

Ed Smith

Member of the National Hall of Fame
Class of 2009



Ed Smith was imbued with the kind of personal aspirations intimated by Sam Smiles it, it as being like the brilliance of the sun. As we proceed towards creates a longer shadows over the burdens of our past, casting them well behind us, removing them from the rich promises held for us by a limitless future. In pursuance of such a future and laden with such hope, he defeated all the burdens of his past to carve out for himself all eminent place in Bahamian Sports history. This he accomplished by becoming the first Bahamian drafted to play football in the National Football League (NFL). He embellished such a historic feat by making his teams starting roster, retaining that lofty status over a sustained period in the Rocky Mountains of Denver.

In 1963, Smith began his introduction to competitive sport as a multi-sport athlete at St. Augustine's College under the tutelage of revered coach and sports administrator, Deacon Lou Adderley. Although introduced to the rudiments of football during that school's vast intramurals programme. His first affections though were basketball and track & field, in spite of which grounding took place in football so that when he matriculated to high school in Denver, Colorado in 1966, he was able to recall all the tendencies acquired at the Big Red Machine, allowing him to win recognition as an outstanding defensive player.

Smith was such a disruptive force as a defensive end at George Washington High School in Denver that he was heavily recruited and eventually signed a scholarship offer with Colorado College. There he continued to excel until his graduation in 1972. In the ensuing period, he was such a force that he was named to the Kodak All American Defensive team in 1972.. He also summoned his earlier experience as a member of the local buccaneers Rugby Club to represent his college in Rugby, and this he did with such aplomb that he was voted to the Colorado Rugby. All Tournament team in 1971, a year in which he also represented The Bahamas at a championship tournament in Jamaica.

Smith established history by being drafted to play professional. He was selected by the Denver Broncos of the National Football League in 1973. There he became an instrumental player on a dominating defensive line that was assigned the nickname, "the Orange Crush, as much for their bright orange jerseys as for the reputation they gathered for regular meetings at the opposing Quarterback. After a successful career, he opted for early retirement as a result of a series of nagging injuries. He renounced his contract with the Broncos just prior to the start of the NFL's 1977 season.

Smith's professional career was to rejuvenate itself in the personage of his son Alex who was drafted by the NFL's Tampa Bay Buccaneers for whom he started as a rookie tight end, putting up statistics that qualified him as being among the best at his position among all those in the NFL. His daughter, Danielle, also continued his legacy, representing The Bahamas at the Carifta Track & Field championships in 2003 and 2004, having won the Colorado State Championships in the Discus and Shot Putt on two occasions.

Smith basked in the brilliance of the sun of success which he confidently approached, convinced as he was that his future was laden with hope that held bright promises for himself and his country. He proved correct on that score.