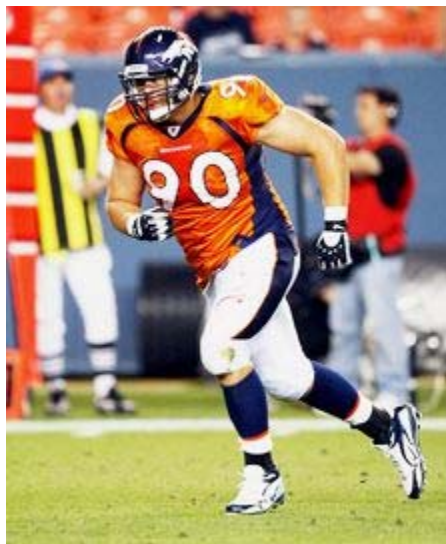




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Getting the chance to play for your childhood team a great experience for Geer and Garland



Ben Garland grew up watching the Denver Broncos play football. Now Garland, a Central graduate is getting the chance to prove he can play in the NFL with his childhood team. The rookie defensive end is hoping to get playing time in tonight's game against Pittsburgh so he can show what he can do to survive the first round of cuts.

By Allen Gemaehlich
Saturday, August 28, 2010

DENVER — Ben Garland and Riar Geer grew up watching and rooting for the Denver Broncos. Tonight, the two Western Slope players will try to make their cases to make the team.

The Broncos play the Pittsburgh Steelers in the third preseason game of the season at 6 tonight at Invesco Field at Mile High.

The first required cut date is Tuesday, and Garland and Geer hope to avoid being on that list. The final cut date is Sept. 4, with the regular season starting Sept. 9.

"It's hard to put into words," Geer said. "Walking out on the field for the first time being a Broncos fan wearing a Broncos jersey, it was absolutely awesome. I had to step back for a minute and get myself refocused on the game instead of all the outside stuff.

"It's that moment a dream kind of came true. It was a crazy experience. At the same time, I want to make this team so bad. I had to make myself stop being happy and get into football mode."

With their families in the stands, Geer and Garland suited up in Broncos orange and played against Detroit on Aug. 21 at Invesco Field.

"It's an amazing, unbelievable experience to be out here with the veteran players and all the guys out here," Garland said. "Playing at Invesco Field is a dream come true. It was louder, more exciting. It was everything you imagined watching as a little kid."

Geer played at Invesco at the University of Colorado, when the Buffs played Colorado State, but Saturday was only the second time Garland was in the stadium. Last fall, one of Garland's friends had tickets to a Bronco game.

He never imagined he'd be playing on the field one year later.

"I was thinking about graduating, becoming an Air Force pilot and starting my career that way," the defensive lineman said. "I want an opportunity to be an Air Force officer, and I have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to play in the NFL. It's tough.

"The NFL is not guaranteed and a long career in the Air Force is not guaranteed. Both are challenging and hard to do."

The Air Force Academy graduate has until April to decide whether he'll apply for early leave or start pilot training.

Garland (6-foot-5, 275 pounds) is required to serve a 5-year commitment with the Air Force, but after two years he can apply to be released early from active duty. He could serve the remaining three years later as a reserve.

If he doesn't apply for early leave, he has a 10-year commitment, beginning with pilot training.

Although Garland is in the midst of tryouts with the Broncos, he is still required to work in the Air Force strength and conditioning division.

Garland found a familiar face in Broncos camp in Geer. The two played against each other in high school.

"We hung out, talked about Grand Junction some and old times playing (high school football)," Garland said.

Geer has bumped into other former Buffaloes and is learning from another former CU tight end, Daniel Graham.

"Dan's been great," Geer said. "He gives me a lot of pointers and is willing to see me succeed. He's helped me with my blocking. I'm a big fan of Daniel Graham.

"It's almost unreal how things worked out for me. I'm definitely blessed."

Although Geer (6-4, 250) is fourth on the depth chart with Nathan Overbay and newly acquired Kory Sperry, a Pueblo native, he's getting a lot of snaps with Graham and Richard Quinn out with injuries.

"People are fighting for their jobs constantly," Geer said. "Any chance you get to be on the field, you have to be ready to go. You have to know your stuff and be ready to play at a very high level, physical level."

A quarterback in high school, Geer has shown the ability to change positions and succeed. If it takes another position change to make it in the NFL, so be it.

"Whatever I have to do to make it in the NFL," he said. "If they tell me to block or to play fullback, I'm willing to throw my body out there to make the team.

"It's a great opportunity to show what I can do, if not with this team, at least I have some game film to show to some other teams. That's a nice bonus."

Geer could find himself at least on the practice squad if he proves he is an adequate blocker to go with his pass-catching skills.

"I have a lot of work to do," he said. "It's a very tough game. I definitely had some good plays, but I definitely had some very bad plays I wish I could have back. I've got to learn from my mistakes and try to make myself better."

Work ethic goes a long way toward surviving the league-mandated cuts.

"I would say, do things that take no talent," Garland said of his advice to young players with NFL dreams. "Work harder than everyone else. If you see someone working harder than you, work a little harder.

"Pay attention, focus on the small things. If you do those things, that's what gets you noticed. That's what I learned in the Air Force. Work hard at absolutely everything you do."

The Washington Post

E. Henry Knoche, 85; a key player in the intelligence game

By T. Rees Shapiro
Sunday, August 29, 2010; C06

One of the leading scorers on the University of Colorado's basketball team in the 1940s was E. Henry Knoche, a limber, 6-foot-4 center, who averaged 18 points a game for the Buffaloes. In 1947, he was among the first players picked in the inaugural draft of the league that would become the NBA.

He was selected by the Pittsburgh Ironmen, but the team, about to go out of business, sold his contract to the New York Knicks. Spying a financial opportunity, Mr. Knoche attempted to negotiate his salary with the Knicks.

The star player demanded \$2,500. The Knicks said no deal.

So ended Mr. Knoche's basketball career. He went to work instead as a Navy intelligence officer, a position he parlayed into a job with the CIA. By the end of his career, Mr. Knoche had risen to acting director -- a position he held for about seven weeks under President Jimmy Carter -- and was party to the country's deepest secrets.

Mr. Knoche kept those secrets safe until he died of congestive heart failure July 9 at a hospital in Denver, where he lived in retirement. He was 85.

After Navy service in World War II and Korea,

Mr. Knoche (pronounced KNOCK-ee) joined the CIA in 1953 as an analyst fluent in Russian and the Fuzhou dialect of Chinese.

Mr. Knoche never served in an operational capacity and lacked clandestine experience. But his colleagues respected him for his efficiency and work ethic, and he received steady promotions within the agency.

On July 7, 1976, Mr. Knoche became the deputy director of the CIA under George H.W. Bush, responsible for day-to-day operations. When Carter took office in 1977, Bush resigned, and Mr. Knoche became acting director.

One of the first things Carter did as president was ask Mr. Knoche to brief him on the 10 most sensitive operations the CIA had underway.

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The Washington Post

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A few days later, at a meeting with the Senate Select Intelligence Committee, a member asked Mr. Knoche, under oath, to repeat everything that he had told the president.

Mr. Knoche agreed, but on the conditions that the senators expel their staff members and let the room be swept for wiretaps three times.

Then, against the advice of his lieutenants, Mr. Knoche laid out in detail the 10 covert operations.

According to Knoche family lore, a shaken Joseph R. Biden Jr., then a junior committee member, approached Mr. Knoche after the briefing and told him a story.

"When I first became a senator, an old friend told me there would be things I would learn in this job that I wish I never knew," Biden, a first-term Democrat from Delaware, told Mr. Knoche. "I never understood what my old friend meant, but now I know."

Enno Henry Knoche was born Jan. 14, 1925 in Charleston, W.Va. He attended the University of Colorado as part of the Navy's V-12 program, an accelerated college curriculum to develop officers during the war, and he graduated, after the war, from Washington and Jefferson College near Pittsburgh.

During his CIA career, Mr. Knoche became accustomed to meeting with presidents at the

White House. But according to Mr. Knoche's family, meeting John F. Kennedy for the first time was a nerve-rattling experience for the seasoned intelligence officer.

During the Cuban Missile Crisis, Mr. Knoche was dispatched to the president's home in Massachusetts to brief the commander in chief on the latest developments.

The morning of their introduction, Mr. Knoche stood in front of the mirror in his hotel room, practicing how he would greet the president, who was one of his idols.

"Good MOR-ning, Mr. President." He said out loud to himself. "Mr. President, GOOD morning."

When he arrived at the Kennedy home, Mr. Knoche was stunned to find the president, who behind the scenes suffered from chronic back pain, with his mouth clenched in agony, his body tightly wrapped in a brace.

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The Washington Post

E. Henry Knoche, 85; a key player in the intelligence game

Mr. Knoche greeted his hero by saying, "What the hell happened to you?"

He married the former Angie Papoulas in 1947. One of their sons, Pete Knoche, died in 1992. Besides his wife, of Denver, survivors include four sons, John Knoche and Randy Knoche, both of Craig, Colo., Chris Knoche of Annandale and Jeff Knoche of Denver; and nine grandchildren.

Mr. Knoche served as acting director until Adm. Stansfield M. Turner was confirmed to lead the agency. Mr. Knoche retired from the CIA on Aug. 1, 1977. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, one of the country's highest honors.

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