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Grizzlies have many Montanans

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GRIZZLIES HAVE
MANY MONTANANS

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MISSOULA-- **Information Services • University of Montana • Missoula, Montana 59801 • (406) 243-2522**

Spring football drills started last Tuesday at the University of Montana and Grizzly coach Jack Swarthout is pleased with the turnout.

More than eighty grid prospects reported for the first week's sessions including 29 lettermen returning from the 1969 undefeated championship team.

Swarthout said while he was pleased with the number of men that suited up for the practices, there are a lot of holes that must be filled before next fall.

"We lost seven starters through graduation," he said "and these men are not easy to replace."

The biggest gap left by seniors is in the offensive unit. Five men including quarterback Ray Brum leave the Missoula university with degrees this year. Three hopefuls are fighting it out for the signal callers job--veteran Steve Caputo, freshman Elroy Chong and transfer Gary Berding.

The rest of the backfield offensively looks about the same as it did in 1969 with All-American Les Kent and Jeff Hoffman at fullback and Anaconda's Casey Reilly and Arnie Blancas running out of the halfback spots.

Swarthout said the backfield has some added strength in Monte Severs, a freshaan fullback from Butte, Sparky Kottke, a Great Falls halfback and Jim Schillinger, a Vida, Mont., halfback.

The offensive interior line also is a question mark at Montana in 1970. Last season the Tips landed three of the five interior linemen on the All-Big Sky squad (Tuufuli Uperesa, Bill Gutman and John Stedham) and all three were seniors.

Two Butte prospects, Andy Antonovich and freshman Ron Richards, along with Great Falls' Barry Darrow are prime contenders for the vacated spots; however, they will have to battle veterans Steve Okoniewski, Len Johnson and John Lugville.

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The other offensive position open is the split receiver post. Kalispell's Doug Bain is an honors graduate and veteran Tom McMahon, Butte's Glen Welch and Tom Bodwell are prime contenders for the slot.

Jim DeBord is back at the tight end position but he will have to contend with Missoula's Dean Hovdey and Bodwell/^{who}are pushing the Pasco, Wash. starter.

Defensively, the Grizzlies have nine of eleven veterans returning. The only senior losses were defensive end John Taloluto and All-Conference cornerback Roy Robinson, a Glasgow native. Robinson has a pro contract with the Atlanta Falcons.

Returning are All-Big Sky linemen Jim Nordstrom, Missoula's Larry Stranahan and Larry Miller and All-Conference linebacker Tim Gallagher of Kalispell. Linebackers Bill Sterns, Marty Frustaci and Bill Hickerson also are back but so are a host of freshmen hopefuls trying to gain a berth at the posts. Butte's Jesse Woods and Kalispell's Terry Pugh lead the pack.

The defensive backfield is loaded with Montana prospects. Veteran starters Pat Schruth, Billings, Pat Dolan and Bob Guptill, Great Falls and Mick Dennehy, Butte are back to team up with All-American Karl Stein, San Anselmo, Calif and Washington's John Waxham. Transfers Lonzie Jackson and Dean Dempsey and Anaconda's Bob Todorovich are prime contenders.

Swarthout concluded that he wants to have a fine spring practice and find the best twenty two men for starting positions. "That kind of competition is what makes great football teams."

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