



Cowboys sign OL Kosier

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IRVING, Texas -- The Dallas Cowboys opened free agency Saturday by signing versatile offensive lineman Kyle Kosier and re-signing lineman Andre Gurode.

The addition of Kosier is intriguing because of the ramifications it could have on Larry Allen.

Allen is due a \$2 million roster bonus on April 1 and would count \$7.5 million against the salary cap. If the Cowboys release him before the bonus deadline, they'd clear about \$3 million under the cap.

Playing for Detroit, Kosier started 11 games last season at left guard -- the spot Allen has manned in recent years in Dallas. That makes Kosier a possible replacement for Allen, the last link to the Cowboys' most recent Super Bowl team.

But Kosier also has started at right guard and both tackle spots, so he could be used elsewhere on the line, too. Rob Petitti struggled at right tackle last season, and the starters at left tackle (Flozell Adams) and right guard (Marco Rivera) are both coming back from injuries.

Whatever role the Cowboys envision for the 6-foot-5, 305-pound Kosier, they certainly think highly of him because he received a \$5 million signing bonus as part of a five-year, \$15 million contract.

Kosier broke in with San Francisco in 2002. He played right guard and left tackle as a rookie, then started 12 games at three different spots in 2003. He started every game for the 49ers in '04, six at right guard and 10 on the left side. He signed a one-year deal with Detroit, a move that paid off with this contract.

Gurode signed a one-year deal and likely will again battle Al Johnson for playing time at center.

Gurode was a regular at right guard the previous three seasons, but the Cowboys signed Rivera to replace him. He raised his value to coach Bill Parcells with his play at center in training camp, then ended up starting the final two games of last season in Rivera's place because of injury.

Dallas also was in talks Saturday with linebacker Akin Ayodele, who went to high school in Irving and has played the last four seasons for the Jacksonville Jaguars.