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Receiver's status up in the air

By Mike Reilly
Senior Reporter

Although knee injuries have deleted the starting wingback and possibly the starting split end for the upcoming season, Nebraska receivers coach Gene Huey remains optimistic because of their replacements.

"We have a lot of young people at the positions right now and it's important to get them some experience early so they can mature as the season progresses," Huey said.

Jason Gamble, who shared time with Scott Kimball at split end last year, is recovering from a knee injury he suffered in the Kansas game and could miss the entire year, Huey said.

"We're not sure if Jason is ready physically or academically yet," Huey said. "We just have to wait and see how his rehabilitation turns out."

Gamble, a sophomore from Santa Barbara, Calif., caught seven passes for 138 yards and scored two touchdowns in his first season with the Cornhuskers. He underwent surgery to repair ligament and cartilage damage in his knee and missed spring practice.

If Gamble doesn't return, junior walkon Robb Schnitzler will take over the starting spot, Huey said. He replaced Gamble in the starting lineup for the Oklahoma game and caught four

passes for 83 yards.

Another candidate for the split end position is redshirt sophomore Rod Smith. Smith was the No. 2 split end behind Schnitzler at the end of spring practice.

Huey also didn't rule out the possibility of moving Dana Brinson, a wingback, to split end.

"There's a possibility Brinson might play both spots," Huey said. "It depends on how fast he can learn two positions and his retention of it."

Pernell Gatson, the Husker's top prospect at wingback heading into spring drills last year until he was sidelined by a knee injury will definitely be out for the entire season, Huey said.

Right now, junior Roger Lindstrom has the most experience at wingback and will probably be Gatson's replacement, Huey said. Von Sheppard and Ray Nelson are also capable of handling the starting role, he said.

Seniors Todd Frain and Brian Hiemer alternated at tight end last year and ended spring practice tied for the No. 1 slot. They combined for 27 receptions for 392 yards and five touchdowns. Frain also caught a pair of touchdown passes in the Huskers' win over Louisiana State in the Sugar Bowl.

However, Hiemer died last week in University Hospital in Omaha after he

was injured by an apparent, self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head.

Hiemer was expected to report to Memorial Stadium the following day with the rest of the football team for strength and conditioning tests. Hiemer walked on at Nebraska after graduating from David City Aquinas High School.

Others Huey said would see some playing time at tight end this fall include sophomore redshirt Tom Banderas, Willie Griffin and Brian Moore.

"Banderas had a good spring practice," Huey said. "He's shown a lot of promise."

Sports page to introduce new features

Welcome to the welcome back issue of the Daily Nebraskan sports section. On the following pages you'll be reading about football and about volleyball and about football and about cross country and about football.

The Daily Nebraskan this semester will be introducing several new features to the sports page. One thing that you'll be reading is an occasional story off the Associated Press wire. We will continue to focus on local stories but the wire will allow us to give coverage to significant national stories that we think might be of interest to the readers.

The sports page will once again run The Bottom Ten. Steve Harvey's Bottom Ten has been featured in newspapers nationwide since he began the column nine years ago. The Bottom Ten tries to recognize programs that probably won't see the AP Top 20 in the next century or two. Harvey also has a bottom ten for professional football as well.

The sports page will also welcome back Bill Allen, who will write a bi-weekly column on whatever is bugging him.

The Daily Nebraskan will continue to cover the intramural sports with the Rec Scoreboard and will also cover intramural championships and special features.

In the fall we will also be paying close attention to both the volleyball and cross country teams. The volleyball team is the only champion in the history of the Big Eight conference. We will cover all their home matches as well as the Big Eight championships in Kansas City and the NCAA tournament if the Huskers are invited.

The cross country team has made great strides with Jay Dirksen as coach. They had been a perennial last place finisher in the conference meet but have replaced that tradition with high conference finishes for both the men's and women's teams. We will cover their home meet and will also cover the Big Eight championships at Columbia, Mo.

Later on in the semester, the hoops will begin at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. The women's team with Kelly Hill as coach had a successful recruiting campaign as did men's coach Moe Iba.

Playboy All-American pick Dave Hoppen is chasing Jerry Fort's school career scoring record. The Husker men also welcome back 1984-85 starters Brian Carr, Harvey Marshall and Bill Jackman.

The Cornhusker women return Maurice Ivy, Angie Miller and Stacy Imming from last year's starting five. Hill will bring in a 6-3 center as well as Nebraska All-State player Amy Stephens from Alliance. Stephens could give Nebraska outside scoring punch that it lacked at times last season.

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