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Ex-Grizzlies Mike Smith, Warren Hill to coach east squad in annual shrine tilt

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A pair of former Montana Grizzly football standouts, Warren Hill and Mike Smith, will get a taste of coaching Aug. 20 when their East squad goes into action against the West in the annual Montana East-West Shrine Football Classic for selected high school graduates.

Hill was a defensive and offensive star for the Grizzlies for three years, seeing action during his college career at wingback, tailback, split end, quarterback and defensive safety. Defense was his specialty.

The Billings native played freshman football at the University of Wyoming under Coach Bob Devaney, who is now head coach at the University of Nebraska. He then transferred to Montana, where he played for three seasons, all under Coach Hugh Davidson.

Last season, Hill completed 10 passes for 179 yards to lead the Grizzlies. He was fourth in total offense, third in pass receiving (five for 83 yards), tops in kickoff returns (24 for 22.9-yards average) and first in punt returns (18 for 183 total yards).

Smith, from Olympia, Wash., played for two years at Montana after transferring Grays Harbor Junior College in Aberdeen, Washington. He was a linebacker alongside small college All-American Wayne Harrington in 1965, and led Grizzly linebackers in 1966. He intercepted one pass from his linebacking slot last season.

Hill, who now lives in Denver, Colo., stopped in Missoula Tuesday and Wednesday en-route to Great Falls. "I'm really honored and excited about getting this opportunity to work in coaching, and I know Mike is, too," he said.

Smith is completing Army ROTC Summer Camp in Washington before he will travel to Great Falls.