

PAUL SMITH

He was one of the most sought after seniors in 1963, having played tackle and guard for the Roswell Coyotes. He was an accomplished athlete: he earned letters in football (3 years), basketball (2 years), and track and field (3 years). He was named to both the All-District and All-State teams and was named "Lineman of the Year" his senior year.

The University of New Mexico recruited him, a raw-boned 237 lb. young man, recognizing his potential. He had a great start as a sophomore and when fall practice began, he started as an offensive end. He was soon shifted to tackle where he would develop skills which would attract the Denver Broncos. At the end of his sophomore year he was one of three sophomores to be named to the All-WAC Team. He was also recognized by the United Press International as a 1st Team All WAC, as well as becoming the 1st sophomore ever to be awarded the school's lineman of the year award. The following year he was named to second team All-WAC as an interior lineman but he had already caught the eye of the NFL.

During his two years as a Lobo, he was credited with 52 unassisted tackles, 112 assisted, five blocked points, two fumble recovers, and a pass deflection. These impressive numbers enabled him to earn the J.H. Golightly Award (UNM's Top defensive player) in 1965. The Denver Broncos drafted him in 1968 - 9th round - and he was to become the first 10 year man in Bronco history. He played 13 years for Denver, establishing a record until it was broken by Billy Thompson. During this period, Paul had two back to back Pro-Bowl appearances as he led Denver to establish its' reputation for defensive excellence. He also played in Denver's Super Bowl game in 1977.

He was inducted into the "Ring of Fame" in 1986 along with quarterback Frank Tripucka and Charlie Johnson, a NMSU All-American in 1960. John Ralston, his head coach, once said, "Smith was the finest defensive tackle in professional football."

In his career at Denver, he played 134 games (13 years) and posted 55 sacks, sixth most on the Bronco's all-time list. He was presented the Earl Hartman Memorial Award (Denver Bronco's outstanding defensive player).

Paul "Chic" Smith died on March 14, 2000. He was the son of Mrs. Charlie Smith of Dallas, Texas.