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German import will join De La Salle

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By Scott Powers

De La Salle coach Tom White received an unexpected gift to his basketball team from Germany this summer.

After spending a year playing in Urspring, Germany, Class of 2013 6-9, 230-pound power forward Gavin Schilling has returned to Chicago and has enrolled into De La Salle.

"The basketball gods were looking down on me for once," White said.

Schilling, who is 15, was born in Germany, lived in France throughout his childhood and had made Chicago his home for about eight years before being given a one-year scholarship to Urspring.

He attended Loyola Academy as a freshman. "In Germany, I decided I wanted to take basketball seriously," Schilling said. "De La Salle's education and basketball team were a good fit for me. I'm excited to play at De La Salle next year."

Schilling is expected to play with De La Salle for the first time at DePaul's team camp at ATTACK Athletics on Monday. Schilling and Class of 2013 forward Alex Foster should give De La Salle two of the state's premier post players.

"I know that he's 6-9 and that he loves to play inside," White said of Schilling. "He's bringing the European-scene game here. I'm hoping this opens the doors for European kids who are coming to the United States, especially the Chicago area."

Patrick Mills, who is an assistant coach with UPEA Orlandina Basket in Italy, scouted Schilling at the U16 Pasqua Barocca tournament in Italy this spring and was able to provide a more in-depth report.

"Schilling is a 6-9 power forward with a strong body and has great athleticism," Mills said via email. "He is very explosive and plays above the rim on both ends of the court. He attacks the basket aggressively looking to dunk every time he gets the ball down low. He only has range out to around 15 feet and doesn't have great touch around the basket. He plays with all power and not much finesse as at his age he is physically stronger than his opponents."

"Defensively, Schilling has good lateral quickness for his size and good instincts. He plays physical down low and rebounds the ball well for his size. He has good timing on his blocked shots and is active in rotating on help situations."

Schilling was considered one of Illinois' top 2013 prospects when he was a freshman at Loyola, but he feels his game has taken a large step since going to Germany.

"This year was a great experience for me," Schilling said. "It was a great opportunity. My game has grown a lot. In Europe, the game is more about fundamentals and slower paced than the United States. I was able to work on my shot and a lot of my post moves."

Schilling will return to Europe in July and August to play with the German U16 national team in the European championships in the Czech Republic. He also has plans to workout with Dirk Nowitzki's mentor Holger Geschwinder while back in Germany.

Colleges have taken notice of Schilling's success in Germany. Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Oregon are among the schools already recruiting him.

"He's been on TV," Schilling's mother Lisa said. "He's getting all of these interviews. He's come a long way. It's amazing how his life has changed in just a short time in Europe."



Gavin Schilling plays with a European skill set.