

Michael Schofield reshaping his image to Broncos' versatile Swiss army knife

By Cameron Wolfe

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Michael Schofield tries his best not to think about that chilly Sunday afternoon in Denver last December when he gave up four second-half sacks to Raiders outside linebacker Khalil Mack. It's the game that smeared Schofield's image among fans and media.

In the locker room after that 15-12 loss to Oakland, then-Broncos offensive tackle Tyler Polunbush embraced Schofield and told him, "I love you, man." Despite heavy criticism in the aftermath, Denver teammates and coaches stayed supportive of Schofield, who admitted he was having a tough time. But memories of such days fueled his desire to improve in the offseason.

Schofield is off to an impressive start this season, having earned a starting job at right guard on the Denver offensive line. It's a position switch that better utilizes his strengths and limits his weaknesses. And he may be the most important offensive lineman on a 3-0 team because of his versatility.

Schofield has moved out to right tackle for 63 plays and to left tackle for 13 plays because of injuries on the offensive line the past two games. And he is regaining believers among those who doubted him.

"It's hard. You try to not listen to the media. You try to not read the papers. But we're all on social media and it's near impossible to not hear the outside noise," Polunbush said. "He's a human being. You could see it. It hurt him. It hurt him to have some poor games. It hurt to know what other people are saying, but I can't stress enough how impressive his mental toughness and resolve is to be able to go through all that and come back this year and really be the glue that's holding everything together."

That sentiment is being echoed throughout the Denver coaching staff and among Schofield's teammates. Schofield used the spring and summer to work on his versatility while also competing with Ty Sambrailo, Darrion Weems and Connor McGovern for the starting job at right guard. He played guard and tackle while many of the starters went in and out with injuries. He was the constant.

"It really made me get back in the playbook to really know the offense," Schofield, a third-round pick in the 2014 draft, said of his struggles. "I think last year I was thinking too much about what do I do on this play and who's my assignment instead of just playing."

His experience starting 13 games at right tackle last season proved valuable for a team that suits up only seven offensive linemen each game, one being backup center James Ferentz. At his current primary position, right guard, Schofield is transitioning into a comfort zone facing bigger, stronger defensive linemen in a phone booth-sized area rather than the smaller, quicker defenders in limitless space when he plays tackle.

"Things happen a lot quicker (at guard) in short range," said Broncos offensive line coach Clancy Barone. "But Michael has picked that up very quickly. Michael's best football is still out there ahead of him."

Barone said a big key for Schofield was keeping on weight, which had been a problem for him because of his lean frame. Barone said Schofield came to training camp this summer weighing 310 pounds. More mass has helped Schofield do a better job battling stronger defenders inside.

Through three games, Schofield hasn't allowed a sack or been called for a penalty. And he has been a key blocker opening lanes in the Denver running game.

"He's killing it," said center Matt Paradis. "I've been proud of him. It's impressive. It's very hard to do. Even one position switch is really hard to do, and he's doing everything at a high level. People don't do that."

Said Polumbus: "Most NFL starters would have a small panic attack if you asked them to switch positions in the middle of the game to a position they haven't practiced all week."

Denver offensive coordinator Rick Dennison said he has coached only two players who have the versatility of Schofield on the offensive line — former Broncos Cooper Carlisle and Chris Kuper.

Schofield knows his struggles last season, when he gave up a total of 10 sacks, make it difficult to change the perception of him among fans. But he is doing his best to reshape his image.

"I hope I am," he said. "That's what I'm trying to do."

Slow start to fast track

A look at where starting right guard Michael Schofield has played on the Broncos' offensive line since coming to the NFL from the University of Michigan:

2014: Did not suit up

2015: Started 13 games at right tackle

2016: Started first three games at right guard; also played left tackle and right tackle

Critical comments

During his rough stretch last season, Michael Schofield received a large amount of criticism from media, fans and former players — most notably from former Broncos guard Mark Schlereth. Here is some of what was said about Schofield:

Mark Schlereth, on Denver radio station 104.3 The Fan in January

"You're saying Schofield might start? Lord have mercy. You have got to be kidding me. He doesn't belong in the NFL. He's not a backup in the NFL at this point in time."

"Confidence in this game is one of the greatest things you could have. When you lack confidence, man, it's miserable. When you lose your swag, it is hard to play. There is no possible way that that kid, as an offensive lineman, can walk out there and feel confident that he can get the job done."

"I'm not trying to bash the kid, because I know that he's trying hard. He's overmatched. There's some people that can't play at this level. At this point in his career, he doesn't belong in the game."

Broncos' offensive tackle Michael Schofield improves thanks to added weight

By Mike Klis

9News

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At no position did the Denver Broncos improve this offseason more than at offensive tackle.

They added left tackle Russell Okung and right tackle Donald Stephenson through free-agent deals that will pay them a combined \$11 million this season.

And returning starting right tackle Michael Schofield is better through added poundage.

After not playing a down during his rookie year of 2014 and three games into his second season of 2015, Schofield suddenly started playing every down through the final 16 games, including playoffs, last year because of injuries to first, Ryan Clady, and then Ty Sambrailo.

Schofield, a third-round draft pick out of Michigan, saw his weight drop from his listed 301 pounds to the 295-298 range last season.

His is up to a steady 308 pounds this offseason.

Playing mostly at his less experienced left tackle position this offseason, Schofield was one of the team's most improved players this spring.

"Last season I was kind of on the lighter side," Schofield said. "So this offseason I really focused on getting my weight up. And my girlfriend is living with me so she's been cooking a lot for me so that's been helping out a lot."

On paper, the Broncos are planning to start Okung at left tackle this season, Stephenson at right tackle, shift second-year tackle Ty Sambrailo to starting right guard and have Schofield serve as the game-day "swing" tackle.

With Okung sitting out team drills this offseason to recover from shoulder injury, the Broncos' coaching staff had Schofield work exclusively at left tackle during OTAs and minicamp.

"More positions you can play and everything, if I'm not the starter than you've got to be able to swing tackle," Schofield said. "I've got to be able to play everywhere."

Not that Schofield is conceding to the Broncos' grand plan.

"No way. I don't want to give up my starting spot," he said. "Definitely not. I'm going to be out there in camp trying to go 100 percent every time trying to win a starting spot."

Schofield had several clean games for the Broncos last season, and he was a consistently strong run blocker. His pass blocking, however, was vulnerable to certain matchups, most notably in a 15-12 home loss to the Oakland Raiders on Dec. 13 when he was burned for four of Khalil Mack's five sacks that day.

"It was definitely a roller coaster year last year," Schofield said. "I played really well in some games and obviously that one game I played really, really bad. It's a new year, a new me is what my mentality is this year. Just trying to get better every day."

Michael Schofield takes unusual path to Super Bowl with Denver Broncos

By Pat Disabato
Chicago Tribune
February 5, 2016

Michael Schofield had no interest in football growing up in Orland Park.

His sport of choice was baseball, and he was pretty darn good at it.

"Michael was a good first baseman," said Mike Schofield, his father and acting fire chief at the Orland Fire Protection District. "He hit left-handed. He was a very good player."

It wasn't until a fateful trip in sixth grade that a love affair with football would begin.

"Michael's younger brother Andrew played for the (Orland Park) Pioneers," Mike Schofield said, referring to the popular youth football program. "We went to pick up Andrew's equipment before the season started. Michael just happened to come for a ride with us. The coaches got to talking with him and that's when he decided to give football a try. Before that, he wanted no part of it."

Thirteen years later, Michael Schofield, 25, finds himself on football's biggest stage, starting on the offensive line for the Denver Broncos Sunday in Super Bowl 50 at Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, California.

The 6-foot-6, 301-pound Schofield will line up at right tackle for the Broncos as they take on the Carolina Panthers.

"It is surreal," said Kathy Schofield, Michael's mother. "To think how far Michael has come. I couldn't be more excited for him."

Michael Schofield will have one heck of a cheering section. Mike, Kathy and siblings Nicole, Stephanie, Kathleen, Jacqueline and Andrew, along with Michael's girlfriend Kendall Coyne, all will be in attendance. Yes, that's the same Kendall Coyne who played on the U.S. Women's Hockey Team in the 2014 Olympics.

Michael and Kendall are graduates of Sandburg, though they didn't begin dating until college.

How's that for a love story?

"She's a great girl," Mike Schofield said.

And, yes, in case you're wondering, Michael Schofield is picking up the entire tab for his family's trip to the Super Bowl. Not only is he talented, he's also generous.

"My wife and I are staying in the same hotel as the players," Mike Schofield said. "Our kids and Kendall are staying in a different hotel. It should be very exciting and a lot of fun."

Just think. If not for that ride-a-long to pick up Andrew's football gear, Michael Schofield might not have ever played football and this incredible family experience never would have occurred.

"That's what I always tell him," said Andrew Schofield, a 2010 Sandburg graduate who went on to play football at the University of South Dakota. "All this happened because of me (big laugh). He didn't know anything about football. He was terrible his first year with the Pioneers. He had no idea what he was doing. I'd say in eighth grade it started to click for him."

When Michael Schofield arrived at Sandburg his freshman year, he played tight end and on the defensive line.

His sophomore season, the coaching staff approached him about moving to offensive tackle.

"We had to talk him into switching positions," said Sandburg coach Dave Wierzal, who resigned in December 2015. "He wanted to play tight end and we had a need at tackle. Once he committed to it, he was something else."

By the time Michael Schofield completed his sophomore season, college scholarship offers began pouring in. He would eventually commit to Michigan, but not before developing into an all-state offensive lineman at Sandburg.

He was a man among boys at the high school level, a gentle giant with exceptional footwork and blocking technique.

"Michael never gave up a sack on offense and he made 75 solo tackles on defense his senior year," Wierzal said.

Michael Schofield went on to enjoy a superb career at Michigan, playing in all 52 possible games in four years.

The Broncos took notice and selected him in the third round, 95th overall, in the 2014 NFL draft.

The quiet kid from Orland Park, who at one time preferred batting baseballs to blocking defenders, had made it to the pinnacle of football.

"From where he started with the Pioneers to where he is now starting for the Broncos in the Super Bowl is amazing," Mike Schofield said. "It's hard to believe, but he's worked very hard."

Michael Schofield was a reserve lineman as a rookie last season, but soon found his way into the starting lineup this season.

On Sunday, No. 79 from Orland Park will attempt to give future Hall of Fame quarterback Peyton Manning enough time to generate some offense and lead the Broncos to an upset victory over the Panthers.

For Kathy Schofield, watching her son play in the Super Bowl won't be much of a surprise. She told Michael when he was in college that one day he was going to play in the Super Bowl. Little did she know, that premonition would quickly become reality.

"Michael would laugh at me," Kathy Schofield said. "Obviously, we're very proud. But what I'm most happy about is that Michael hasn't changed. He's still the same kid. He's so grateful."

SB50 notes: Broncos' Schofield gets unexpected chance

By Dave Birkett
Detroit Free Press
February 4, 2016

Michael Schofield was supposed to be a backup this season, watching and learning while waiting to become an NFL starter.

But Ryan Clady suffered a torn anterior cruciate ligament in the spring, and Clady's backup, rookie Ty Sambrailo, suffered a major shoulder injury in October, opening the door for Schofield to start at right tackle for the Denver Broncos in Super Bowl 50 on Sunday (6:30 p.m., CBS).

"It's definitely an unbelievable experience," Schofield said. "I keep telling people — it's my second year, and I'm in the Super Bowl right now. Some guys go 15 years and never make it, so it's definitely a pretty surreal experience."

A third-round pick out of Michigan in 2014, Schofield did not dress for a game as a rookie, and his future seemed in doubt when Gary Kubiak replaced John Fox as coach last year and the Broncos drafted Sambrailo in the second round.

Schofield struggled in his first few games this season, but he rebounded with his best performance of the season in a playoff-opening win over the Pittsburgh Steelers and said playing against Von Miller and DeMarcus Ware every day in practice has prepared him for Sunday.

"It's just been a lot of fun," Schofield said. "This whole season's just been awesome. We've played some great games, had a lot of fun as a team, and hopefully, we can keep the trend going."

■ He's hip: Peyton Manning missed the 2011 season after four neck surgeries. He missed six games this season because of a foot injury.

Wednesday, the Broncos' quarterback revealed that he'll require hip-replacement surgery after his playing career.

"When you have injuries, when you have surgeries, the doctor sometimes will mention to you, whether you ask him or not, 'Hey, you are probably heading for a hip replacement at a certain time in your life,'" Manning said. "I said, 'Doc, I didn't ask you if I was going to have a hip replacement. I didn't need to know that right here at age 37. But thanks for sharing. I look forward to that day when I am 52 and have a hip replacement.'"

Manning said he wears a "posture shirt" and does a lot of preventive stretching to help with his hip condition, which hasn't affected his ability to get on the field in his 18-year career.

■ Braced for success: Panthers linebacker Thomas Davis said he planned to try a new brace for his broken right arm in practice Wednesday, the second contraption he has tested this week.

"Just another thing that our trainers came up with," Davis said. "I don't really know what they call it, to be honest with you. I don't really ask a whole lot of questions. I try the things on and see what they feel like, and then when we go out and practice."

Davis, who finished second on the team with 105 tackles, reiterated that he plans to play Sunday.

Schofield won't be wrong move at right tackle if Broncos run well

By Troy Renck
Denver Post
January 15, 2016

Be warned Broncos fans. Michael Schofield might start at right tackle Sunday. If that news requires medication, meditation or amnesia, plan accordingly.

The idea of Schofield even playing strained credulity after Tyler Polumbus replaced him in the season finale victory over San Diego. Polumbus entered the game in the third quarter at the same time as Peyton Manning. Both had success.

Schofield and Polumbus will see snaps against Pittsburgh. Why would the Broncos risk using the slumping Schofield? While trepidation is warranted, his appearance paints a broader picture, highlights a more important issue.

The Broncos want to run the ball, meaning Manning figures to be under center a good portion of snaps, mirroring his work against San Diego. Schofield's pass blocking issues are well known. He helped Oakland's Khalil Mack make history as the first all-pro at both defensive end and outside linebacker. In fairness, Schofield can be effective in the run game. Denver's ability to make this postseason special hinges on the inconsistent offensive line's ability to establish a ground attack and keep Manning's jersey spotless. In that order.

Denver ranked 29th in rushing in the season's first nine games, all started by Manning. In the final seven games, the Broncos averaged 135.1 rushing yards, seventh best in the NFL. Even more salient, Ronnie Hillman and C.J. Anderson became better later, each totaling 228 fourth-quarter yards and two scores.

Ask any lineman and he'll tell you he prefers run blocking. The grunts love to put their hand in the dirt and exert their will. Pass blocking, by design, is a reactionary skill, requiring backpedaling. When the Broncos show balance, they devour clock, and they protect their defense, the team's greatest asset.

Could Schofield start? Yes. He has played 79 percent of the offense's plays this season, so regardless of his high profile mistakes, I see coach Gary Kubiak using him. It's more likely Schofield will share time with Polumbus, similar to the Evan Mathis-Louis Vasquez rotation at guard around rookie Max Garcia.

It goes without saying that Schofield must receive help on passing downs. It's better to be boring with tight ends blocking rather than watch the Steelers injure Manning or force him into a costly interception. The leash must be short. Remember, the Steelers relish blitzing, especially with their cornerbacks, and finished with 48 sacks, four shy of the league-leading Broncos.

Kubiak's urgency in the San Diego game sent a message about performance. He trusts his players, but not at the expense of the outcome. I believe he learned from the Kansas City home loss that patience requires an expiration date.

If Schofield experiences fundamental breakdowns, this isn't the week to let him figure it out. The Broncos never run away and hide from opponents. Every game is close. Yes, Schofield might be at right tackle. But it won't be the wrong move if the Broncos rush the ball 30 times for 130 yards, statistics that will likely spell out victory.

Michael Schofield set to continue starting as Broncos' right tackle

By Andrew Mason
DenverBroncos.com
October 29, 2015

Whether Ty Sambrailo has recovered enough to start at left tackle or not, Head Coach Gary Kubiak made it clear that on the right side, Michael Schofield would remain in the starting lineup.

Schofield was promoted to the first team after Sambrailo's injury forced eight-year veteran Ryan Harris to left tackle. But Kubiak believes that Schofield's progress during the first three starts of his career was sufficient to justify keeping him there.

"Michael has done a really good job. I think that he's an improving player every week," Kubiak said.

"Even if Ty does come back, I don't see Ty playing 50, 60 plays. That's not going to be the case, so yeah we'll stay just how we are."

That gives Schofield a chance to continue settling in at right tackle, the position at which he was projected after playing there for much of his career at Michigan before being the Broncos' third-round pick last year.

"I'm just trying to focus on myself and improve every single game, and every single practice and focus on getting better at one thing," Schofield said. "I felt like that was one thing I did in those games: get a little bit better in each game."

For example, Schofield felt he made strides as a pass blocker in the Week 6 win at Cleveland, and that bore itself out; he didn't allow a sack for the first time as a starter.

His development was at the point where he needed repetitions to take the next step. He got plenty of them, playing every offensive snap in October.

"Getting live reps in a real game is definitely going to help you out -- and especially help your confidence," Schofield said. "That's really big at this position."

"I've just got to become a more consistent player at every aspect of the game. In the run game, I've got to do cut blocks better. In pass protection, I could be more firm."

Offensive Coordinator Rick Dennison sees the same growth as Schofield does.

"Just like the group, I think he keeps making strides," Dennison said. "Each day, you see his technique getting better and honing in because he's working at it and he's working really hard at it."

Through My Eyes: Michael Schofield makes first NFL start

By Michael Schofield
DenverBroncos.com
October 8, 2015

Leading into the Vikings game, Head Coach Gary Kubiak sat me down and told me that I was going to start.

My first NFL start would be my first snap in the league. Protecting Peyton Manning, no less. No pressure, right?

My parents definitely reminded me about that before the game. You know you're going to be blocking for a Hall of Famer?

The offensive line went through some changes after Ty Sambrailo hurt his shoulder. Ryan Harris, who usually plays at right tackle, moved to the left and I stepped into his place.

Because of that, people doubted us, especially with all the changes. That doubt just added to the pressure.

But the only way to silence the doubters is to go out there and perform.

It helps to be close with my teammates and they were supportive of me the whole way. During the preparations leading up to the game, Ryan came up to me and helped reassure me, telling me, Play confident. You're a good player. That's why you're here.

When it came time for the game, no lie, I had some jitters. Just don't mess up! That was the big thing. You don't want to give up a sack, don't want to mess up. I just had to play with confidence to go out there and prove that I'm a good player.

The first play – I was definitely nervous. I don't like being on defense first because then you've got to wait to get those jitters out of the way on the sideline.

You've got to have a short memory in this league when it comes to making mistakes and constantly look to learn from them. There were a couple plays where I did some things off balance, but then later in the drive I made up for it with a different play and better technique.

Then midway through the first series the nerves started to go away -- because the second play I was a little iffy -- but then after that I kind of got into a groove.

Because once you get the first play out of the way, you realize it's just football. You know you're blocking for Peyton, but it's not the big concern. No matter who the quarterback is you don't want him to get hurt.

The most important thing was that we got a win and it helped give me confidence going forward this season. Any time you can get on the field and perform well it's going to help you in your career.

Michael Schofield gives Denver Broncos a solid NFL debut

By Mike Klis
9 News Sport
October 7, 2015

In his first-ever NFL playing time, Michael Schofield started at right tackle for the Denver Broncos in their 23-20 win on Oct. 4 against the Minnesota Vikings.

"There's definitely some things I need to work on, but I felt overall it was a real good first game," Schofield said.

Schofield received a -1.1 score from Pro Football Focus, which is notoriously tough on offensive tackles. Consider the Broncos' other two starting tackles, Ryan Harris and Ty Sambrailo, have received of -9.2 and -10.3 grades, respectively, from PFF this season.

"I think for a guy that played his first NFL football game, I thought that he played really well," Broncos head coach Gary Kubiak said of Schofield. "There are always going to be things that you have to get better at. He got called for a couple of penalties, just some alignment stuff that you have to go through to get better. I liked his effort, and I liked the way that he got to the second level. You can tell that he hasn't worked much with [right guard Louis Vasquez], just with them picking up some stunts and doing things that we have to improve upon."

Vikings defensive Brian Robinson was lined up across from Schofield before stunting inside and blowing past an unsuspecting Vasquez and subsequently sacking quarterback Peyton Manning.

"I've got to be quicker about passing that off to Louis," Schofield said.

His playing time this week likely depends on Sambrailo's status. The starting left tackle through the Broncos' first three games, Sambrailo didn't play against the Vikings because of a left-shoulder injury. Harris moved from right tackle to left to make room for Schofield at right tackle.

Sambrailo figures to be iffy to play this Sunday against the rival Oakland Raiders in Oakland.

Michael Schofield planning to prove his worth to Broncos in first career start

By Cameron Wolfe
Denver Post
October 2, 2015

It's like *deja vu* for Broncos tackle Michael Schofield. One man's injury is another man's opportunity. And Schofield is the benefactor.

Coach Gary Kubiak announced Friday that starting left tackle Ty Sambrailo would be out Sunday versus Minnesota with a shoulder injury. The blowback effects two spots on the offensive line with Kubiak moving starting right tackle Ryan Harris to left tackle and the 6-foot-6, 301-pound Schofield getting the start at right tackle.

Not only will it be Schofield's first start, it'll be his first career NFL snap.

"I'll definitely have some butterflies. I'm sure everyone does in their first game. I've just got to go out there, play with confidence and play with good technique," said Schofield, in his second season with the Broncos.

An almost identical situation happened to Schofield during his redshirt sophomore year at the University of Michigan. He wasn't supposed to get much action that season, but the starting left guard went down with an injury in Week 1 and it was his job from that point on.

That's where a lot of his motivation comes from this week. Despite struggling in training camp and during the preseason, Schofield is confident he can do the job.

"They drafted me last year in the third round, so I've got to prove I was worth that pick and come out there and dominate," he said.

He found out he was getting the start Wednesday. Immediately, he reached out to Harris and right guard Louis Vasquez for advice.

But Schofield knows when he hits the field Sunday, it'll all be on him. Also, new Broncos tackle Tyler Polumbus, who was signed Wednesday after being released by Atlanta, will be available if needed.

Along with the added pressure, Schofield has a lot of pent up frustration. He watched the team move Vasquez from right guard to right tackle instead of him last season when coach John Fox reshuffled the offensive line at mid-season. And, this year, after being an early favorite to start at right tackle, he was quickly passed by Harris and former Bronco Chris Clark in training camp. Clark was subsequently traded.

Schofield treated it like an indictment of his play and said he's on a mission to prove his worth.

"This is a great opportunity for Michael. As a player, that's all you ask for — work, work, work and then someday, okay, hey, here we go. Then you find out," Kubiak said. "It's Michael's turn."

Schofield isn't the only offensive linemen with a new challenge this week. Harris will play left tackle in a regular season game for the first time since 2013.

He's played on both sides of the line throughout his NFL career but admitted it's not an easy switch. All of the terminology is backwards and then there's the added pressure of protecting Peyton Manning's blindside against the Vikings' top pass rusher.

Sambrailo sustained his injury late in Sunday's victory over the Lions. The Broncos offensive line had perhaps its best game of the young season though the running game remained stalled. They allowed one sack versus the Lions after allowing seven in the previous two games.

Harris isn't looking for any pity. The rest of the line isn't either.

"You play in the NFL, things aren't going to be perfect, ever," Harris said. "That's in life, too, whether you're a sports writer or a fan, things in life don't go perfectly and you have to be ready to adapt. The team that can adapt the best is going to win on Sunday and is going to win the Super Bowl."

Schofield utilizes joint practices

By Lauren Giudice
DenverBroncos.com
August 22, 2014

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. – During team drills on Wednesday, Texans tackle Keith Browner tipped a pass from Zac Dysert at the line of scrimmage. Broncos rookie offensive lineman Michael Schofield didn't see the ball get tipped, but he heard it slap Browner's hand and was determined to come away with it.

Schofield didn't see the ball until the last second, but it fell just before him. He scooped it up and cradled it, and without hesitation, he started running.

"I caught it and I took a couple steps and I got hit pretty hard," Schofield said. "I haven't gotten hit like that in a while. So that was pretty fun."

For a split second he thought taking it in for the score was a possibility. Then reality set in.

"I saw like three guys coming in on me and I thought 'This is not going to happen,'" Schofield said.

After a few steps, Texans linebacker Chris Young got to Schofield and hit him. He hit him hard. While Schofield's shoulder was still a bit sore on Thursday, he called the play "memorable." During a game while he was at Michigan, he came close to making a similar play but dove and missed the ball.

Perhaps Schofield's confidence in scooping up the ball comes from his tight end days. As a freshman at Carl Sandburg High School in Orland Park, Ill., Schofield played tight end. He was a goal line specialist with seven catches for seven touchdowns.

"I was pretty consistent," he said, laughing.

After his freshman year, one of the offensive linemen on his team didn't come back and, as the best blocking tight end, his coach moved him to offensive tackle.

"It worked out," Schofield said. "It got me here so I'm not mad about it."

He often thinks about his tight end days and, occasionally, he misses it.

"I like what I'm doing now but if they ever need an extra tight end, I'd be okay with that," Schofield said.

At Michigan, Schofield started 10 games at left guard in 2011 to go with 26 starts at right tackle in 2012 and 2013 combined.

Hard hits have dashed the fields in intense practices at Dove Valley this week, including the lick Schofield took. He said the intensity at Michigan practices was comparable to the energy of the past few days. While his aching shoulder is proof of the physical practices this week, he's loved it and said "we're playing like it's a game out there."

"I would say these are the most fun practices I've had in a while because it's a change of pace going against different guys, doing different things, so it's been fun," Schofield said.

Even veteran tackle Ryan Clady has noticed Schofield's progress.

"He's doing good," Clady said. "He's definitely developing. [It's] night and day from OTAs. He's definitely honed in and got the offense down and working on his technique. I think he's a good shot to make the team."

The last time Schofield scored a touchdown was freshman year of high school. While he has realistic goals of his chances of making it in the end zone this year, he is enjoying his time on the Broncos and learning as much as he can, especially during this week's joint practices.

As a rookie, he said these practices with the Texans have been especially beneficial.

"Their defensive scheme is totally different than ours so I get to learn that," Schofield said. "We're going to be going against some offenses this week and throughout the season we'll be going against different defenses so it will be nice going back to this time."