Secondary to have a new look

Kellem, Brown, Issac, and their 117 career starts have to be replaced

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Headlines
Key Losses: S Jeremy Kellem, S Kevin Brown, and CB Rod Issac. The threesome combined for 117 career starts. Key Returnees: CB Arness Ikner, FS Derrick Crumpton, SS Eric Russell

Battle to Watch (corner): The starting left corner job will be fun to watch in the fall between T.L. Edwards and Kenneth Gilstrap. Edwards had his first offseason at MT which has made him better and has him playing faster. Gilstrap is back to 100 percent and has unbelievable speed. Both are competitors and will battle to the very end.

Battle to Watch (safety): Derrick Crumpton and Eric Russell earned starting spots coming out of the spring but Denzell Guerra and Sammy Seamster are knocking on the door. It could end up with any of the four starting so the competition in the fall will be fierce.

Spring Standout: The standout among the corners was Chris Sharpe. The redshirt freshman played with a lot of confidence in the spring and will be exciting to watch. Coaches expect him to be in the mix. For the safeties, Eric Russell and Derrick Crumpton get the nod. Russell just loves to play the game and Crumpton took advantage of the opportunity. Both were consistent and took charge of the position.

Coach Bibee on the safeties
"I have guys who don't have a lot of experience but they have been in the program a long time.

(Derrick) Crumpton has played in 38 games and (Denzell) Guerra has competed in 26 games. We have a lot of competition which should promote hard work and an intense summer because they all see playing time and will fight for it. We are not starting from scratch."

Coach Ellis on the cornerbacks

"I thought everyone got better fundamentally and improved their knowledge of the game. They pushed each other and played with a purpose. This is a playmaking group and will be more technical than last year's unit. All are very versatile."

Players

Strong Safety

ERIC RUSSELL (Senior) - Coming off the best spring of any safety ... Loves to play the game ... Has similar ball skills to former player Jeremy Kellem ... A great athlete and a strong blitzer.

SAMMY SEAMSTER (r-Sophomore) - Played as a freshman then sat out last year to mature ... Possesses great overall tools ... Has exceptional strength, size, and speed ... Showed signs in the spring that he knows how to use his talents.

JUNO PRUDHOMM (Junior) - Missed about half the spring with an infection and conditioning suffered ... Has the ability to compete but needs a good summer to catch up ... Could see a lot of action on special teams.

Free Safety

DERRICK CRUMPTON (Senior) - On the field leader ... Has played a lot of good football the past two years and now is his time to shine ... Very physical ... Ready to be an every down player.

DENZELL GUERRA (r-Junior) - Is fighting for a starting job ... Was steady in the spring but will need to dedicate himself over the summer ... Is strongly in the mix.

Left Cornerback

T.L. EDWARDS (Senior) - A big, athletic, and physical corner ... Has great ball skills and has benefitted from his first offseason at MT ... Coming off a strong spring ... Needs to continue to redefine his technique.

KENNETH GILSTRAP (r-Sophomore) - Brings a lot of speed to the game, is competitive, and just loves to play ... Can play corner, in the nickel or dime package or as a kick returner ... Good overall athlete ... Just needs to regain his confidence after his injury.

CHRIS SHARPE (r-Freshman) - Can play a number or roles but is a natural corner ... Understands the game and is a tackling machine ... Knows angles and leverages ... Needs to continue building his strength.

Right Cornerback

ARNESS IKNER (Senior) - Pleasant surprise in the spring ... Plays with a chip on his shoulder, high intensity, and has a good understanding of the game ... Very fluid and compact ... Showed improvement from practice one of spring drills to practice 15 ... Needs to adjust to speed of the game at this level.

KHARI BURKE (r-Freshman) - Has great football pedigree and loves to play the game ... Possesses

great transition and body movements for the position ... Needs to learn the entire defensive scheme.

MARQUISE DIXON (r-Sophomore) - A utility player who can play all four spots in the secondary ... Tough, physical, and likes to mix it up ... Needs to keep developing his lower body strength.

Returners

*Bryan Armstrong r-Jr. S
7 Khari Burke r-Fr. CB
*William Carter r-Jr. CB
24 Derrick Crumpton Sr. S
26 Marquise Dixon r-So. CB
6 T.L. Edwards Sr. CB
Reginald Farmer r-So. S
18 Kenneth Gilstrap r-So. CB
Brandon Grady r-So. CB
31 Denzell Guerra r-Jr. S
36 Jajuan Harley Jr. CB
*Robert Hogg r-Jr. S
5 Arness Ikner Sr. CB
Tracy Mayes r-Jr. CB
42 Juno Prudhomm Jr. S
1 Eric Russell Sr. S
8 Sammy Seamster r-So. S
27 Chris Sharpe r-Fr. CB
Lee Woods r-Jr. S

Newcomers

21 Kevin Byard Fr. S
47 Rodney O'Neal Fr. CB
39 James Roberson Fr. S
41 Jared Singletary Fr. CB
*Nonscholarship

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