (Dallas) Cowboys contacted me mostly, so I thought if I was to be drafted I would go to the Cowboys.”

Nevertheless, it wasn’t in the tea leaves as Ahrens was drafted by San Diego as an offensive tackle, which Ahrens said came as a surprise. “By the time the 1973 draft came around, I hadn’t had much contact with the Chargers before hand, then I got the telegram (which is shown in this article) telling me I had been drafted in the 12th round. I really thought I would be going to the Cowboys.”

“I flew down to their minicamp in San Diego where I found out they wanted me as an offensive tackle and to bulk up to 265 lbs. from my then 235 lbs. I had not signed my contract yet, my bonus was to be \$500,” Ahrens said. “While I was in San Diego wondering what I should do, the Edmonton Eskimos called and offered me \$1500 and I could still play tight end. So Cliff Burnett and I went to Edmonton and signed. We both got cut later that year. Back then only a few Americans could be on each team.”

Ahrens said there was a flicker of hope playing ball somewhere, “I got a call from the Chicago Fire of the WFL, so I flew to Chicago. It didn’t take long to believe that this league would seem to be short lived. I went back to Eastern Montana College to finish my degree.”

Upon getting his degree, Ahrens “went to the placement office at EMC where I learned there was an opening at North Toole County High School in Sunburst so I applied, got the job, and have been there ever since.”

Shortly thereafter, Ahrens met and married

Lana Snell of Miles City.

At NTCHS, Ahrens was head football coach for 5 years, assistant boy's basketball coach for 10 years and also was assistant girl's basketball coach for three years, then on the side, drove the bus. Ahrens said, "Coaching part was fun, driving the bus was a way to add income to our household, but, I also got to leave for home when I wanted to."

When NTCHS brought girl's volleyball to the school in 1984, Ahrens threw his hat in and was chosen to be the Lady Refiner's head coach, a position he would hold for 19 years. Ahrens admitted it was a rough go at the start, but "we got much better as I got better"

According to an 2004 article by Cynthia Gillund of the Cutbank Pioneer Press, "During the last 13 years of his tenure, Coach Ahrens compiled a record of 182-123, and in the last 10 years his teams have decorated the halls of NTCHS with 22 trophies. Ahrens coached his teams to four conference championships, one district Tournament championship, one Northern C Divisional Championship and four trips to the State C Volleyball Tournament in Lewistown. His state teams finished as the state runner-up once and placed third on two occasions."

Ahrens added, "Coaching volleyball for 19 years was a great time, it was a good decision. It gave me a chance to coach my two girls, Jerri and Janae."

Ahrens retired from teaching in 2004, and took on a new career as a full time Canadian border guard. Ahrens said, "I had to go to a customs academy in Georgia in July and August, I liked it, I sweat whether working out or going to lunch. I was still in good shape for a 52 year old."

During his 15 years working at the border, Ahrens was part of one of the largest drug busts on the border at that time.

2004 was also the year, Ahrens' wife Lana, who had fashioned a successful 25 year career at the duty-free store in Sweetgrass, learned of her cancer. It became a decade long battle that took her



on August 23, 2014. "Lana's passing was a big hit on me. She fought her cancer for 10 years," Ahrens said. "I often admired how tough she was because of how much it took out of me. I was so grateful for friends who helped, stayed in touch, checked in on us, held an amazing benefit, our small town was so

outpouring of love for us. Even my border community friends never stopped caring about how we were."

Lana and Lynn were married 38 years and had three children, Janae of Kalispell, Jerri High (Colt) of Clancy and Steven (Alfton) of Billings.

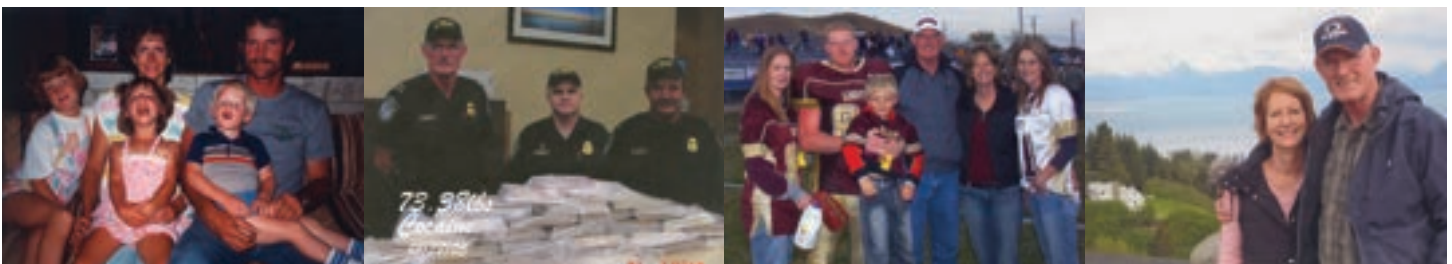
Lynn still resides in Sunburst and even at age 72 today, he looks like he could still play football. Lynn's genes in football run deep, his son, Steven played at Northern Montana College and with the Billing Outlaws, a professional arena team. Steven has even coached the Outlaws while serving as a Yellowstone County deputy sheriff. Ahrens' grandson, Treyton Pickering, is currently a standout tight end for the MSU Bobcats after playing 6 man football in Sunburst.

Fishing is a big part of Ahren's life now. Places in Canada like Chin Reservoir, Ridge Reservoir, and Forty Mile reservoir are favorite fishing holes. In Montana, Lake Francis at Valier and Tiber reservoir near Conrad are favored as well. Ahrens said, "Having five grandchildren is kind of neat, all our kids still like camping, we have at least three camping trips planned before (MTFHOF) weekend."

Here is a hint to Ahrens' relationship with his children and grandchildren. One of his young granddaughters was having a birthday this spring, her gift from Grandpa Lynn was a fishing pole.

Ahrens was inducted into Eastern Montana College's Athletic Hall of Fame in 1975 and later inducted into the Montana State University-Billings Athletic Hall of Fame in 1997.

The Montana Football Hall of Fame is honored to welcome Lynn Ahrens!





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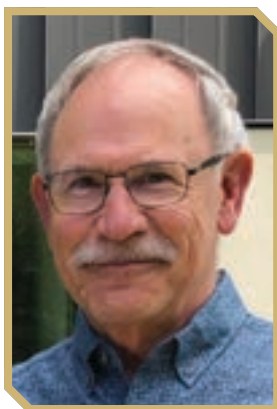
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★ DAN RAMBO ★

By Bob Townsley

In August of 1973, The Allman Brothers Band released their single, “Ramblin’ Man,” which became their first top ten hit peaking at number two on Billboard’s Hot 100 chart. Coincidentally the same year, Carroll College’s “Ramblin’ Rambo” ran rampant through defenses of the Frontier Conference; averaging 30 carries for 130 yards a game while powering the Saints to an undefeated season and were ranked as high as seventh in the NAIA polls.

While the song implies a life of a drifter, Dan Rambo’s nickname references the opposite. At 5’-10” and 215 pounds, Rambo was a force to be reckoned with. Over three seasons (1972-74), the three-time All-Conference running back rushed for 640, 910, and 1,145 yards respectively, while scoring a career total of 202 points including 98 his junior year on 15 touchdowns and four two-point conversions.

When asked to describe his style, “Not very glamorous.” Rambo said, “I’ll tell you, my style was to follow the biggest offensive lineman I could find.”



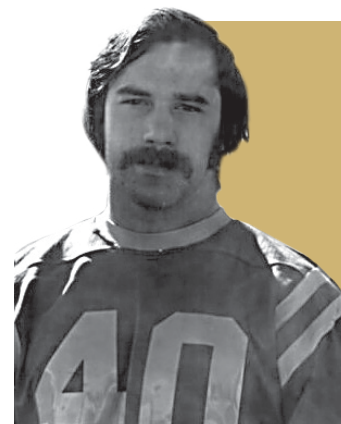
Sports editor, Hudson Willse of the Montana Standard may have summed up Rambo’s style the best in his “What they got for Christmas” column following the holiday in 1974 when he gifted Rambo “a brick wall to run through.”

Son of Howard and Viola Rambo, Dan was the youngest of four behind Kathleen, Patty and Art. He grew up on the family’s 168-acre farm five miles south of Libby during the heyday of the construction of Libby Dam, which began in 1966 and was completed in 1972.

Asked what the family farmed, “Both my parents worked for the government...the Forest Service,” said Rambo. “So the only thing

I can remember ever being on that ground was hay for the horses and cows...and that was about it. So saying that I was a farm boy, might be stretching it.”

“I just remember my earliest sporting event I ever played in was on my birthday when I was eight years old, my first baseball game,” said Rambo, and added the milestone came by happenstance. “My dad and I were wandering around (in town) one time, we ran into this old timer and he asked my dad if I was into sports. We looked at each other and we didn’t have an answer. And he said, ‘Well, you should talk to the baseball team.’ And that’s how I got started.”



“Football didn’t start until I was 15 because there just was no place to play it,” Rambo added. He played at Libby High School, coached by former Dillon and Oregon State football great, Frank Little. Coach Little made it commonplace winning state championships in Montana garnering titles in Glendive, Livingston, and Kalispell. In 1967, Rambo’s sophomore year, the Libby Loggers would add another to Coach Little’s resume by defeating the Glasgow Scotties for the Class A State Championship, 26-7.

Rambo remembered one afternoon when Coach Little called him over after a botched run play where Rambo ran a sweep.

“You know what caused you to stumble and fall?” Coach Little asked.

“No sir,” Rambo said.



“Look down there at that white line.” Coach Little said, “That’s what tackled you today, was that white line.”

Rambo settled in at running back for the next two seasons gaining All-Conference recognition his senior year.

Although he participated in baseball, basketball, and track in high school, Rambo said weightlifting became a passion thanks to Lanny Wilson. “I remember the first time I went out to his place, he says, ‘Listen...I’m not into training kids that are going to quit in two weeks.’ And I said, ‘Okay, I got it.’”

He continued Olympic-style weightlifting and when he arrived at Carroll College, a weight training room was nowhere to be found. Rambo recalled he and another player, Ron Axman, took up the matter themselves to create one, “we both had our sets of Olympic weights and we had a huge room up on the fifth floor of St. Charles Hall at Carroll, and that was our weight room.” Over the next four years, Rambo bulked-up nearly 25 pounds.

Lightly recruited out of high school, Rambo said he went to Carroll College “not because of sports or anything, but because my brother Art and sister Patty, went there”. Arthur Rambo, who had attended and received a mathematics degree at Carroll and then a chemical engineering degree at Notre Dame, was drafted into service in 1968. Soon after November 26, 1969 during Dan’s senior year in high school, tragic news reached the family that Staff Sergeant Arthur Rambo was killed in the Vietnam War serving in the 11th Armored Cavalry. Dan attends the reunions held by his brother’s regiment when possible.

Rambo started as a freshman playing defensive back and returner under Head Coach Tom Kelly. He sat out the following year in 1971, when he broke a bone in his fifth metatarsal, the long bone on the outside of the foot that connects the small toe.

1971 would also be the dawn of a new era for the Saints football program, when Bob Petrino, formerly of Butte Central, took over as head coach. A position he would hold for 28 years, amassing a 163-90-2 record, while guiding Carroll to 20 winning

seasons, 15 Frontier Conference championships, and qualifying for the NAIA playoffs eight times.

From time-to-time Coach Petrino and Rambo didn’t see eye-to-eye

on matters. “After my freshman year, I decided that I wanted to play running back. So, I went in to see the coach.”

Rambo recalled with a chuckle. “The coach said, ‘what are you doing in here?’ I said, ‘Well, coach, I’ve been thinking about my position.’ ‘Get out of here.’ He said, ‘I’ve already moved you to running back, so get out.’ He already figured that out, I guess.”



“He was one heck of a motivator for me,” Rambo added. “He was just telling it like it was, and you either did it his way or not. One time he kicked me off the team twice in about an hour.”

The incident happened when Rambo went to practice with laryngitis. “Well, Coach Petrino was a raw, raw guy...so he was upset that I wasn’t cheering, yelling, whatever he wanted,” Rambo recalled. “So he said, ‘Get your ass out of here...hit the showers.’”

“So I went down into the showers and came back about 20 minutes later,” Rambo continued. “I figured he’d cooled off and I was out on the field for about five minutes (before) he sent me off again.”

Being kicked off the practice field was not new to Rambo. In high school, assistant coach Kevin Calnan did the honors. Rambo admitted that Calnan was his favorite coach from his playing days and concluded “There must be something I like about coaches who kick me off the field.”

At one point Rambo said he nearly transferred to Minot State University. “I didn’t think Carroll was going to be for me and I had a good game against Minot. The Minot Head coach graciously spent some time with me explaining how coaches can be now and then and basically said, ‘Dan, don’t transfer. Just stay there.’ And coach (Petrino) and I got along great after that.” “Actually,” Rambo added. “If it wasn’t for coach Petrino I wouldn’t be where I am today.”

It was good advice, as Rambo went on to earn AP Little All-American Honorable Mention recognition twice, an NAIA All-American selection his sophomore year, and was a two-time All-NAIA District 12 selection.

As a senior, he led the NAIA in rushing and racked up 262 yards in one game against Rocky Mountain and 246 more against Eastern Montana. The NAIA did not recognize Rambo’s stats from the Saints’ first game





against Rick's College, a junior college, reducing his numbers down to 1,065 yards on 201 carries for a 152.1 per

game average, which was still top in the country.

For his crowning achievement, Rambo received a certificate from NAIA listing the Individual Statistical Champions for 1974. Rambo cherishes that item to this day, not because his name is on it as the rushing champion but because it was next to the scoring champion, Walter Payton of Jackson State, a future NFL Hall of Famer.

In 1975 and undrafted, Rambo had aspirations of playing in the NFL and would sign with the New York Giants only to be cut after about a month of 2-a-days, hot sweaty New York humidity and one scrimmage play. Undeterred, Rambo hustled making phone calls, and used his connections to get a tryout with the Philadelphia Bell club of the WFL, only to be cut once more after one practice.

He then reached out to former Montana State standout, Joe Tiller, who was the head coach with the Calgary Stampeders. "He told me Calgary couldn't use me at that time since everyone was healthy, but he did tell me about playing semi-pro in Wheeling," said Rambo.

Rambo packed his bags and arrived in Wheeling, West Virginia to play for the Ohio Valley Panthers, an independent semi-pro team.

"He started out basically as a kickoff and punt returner but was the team's running back the last five games," reported Marty Mouat of the Independent Record. "Wheeling finished with a 9-1 record and Rambo ran for 16 touchdowns, including four on kickoff and punt returns. He also averaged a whopping 8.5 yards per carry."

One of Rambo's highlights that season came against the Detroit Warriors when he scored five touchdowns, including an 86-yard kickoff return for a touchdown, to lead the Panthers to 102-0 whooping.

Eager to break into the pro ranks, Rambo jumped on the tryout carousel once again for the next four years with unsuccessful stops in Calgary and Saskatchewan in 1976, Green Bay and Denver in 1977, and no place in 78'.

At 27 years old, Rambo gave it one last go of it by trying out for the Oakland Raiders in 1979 but it didn't take long for Rambo to see the writing on the wall. He went to see Head Coach Tom Flores to ask why he wasn't getting reps anymore and it was then Rambo decided it was time to hang-up the cleats.

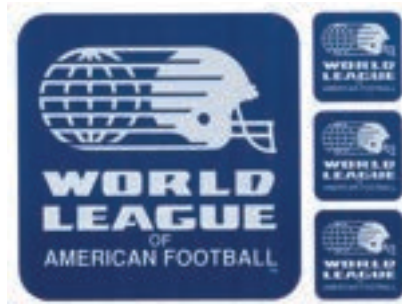
With football all but in the rearview mirror, Rambo returned to Helena where he continued to run his two businesses, an exercise equipment business and the HART Athletic Club, or though it seemed.

In 1983, John Herrera, the General Manager of the Saskatchewan Roughriders of the Canadian Football League came calling. Herrera and Rambo knew each other in Oakland when Herrera was the Director of Player Personnel at Oakland and Rambo was a free agent. Herrera offered the Roughriders' Director of Scouting position to an inexperienced Rambo.

"I really advise you to find somebody that knows what they're doing, because I've never scouted before," Rambo remembered telling Herrera. "Well, I'll teach you whatever you need to know," Herrera responded.

It was a move that raised a few eyebrows in the media, but Rambo "worked long and hard on the team's behalf" under four different GMs over the next seven years. He became an early adopter and pioneer of incorporating the computer and developed a computerized recruiting system that according to Rambo was "second to none because there just weren't any around at that time."

After nearly being a casualty of the Roughriders



cash crunch of 1987, Rambo was named Assistant General Manager overseeing scouting, recruiting, and player negotiations in March 1989. Later that year the Saskatchewan Roughriders defeated the Hamilton Tiger-cats 43-40 to capture the Grey Cup, their first in 23 years.



In September of 1990, Rambo would join the World League of American Football (WLAF) as their Personnel Coordinator for Mexico and Canada.

"I go down there to interview with Jerry Vainisi and Tex Schramm," remembered Rambo. "I'm not going to walk in and pretend I know more than I do. But I'm sitting in a chair with Jerry and Tex in this big meeting room in Dallas, Texas. Out of my mouth comes, 'Well, I have

a good job, how is this one going to compare?”

“Tex gets up and he’s an imposing man and I thought, okay, he’s going to kick my (you know what) out of here just like coach Calnan and Petrino did years before. And he said, ‘Well, let me tell you how.’ And (he) went on a 10-minute speech about how great football was and how he was going to build it throughout the rest of the world. And as soon as I knew which direction he was going and he wasn’t trying to intimidate me, I said, ‘This is where I want to be.’ And in the end they hired me. I had a couple of different jobs there. I was in charge of college scouting during the season and in charge of European football operations during the season.”

A year later Rambo felt his job was on shaky ground as rumors were swirling that the WLAF would fold. By late 1991, the CFL came calling once again, this time Rambo became General Manager for the Ottawa Rough Riders. (It’s a long story, but yes, there were the Ottawa Rough Riders and the Saskatchewan Roughriders.)

Shortly after arriving in Ottawa, Rambo met his future wife, Kathy McFarland, after they were introduced by one of the coach’s wives.

Over the next 18 months, it would prove to be tumultuous at times as Rambo wrestled with salary restructuring to bring the salaries into line with the league’s new salary caps. Rambo’s approach mirrored similarly to Coach Little and Coach Petrino as a no-nonsense straight shooter. Despite the early criticism from the media for cutting older overpaid players, Rambo quickly brought respectability back to the Rider’s organization.

After just one full season as general manager, where the Riders registered a 9-9 record, the most wins since 1976 clear to 2015, Rambo was forced out as the Riders GM, when team owner, Bernard Glibberman, brought in “consultant-type” John Ritchie as CEO to run the show. As one reporter reported years later, “It was the first of a series of follies in 1993 that sent the Riders on a path of destruction from which they never veered.” The franchise would fold following the 1996 season.

Following quick stints as a scout for the Toronto Argos and scout for the Denver Broncos in the USA Northeast region, Rambo returned to the Saskatchewan Roughriders as their Director of Player Personnel in 1994. In his final season, the Roughriders reached the 1997 Grey Cup only to come up short against Toronto 23-47.

In 1998, Rambo resigned to become the Northeast regional scout for the Denver Broncos of the NFL, a position he would hold for eight years. In 1999, he would add another ring for the hand, this time a Super Bowl ring.

Rambo retired from the Broncos in 2006 with hopes of returning to the CFL as general manager. He worked with Bill Palmer to bring an Ottawa expansion franchise back to the Canadian capital. However, the bid collapsed in late spring of that year when the league wouldn’t give Palmer more time to get its financial requirements in order.

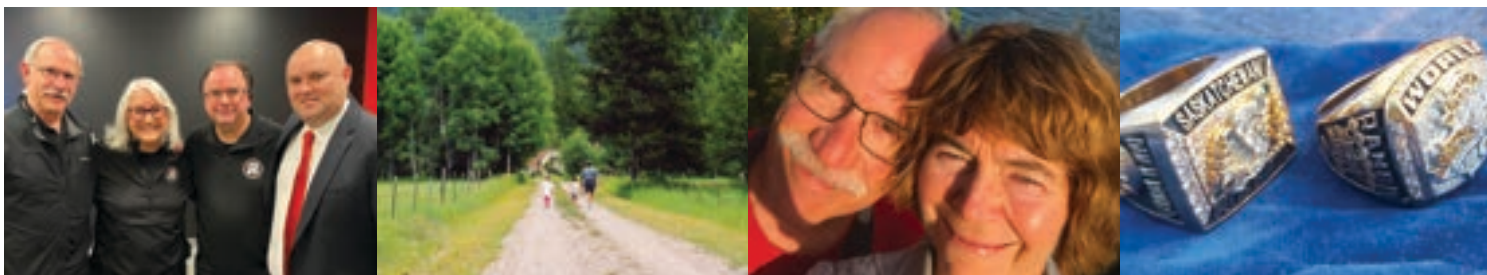
A year later Rambo was named Director of Football Operations for the Hamilton Tiger-Cats, a position he held for two years, ending in 2008.

In 2008 Rambo needed some down time but a week later started FBX. FBXchange.com is partnered with the CFL, XFL, and College Gridiron Showcase. FBX is a one-of-a-kind interactive pro football player personnel solution – designed for teams’ Player Personnel operations staff to FIND – REPORT – RECALL players in just a few minutes. With 15 years of historical player transactions and measurable data from pro circuits, all-star games, and combines, FBX currently has 161,178 total players in its database.

Rambo continues to live in the Ottawa area with his wife of 28 years, Kathy, and two grown children, Teeghan and Art, who live in Montreal.

He was inducted into the Saints Athletic Hall of Fame at Carroll College in 1984 and also inducted into the Libby High School Distinguished Graduates Hall of Fame in 2015.

The Montana Football Hall of Fame is honored to welcome Dan Rambo!



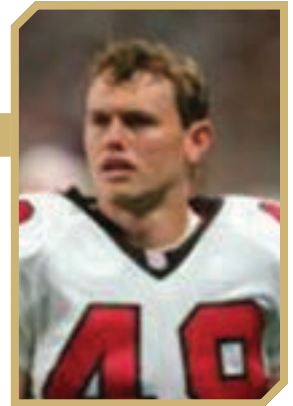
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★ DALLAS NEIL ★

By GEORGE GEISE

GREAT FALLS -- If you asked Dallas Neil to perform any task for any football team, he inevitably answered the call of duty.

When asked to run or pass the football for his high school program, Neil became an all-conference quarterback for Coach Dale Pohle's Great Falls High Bison. He also earned all-league honors as a junior at linebacker, when Pohle needed help on defense since the Bison already had a standout, Rob Compson, at QB. When asked to perform quarterback duties for the East squad at the 1995 Montana Shrine Football Game, Dallas came through with flying colors, earning Most Valuable Player honors at his home field, Memorial Stadium in Great Falls.

When asked to catch the football rather than throw it, Neil developed into a star tight end for the Montana Grizzlies from 1995 through 1999. Even though the pass-happy



Grizzly offense under coaches Don Read and Mick Dennehy normally utilized four wide receivers instead of a tight end, Dallas grabbed 23 passes for two touchdowns as a junior, then snagged 14 passes for 183 yards and three TDs as a senior in 1999.

But when asked to punt the football, well, that was when Neil really made a name – and a reputation -- for himself. He set a Great Falls High record when he averaged 41.9 yards per boot, then helped the Montana Grizzlies win their first national championship in 1995 as a freshman punter. As a UM senior, he averaged 39.9 yards per punt including a long of 65 yards. That earned him a spot on the all-Big Sky Conference team.

His ability to punt the football at the prep and collegiate level earned Neil a shot at the highest plateau of the sport, the National Football League. Fact is, Dallas Neil literally punted his way into the Montana Football Hall of Fame, which will induct him as a new member in June.

It was a talent that he discovered early in his life.

“When I picked up a football in the third grade on the playground and kicked it, it was a perfect spiral,” Neil recalled. “It was truly a gift for me to punt the ball. It came so naturally, yet I cannot kick a field goal to save my life,” he added.

Even though Dallas discovered his unique talent as a young boy, he never expected that one skill to define his football career.

“My passion was to play football, to be in the trenches, to be on a team and when necessary to lead a team,” he said.

“I am quite sure that if I was only allowed to punt a football, I would have given up football long ago ... it was part of the game, but I always wanted to be in all aspects of the game. And in the end, that is why I made it to the NFL. I just always got better.”

Neil's arrival to the NFL was a surprise to many. Pro football clubs rarely draft punters, and Dallas was no exception. He wasn't even invited to the NFL Combine in the spring of 2000, but as a marketing stunt he mailed a mannequin leg to the St. Louis Rams with a note saying “I'd give my right leg to play for the St. Louis Rams.” That earned him an appearance on the Jim Rome talk show.

He never got a look from the Rams, but he tried out with the Denver Broncos, Green Bay Packers and Atlanta Falcons. Atlanta coach Dan Reeves saw something he liked in the versatile Neil, and signed him as a free agent on April 28, 2000.

Even though he was signed as a punter, Reeves admired Neil's attitude and athletic ability and asked him to "put some pads on" and try out as a tight end and halfback as well.

He ultimately made the 2000 Falcons' 53-man roster, where he earned the nickname "Rudy" for his tenacity. He played six regular-season games in 2000 on special teams before injuring his arm. He continued on the Falcons' practice squad in 2001 and the following season suffered another injury while playing special teams, ending his tenure with the Falcons.

After the last injury, Reeves called Dallas into his office and informed him he was going to be released. Neil asked the coach – who had become a close friend – whether he should "give up football" and move on with the next phase of his life.

"He said 'absolutely not.' You have what it takes and some team will be the right fit at the right time," Neil recalled. Reeves then contacted the New York Jets, who needed a punter for training camp in the summer of 2003.

"I punted amazing when I was with the Jets yet I only got to punt once in a preseason game before being released," said Neil. "After the season they called me back and said they were impressed with my training camp and wanted to sign me and send me to NFL Europe.

"I accepted and then got released during NFL Europe training camp because they needed a punter who could kick off as well, and that was not my skill set. The Jets said they were still interested but I never got to play in a regular-season game with the Jets."

Neil said he was glad that he never considered himself a "specialist," because he wouldn't have made it as far as he did for as long as he did.

"My gift God gave me to punt a football (and thanks to my parents as well), but being willing to play any position and my love for the game is WHY I made the team with the Falcons," Dallas emphasized. "I was already on the cut list (in 2000) when injuries at fullback propelled me into the game. There was literally no one left on the sidelines who could go in, and that . . . was the moment I made it into the NFL."

Neil said there was another reason why he enjoyed success at every

level of football.

"I just always got better. Dale Pohle said that he was surprised (in a nice way) that I made it to the NFL. And I could see why. In high school I had not fully developed yet at all. I was not super fast in high school but every year I got faster, quicker and developed myself as a tight end, H-back and special teams players as well!"

Neil said he learned valuable life lessons from all of his coaches.

"Dale Pohle taught me how to work hard and grind," he said of his prep mentor.

"Don Read taught me how to keep it light and relaxed and that is how you play at your best," he said of his college coach, the venerable Papa Bear.

"Dan Reeves taught me what it was like to make a team an extension of your family, not just your job or hobby. And to not be shy about what other people or the goodness of God have done in your life," he said of the NFL Hall of Famer.

Neil also excelled as a student, which is probably why he learned so much from so many people and so many experiences along the way. While being named to All-State teams in high school in both football and basketball, he also was a four-time Academic All-State selection.

At the University of Montana, he was a three-time member of the Big Sky All-Academic team, and a GTE Academic All-American in 1999 while compiling a 3.86 grade-point average. He used his final year at UM to earn an MBA, and in 2000 he

became the first active NFL player to have his master's degree when he entered the league.

Neil's parents, Dr. Dave and Shelley Neal, have been longtime community leaders and youth advocates in Great Falls, and Dallas has followed their example. In college, he spent three years with Big Brothers and Big Sisters, and developed a lifelong friendship with little brother Cameron.

During his time as a business owner of The Source Health Club in Missoula, Dallas and his wife Christy started the Dream Bigger program for boys aged 10 to 14 to coach boys how to set goals and value themselves as people apart from their performances.

Neil has always had the heart of an entrepreneur and has built many businesses since retiring from the NFL. Dallas and his wife now live in Arizona with their young daughter, and he continues to be involved with young athletes in the Phoenix area.



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360 Coaching the FCA Way

By Bob Veroulis

Montana Fellowship of Christian Athletes
State Director



Well-known Evangelist Billy Graham tells the story of an encounter he had during a pastoral conference with a young pastor who was also a coach. He struggled to where we should focus his time, on Ministry or Coaching. Mr. Graham finished the story by saying, “I am not going to tell you what to do, that being said, “A coach will impact more young people in a year than most people will be in a lifetime.”

With 360 coaching we see the coach as a leader, a guide and a mentor.

We care about every role a coach plays in every aspect of his or her life. The concept of “360” is rooted in the idea that our hearts, minds and bodies are interconnected; all three parts work together to form us into who we are. As coaches, what’s in our hearts affects our thoughts and minds. How we treat our bodies impacts our hearts. We see the coach and player as a creation of God with a specific design and purpose. Ultimately for the coach and athlete it is to use the platform of sports to glorify God.

Former Super Bowl winning Coach of the Dallas Cowboys Jimmy Johnson used to famously say, “Let the mind control the body.” He advocated that the mind could push the body thru times that it would physically want to quit.

360 Coaching take that thought of Coach Johnson’s to another level, “Let the spirit control the mind, which will then control the body.”

The power of the Holy Spirit can help power us through as coaches and athletes when the mind and the body want to quit.



At FCA we feel our 360 Coach strategy is one of the most powerful investments we can ever make into a coach, his or her relationships, and his or her coaching. Designed with 15 sessions and 90 minutes of video content, FCA wants to equip coaches in God’s Word by sharing the Bible’s clear direction for your life and coaching.

A 360 Coach will have a practical framework that helps develop a Transformational Purpose Statement, unpacking their WHY and HOW of coaching. They will get training on how to access and form a strategy for taking care of their heart, mind and body. Get confidence. Get tools that teach them how to be a great coach. Get encouragement. You CAN reflect Jesus to your players and make a Kingdom impact on their lives.

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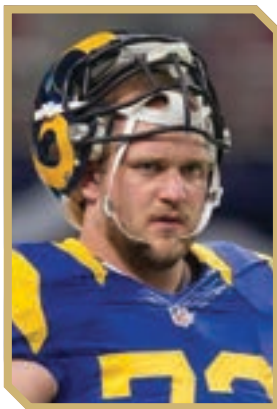


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★ MIKE PERSON ★

PERSONS PERSERVERENCE: Glendive product wills his way to a decade in the NFL.

By COLTER NUANEZ

During his rookie year with the San Francisco 49ers, Mike Person spent many days watching Justin Smith perform super-human feats in the weight room and on the practice field.

Person was a seventh round draft pick trying to stick on the 49ers' active roster. Smith was in the midst of a first-team All-Pro season, one of five All-Pro campaigns for the outstanding defensive lineman who rolled up 87 sacks over 14 NFL seasons.

During one stretch of that 2011 NFL season, the 49ers had back-to-back East Coast games. So rather than going back to California, the team stayed and trained for a week in Youngstown, Ohio.

On the Monday after playing the Philadelphia Eagles, the offensive and defensive linemen were at Youngstown State for a post-game lift to flush out their lower bodies.

"I remember Justin comes in and he's this big human from southern Missouri and he walks in and yells at the Youngstown State strength coaches. 'Hey, what's your squat record in here?'

"The strength coach says, it's 675 pounds. And Justin says, 'All right. Let me warm up and then we are putting that on the bar.

"And sure enough, I mean, he could have probably done it five or six times. This is the day after playing an NFL football game where most guys don't even want to move out of bed. All I could think was, 'How am I ever going to block that man?'"

Person often wondered during his early days. But he never quit. That helped his storybook career end almost a decade later with a start in the Super Bowl.

A total of 15 players from Glendive, Montana have played for Montana State. But Person is the best, the pride of the Eastern Montana outpost that holds the distinction as the smallest media market in America.

Person starred for his father for the Dawson County High School Red Devils. His MSU legacy was forever solidified when he captained the Bobcats to a 21-16 win over Montana in Missoula in 2010 to simultaneously clinch a Big Sky Conference title for the 'Cats and end a 17-year streak qualifying for the FCS Playoffs by the Griz.

When Person became the first Bobcat drafted in seven years when he was picked in the 7th round in 2011, it seemed like he would have more of an inside track than most Montanans of his generation who were getting shots in the NFL.

Yet he had to ride a wave of instability for most of his first three seasons in the NFL. After getting cut twice in the span of 10 days in 2012, Person wondered if he had a long-term future in professional football.

Thanks to mental fortitude and a pride in where he came from, plus the toughness that has defined each step of his football career, Person emerged out of uncertainty to etch a career defined by its longevity.

Once Person played his way off the practice squad to make the Seahawks active roster, he took advantage of every opportunity in front of him. The offensive lineman earned contracts with the St. Louis Rams, Atlanta Falcons and Kansas City Chiefs before earning a second chance in San Francisco.

In his eighth season in the NFL, Person won the starting right guard position for the 49ers and started 16 games. And in 2019, his ninth and final in the NFL, Person was a starter again, this time for a team that won the NFC title and made a run all the way to the Super Bowl.

By the time his professional career ended, Person played more NFL seasons than any other Bobcat save three former Montana State stars; Jan Stenerud played 19 seasons in the NFL and is the only placekicker in the NFL Hall of Fame; wide receiver Sam McCullum played 10 seasons in the NFL between stints with the Minnesota Vikings and the Seattle Seahawks; and linebacker Ken Amato played 10 seasons in the NFL, nine with the Tennessee Titans.



Jon Borchardt, himself an MSU All-American offensive lineman, played nine NFL seasons like Person.

Person played longer in the NFL than MSU legend Bill Kollar, the first player ever to become a first-round draft pick out of the Big Sky Conference. Person played longer than former Bobcat linebacker Corey Widmer, a Bozeman native who was a starter for the majority of his eight-year career with the New York Giants. And Person played longer than Dane Fletcher, one of Bozeman and Montana State's favorite sons, a walk-on turned conference MVP linebacker who ended up starting in the Super Bowl for the New England Patriots.

"When he first got to San Francisco, I thought he was a decent back-up offensive lineman and you get biased based on a player's history and that's what he had been. But he completely changed my mind the day we signed him in San Francisco," said John Benton, a veteran offensive line coach that spent four seasons with the 49ers, including coaching Person his final two in the NFL.

"Mike would tell you as an athlete, he wasn't maybe the best athlete in the pool but damn he was so smart and so damn tough. There's no substitute for that. That's how you play a decade in the NFL."

Person's legacy at Montana State is certainly unforgettable and warrants Hall of Fame consideration all by itself. But his ability to forge such a long NFL career that culminated with him playing in the biggest football game in the world January of 2020 for the 49ers is why he's one of the headlining members of the Montana Football Hall of Fame Class of 2023.

"If you have the baseline size and strength, as an offensive linemen, you can make yourself into a player if you want it bad enough," said Benton, a Colorado State alum who coached under former Bobcat head coach and longtime CSU head man Sonny Lubick from 1995-2002 before embarking on an NFL journey that's at 20 seasons and counting. "That's Mike Person. He wanted it more than almost any player I've ever coached."

The high school coaching in Montana is exceptional because people from the Treasure State take so much pride in where they come from. A great many of the best football players to ever come out of the Treasure State are the sons and relatives of many of the stalwart coaches walking the sidelines during fall Friday nights across the Last Best Place.

Person is one of those coaches' sons. The early evening practices in eastern Montana were a part of his daily life since he can remember. His father, Jim, was the head coach at Dawson County High School from 1979 until 1995, then again from 2001 until 2007.

"I was around it from day one, watching my



older brother (John Person) play football as he was growing up," Person remembers. "Some of my favorite memories of growing up were going to practice with dad, just being down there, being a fly on the wall, hitting attack on dummies when I was six... I'm sure I was getting in the way but I was having the time of my life.

"I knew from the time I started playing football, I wanted to be an offensive lineman. And that's what I wanted to do, wanted to be like my dad, like my brother. It was just something that was always a part of me."

But most kids want to be a quarterback...

"I couldn't throw a baseball very well so I figured I couldn't throw a football very well either," Person said with a laugh. "I was always the big kid, and I knew that the big kids, they play o-line and that's what I wanted to do."

Although Jim Person has lived a life of football and sports, Mike remembers his dad balancing football life and home life perfectly. Football stayed at school. If Mike ever brought up football during dinnertime with the family (Person also has two sisters, Sara and Katie), Jim would stop him dead in his tracks and redirect the conversation.

Person stood out during the fall, winter and spring during his junior and senior years at Dawson County. He was a three-time all-league selection in football and an All-State honoree as a junior and a senior. He was the two-time Class A Offensive Lineman of the Year and was regarded as one of the top prospects in the state, fielding offers from Montana State and Wyoming along with interest from the Grizzlies.

Person was also a two-time track and field discus state champion and a two-year letterman in basketball under Doug Selvig, a former University of Montana standout who also happens to be the younger brother of the legendary Robin Selvig, the iconic head coach of the University of Montana women's basketball team for 38



successful seasons.

"I remember him as a skinny rail of a frame but I remember watching his junior year track meet and he threw the disc more than 170 feet so you could see how explosive he could be once he filled out," said Jason McEndoo, who was the offensive line coach at Montana State from 2003 until 2014. "He had the long levers, rangy kid and we instantly loved the way he played the game. His dad, a football coach, so he got it. He had that tenacity, that chip on your shoulder that you want.

"And that's been a hallmark of his all the way from high school, college and through his pro career. He was that nasty, edgy player. And that's what stood out to me in the beginning."

Person had a huge upside in track as a thrower and thought basketball was fun. But football was in Person's blood. His father played offensive line at Montana Tech in Butte, where Mike's late mother, Shelley, grew up. Her brother, Dennis Lowney, played at Montana Western while Jim's brother, Jerry Person, played at San Diego State.

When Mike was in seventh grade, he remembers running into Montana State head football coach Mike Kramer while the man known as "the Big Human" was on MSU's annual Eastside Swing Tour through the Eastern part of Montana.

Person and his father just happened to be out to lunch the day the Bobcats were in town – Mike still doesn't know if Jim planned it that way, or not – but Kramer left a lasting impression.

"He started telling stories and he had me hook line and sinker," Person said. "Then he says, 'I guess we will see you in about six years. That really stuck with me.'"

Like so many towns in Montana, Glendive is one founded upon and built around industry. The unique topography of the area caters to farming and ranching. Dawson County is also a railroad community. And there's oil in that part of eastern Montana.

Growing up, Person noticed from a young age "seeing people who put their nose in the dirt and just do what they need to do every single day."

During his high school days, Mike didn't just play three sports. He was also expected to work any time he wasn't practicing or playing. That set the tone for knowing how to wake up early, knowing how to manage his time and knowing the value of an honest hard day's work.

"In high school during the summers, I worked with my dad and our shop teacher and we would roof houses and frame, all things construction," Person said. "My dad kicked me out of bed at 5 a.m. in

the morning in the summers so that we could go work and then we would get done with the day at 4 o'clock and we would go get the lift in for the day."

Although Montana and Wyoming entered the mix – "those are the three schools a kid from small-town eastern Montana dream about getting recruited by," Person said – the prospect never forgot that initial meeting with Kramer when he had just turned into a teenager.

Person knew he had a mentor for life when he first developed a relationship with McEndoo, Montana State's cornerstone offensive line coach who spent 2003 until 2014 at MSU, making him the longest-tenured assistant in Bobcat football history.

When the Bobcats beat the Grizzlies 16-6 in the 2005 rivalry game in Bozeman – the victory marked MSU's third rivalry win in four seasons after losing 16 in a row to Montana – Person knew his future would play out in Bozeman.

"Right after that 2005 rivalry game, I distinctly remember telling my dad I was going to the Bobcats," Person said. "We didn't beat the Griz again until my senior year, but still definitely one of the best decisions of my life."

As a full scholarship player, Person was certainly expected to compete for a place in the rotation. But his development was accelerated more than most offensive lineman.

When he first arrived on the Montana State campus in the fall of 2006, he rolled with the second string at right tackle despite intending to maintain his redshirt. It was a common tactic of McEndoo's, having his most promising lineman getting practice reps against varsity players while still hoping to preserve a fifth season for later on in their careers.

"Small-school guys do everything, football, basketball, track, so he was always busy and he was always in the weight room," McEndoo said. "I love those small-town kids who check all those boxes and then when you are a coach's kid, that's a whole other element as well because he gets it and he knows what to do, how to do it.

"I knew Mike had all the potential in the world to be a great player."

Person remembers the butt whippings given out in practice by a variety of veteran MSU defensive linemen, particularly Reshawn Bobo and the late Brandon Hoffenbacher. Person also remembers one day when veteran offensive lineman Peder Jensen told senior defensive end Aaron Papich that "Mike wants to go one on one and he said he was going to whip you," which the redshirt right tackle had not said. Person got whipped. "Those first few weeks were absolutely a nightmare," Person said with a reflective chuckle. "That's what



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introduced me to pass blocking in the Big Sky Conference.”

By the opening game of the 2007 season, Person was a starter getting ready to go up against Texas A&M. The Aggies defensive line featured Jonathan Jolly, Red Bryant and Michael Bennett, all who went on to have successful NFL careers.

If that wasn’t nerve racking enough...

“First career start, starting at one of the most intimidating stadiums in college football, going against an entire NFL defensive line...and I forget my helmet,” Person said. “Luckily, they brought another one.”

Person’s steady improvement throughout his Montana State career received decoration every year he was in Bozeman. He was the top offensive scout as a redshirt in 2006. That award came at the end of a very hard year for Person on a personal level. His mother Shelley passed away Mike’s second year of college in 2007.

The heartache did not deter his consistent and constant improvements. Person won the Cliff Hysell Award for Bobcat Spirit and Courage in 2008. He was the Tom Parac Most Improved Offensive Player in 2009 and a first-team All-Big Sky nod for the first time after earning honorable mention honors the season before.

In 2010, he won the Chuck Karnop Award for toughness and the Dennis Erickson Offensive Coaches’ Choice honor. He also shared the D’Agostino Family Strength award with Steven Foster and Jordan Craney.

“I would be a liar if I told you when we got to Montana State, he was ready to go,” said former Montana State safety Mike Rider, a Billings native who was co-captain of the 2010 Bobcats alongside Person. “When we were at the Shrine Game and the Mon-Dak game, here was this full scholarship guy. And I wouldn’t say he dominated.

“That redshirt year, he knew he had some ground to make up and that’s what set him apart. He never stopped working in the weight room and every single day, nobody worked harder than him. He had such high expectations for himself and other people had such high expectations for him.

“He took his lumps as a freshman, starting his first game against Texas A&M. That’s a pretty big jump from Class A Glendive. I think he willed himself into it. He worked his tail off and you saw that exact same thing translate into the NFL.”

Person’s final season with the Bobcats finished with a crescendo. The team captain was one of 30 Bobcats ever to earn first-team All-American honors after leading MSU to a Big Sky title by winning

against archrival Montana in Missoula.

“The Montana State program is built on the backs of Montana kids. It always was, always has been while I was there and still is,” McEndoo said. “My whole time there, I was the in-state recruiter in Montana and I loved traveling the state.

“Mike had that Montana dude toughness, was a great leader, a vocal leader who grew into his own. He personifies everything about being a Montana kid playing for Montana State.”

Person came to Montana State as a 6-foot-5, 240-pound lanky teenager. By the time 2010 finished, he’d started 34 consecutive games and more than 40 games overall. He was one of the central pieces of the ascension of the Bobcats.

“He’s blue collar and he’s had a ton of adversity in his life, from losing his mom really young to trying to always live up to the hype as a prized recruit in the state of Montana,” Rider said. “There was always that chip on his shoulder and it carried on to the NFL.

“He was incredibly talented and when you couple that with hard work and toughness, that’s how you have that sort of success in college and the NFL.”

That Cat-Griz win in 2010 solidified Person as a Bobcat legend and also helped form the foundation for a last decade-plus that have seen Montana State inch past Montana in the hierarchy of the Big Sky Conference.

That game is embedded in McEndoo’s mind (and his ear) to this day.

Both McEndoo and Person remember it pretty much identically. McEndoo had a rule that the offensive line would not wear sleeves during games where the temperature was below freezing. And the coach would also not wear sleeves in an act of solidarity.

In the hours before the ‘Cats took on the Griz in Washington-Grizzly Stadium in 2010, the Hellgate wind was ripping and the meteorologists were warning of record-setting cold temperatures. So McEndoo thought he might wear a coat or some sort of sleeves.

“I would be layered up underneath but I wouldn’t have sleeves,” McEndoo said. “That Brawl of the Wild in 2010, that was the coldest game I have ever been a part of. I got out in pre-game and I had a jacket on, but it wasn’t game time yet.

“I came out in a jacket and Person looks at me and says, ‘What the hell are you doing?’ And I ignored him. And then he told me I wasn’t allowed to wear sleeves. I walked back in the locker room, took all



that stuff off.

“I had gloves on and a ball cap and that’s it. I still, to this day, have frostbite on the tips of my ears. When it gets cold, the tips of my ears start to hurt and I think of Person and that offensive line and that win every single time.”

During his playing days, McEndoo was a standout offensive lineman at Washington State. Like Person, he was a seventh round draft pick. McEndoo was selected by the Seattle Seahawks.

And like Person, McEndoo had to overcome the heartbreak of tragedy. McEndoo and his late wife, Michelle, were in a roll-over accident when McEndoo was 21. Michelle did not survive.

Person wasn’t McEndoo’s first protégé but he was certainly the one that reminded the coach most of himself, from a sharp tragedy early in life to a long shot at the next level to a love of the game.

McEndoo only lasted the one year in the NFL, but he vowed to



help any pupil who was trying to fight his way onto an NFL roster. So he and Person have been in contact pretty consistently for the last decade-plus.

“At the end of the day, you have to keep a great mental state of mind, not get too low, not get too high and that’s what I would tell him,” McEndoo said. “For him to be with six, seven different teams and then his career to culminate with starting in the Super Bowl with the Niners, I think that’s a testament to him and the fortitude and the work ethic and drive and determination to keep pushing through it.

“No matter what is thrown at you, keep your head down and stay in your lane and that’s the epitome of Mike. He had all those things. Most guys would’ve packed it up. Most guys would’ve gotten discouraged, gotten down, folded the tent. I think a lot of players are missing

nowadays is grit. Mike was just a gritty, gritty player and that’s from his background, Butte ties to Glendive, Montana (laughs) . . . Glendive is not Butte, but Glendive is the Butte of eastern Montana.”

Person first started riding the roller coaster of NFL uncertainty following his rookie year when the 49ers cut him. The Colts signed him a few days later only to cut him following the weekend.

“I think I’m fine when the Colts claim me,” Person said. “Then the following Monday, they cut me. That’s really when it hit me, this NFL thing might not work out.”

But things did work out. Person caught on with, like McEndoo, the Seahawks. After playing his way on to the active roster, he spent two seasons in Seattle.

He signed with the Rams in 2013 and the Falcons in 2015 before spending 2016 in Kansas City. He earned redemption (and half a dozen starts) for the Colts in 2017. And he played his final two seasons as a full-time starter for the 49ers in 2018 and 2019.

“There were some dark days early on in my NFL career, and there was a handful people that I knew who, whenever I called, they would pick up and coach Mac was one of them,” Person said. “And he always gave me the best advice. And when he had to kick me in the rear, he would get my act together.

“Being able to pick his brain because he went through it was such a great resource for a young player. You don’t usually get the same offensive line coach for all five years at your school, but he was there for all five years that I was there.

“We still talk at least once a month, to this day. And you know, I always called Mac and Ruth, they were my second family in Bozeman. So just having someone like that, that you can lean on who is invested in you, who has walked the path that you are trying to walk? You can’t really put it into words what it means.”

The 2014 season in St. Louis proved to be a turning point in Person’s career. That season, he dressed for every game and played in most. He had film to show teams his talents. In the summer of 2015, Person signed a three-year contract with the Atlanta Falcons.

“It’s absolutely affirmation,” Person said to Skyline Sports in 2015. “That’s what you want to do: you want to play. I didn’t play at all my first three years and then sparingly last year. Now it’s just making that push to get over that hump and become a starter in this league.”

A few years later, the goal became a reality; and it culminated with Person playing in the Super Bowl.

“One of my favorite memories, period, was the 2019 NFC Championship game,” Person reflected in an interview with ESPN MT Radio in April of 2023. “We ran it down Green Bay’s throats, threw the ball eight times the entire game.”

Earlier in the year, San Francisco center Weston Richburg (a

second-round draft pick (Colorado State in 2014), tore his patella tendon.

“He was my best friend on the team and he was kind of our general out there,” Person said. “It’s the same thing that we had in San Francisco as we had at Montana State. It’s a really tight knit group of guys, especially that o-line.

“I’ll never forget, we’re taking our final knee to win that NFC championship and Weston hobbles himself down to the sidelines on his crutches. And all five of us went over to Weston instead of celebrating with the team, the five offensive linemen, we went over to Weston and gave him a big bear hug. He was kind of our rock that year and unfortunately had his year end early but that moment will remind me of that NFC Championship night. That’s was something that I’ll cherish for a very long time.”

San Francisco’s offensive line was one of the stalwart units in the league, even before adding future first ballot Hall of Famer Trent Williams in 2020. The 2019 line, coached by Benton, was bookended and anchored by left tackle Joe Staley and right tackle Mike McGlinchey. Richburg and Laken Tomlinson were the other starters along with Person.

“McGlinchey was still a young guy and really Mike had a lot to do with McGlinchey’s success,” Benton said. “Person took the role on of the tough guy, the grunt, getting in the mud, down and dirty, tough guy. He really played that well.

“That’s really when you have your best offensive line: when each guy plays a role and you run with it. And you have to have that tough guy. He was always in a good mood but he would keep people in line.”

Person met his wife, Kelly, during his rookie year in San Francisco in 2012.

“And I somehow kept her, even though we were moving all the time and living out of a suitcase those early years,” Person said with a laugh.

Through all the moves, the family has finally found a spot to settle down. In June, the Person clan will have lived in Dublin, Ohio for four years. That’s the longest by far Mike and Kelly have lived in a single place since first meeting.

The same summer Mike signed with Atlanta, the couple welcomed son Sean (8) into the world. Daughter Nora (6) and son Eli (4) followed.

“Kelly is definitely the head coach of the family,” Person said.

After retiring from the NFL, Person started volunteer coaching at a local high school in Dublin and also started Five Dot Offensive Line



Academy to help area teenagers develop in techniques, drills work and studying film.

In 2021, Person started thinking about getting into college or NFL coaching. Last season, he served as the assistant offensive line coach at Mike McDaniel’s staff with the Miami Dolphins.

Person is quick to acknowledge how much he enjoyed the experience of working for McDaniel but also said he realized that moving his family to South Beach wasn’t ideal.

So this fall, for the first time in close to three decades, Person might just be a football fan. And how could you blame him?

Regardless of what his football future might hold, the impact the game has had on his life is indelible.

“Football has been huge for my life,” Person said. “Football has brought me so many things, not just learning experiences good and bad. If I didn’t play in the NFL, I never would have met my wife. We met in San Francisco my rookie year. I wouldn’t have this family that I have right now.

“Football has been an ever present part of my life and my wife’s life as long as I’ve known her. So the things that the game brings you, the possibilities are endless. It’s tough to put it into words, but I’m living in a beautiful neighborhood in Dublin, Ohio, and that wouldn’t have been possible without football.

“The lessons that it teaches you; that’s the most important thing. That’s the beauty behind any sport - is the lessons that it teaches you on and off the field. But the things that it provides you in your life, that what makes it special. You meet all of these people, who would have ever thought that my best friend would be from Amarillo, Texas. Had I not played football, I never would have met some of my best friends. It’s been one of the most important parts of my life.”



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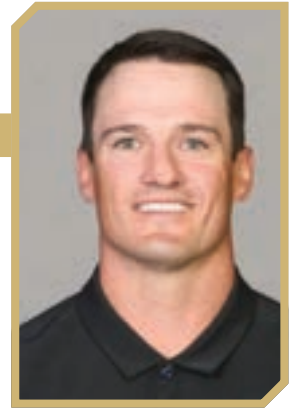
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★ COLT ANDERSON ★

THE BUTTE MISSILE: Anderson has as much NFL longevity as any Montanan

By COLTER NUANEZ

On the surface, Colt Anderson’s story is one of an underdog triumphing over long odds over and over again.

But when one dives into a person’s makeup, it quickly becomes apparent that the man who earned the nickname “the Butte Missile” was perhaps destined to become one of the most successful Montanans to live a football life.

Anderson, who hails from the Mining City, has defied the odds ever since he emerged from a winless high school football team his senior year as walk-on at the University of Montana. Yet he and those around him always knew he would achieve great successes.

Despite walking on, Anderson wasted little time affirming himself as one of the greatest players in Griz football history, earning first-team All-Big Sky Conference honors three times while establishing a reputation as one of the hardest hitting safeties ever at UM or in the Big Sky.

Once into the NFL, he had to start all over, working his way from practice squad to kick team units to, eventually, starting for several of the most storied franchises in professional football.

And that life of football continues today as Anderson continues his work in the NFL as an assistant coach on Zac Taylor’s staff for the high-flying Cincinnati Bengals.

Hundreds of men either from Montana or who played collegiately in Montana (or both) have gone on to compete in professional football. Very few have done it for as long or as consistently as Anderson did.

For his longevity, consistency and general excellence, Anderson is one of the headlining members of the Montana Football Hall of Fame Class of 2023.

“The thing that made Colt stand out most as a football player is decisive urgency,” said Tom McMahon, a Helena native and Carroll College alum who has been an NFL special teams coordinator since 2007. McMahon is currently the special teams coordinator for the Las Vegas Raiders and coached Anderson for the two seasons Anderson played for the Indianapolis Colts.

“There’s not a lot of guys who have that. He is very decisive and really fast. He sees it and when he does, he is going 100 percent. And 99 percent of what he sees is correct. He almost never makes mistakes and it makes his play speed seem even faster. That’s how you play a decade in the NFL.”

Anderson played nine seasons in the NFL, working his way from the Minnesota Vikings’ practice squad as a rookie in 2009 to starting games for both the Philadelphia Eagles and the Indianapolis Colts. He played on five playoff teams and was a part of five playoff wins between 2010 and 2017.

Only four Griz alums – Guy Bingham, Tim Hauck, Mike Tilleman and Scott Gragg – played longer in the NFL. And Anderson equaled Kirk Scrafford’s nine seasons in the League.

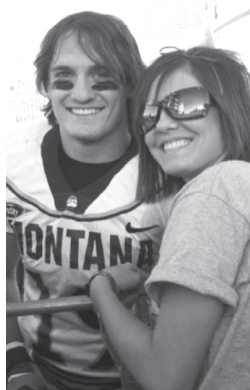
“The whole body of work is so impressive when you look at it,” said Tim Hauck, a Griz legend in his own right who pioneered Montana’s iconic No. 37 jersey. Hauck played 13 seasons in the NFL before returning to Missoula and coaching Anderson for most of his time with the Griz.

“Play after play, big hit after big hit, it was never one game here or one game there, it was always the consistency of his performance that was so impressive. To play that long in the NFL this day and age is incredible.”

Not bad for a kid from a “mile high, a mile deep” who went from playing on a Butte High School Bulldogs team that didn’t win a game during the 2003 season to earning a reputation as a special teams ace for NFL playoff teams led by quarterbacks like Michael Vick in Philly and Andrew Luck in Indy.

Now he’s coaching for the Bengals during the rise of Joe Burrow. Cincinnati had the worst record in the NFL the season before Anderson joined Taylor’s staff. Over the last two seasons, Cincy appeared in Super Bowl LVI and the AFC championship game, respectively.

“He knows what to teach and how to tell these guys what they need to do to be a part of an NFL roster,” Hauck said. “If they will listen, they’ll get it done and if they don’t





listen, they won't. He's been through the wars so he immediately has their respect"

Folks from Butte knew who Anderson was...because that's how folks from Butte are.

In Butte, high school sports are a religion. And Colt's father, Mike Anderson officiated high

school and Frontier Conference hoops for more than four decades. Mike also coached his three sons in baseball growing up and was a defensive backs coach at Butte High during his sons' high school careers. Michele Anderson taught dance when she wasn't busy chasing around her three sons and daughter, Brianna.

During his prep days, Colt was more well-known on a state-wide level for his exploits on the basketball court as a gritty, tough and efficient guard for John Thatcher's Bulldogs. Anderson's first big athletic achievement in Missoula actually came the winter before he walked on with the Griz.

He led a Butte High team playing in its first state tournament since 1990 to a pair of victories over Bozeman and Billings West, respectively, in that 2004 basketball championship. The wins punched the Bulldogs' ticket to the Class AA state title game.

"Colt made an incredible contribution to our basketball team, No. 1, leadership. No. 2, he was extremely coachable. I didn't let Colt shoot because he never came to open gym, he never proved to me he could shoot," joked Thatcher, Butte High's head boys' basketball coach for years and currently an assistant women's basketball coach at Montana Tech in Butte.

"But he always picked up the toughest defensive job. Prime example, when we beat Billings West Colt's senior year, they had that great guard who's dad was the coach, Chase Sukut. (Colt) did a great job of guarding him. We didn't have the athletes but we controlled the tempo."

Almost 7,000 fans packed the Adams Center – a vast majority of them dressed in Butte purple. Yet the Cinderella run fell short as Great Falls CMR won its fourth Class AA title in five years in a defensive slugfest.

"Colt was our best defender, but that's only part of it," Thatcher said. "I can't say enough about the person he is. Salt of the earth.

"He was such an unselfish athlete and he knew what it took to win. You try to convince high school athletes that it's not about each one of you individually; it's about how we perform. It doesn't matter who scores, it's all

about what it takes to win. He executed EXACTLY what I asked of him. High school kids don't do that.

"He was the leader, no question about it."

Anderson was a three-sport athlete who also excelled as a shortstop on the baseball diamond. Colt's father was a longtime baseball coach and his oldest brother, Beau, was also a standout player.

"I have a saying I have said to every team I've ever coached: never forget who you are, never forget where you came from and never fear anything," Thatcher said. "He falls into all three of those categories. His worth ethic is and was second to none. There are very few people out there that paid the price he did to make it to the NFL. And you could see that when he was a teenager."

The Bulldogs – who played at a middle school field back then rather than iconic Naranche Stadium like Butte High does now – might've had a hard time breaking through. Yet Anderson's toughness stood out as an individual talent throughout his high school career.

"We watched him a lot in high school and for some reason, most of the film we watched, he was playing tailback and he was really good," Montana head coach Bobby Hauck, who spent 2003 through 2009 at UM before returning ahead of the 2018 season to lead his alma mater, said in the spring of 2023. "He wasn't very big. But he ran well and he was tough, really a good running back.

"We didn't see him as a running back in college but we were trying to project him. I was so stupid I didn't offer him a scholarship (laughs). We ended up convincing him to walk on to play safety."

Although he loved basketball and baseball, ultimately, Colt's attention settled upon football when it came to his post-prep days.

"Growing up, my brothers had opportunities to play college football and neither one of them did," Anderson said. "My oldest brother, Beau, went to play college baseball (at Walla Walla Community College) and my brother Luke had an opportunity to play at Montana Western and he didn't want to pursue football.

"So when I had an opportunity to walk on, I thought at least one of us has to try to do this because I thought both those guys were better football players than me. They were bigger than me. The fact that they didn't do it, I felt like I needed to do it."

Tim Hauck – who had his first college coaching job when working for his older brother between 2004 and 2007 – instantly noticed Anderson's sharp explosiveness, fearless pursuit and natural abilities at safety.

"Tim kept coming to our personnel meetings during spring ball, fall camp when Colt was a young guy and saying, 'He's our best safety. What's the hold up? Let's go!'" Bobby Hauck remembered. "I'm always putting the brakes on, watching them more, making sure they are ready. Then it became apparent pretty early on, probably a year and a half in, that this guy is going to be a special player for us."

"I tried to tell my brother that Colt was the best safety we had," Tim





confirmed with a laugh. “He’s explosive, instinctive, tackles well, runs well. Once we believed what he could do, he made the most of it.”

The story of football in Montana has deep roots in the Mining City. Partly because of the late Sonny Holland and the enormous influence he had on Montana State’s first 20 years in the Big Sky Conference, Butte was a Bobcat town for most of the 1970s and ‘80s.

The emergence of players like Todd Erickson in the early 1990s started to shift the Mining City’s allegiance. Butte is the hometown of 99 lettermen for the University of Montana football team.

The first Griz ever drafted in the NFL Draft came out of Butte. Milt Popovich was selected with the 15th pick of the second round of the 1938 NFL Draft by the Chicago Cardinals. The man known as the Butte Bullet is still the highest ever draft pick out of UM.

And the most recent Griz to make an NFL active roster is also from Butte: offensive lineman Dylan Cook signed with the Pittsburgh Steelers in May of 2023.

Anderson had two uncles who played for each college: Montana (Pat Sullivan and Dave Manovich) and Montana State (Barry Sullivan and Jim Anderson). One of his best friends growing up was Cole Salo, who’s uncle Greg Salo was the defensive coordinator at MSU in the 1990s before taking over as the head coach at Butte High in the early 2000s. So Anderson had ties on both sides of the rivalry.

“He was a great all-around athlete, played basketball, baseball, and on the football team, we used him all over the place,” said Salo, who’s now retired and golfing as much as possible. “He is a great all-around athlete, great competitor with a great work ethic, which we learned how far that can take you after he walked on to the Griz.”

“The underdog, chip on your shoulder, whatever cliché you want to use, that 100 percent drove Colt. That was what he was going to use to motivate him to get the most out of his ability.”

Anderson didn’t give it a second thought when Bobby Hauck extended a walk-on offer to join a Griz team that was in the midst of a run of 12 straight Big Sky Conference championships.

“Butte was a Griz town when I was coming up,” Anderson said. “They were rolling at the time and they were out-recruiting Montana State with Butte guys. There was a handful of Butte guys on that national championship team in 1995.

“In 4th grade, I was 10 years old (in 1995) and my fourth grade teacher was Dave Dickenson’s aunt. That was a school year I will always remember. Everyone from my class grew up big



Griz fans because of that 1995 team.”

So often, the story of the in-state walk-on at Montana is one of being buried on the depth chart for years before getting an opportunity to break out. Anderson rose through the ranks almost immediately, earning a starting job as a sophomore.

“He’s a great tackler, he’s a great hitter, has good instincts, fearless, all those things that you love about safeties in our defense,” Bobby Hauck said. “He had it all.”

That 2006 season, Anderson rolled up 96 tackles and earned his first of three straight first-team All-Big Sky honors. That Griz season ended in a Big Sky Conference championship, one of four straight that Anderson helped contribute to during his time in Missoula. That Griz team also went on a march to semifinals of the 2006 FCS Playoffs.

The following season, Anderson was equally consistent and impactful, rolling up 85 tackles, including seven for loss, forcing three fumbles and intercepting four passes. He was an All-American for the first time. But his junior season ended in disappointment.

The top-ranked and undefeated Grizzlies lost 23-22 to Wofford in the first round of the playoffs. The upset loss to a triple option team left a bitter taste in Anderson and his returning teammates’ mouths.

In 2008, behind one of the great single seasons by any Griz defensive players in program history by Anderson, the Griz rolled to 14 victories, including an 11-1 finish in the regular season. They steamrolled the Bobcats in Missoula after a quick and iconic wardrobe change and carried that momentum into the playoffs.

“We did senior night the week before the ‘Cat game against Idaho State and we thought that was weird,” Anderson said. “There where whispers going around. Then the day of the game, we are in our team room and Coach Hauck comes in with this big duffle bag.”

Montana had warmed up in its traditional maroon and silver jerseys. But right before the famed tunnel run on that November afternoon, the Griz changed into throwback Copper and Gold jerseys. Montana State never had a chance as the Griz rolled to a 38-3 victory to spark another playoff run.

“It still gives me goosebumps to this day thinking about that tunnel run and that game,” Anderson said. “I don’t think the University of Montana had worn those colors since (the national championship season of) 1995 so to be able to represent the University of Montana with the old school colors, the greats I grew up



watching, the Dave Dickensons, all the Butte guys, those are the colors I watched the Griz play in as a kid, so to wear those same colors, me and all the Montana guys on that team, for us, it was such a special day.”

The following week in the playoffs, the Griz kept chugging. Montana had no trouble with Texas State, drilling the now FBS Bobcats, 31-13. The following week, the Griz avenged the only Big Sky Conference loss they suffered between 2006 and 2009 when they defeated Weber State 24-13.

That win over the Wildcats set up a clash of titans. In 2004, during Hauck’s second season, the Griz rode a hot streak all the way to the national championship game, only to lose to James Madison University.

Four years later, Montana got another shot. But this time, UM had to go to Harrisonburg, Virginia to play the No. 1 ranked Dukes.

In what Bobby Hauck still calls “one of the finest wins in school history”, Montana bludgeoned Walter Payton Award winning JMU quarterback Rodney Landers and the top seeded Dukes, 35-27, to earn UM’s sixth trip to the national title game, all since 1995.

“I remember that game pretty distinctly because I think it’s one of the great wins in school history,” Bobby Hauck said. “They were No. 1 in the nation and we beat them on the road.

“Colt and the guys in his class all performed in that game. Colt had a big night and JMU had some really skilled players and Colt and our defense really showed up. Colt led the charge in that game and that was an enormous win for the Griz.”

Anderson was a part of Griz teams that went 45-8 between 2005 and 2008, but his final game as a Griz ended in heartbreak. After the landmark win at JMU, Montana ran into a brick wall. Defensive end Lawrence Sidbury

had a coming out party coming off the edge to spark a 24-7 Richmond runaway in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Despite that disappointing ending to his Griz career, Anderson earned a reputation as an all-time Griz great. He piled up 313 tackles, which still ranks in the top 10 in school history. His 129 tackles as a senior is the seventh-most ever by a Griz.

Anderson is also one of only five Grizzlies to ever win multiple Tony Barbour Awards, given each year “to the Griz who best exemplifies outstanding practice habits and makes an unselfish contribution to the betterment of the Grizzly football team.”

Anderson won the Golden Helmet Award in 2007 and 2008 as the hardest hitter on the Griz and he also was the 2008 Steve Carlson Award winner as the team’s overall MVP.

“He was hard-nosed, he did everything right, he worked hard and he had all the intangible stuff and when he finally got on the field, you saw his athletic ability take over also,” Tim Hauck said. “That’s a great recipe for a really great football player.”

Although the disappointment of his final game as a Griz stung, Anderson hoped he didn’t have to stop playing football.

And he made sure of it with an unforgettable pro day that helped solidify what Tim Hauck knew to be true all along. The Butte Missile was an NFL caliber safety and special teams stalwart who would get a shot to play on Sundays, even if he had to prove himself all over again.

Many thought that Anderson would get drafted. Instead, he ended up signing with the Minnesota Vikings. He flirted with the active roster but ultimately spent the 2009 season on the practice squad.

He signed with Philadelphia’s practice squad in September of 2010. By November, the Eagles signed him to a three-year contract that elevated him to the active roster.

He played in eight games for the Eagles in 2010, rolling up 16 tackles and, like Tim Hauck, established himself as a special teams ace that the Philly faithful noticed and appreciated.

“Being a walk-on was very similar to being undrafted,” Anderson said. “Your back is against the wall and you get over looked a little bit. They have the guys they drafted just like in college where they have guys they gave scholarships to. I knew I had my work cut out for me, but it was a challenge I was willing to accept. I just approached it like I did in college, where I was going to outwork my opponents, which were my teammates and show the coaches that I deserved a shot.”

The following year, Anderson was playing at a Pro Bowl level on special teams through 12 games. Then disaster hit – he tore his ACL.

As has been the proven pattern of his life, Anderson was not deterred,



and he returned to full strength by 2012. His fourth season in the NFL happened to be the first that he worked his way into the starting lineup.

Anderson played in 48 games and started six during his four seasons in Philadelphia, compiling 71 tackles, three forced fumbles and his first (and only) career interception.

“He was ALWAYS confident in his ability to compete in the NFL,” Bobby Hauck said. “There’s a lot of people who might think they can play in the NFL but they can’t. Colt can.”

“He was tough enough to handle both the mental aspect of trying to make the team every year and the physical aspect of competing in the kicking game at a high level, which is a high-speed, hard collision type game every time you are in there. He’s a fine football player who maximized his ability.”

By the time he signed with the Colts in 2014, Anderson had a well-earned reputation as a steady performer who could have an elite impact on an NFL special teams unit, plus he was a viable option as a safety that carried himself with professionalism.

McMahon hails from Helena. The Capital High and Carroll College alum first recognized Anderson while watching film of the Eagles. He wanted to get the fearless gunner on his team right away.

“I remember watching his tape and I knew he played with some real urgency,” McMahon said. “It’s rare, what he has.”

“I was in Coach (Chuck) Pagano’s ear every single day. Through the free agency process, I wanted Colt every single day. I would leave a note on Pagano’s desk every single day, saying either ‘Colt’ or ‘Anderson’, just bugging him relentlessly. But finally, they brought him in for a visit and they saw his talent, too.”

Anderson spent two seasons in Indianapolis before making one more move during his playing days. He landed with the Buffalo Bills for the 2016 and 2017 seasons. He spent most of his final two seasons in the NFL on injured reserve before retiring.

“He is one of the top five best teammates I’ve ever seen since I’ve been in the league,” McMahon said. “He epitomizes what a teammate should be. And on top of that, he’s a great person and a great communicator.”

“And he produces. Good teammates produce. They get out on the field and they make plays. They are good in the locker room, too. But I’m a great guy but I could never play in the NFL. There’s a lot of people who could be a great teammate because they are great people. But you have to be able to play. Colt went out and produced.”

Hundreds of Montana football legends hail from Butte. But Anderson is a modern day Mining City hero. And like Thatcher taught him, he never forgot his roots. It’s an important part of his legacy and the Anderson family name.

“He’s always kept Butte, America close to his heart,” Bobby Hauck said.

“Over the years, he and his family, they have always gone out of their way to keep in touch with his college teammates, his college coaches. Their family is so tight. He is a true Montanan, a true Butte guy and he’s proud of that fact. It’s such a part of who he is and it’s one of the things that makes him so special.”

Each summer, Anderson hosts a two-day event called the “Dream Big Montana Experience” where he and his NFL friends rally together in Butte to give local and statewide kids an unforgettable few days that Anderson hopes inspires the next generation. The event includes a skills camp, a summer kick off concert and a BMX show, a family-fun day, and a gala.

“He’s done so much for this town and for kids,” Thatcher said. “He does his camp every summer and he brings in all the big time athletes, the former NFL guys. He has a business here (UpTop Clothing with his brother, Luke) and he has the Mo Club in Missoula with his brother, Beau. He pays attention to business, dots his I’s and crosses his T’s at every road way.”

“As an old guy like I am, he’s a real special person to me. There’s no arrogance about him. He has never demonstrated any ego. You could be a stranger on the street and he will be with you when you are talking to him. He’s as down to earth as you can get and he doesn’t have to be as far as I’m concerned. He’s paid his penance, paid the price and he’s accomplished more than most Butte people that have ever come along.”

Anderson has had steady presence throughout his entire life journey: his wife, Keelie, who’s been his other half since the couple was in high school. The Andersons have four boys: Cage (11), Krew (10), Coye (6) and Kace (2). Each is very involved in a variety of sports, including hockey and baseball.

Throughout his career, Anderson has always kept ties to Butte. Often in the off-season during his playing career, the Anderson clan would come back to Butte

before embarking on the next adventure wherever Colt was playing at the time. Now the family is in Cincinnati full time as the Bengals chased the first Super Bowl in franchise history.

Sports have always been a huge part of Colt Anderson’s life, whether as a kid or as a father. From Butte High to the University of Montana to living all over the country working in the NFL, a few key factors have never wavered during Anderson’s football life.

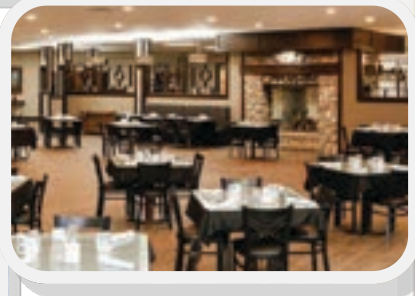
“A lot of people say faith, family and football and I look back at my life and that’s what it’s been,” Anderson said. “Family is very important to me. My faith is important to me. And football has been a huge part of my life. It’s always been something in my life that I’ve always had.”

“When I took two years off, I felt like something was missing. So to be able to come back and coach and be on the other side has been a blessing. Football has been such a huge part of my life.”





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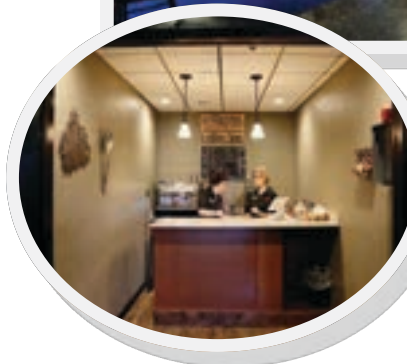
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Players in the NFL CFL AFL USFL
Montana State University

Don Cosner	Chicago Cardinals	1936	Tony Boddie	Denver	1982
Johnny Reagan	Winnipeg CFL	1946	Phil Bruneau	Oklahoma USFL	1982
Roy Gardiner	Calgary Stampeders CFL	1947	Bill Clawson	Winnipeg CFL	1982
Jack Meakin	Calgary Stampeders CFL	1954	Larry Rubens	Green Bay Packers	1982
Harvey Wylie	Calgary Stampeders CFL	1955	Brian Strong	Calgary Stampeders CFL	1982
Ed Ritt	St Louis Rams	1956	Mike McLeod	Green Bay Packers	1983
Ron Warzeka	San Francisco 49er's	1956	Mark Fellows	San Diego Chargers	1984
Bob Butorovich	St Louis Cardinals	1957	Kirk Timmer	New York Jets	1986
Bob Schmitz	Pittsburgh Patriots	1961	Jim Kalafat	Washington Redskins	1987
Bob Cegelski	Minnesota Vikings	1962	Corey Widmer	New York Giants	1991
Curt Farrier	Kansas City Chiefs	1963	Reggie Carthon	B.C. CFL	1993
Cliff Hysell	Denver Broncos	1966	Sean Hill	Miami Dolphins	1994
Jan Stenerud	Kansas City Chiefs	1966	Neal Smith	Sask. CFL	1997
Ron East	Dallas Cowboys	1967	Ken Amato	Tennessee Titans	1998
Howard Hahn	Washington Redskins	1968	John Taylor	Detroit Lions	2002
K.O. Trepanier	New Orleans Saints	1968	Joey Thomas	Green Bay Packers	2004
Ray Becky	Denver Broncos	1969	Dane Fletcher	New England Patriots	2009
Gary Gustafson	Cincinnati Bengals	1970	Mike Person	San Francisco 49er's	2010
Bob Banaugh	Minnesota Vikings	1971	Zach Minter	Chicago Bears	2012
Al Wilson	British Columbia CFL	1972	Beau Sandland	Carolina Panthers	2015
Bill Kollar	Cincinnati Bengals	1973	John Weidenaar	Cincinnati Bengals	2015
Sam McCullum	Minnesota Vikings	1973	J.P. Flynn	San Francisco 49er's	2016
Wayne Hammond	Los Angeles Rams	1974	Bryson Keaton	New York Jets	2016
Pat Bolton	Atlanta Falcons	1975	Alex Singleton	Calgary Stampeders CFL	2016
Randy Hickel	Minnesota Vikings	1975	Travis Johnson	Tampa Bay	2020
Steve Kracher	Minnesota Vikings	1975	Troy Anderson	Atlanta Falcons	2022
Bob Lubig	Calgary Stampeders CFL	1976	Tre Webb	Atlanta Falcons	2022
Jeff Muri	Minnesota Vikings	1977	Daniel Hardy	Los Angeles Rams	2022
Lee Washburn	Dallas Cowboys	1977	Lance McCutcheon	Los Angeles Rams	2022
Jon Borchardt	Buffalo Bills	1979	Lewis Kidd	New Orleans Saints	2022
Stuart Dodds	San Diego Chargers	1980	Kevin Kassis	Seattle Seahawks	2022
Mark McGrath	Seattle Seahawks	1980			



Players in the NFL CFL AFL
Eastern Montana College

Loren Soft	Baltimore Colts	1964	Doug Linehan	Washington Redskins	1967
Harvey Munford	Los Angeles Rams	1965	Paul Champlin	San Francisco 49ers	1969
Rick Duncan	Denver Broncos	1966	William Wondolowski	San Francisco 49ers	1969
Bart Templeman	San Francisco 49ers	1966	Lynn Ahrens	San Diego Chargers	1972





Players in the NFL CFL AFL USFL

University of Montana

Chris Bentz	Detroit	1920	Brian Salonen	Dallas Cowboys	1984
Steve Sullivan	Evansville	1922	Brent Pease	Minnesota Vikings (11th)	1987
Ivan Wells Cahoon	Green Bay Packers	1926	Mike Rice	New York Jets	1987
Ted Illman	Wilson's Wildcats	1926	Pat Foster	Los Angeles Rams (9th)	1988
William "Wild Bill" Kelly	Brooklyn Professionals	1927	Larry Clarkson	San Francisco 49ers (8th)	1988
Frosty Peters	Portsmouth Spartans	1930	Kirk Scrafford	Cincinnati Bengals	1989
Russ Peterson	Boston Braves	1932	Jay Fagan	Washington Redskins	1989
Verne Oech	Chicago Bears	1936	Tim Hauck	New England Patriots	1989
Len Noyes	Brooklyn Dodgers	1937	Mike Trevathan	British Columbia Lions	1991
Milton Popovich	Chicago Cardinals	1937	Grady Bennett	British Columbia Lions	1991
Paul Szakash	Detroit Lions	1937	Matt Clark	British Columbia Lions	1991
Bill Lazetich	Cleveland Rams	1938	Brad Lebo	Cincinnati Bengals	1992
Aldo Forte	Detroit Lions	1938	Sean Dorris	Houston Oilers	1992
John Dolan	Buffalo Indians	1941	Todd Ericson	Indianapolis Colts	1994
Harold Maus	Detroit Lions (30th)	1953	Carl Franks	Toronto Argonauts	1994
Stan Renning	Edmonton Eskimos	1959	Shalon Baker	British Columbia Lions	1995
John Lands	Indianapolis Warriors	1960	Scott Gragg	New York Giants (2nd)	1995
Gary Schwertfeger	British Columbia Lions	1961	Scott Gurnsey	Toronto Argonauts	1995
Bob O'Billovich	Ottawa Rough Riders	1962	Keith Burke	Ottawa Rough Riders	1995
Terry Dillon	Minnesota Vikings	1963	Marc Lamb	New York Jets	1995
Mike Tilleman	Chicago Bears	1964	Matt Wells	Saskatchewan Rough Riders	1996
Bryan Magnuson	Washington Redskins	1967	Dave Dickenson	Calgary Stampeders	1996
Dave Urie	Houston Oilers	1969	Blaine McElmurry	Houston Oilers	1997
Maceo Gray	Baltimore Colts	1969	Jeff Zellick	New York Giants	1997
Tuufuli Uperesa	Philadelphia Eagles	1970	Joe Douglass	New York Jets	1997
Tim Gallagher	Dallas Cowboys	1971	David Kempfert	Seattle Seahawks	1997
Steve Okoniewski	Atlanta Falcons	1972	Jason Baker	Jacksonville Jaguars	1998
Willie Postler	British Columbia Lions	1972	Jason Crebo	Buffalo Bills	1998
Roy Robinson	Saskatchewan Rough Riders	1972	Brian Ah Yat	Winnipeg Blue Bombers	1999
Barry Darrow	Cleveland Browns	1974	Scott Curry	Green Bay Packers	1999
Ron Rosenberg	Cincinnati Bengals (13th)	1975	Marty Mornhinweg	Detroit Lions	2000
Walt Brett	Atlanta Falcons (4th)	1975	Dallas Neil	Atlanta Falcons	2000
Greg Harris	New York Jets	1976	Jeremy Watkins	New York Giants	2000
Terry Falcon	New England Patriots	1977	Kris Heppner	Seattle Seahawks	2000
Doug Betters	Miami Dolphins	1977	Leif Thorsen	BC Lions	2001
Greg Anderson	Montreal	1979	Jimmy Farris	San Francisco 49ers	2001
Carm Carteri	Ottawa Rough Riders	1979	Thacher Szalay	Cincinnati Bengals	2002
Tim Hook	Saskatchewan Rough Riders	1979	Calvin Coleman	New York Giants	2002
Guy Bingham	New York Jets (10th)	1980	Dylan McFarland	Buffalo Bills (7th)	2003
Pat Ogrin	Washington Redskins	1981	Drew Miller	Detroit Lions	2003
Mike Hagan	Seattle Seahawks	1982	Jon Skinner	San Diego Chargers	2003
Rich Burtness	Dallas Cowboys	1982	Chris Snyder	Detroit Lions	2003
Pat Curry	Seattle Seahawks	1982	Spencer Frederick	New Orleans Saints	2003
Rocky Klever	New York Jets (9th)	1982	Etu Molden	Green Bay Packers	2004
Mickey Sutton	Hamilton Tiger Cats	1983	Andy Petek	Hamilton Tiger Cats	2004





Players in the NFL CFL AFL USFL

University of Montana

Justin Green	Baltimore Ravens (5th)	2004	Donny Lisowski	Seattle Seahawks	2012
Craig Ochs	Buffalo Bills	2005	Brody McKnight	New York Jets	2012
Cory Procter	Dallas Cowboys	2005	Caleb McSurdy	Dallas Cowboys (7th)	2012
Levander Segars	Montreal Allouettes	2005	Jon Opperud	San Diego Chargers	2012
Willie Walden	Kansas City Chiefs	2005	Jabin Sambrano	Indianapolis Colts	2012
Trey Young	Calgary Stampeders	2005	Charles Burton	San Diego Chargers	2012
Brad Rhoades	Tennessee Titans	2006	Trumaine Johnson	St. Louis Rams	2012
Josh Swogger	Kansas City Chiefs	2007	Dan Moore	Indianapolis Colts	2013
Tuff Harris	Miami Dolphins	2007	Greg Hardy	Washington Redskins	2013
Ryan Bagley	Saskatchewan Rough Riders	2008	William Poehls	Tennessee Titans	2014
Cody Balogh	Chicago Bears	2008	Jordan Tripp	Miami Dolphins	2014
Kroy Biermann	Atlanta Falcons (5th)	2008	Zach Waggenman	Arizona Cardinals	2014
Dan Carpenter	Miami Dolphins	2008	Brock Coyle	Seattle Seahawks	2014
Lex Hilliard	Miami Dolphins	2008	Danny Kistier	Oakland Raiders	2014
J.D Quinn	Miami Dolphins	2009	Travon Van	Ottawa Redblacks	2015
Michael Stadnyk	Saskatchewan Rough Riders	2009	Ben Roberts	Tennessee Titans	2016
Colt Anderson	Minnesota Vikings	2009	Tyrone Holmes	Jacksonville Jaguars	2016
Cole Bergquist	Saskatchewan Rough Riders	2009	Jamaal Jones	San Diego Chargers	2016
Colin Cow	Cincinnati Bengals	2009	Jeremiah Kose	Ottawa Redblacks	2016
Marc Mariani	Tennessee Titans (7th)	2010	Jr Nelson	Kansas City Chiefs	2017
Steve Pfahler	Tennessee Titans	2010	Caleb Kidder	Minnesota Vikings	2017
Shann Shillinger	Atlanta Falcons	2010	Ryan McKinley	Tennessee Titans	2018
Levi Horn	Chicago Bears	2010	Dylan Cook	Tampa Bay Buccaneers	2022
Chase Reynolds	Seattle Seahawks	2011	Samori Toure	Green Bay Packers	2022
Jimmy Wilson	Miami Dolphins (7th)	2011			



Players in the NFL CFL AFL USFL

Carroll College

Dan Rambo	New York Giants	1976	Bubba Bartlett	Houston Texans	2010
Casey Fitzsimmons	Detroit Lions	2003	Josh James	Green Bay Packers	2016



Players in the NFL CFL AFL USFL

Montana Tech

Don Heater	St. Louis Rams	1972	Ryan Jones	Baltimore Ravens	2014
Buddy Walsh	Dallas Cowboys	1975	Hunter Spartz	New England Patriots	2022



Players in the NFL

Northern Montana College

Robert Lonning Pittsburgh Steelers 1968





Players in the NFL CFL AFL
Rocky Mountain College

Chris Horn Kansas City Chiefs 1996 Andre McCullough Washington Redskins 2016

Players from Montana High Schools
Attended out of state colleges and then made the NFL

James Bertoglio	Meaderville/Columbus Tiger	1926
Francis Cope	Anaconda/Santa Clara/ New York Giants	1938
Victor Lindscog	Roundup HS/Stanford U/Philadelphia Eagles	1942
Frank Akins	Dutton/Washington State/Washington Redskins	1943
Kenneth Snelling	Musselshell/USCA/Green Bay Packers	1943
Earl "Pruney" Parsons	Helena HS/USC/49ers	1946
Laurie Niemi	Red Lodge HS/Washington State/Redskins	1949
Edward Barker	Dutton/Washington State/Pittsburgh Steelers	1953
Wayne Hawkins	Jordon HS/Pacific University/Oakland Raiders	1960
Bob "Spud" McCulloch	Helena HS/U of Colorado/Denver Broncos	1962
Edward Cummings	Anaconda/New York Jets	1964
Bill Glennon	Billings West/Washington/Pittsburgh	1968
Edward Breeding	Billings/Washington Redskins	1970
Rick Ogle	Bozeman HS/Colorado/St. Louis Cardinals	1971
Keith Workman	Billings/Nebraska/Green Bay Packers	1972
Steve Sweeney	Bozeman HS/U of California/Oakland Raiders	1973
Wayne Baker	Plains/San Francisco 49ers	1975
Pat Donovan	Helena HS/Stanford/Dallas Cowboys	1975
Vince Wagner	Billings West/NMC/Minnesota Vikings	1977
Donald Schwartz	Billings/Washington State/New Orleans Saints	1978
Mike Friede	Havre/U of Indiana/Detroit Lions	1980
Rick Dennison	Kalispell/CSU/Denver Broncos	1982
Thomas Neville	Fresno State/Green Bay Packers	1986
Kevin Sweeney	Bozeman HS/Fresno State/Dallas Cowboys	1987
John Friesz	Missoula HS/U of Idaho/San Diego Chargers	1990
Mitch Donahue	Billings West/Wyoming/San Francisco 49ers	1991
Shane Collins	Bozeman HS/Arizona State/Washington Redskins	1992
Joe Cummings	Missoula HS/U of Wyoming/San Diego Chargers	1996
Jack Stipech	Anaconda/Washington Redskins	1996
Ryan Leaf	CMR HS/Washington State/San Diego Chargers	1998
Travis Dorsch	Bozeman HS/Purdue/Cincinnati Bengals	2002
Dwan Edwards	Columbus HS/Oregon State/Baltimore Ravens	2002
Brock Osweiler	Kalispell/Arizona State/Denver Broncos	2012
Dillon Donahue	Billings West/West Georgia/New York Jets	2017

Players & Coaches from Montana who coach or coached in the NFL/CFL

Craig Dickenson	NFL/CFL Coach	Andre Patterson	Minnesota Vikings
Dave Dickenson	Calgary Stampeders	Bobby Petrino	Atlanta Falcons
Dennis Erickson	San Francisco 49ers	Bruce Read	Montreal Alouettes
Tim Hauck	Philadelphia Eagles	Marv Sunderland	NFL Scout
Monty Mornhingweg	Baltimore Ravens	Jim Sweeney	MSU/Fresno State
Bob O'Billovich	Ottawa Rough Riders	Brock Sunderland	GM - Edmonton Elks
Dane Storrusten	NFL Films		



MOST OUTSTANDING PLAYER Roger Silvernale Memorial Trophy *Est. 1965*

- 1965 Dick Wilson, Butte
- 1966 Paul Schafer, C.M. Russell
- 1967 Roger Fincher, Kalispell
- 1968 Gary Fox, Billings West
- 1969 John Emmert, Kalispell
- 1970 Bill Ballowe, Great Falls High
- 1971 Duane Walker, Malta
- 1972 Greg Gates, Bozeman
- 1973 Jim Tice, Great Falls Central
- 1974 Bruce Carlson, Great Falls High
- 1975 Scott Hoard, Great Falls High
- 1976 Frank Damberger, Cut Bank
- 1977 Art West, C.M. Russell
- 1978 Terry Idler, Malta (off.)
Bob Morasko, Glendive (def.)
- 1979 Bob Petrino, Helena Capital (off.)
Dave Carriger, Butte (def.)
- 1980 Dudley Scott, Bozeman (off.)
Wayne Berard, Missoula Sentinel (def.)
- 1981 Bob Connors, Glasgow
- 1982 Clete Linbarger, Conrad (off.);
Jim Huggins, Missoula Hellgate (def.)
- 1983 Mike Stanger, Helena Capital (off.)
Ron Kenney, Helena Capital (def.)
- 1984 Shaun Shahan, Billings West (off.)
Jon Wanago, GFHS (def.)
- 1985 Tim Nielson, Havre (off.)
Don Mahoney, C.M. Russell (def.)
- 1986 Jody Farmer, Libby (off.)
Derek Whiddon, Missoula Big Sky (def.)
- 1987 Steve Haugeberg, Glendive (off.)
Wayne Thompson, Forsyth (def.)
- 1988 Si Ryan, Billings West (off.)
Shane Maharg, Helena Capital (def.)
- 1989 Bill Cockhill, Helena Capital (off.)
O.J. Nybo, Helena High (def.)
- 1990 Brad Martell, Billings West (off.)
Jason Welnel, Sidney (def.)

- 1991 Dave Dickinson, C.M. Russell (off.)
Jeff Ellis, Billings Skyview
Yohanse Manzanarez, GFHS
Jory Thompson (def.)
- 1992 Mark Sherman, C.M. Russell (off.)
Karl Borge, Conrad (def.)
- 1993 Josh Paffhausen, Butte (off.)
Jake Dennehy, Missoula Hellgate (def.)
- 1994 Mark Hamilton, Columbus (off.)
Blaine Stimac, GFHS (def.)
- 1995 Dallas Neil, GFHS
Paul Mocko, Missoula Hellgate
- 1996 Jeramiah Butenschoen, Billings Skyview
Jarod Tacco, Billings Skyview
- 1997 J.D. Emmert, Helena Capital
- 1998 Jeff Nkolaisen, Plentywood
- 1999 Matt Garreffa, Billings Central
- 2000 Greg Carothers, Helena Capital
- 2001 Tyler Thomas, Dillon
- 2002 Pete Sloan, Kalispell Flathead
- 2003 Brandon Dwyer, Kalispell Flathead
- 2004 Josh Saunders, Great Falls High
- 2005 Shawn Lebsock, Billings Skyview
- 2006 Matt Komac, Helena High
- 2007 Clark Cranford, Huntley Project
- 2008 Rick Haluszka, Harlem
- 2009 Michael King, Helena Capital
- 2010 Shay Smithwick-Hann, Glacier
- 2011 Tanner Roderick, Bozeman
- 2012 Chad Newell, Billings Senior
- 2013 Quinn McQueary, Manhattan
- 2014 Jared Trinastich, Columbia Falls
- 2015 Dalton Palmer, Fairfield
- 2016 Luke May, Whitefish
- 2017 Nathan Dick, Billings Senior
- 2018 Garrison Rothwell, C.M. Russell
- 2019 Mitch Norslien, Lewistown
- 2021 Colter Janacaro, Missoula Big Sky
- 2022 Tyson Rostad, Hamilton
- 2023 Jarret Wilson, Polson

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HISTORY OF THE MONTANA EAST-WEST SHRINE GAME (SINCE 1947)

Founders, who presented the first game on August 24, 1947, didn't have the slightest inkling that what they had started would turn out to be the "granddaddy of 'em all." But that is what happened. It is one of the oldest games of its kind-the Montana East-West Shrine Game is the longest continuous Shrine game in the U.S.

The game began over 70 years ago when the "Big Red" of the West defeated the "Golden East" by a 33-13 margin with Missoula's Tommy Kingsford fancy-footing for the West. The colors of the uniforms had been selected by the original Game Committee - red trimmed with gold for the West, and gold trimmed with red for the East - and these colors have been maintained to this day.

After the first game was presented, under almost insurmountable odds and on a "break even" basis, the coaches urged that the Committee make the contest an annual project. The Committee agreed and the game was incorporated by the late Roger Silvernale, the game's founder and first chairman.

Incorporation didn't solve the myriad of problems that the game faced on the pitfall-laden road into the future. But it welded the determination of the game's pioneers who fostered the determination and desire during even the darkest hours.

From the standpoint of the contest itself, the game was on a pretty even basis for the first few years, but in the early 1960's the West began to dominate play. The East battled back and the record now stands at East 37, West 30.

Over the years the game rosters have read like a "Who's Who" of Montana football. Great Falls' Joe Cloidt, who became an All-American for the Washington Huskies, starred in the first game. Dick Gregory, former Billings flash, scored the East's lone touchdown in

the second game while Gene Carlson, former coach at the University of Montana, and Bob Yurko, a Great Falls pharmacist, starred in Game No. 3.

Big Ed Kalafat, cage star for the Minnesota Gophers and later the Lakers pro club, was a 1950 selection from Anaconda and Tom Parac of Lewiston, former athletic director of the Montana State Bobcats, also was selected.

Butte's Jack Killingstad ran 90 yards for what he thought was a touchdown during the 1951 game, only to have it erased by an offside penalty. Butte's Jim Janhunen and Fort Benton's Moe Embleton appeared in the 1952 edition. With each passing year the crowds grow bigger and the total donation to the hospitals increased.

Pat Monno of Anaconda scored three touchdowns in the 1953 game for 18 points - the most scored by an individual in the game's history. This mark was later tied by Helena's burly Bob McCullough in 1958; Billings' West's Ken Hustad in 1968; and Jody Farmer of Libby in 1986.

A star of the 1991 game was Dave Dickenson from CMR, who later became an All-American Quarterback for the Montana Grizzlies and an MVP in the Canadian Football League in 2000. Future Montana Grizzlies and NFL stars Colt Anderson (Butte/Philadelphia Eagles/Indianapolis Colts) and Kroy Biermann (Hardin/Atlanta Falcons) played in the 2004 game. All Pros Marc Mariani (Havre/Tennessee Titans/Chicago Bears) 2005 and Dan Carpenter (Helena/Buffalo Bills) 2004 participated in the game as well as Bobcat All-American Dane Fletcher (Bozeman/New England Patriots/Tampa Bay Buccaneers) 2005. The list goes on.

In the 2006 game, Andrew Selle of Billings West and Matt Komac from Helena High staged

a quarterback dual that tied a record for combined points scored (76).

In 2007, Clark Cranford from Huntley Project capped a fourth quarter comeback for the East with a game-winning touchdown late in the game.

It was in 1956 that Roger Silvernale, the man who planted the seed for the classic and nurtured it to maturity, turned over the reins to Leroy (Chink) Seymour who had worked on the contest from its beginning.

In 1961 the game's founder died and, in his name and in his honor, two fine young athlete's will be named for the the "Roger Silvernale Memorial Award." The award established in 1965 is awarded to the contest's outstanding performers.

The following were chairman and co-chairman: E.F. Gianotti (1964); Bill Loney, Pat Goodover (1970); Bill Loney, Louis Rivera (1974); Bill Loney, Jerry Evans (1987); Dudley James, Jerry Evans (1989); Jerry Evans; Don Bisgard (1990); Jerry Evans (1993); Ev Joslyn; Jerry Evans (1999-2007); Dale Gorman (2009); AE "Turtle" Johnson (2010); Dennis Lindsay (2011); Bill Thomas (2012); AE "Turtle" Johnson (2013); Paul Lechner (2014)

This year will be the 69th Annual Montana East-West Shrine Game - may it last forever! The game has reached maturity without the loss of dedication by the countless, nameless people who share in making it a success. Over one million dollars has been donated to the Spokane Shrine Hospital.

And thanks to the young stars, coaches and officials - some of whom drive hundreds of miles for the honor of donating their services - the brilliance of the presentation has not diminished one iota from the "Good Old Days." "Over 70 Years of Excellence"

Montana Football Trivia Answers



1. Charles Dillon, Wyola
2. Jerry Kramer, Jordan
3. Joe Montana, Ismay
4. Boston
5. Dallas Cowboys



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