

Gilman steps to the forefront to help NU's young tight ends

By Todd Walkenhorst
Staff Reporter

When tight end Mark Gilman reported for winter conditioning, he noticed something different.



Gilman

a 6-foot-3, 240-pound senior, took over the top spot.

Receivers coach Ron Brown said Alford and Shaw would be missed.

"We lost two very good tight ends," Brown said.

But Gilman is ready to accept his new role this fall.

"I feel more mature now," Gilman said. "I feel responsible for setting a good example. I have to go out and show the younger tight ends exactly what it takes to be a tight end here."

Brown said Gilman had improved and matured during the off-season, which should lead to a successful season.

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"Gilman was a very solid tight end last year. He also really is a great leader on our team right now, one of the hardest working guys we've had around here."

RON BROWN

Nebraska receivers coach

is a great leader on our team right now, one of the hardest working guys we've had around here.

"Size-wise he's really improved," Brown said. "I think he's at a weight now that he feels comfortable with; he's really stepped into a real comfort level."

Behind Gilman is a youthful crop of tight ends.

Sophomore Tim Carpenter is the only other letter winner at the position. Carpenter, a 6-foot-2, 230-pounder, is listed as the No. 2 tight end. Brown said was just as important as No. 1.

"Carpenter is the number two tight end right now," Brown said, "of course in our offense he's number one because we play two tight ends so often."

Despite the youth and inexperience, Gilman said, these tight ends have potential.

"Carpenter, I think is going to be a great player," Gilman said. "He worked pretty hard during the off-season. He's a big, strong kid."

"Teams don't know what to expect at tight end this year, because Carpenter can run and catch, and then if we play Sheldon Jackson or Vershan Jackson, they're receiving threats."

Gilman said the lack of name recognition of the other tight ends shouldn't disturb fans this year.

"Right now you don't really recognize the names, but they'll be household names in two years," Gilman said. "A huge program like this develops players, and when it's their turn to step up, they're ready to play."

Freshman Sheldon Jackson is optimistic about his chances for playing time this season.

"The one and two positions are pretty much a lock," Jackson said, "but three is a toss up."

Krondak

Continued from Page 11

ence is the whole size of the block and how quick everything is. It's a lot quicker than high school."

The Huskers were playing Saturday without senior outside hitter Billie Winsett, who sat on the bench resting a sore quadricep muscle.

Once Winsett returns, she will return to the top unit, joining returning senior starters, Weston and Johnson. Junior Jen McFadden, who rotated with Maria Hedbeck during the scrimmage, likely will start this season after sitting out much of 1994 with back and knee injuries.

Sophomore Lisa Reitsma appears ready to seize a starting role. The 6-4 left-hander, who came on strong at the end of her freshman campaign, pounded 11 kills during the scrimmage Saturday.

That leaves senior Kate Crnich and Krondak to fill the final position. Crnich split time with the top unit and the reserves on Saturday, while Krondak played all four games with the starters.

"Coming in as a freshman, to be working out with the top team," Krondak said, "you don't expect that."

No matter if Krondak begins Friday's match on the court or if she comes off the bench as a substitute, she said, nothing will match the feeling of playing in her first collegiate match.

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JAIME KRONDAK

NU volleyball player

ing," she said. "All the coaches have said I need to show a lot of court presence and need to have a lot of self confidence, to stand tall and kind of fake it sometimes."

After less than two weeks of practice, Krondak said she was beginning to feel comfortable on the court with the group of returning players. Workouts have been intense, she said, that's something she expected from the nation's second-ranked team.

"I guess if you are going to go in," she said, "you might as well just go in all at once. That way, everything will gel earlier in the season, rather than waiting halfway through it. Everybody is out there giving it their all, which is really good, because that's what we need for a national championship."

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