Frontier Conference Football Preview 2012: Tight ends
Plenty of tight end weapons in the league
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Wednesday, August 1st, 2012

On offense, the tight end position can be a forgotten one at times. But it isn’t ever forgotten to coaches and players, as it’s one of the most vital and unsung positions in football.

In the Frontier Conference, great tight ends have certainly been a staple. From former Chester/J-I and Carroll College great Casey Fitzsimmons to many, many more, tight ends have flourished in the Frontier over the years.

And heading into the 2012 season, the Montana State University-Northern Lights may have the next big thing in the form of the tight end as Brian Torgerson enters his junior season for the Lights. Torgerson (6-3, 240), a Helena, MT native has started 16 games for the Lights over the past two seasons and is a returning First-Team All-Conference selection. In 2011, Torgerson had 18 catches and averaged a stellar 10.3 yards per catch. Torgerson is a go-to option on short-yardage pass situations and is also an outstanding blocker, as evidenced in MSU-N’s stout running game. And all of that has added up to Torgerson being touted as a 2012 NAIA Preseason All-American.

During the 2011 season, few teams had as good a tight end as Eastern Oregon’s Dillon Bedford, a two-time NAIA All-American. But with Bedford gone, Torgerson and several others will step to the forefront at the big receiver position this season.

Montana Tech has an outstanding one in senior Leif Knatterud. Tech’s offense is predicated on running back Pat Hansen and Knatterud did plenty of blocking for him a year ago. But at 6-3 and 245 pounds, Knatterud is also a force in the passing game. A year ago, Knatterud caught 20 balls for 216 yards and one touchdown, and he with Tech’s offense now in its second year under a new scheme, Knatterud could be an even bigger threat in the passing game.

Over the years, UM-Western hasn’t been known to utilize the tight end in its passing game, but the Bulldogs come into 2012 with a good one in sophomore Kris Bragg. At 6-4 and 220 pounds, Bragg has the prototype size and speed to be one to watch this fall.

Carroll College, in many years, might have well been known as “Tight end U”, and the Saints return their top two tight ends from last season. Carroll didn’t throw often to either Cole Coba (6-3, 240) or Anthony Hogan (5-11, 225) a year ago, but the Saints were one of the best running teams in the nation and the duo had plenty to do with that. Both will be called on to block again this season for star running back Chance Demarias, but make no mistake, both Coba and Hogan have pass-catching abilities, and don’t be surprised if one, or both break out this fall.