Lights announce first recruits
Former Blue Ponies Holdsclaw and Evans among new MSU-N football signees
By George Ferguson
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The new semester has begun, and soon enough, the Montana State University-Northern football team will be back on the field for spring ball.

And the Lights, who are coming off a tough, but productive 4-6 season, have announced the first wave of recruits for the 2014 recruiting class.

Seven of the eight new Northern recruits are already enrolled at MSU-N and will participate in spring drills in March and April. And two of them are homegrown products.

Former Havre Blue Ponies Thurman Holdsclaw and C.J. Evans will both be wearing maroon and gold next fall. Holdsclaw is coming to Northern after spending the fall as a walk-on with the University of Montana football team. The 6-2, 200-pound wide receiver is a two-time Class A All-State and Central A All-Conference selection, who also played in last summer’s Montana East-West Shrine Game.

This will be Evans’ second stint with the Lights. As a quarterback, Evans originally signed with Northern out of Havre High, before transferring to Minot State. Evans was the Beavers’ opening day starter two seasons ago. At 6-1, 190-pounds, Evans is slated to play defensive back at MSU-N and will have two years of eligibility.

The Lights also picked up another UM walk-on in 6-4, 225-pound tight end David Cross. Local fans will remember Cross, who was a beast of a player on the 2013 Hot Springs team which beat Big Sandy for the six-man state championship. Cross was a First-Team All Six-Man selection and was also a Shrine Game participant.

Northern added yet another big tight end in former Billings West standout Ty Webb (6-5, 240). Webb was a Class AA All-State player as a senior in 2012, as well as a three-sport standout. He too has four years of eligibility remaining.

MSU-N also added several key defensive transfers, including Matt Lamberton, a 6-2, 245-pound middle linebacker from San Diego. Lamberton transfers to Northern from Orange Coast College where he was an All-Conference performer.

Joining Lamberton are a pair of NCAA Division II transfers. Tucker Dunn, a 6-2, 205-pound linebacker from Chandler, Ariz., comes to Northern from the University of Colorado-Mesa, a team which played Montana State last fall. Also coming to Northern is Will Hatley, a 6-3, 250-pound defensive end from Western Oregon University. The Wolves have become a strong DII power and have played at the University of Montana in the past.

Rounding out the first batch of recruits is Jefferson Aumnua, a 6-3, 320-pound nose guard from Auburn, Wash. Aumnua comes to Northern from the College of Siskiyous in California, where he was an All-Conference performer.

“We are very excited to announce the signings of these eight student-athletes. Most of these young men have all transferred in to Northern this semester and are enrolled in classes here this spring,” MSU-N head coach Mark Samson said. “We have signed some very talented kids that not only are good athletes but good people as well. Five of these young men were honors students at their previous university or junior college. We have addressed some immediate needs with these young men and some of them will have the ability to come in and compete right away for playing time. We are extremely excited about the caliber of
players that we have brought in. These players will definitely fill some holes that we have in certain positions and provide some great depth for our team.”

“It’s always great to have a couple hometown kids come back and join our program with Thurman and C.J.,” he added. “We feel our recruiting has gone very well so far and look forward to signing a lot of our high school recruits these next couple weeks.”

Samson expects to announce the first high school signings of the recruiting class in the coming days.