

FANS

OF THE CFL

This is our League. This is our Voice.

Billionaires Ignore The CFL

Many rich investors like Jim Balsillie are trying to get an NHL Franchise in Canada.
As Steve Thompson explains: these investors should turn instead
to the CFL, who would welcome them with open arms.

Also Inside This Issue:

Should The Lions Start Jarious Jackson?

Josh Dhani examines the controversy in BC.

What does the future hold for Graham Harrell?

Chase Ruttig takes a look at Saskatchewan's new pivot.

Quarterback Rankings Through The First Month

Mike Burse examines the performance of the league's starting pivots.

And Much More...

<http://fansofthecfl.blogspot.com/>

Message From the Editor

The Canadian Football League (CFL) is a proud part of Canadian Heritage. It is not noted as one of the major sporting leagues yet it still attracts large amount of viewers from different parts of the world. The game has its distinctive qualities which make it unique, yet don't be fooled, the CFL is home to some of the most competitive football you can watch. Since the CFL has only eight teams, there is a strong sense of unity in the League. Each football team boasts an impressive fan base each year, and there are always many heated rivalries among these passionate fans. "Fans of the CFL" aims to give fans of this great game a unique perspective on the game. You won't just find scores and stats in this magazine, you will find top quality analyses by some very talented aspiring journalists and people in the media, individuals that have an unwavering passion for the CFL. The writers for "Fans of the CFL" will look to tackle some of the bigger issues in the CFL. We hope you enjoy the inaugural edition of our CFL Magazine, and we encourage you to watch for upcoming editions. If you would like a free subscription to "Fans of the CFL", or have any questions or comments, send me an email at roughriderfreak@hotmail.com.

**Jonathan Hamelin
Founder of "Fans of the CFL"**

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Who Writes for “Fans of the CFL”?

Mike Burse:

So how does a former hockey player fall into the insurance business you ask? Well I still am not sure how it happened but it did. I came out of Mohawk College with a diploma majoring in Insurance. I very much have a passion for discussing sports (NHL, CFL, Women’s Hockey mostly) and I finally got the nerve up to write about them on the website Bleacher Report. I plan on continually improving my writing skills and if this leads to a job one day that would be an amazing dream. But if not then I will continue to write regardless, as I truly have a passion for sports and enjoy writing. If you want to see more of my work head over to BleacherReport.com.



Josh Dhani:

Josh Dhani has just got into the CFL and his contributions are mostly forwarded directly about his favorite team, the BC Lions. For more of his articles regarding the CFL, please visit thecanadianfootballleaguereport.blogspot.com.

Scott Fitzsimmons:

I am a 10 year radio professional from Yorkton, Saskatchewan who loves sports, especially the CFL. I loves watching, playing and coaching football. I am a student of the game, and I love to pick apart every aspect of the game. The knowledge I have gained in his 32 years of life, has grown quite an opinionated view, and whether or not you agree, I think my points will have some merit. I try very hard to be fair and as unbiased as possible in my views. I will always be a Stampeders fan, and will eventually convert my lovely wife, who is still a Riders fan.



Giants27:

I live in Syracuse, New York and am a huge football fan, whether it's the NFL or the CFL. I'm a lifetime Hamilton Tiger-Cats fan and am obviously only recently coming out of hiding after having only three wins last year. If you hate my writing or love it feel free to contact me at giants27rules@gmail.com

Jonathan Hamelin: I am a diehard fan of the Saskatchewan Roughriders and the Canadian Football League. I am also an aspiring journalist and a lot of my work is centered around the Canadian Football League. My CFL work can be seen on Bleacher Report, Reservation For Six, Rider Prider, Rider Fans and The Canadian Football Report.



Brandon Marsdin: Brandon Marsdin is a 16 year-young- man from Hamilton, Ontario. He took an interest in watching sports in the 7th grade and has ever since. But, has played in sports leagues since he was 4. Like most Canadians he enjoys the CFL. But, has only recently started taking a real interest in it. Re-

siding in Stoney Creek as part of the greater city of Hamilton. He is a huge fan of the Hamilton Tiger-Cats. He is also proud to be Canadian.

Avry Lewis-McDougall:

I'm a 16 year old high school student in Edmonton, Alberta I'm a die hard Eskimo fan and I also host a sports show on blogtalkradio.com/Avry called Avry's Sports Show Tuesday nights at 7PM Mountain time.

Chase Ruttig:

Sixteen year old dealing with the trivial happenings of living in small-town Saskatchewan Canada, considered the middle of nowhere for North American sports. I have been writing for three years covering all sports, but the CFL is my passion as it is truly Canada's own. I am proud to be one of the writers on this magazine and I hope it is entertaining and informative to the readers.

Steve Thompson: My name is Steve Thompson and love writing articles about sports. I live in Toronto, Ontario and have been a CFL fan since I was in my single digits. I would like to see the league expand in Canada to cities that have never had a franchise before and have written several articles about this, and possible American expansion as well. I shall write more. The CFL welcomes back Ottawa next year, but when will they add that tenth (and more) franchise? By the way, I've done something that few CFL fans have ever done: I've picked up the Grey Cup several times and even thrown it.

TJ Zwarych: TJ Zwarych is 15 years old. He has lived in Canada and has been breathing sports his whole life. From hockey drafts and NCAA tournament brackets, he loves it all. He enjoys writing about all things but his bread and butter are the CFL and the NBA.

As you can see, we have a lot of talented writers contributing their voice to "Fans of the CFL". However, we are always looking for different views on this great game. If you would like to write for "Fans of the CFL," send me an email at roughriderfreak@hotmail.com



CFL Month In Review: July

By: Chase Ruttig

Well July is over, and that means many things in the Canadian "Sports World". The Jays are officially out of playoff contention, the MLB trade deadline is over, and hockey news shifts from one half of SportsCenter to three quarters of it. Most importantly however, the first month of the CFL season is over

The first month of the CFL season brought us many storylines. Graham Harrell signed with the Roughriders, Arland Bruce was traded to the Tiger Cats, and few teams have played like contenders so far. The first month has been an interesting one.

Western Division

Saskatchewan (2-2)

The Roughriders jumped off to a hot 2-0 start, and it looked like the talks of the Riders finishing last in the West were a bit premature. Then, the old demons of last season re-appeared as turnovers began to plague the Riders, frustrating the fans and creating a quarterback controversy in the Queen City.

The turnovers played a part in the Riders their first loss to Montreal, a second half blow-out. They were also the culprit in a loss to the Eskimos in week four. The wheels fell off in the second half and the Eskimos got a character win in the CFL's most unfriendly confines.

If the Riders want to get back to the top of the West they need to start protecting the ball and improving the offensive line and quarterbacking play. This will be solved over time as the line gets healthier.

The quarterback situation remains a mystery as Darian Durant can win foot-

ball games, but has looked shaky to put it nicely. If the Riders want to win they need to take a serious look at throwing Graham Harrell into the fire sooner than later.

The Roughriders kick off August with a tilt against the defending champion Stampeders at Calgary.

B.C. (1-4)

The 1-4 Lions are continuing the theme of quarterback controversy in the CFL as the battle between Jarius Jackson and Buck Pierce is heating up.

The Lions have looked like a team that is a couple of plays away from winning, or losing, every game they play in this year. It may just be the drama between Pierce and Jackson that will be the difference between this season being a usual success, or a rare disappointment in British Columbia.

The Lions start out August With a home game against Saskatchewan in week six.

Edmonton (3-2)

The story of Edmonton's season has definitely been the running game, particularly with running back Jesse Lumsden getting injured once again..

After embarrassing defeats against BC and , where the absence of Lumsden appeared to be a factor, the Eskimos bounced back in a big way. They came from behind against Saskatchewan on the road and ended the Alouettes undefeated record at 4-0 getting revenge for the crushing Week Two blow-out.

The Eskimos appear to be back on track and could unseat their in province rivals from Calgary as the favourites in the Wild Western Division.

Edmonton kicks off August in Hamilton on August 8 at Ivor Wynne Stadium.

Calgary (2-2)

After a loss in a Grey Cup rematch to Montreal, and a shocking loss to Winnipeg, the Stampeders finally got their offence clicking and are back to being the dominant offensive force that won them the Grey Cup last year.

Calgary has it all, great quarterbacking play from Henry Burris, a solid receiving core led by Jermaine Copeland and a solid defense. Calgary has the perfect tools for a repeat in Cow Town.

The Stampeders kick off August at home against Saskatchewan, in what is always a wild game.

Eastern Division

Toronto (2-2)

As usual there is turmoil in Toronto. Surprisingly, they have been able to win in the midst of it. Thanks to a weak schedule and good defensive play, the Argonauts sit a game out of first place with a game at hand to the Als.

The problems started in Week One during the CFL's opening game on Canada Day. Arland Bruce decided to honour Michael Jackson by stripping out of his jersey and shoulder pads and pretending to be buried in the endzone. Debate how much respect is in that, but it caused the talented receiver a fine and perhaps, a ticket out of Toronto.

Bruce also called out head coach Bart Andrus and Kerry Joseph. He basically read Terrell Owens tell-all-book about the situations with the Eagles and followed it page by page. This earned him a trade to

the rival Hamilton Tiger Cats, which should get very interesting.

The question is: can the Boatmen continue winning once the competition gets tougher? I don't think so, but they should make the playoffs this year and avoid the embarrassment they suffered last year.

The Argos kick off August in Winnipeg on the back end of a home and home August 1st.

Montreal (4-1)

Nothing really to report here, other than that it is business as usual in Montreal. Anthony Calvillo is once again leading the Alouettes to another dominant run throughout the Eastern Division, starting the race to avenge their Grey Cup loss at home to Calgary last year.

It seems to be a foregone conclusion that Montreal will win the much weaker Eastern Division convincingly. They have also been beating their Western opponents as well this year, so it looks like it might be another run at a Grey Cup ring for the Mexican gun slinger and his Als.

Montreal kicks off August at home against Toronto on August 7th in what will be Toronto's first test of the year.

Hamilton (2-2)

Hamilton is the surprise team of the year as the usual East doormat has rallied around the defence and the rushing of DeAndra Cobb. Cobb was the pre-season sensation who is the breakout player of the year so far.

The Tiger Cats are making the East interesting and may reverse the balance of power between the East and West this year. The more Quinton Porter develops, the better Hamilton

gets. The Ti Cats are getting better game by game so they may just be serious contenders come October.

The Ticats kick off August against Edmonton on August 8

Winnipeg (1-3)

It turns out, letting coach Mike Kelly clean house this off-season wasn't such a good idea.

His pick at quarterback Stefan LeFors has been an absolute bust and his decision to release Kevin Glenn and former Boise State standout Ryan Dinwiddie, left them without a safety net. They were forced to bring in Michael Bishop, who was coming off his worst year as a pro.

The Bombers are basically the team off the horrible movie with Keanu Reeves. A band of misfits just happy to be able to win games. Unlike the movie however, the games are, as in real hard for the Bombers to win.

The Bombers are my pick to "bomb" and miss out on the post-season as they have absolutely no evidence to prove that they can turn it around.

They kick off August at home against Toronto August 1st.

That is your recap of the first month of the CFL. Come back again next month. Stay Classy Canada

Burse's Quarterback Rankings

By: Mike Burse

A Monthly Examination of the CFL's Starting Quarterbacks

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1 – Anthony Calvillo (On pace for 5,774 yards 32 TDs 9 INT)

He has completed 74% of his passes for 1,283 yards and 7 TDs with 2 interceptions this season. With these stats he has led Montreal to a 4-0 record in the first four games of the 2009 season. He has once again shown that he is a vintage wine that just keeps getting better with age. While he is not anywhere near as mobile as he once was, he can still control a game from inside the pocket. He is a treat to watch and we should all enjoy his talents while they last.

2 – Kerry Joseph (On pace for 4,608 yards 27 TDs 22 INT)

He has completed 56% of his passes for 1,024 yards and 6 TDs with 5 interceptions this season. With these stats he has led Toronto to a 2-2 record in the first four games of the 2009 season. He has shown improvement this season in Toronto compared to the long 2008 season he endured. He has been called out by Arland Bruce as one of the players on the Argonauts that coach Bart Andrus should be disciplining. However this does not seem to have affected the mobile quarterbacks' play. Look for him to continue to improve his game in the coming weeks.

3 – Henry Burris (On pace for 4,523 yards 23 TDs 18 INT)

He has completed 61% of his passes for 1,005 yards and 5 TDs with 4 interceptions this season. With these



Anthony Calvillo has been the most impressive quarterback in the CFL, leading Montreal to a 4-0 record.

stats he has led Calgary to a 2-2 record in the first four games of the 2009 season. The four-year contract extension he signed this off-season is already paying dividends for the Stampeders. He is a consummate professional, a good leader off the field; he does good work in the community, and is a top 3 quarterback in the CFL. Any team would be very happy to have Burris on their squad for the next four seasons.

4 – Ricky Ray (On pace for 4,550 yards 14 TDs 18 INT)

He has completed 66% of his passes for 1,011 yards and 3 TDs with 4 interceptions this season. With these stats he has led Edmonton to a 2-2 record in the first four games of the 2009 season. By his own lofty standards he has struggled this season, but his struggles are still good enough for number four on this list. He appears to have lost arm strength and for a quarterback like him, that could be a disastrous happening.

5 – Darian Durant (On pace for 3,906 yards 18 TDs 23 INT)

He has completed 57% of his passes for 868 yards and 4 TDs with 5 interceptions this season. With these stats he has led Saskatchewan to a 2-2 record in the first four games of the 2009 season. While he seems to be taking the brunt of the boos in Rider Nation he is certainly not the one to blame for their slow start. His offensive line does need to better protect him if he is going to see any improvement

in his offensive numbers.

6 – Quinton Porter (On pace for 3,573 yards 14 TDs 18 INT)

He has completed 68% of his passes for 794 yards and 3 TDs with 4 interceptions this season. With these stats he has led Hamilton to a 2-2 record in the first four games of the 2009 season. Porter's completion percentage is second best among starters in the CFL. This season Porter has done a good job of moving the ball, but he has had a hard time finishing drives with TDs. Hamilton should give Kevin Glenn the starts in weeks five and six in order to give Porter some time to watch a CFL veteran work a couple games. Glenn has been good enough in his time on the field this season to merit the starts as well. He has completed 61% of his passes for 344 yards and 2 TDs with 2 interceptions.

7 – Buck Pierce (On pace for 2,939 yards 18 TDs 23 INT)

He has completed 58% of his passes for 653 yards and 4 TDs with 5 interceptions this season. With these stats he has led the BC Lions to a 1-3 record in the first four games of the 2009 season. While his coach anointed him the starter prior to the season beginning he has not shown that he can get the Lions offense rolling consistently. Thus far, Jarius Jackson has looked much more dangerous in his time on the field. It is time to give

Jackson the starters job until his play is not up to par. He has earned this shot while completing 58% of his passes for 368 yards and 4 TDs with 2 interceptions.

8 – Stefan LeFors (On pace for 2,066 yards 9 TDs 9 INT)

He has completed 47% of his passes for 459 yards and 2 TDs with 2 interceptions this season. With these stats he has led Winnipeg to a 1-3 record in the first four games of the 2009 season. Head Coach and General Manager of the Blue Bombers Mike Kelly believed so much in LeFors that he released Bombers veteran quarterback Kevin Glenn and traded a second round pick to Edmonton for LeFors. It now appears that the wrong decision was made as the Blue Bombers have struggled on offence thus for this season. Mike Kelly has signed former Toronto Argonaut Michael Bishop to see if he can make an impact at the quarterback

position. None of the current three talented quarterbacks have been able to produce good numbers under Kelly's offensive system. I say give him three more games to get this team headed in the right direction, and if they do not show improvement send him packing.

CFL Average (On pace for 3,992 yards 18 TDs 18 INT)

The average CFL quarterback has completed 61% of his passes for 887 yards and 4 TDs with 4 interceptions this season.

This list is based on each teams' starting quarterback through the first four games of the 2009 CFL regular season. The evaluation is based only on the individuals' performance and the teams' performance.

Milestone In Montreal

In Montreal's week four 21-8 victory over the Hamilton Tiger Cats, Anthony Calvillo reached yet another milestone in his storied career. The veteran pivot threw two touchdowns in the game, giving him 335 in his career. He is now second place on the all-time list behind Damon Allen. Calvillo moved into second place, and ahead of Rider legend Ron Lancaster, on a 48 yard touchdown pass to Jamal Richardson in the second quarter. We at "Fans of the CFL" would like to congratulate Anthony Calvillo on yet another get achievement.



Problems in Riderville

By: TJ Zwarych

In the Saskatchewan Roughriders loss at home to the Edmonton Eskimos, it was evident that the team has many problems. Many fans are very quick to blame the young quarterback Darian Durant for the recent woes, but he should be the least of Rider fans' worries.

Durant didn't play fantastic, but he led the Riders to 24 offensive points, he had 238 yards, 1 passing touchdown, 1 rushing touch down, a 57% completion percentage and threw no interceptions. It wasn't a great game, but when you consider how little time he had that entire game, it was quite, quite good.

The Roughriders' offensive line has been absolutely pathetic this season, Durant has had no time, and Wes Cates, who is one of the top running backs in the league, has had bad numbers due to the fact that he has had no holes to run through. The o-line is decimated by injuries, but Eric Tillman should really get a big import from somewhere who is good, and get him playing, fast.

Cates' lack of yardage this season isn't only the fault of the offensive line. It seems that the only running plays the Riders run are right up the middle out of the shot gun. All the running plays are very predictable and with an offensive line that can't push people around, we need some creativity.

Offensive coordinator Paul LaPolice really needs to start calling much better plays to free up Wes Cates, (screen passes, counters and tosses) and plays that better suit the offense. With the players on offense that Riders have, (a quarterback with weak arm, amazing

slot backs and weak outside receivers) the Riders should be running quick crossing patterns to Andy Fantuz, Weston Dressler and Jason Clermont. They are all great receivers and would be able to pick up yards after the catch. The play calling has been bee sub par and really needs to improve.

On the other side of the ball, the Riders' biggest problems are their defensive tackles and Canadian corner Donovan Alexander. Both defensive tackles are too slow, and are getting pushed around. Marcus Adams is not strong enough and is constantly getting pushed forward instead of getting to the quarterback, and whenever Scott Schultz breaks through the offensive line, he is way to slow to catch up with the quarterback or running back. The inside tackles on most teams are usually the ones who are getting double teamed, but on the Riders, Stevie Baggs and John Chick are constantly being doubled because Schultz and Adams can be covered easily with one guy each. Donovan Alexander is also a problem as he was heavily exploited by Ricky Ray in their last game, he gives way to big of a cushion to the receivers and then goes for the big hit and misses instead of breaking down and tackling like you should.

Coaching isn't going well either, the Riders' new kick return formation is terrible and doesn't work. The wedge formation needs to be improved to give Darian Durant and the rest of the offence good field position. Also, little things like having Johnny Quinn, an import slot back who is slow and average at best in the game, instead of Canadian Chris Getzlaf in is just a bone headed move. Because of this, speedy back Hugh Charles can't dress because there would be too many imports.

The Riders do still have a shot to do well this year when some players return. Gene Makowsky should be back soon which should give the Riders a boost.

Billionaires Ignore the CFL

By: Steve Thompson

A month ago, I wrote an article about Jim Balsillie trying for an NHL franchise only to be rebuffed, instead of trying for a CFL team whose commissioner and board of governors would welcome him with open arms.

Now it has been reported that the head of Quebecor, Pierre Karl Peladeau, failed to purchase the Montreal Canadiens, and now wants to follow Balsillie and get a hockey franchise back for Quebec City.

Great news for hockey fans. There has been a petition signed by 80,000 fans asking for the return of their team. Peladeau finally puts a face to an investment bid for getting a team back in Quebec. The only quibble is that Peladeau wants more partners in order to build a new NHL-size arena, which is estimated to cost \$300 million.

This would be great for Quebec Nordique hockey fans. Quebec, with a proper arena, would be a sure-fire winner, and because it has no territorial issue, would immediately leap ahead of Hamilton and Winnipeg as the best place for NHL expansion in Canada.

The NHL would also probably favour going back to a city where it had some success in the past if it finally built a proper arena.

First, it has to get past Gary Bettman, the alliance in the board of governors between ignorant and hostile American owners, and Canadian owners who don't want to share TV money. It will be a tough nut to crack.

Which brings us to the CFL.



"Nobody with money has any faith in the CFL"

Why do all these Canadian billionaires and millionaires ignore the CFL? Why don't they have any faith in it, like they have for the NHL?

The CFL has been talking about getting more than nine Canadian franchises since before I was born.

In my very first article, I said that Quebec, London, and Kitchener were cities that the league could gamble on in the short term (ie. expand to within the next five years), and that Windsor, Oshawa, Victoria, and Halifax were long-term possibilities; followed by other up-and-coming cities in the very long-term.

The two biggest problems are stadiums and ownership.

All through late spring and summer, we have been deluged with tales of Balsillie and other rich Canadians going after Phoenix, Atlanta, or some other failed American NHL franchise, with the intention of either moving it across the border, or trying to make it work in a failed environment.

But none of these rich investors ever consider the CFL. The CFL is getting back Ottawa next year, and would welcome new investment in Canada with open arms.

The franchise fee would be peanuts compared to entering the NHL and building a new stadium, and could be a fraction of the cost of the ultra-modern arena that the NHL wants.

Winnipeg's new 30,000 seat stadium will cost \$100 million, one-third of the cost of a new hockey arena.

Kitchener, Quebec, and London all have strong university football teams at Laurier, Laval, and Western, so football would hardly be a strange sport to fans, like hockey is in some southern American cities.

But nobody with money has any faith in the CFL. The last owner to do so was the American owner of Shreveport, who wanted to continue in the CFL, but was left in the lurch when the American franchises were folded.

If only he could have been persuaded to transfer the Pirates to another Canadian city and build a proper stadium, minimum 25,000 seats.

The only other expansion that has been mentioned has been to the United States, now that NFL Europe has folded. Rochester (a large city wanting in major professional sports franchises) and Detroit (which should be located across the river and named Windsor) were mentioned.

So what is the problem?

Investors saw the folding of the Montreal and Ottawa franchises, and backed away.

But I think more could be done by the commissioner and the board of governors.

Has Commissioner Cohon contacted Peladeau and Balsillie about investing in the CFL? Does he know any other investors, both in Canada and abroad, who could be persuaded to operate an expansion team in Canada?

prop up failed auto-makers and other troubled businesses, why not take a chance in a sports league?

The CFL is cheaper to operate in than most of the other leagues. If these investors would just take a chance in the CFL, they might be able to make money in a place that hasn't really been tried before.

That's Ugly!

The Winnipeg Blue Bombers recently delivered one of their worst offensive performances in the team's history. In a 19-5 loss to the Toronto Argonauts at home, the Blue Bombers only managed eight first downs all game. Three Bombers quarterbacks (Stefan Lefors, Bryan Randall and Richie Williams) threw for a combined 66 yards and two interceptions. Fred Reid only rushed 32 yards in the ball game. The loss prompted Bombers pivot Stefan Lefors to say: "We can't go any lower than this, I don't think, so we've just got to keep plugging away, keep working at it and, hopefully, we'll get a little bit better."

And what about the board of governors? Don't they have rich friends who might consider joining them? Have they heard of networking?

Of course, in the present recession, everyone is going to be ultra-conservative, but since governments and other investors want to

Tough Times for the New Guys

By: Jonathan Hamelin

With four rookie head coaches in the Canadian Football League this year, it has been interesting to see these coaches try to adapt to their new job.

Throughout the early weeks of the season, these coaches have definitely suffered through some struggles.

It seems that these CFL rookie head coaches are learning early in their careers, that when it comes to being a head coach, much like any job, it's not easy being the new guy.

The new head coaches, Richie Hall (Edmonton Eskimos), Bart Andrus (Toronto Argonauts), Mike Kelly (Winnipeg Blue Bombers) and Marcel Bellefeuille (Hamilton Tiger Cats) have experienced the good, the bad and the ugly during their short tenures.

They have all tasted victory and the sweet sensation of a Gatorade shower, but also the agony of a crush-

ing defeat. In fact, none of these coaches' teams had a winning record through four weeks.

Argos' head coach Bart Andrus has gone on a roller coaster ride to start off his tenure in Toronto. Bart Andrus took over an Argonauts squad that was in hot water. The once notorious defense had struggled greatly over the last few seasons, and the team had gone 4-14 the year previous.



Through four weeks, Bomber's head coach Mike Kelly has fired his star receiver, been involved in a spy gate scandal, all the while amassing a record of 1-3.

Heading into the opening game of the season against the Hamilton Tiger Cats, another team fallen on hard times, fans weren't sure what to expect. Fans were pleasantly surprised by the outcome. The Argos won 30-17, Kerry Joseph and Jamal Robertson were solid on offense, and the defense held its own. It appeared that Bart Andrus had begun to bail the sinking ship around.

The next two contests didn't work

out quite so well. The Argos collapsed and gave up 30 points in the second quarter during a loss to the Saskatchewan Roughriders, and were blown out in Calgary. These losses showed that Bart Andrus didn't have the CFL quite figured out as some similar problems emerged for the Argos.

Things began looking up for the Argos and head coach Bart Andrus however. The Argos most recently defeated the Blue Bombers in Winnipeg, and as of week four held a record of 2-2. Andrus still has some work to do, such as getting the offense and defense to play consistently, but he is on the right path.

It seems that Bart Andrus has breathed some new life into an Argos team that underachieved last season. And the team does have double their wins from last season already...

When it comes to taking over a team that has been struggling,

Marcel Bellefeuille can feel Bart Andrus' pain. Bellefeuille took over the lowly Hamilton Tiger Cats, the least successful franchise in the Canadian Football League for several years. Bellefeuille had interned as the teams head coach last season and was looking to improve things this season.

After the aforementioned loss to the Argos, Bellefeuille's Tiger Cats' won two straight games, with a dramatic win against both the BC Lions and Winnipeg Blue Bombers. Hamilton did recently lose to the tough Montreal Alouettes, but they appear to be a contender in the East.

It hasn't been all sunshine and roses for Bellefeuille however. Hamilton has had some struggles in their secondary this year, and the team is currently caught up in a mini quarterback controversy. The team has also recently added notorious trouble maker Arland Bruce to the team, and it will be interesting to see how Marcel Bellefeuille will deal with Bruce's attitude if problems arise...

Defensive guru Richie Hall also took over a team that was under-achieving. The Edmonton Eskimos did make the playoffs in crossover last season, but finished fourth in the West. Hall finally got a chance to be a head coach and was expected to bring some defensive flare to the Eskimos.

Hall's defensive smarts definitely showed in week one, as the Eskimos held the Bombers to 17 points, but the Eskimos then went on to give at least 40 points in the next two games.

Hall has had to work hard this season to try and improve Edmonton's porous defense.

The Eskimos would likely be 1-3 through four weeks, had it not been for a miraculous come from behind win over the Roughriders. There are still some question marks surrounding Richie Hall early in the season...

From three rookie head coaches who have had a rocky ride, we go to a rookie head coach who has had one of the weirdest rookie seasons ever by a head

"Trying to live up to names like Kent Austin, John Hufnagel and Marc Trestman has been challenging for these new head coaches just trying to grasp the ropes of this league"

coach.

Through four weeks, Bomber's head coach Mike Kelly has fired his star receiver, been involved in a spy gate scandal, all the while amazing a record of 1-3.

The Bombers struggles on offense have been well documented. While all this can't be shouldered on Mike Kelly, a lot of it can. Kelly refused to use the Shotgun formation until recently, saying it was for flag football. Yet for a young quar-

terback like Stefan Lefors, it is a necessity.

Kelly has at times, tried to be too cute with his play calling. He has tried to orchestrate too many advanced plays that have just slowed the Bombers down. With a quarterback controversy that is spiraling out of control, and offense that only put up 8 first downs during a loss to Toronto, Mike Kelly has got all he can handle...

It has been evident that all of these head coaches have had their shares of growing pains in their rookie years, and some of them are likely feeling the pressure. But of fans, is it fair to put this much pressure on rookie head coaches?

They do need time to put their mark on their new team.

I think fans expect a lot more out of new head coaches these days, especially in the CFL, because of the success they have had in the past. For two years in a row, and three out of the last four, rookie head coaches have guided their teams to Grey Cup Championships.

Trying to live up to names like Kent Austin, John Hufnagel and Marc Trestman has been challenging for these new head coaches just trying to grasp the ropes of this league.

Tough times aside, these new head coaches in the CFL have made progress. But one thing is for sure.

It hasn't been an easy ride for the new guys.

CFL Players Finally Held Accountable

By: Scott Fitzsimmons

The NFL is usually the league known for the off field problems that occur among their players, and players with egos bigger than their bank accounts. These players are apparently bigger than the team.

The CFL hasn't been as bad for this seeing as most players can't afford to act out in fear of losing their jobs. Many of the players have to keep other jobs in the off season because they don't make a huge salary in the football season.

Recently the CFL has seen a rash of behaviour that can cause a lot of problems among teams and their players. The disrespect shown by players has left a lot of people shaking their heads.

Examples of this disrespect was evident in the very early parts of the pre-season when JoJuan Armour was disciplined for action detrimental to the team when he heavily tossed Jeremaine Copeland to the turf in a practice.

Derrick Armstrong showed how big his ego is when he refused to play for the Blue Bombers when he was asked to play the role of the Designated Import.

The latest incident happened when Arland Bruce III went to the media to state his disapproval of his coach and quarterback after his suspension for multiple incidents.

While I haven't had a lot of experience in a CFL dressing room, I am sure these things aren't new to the



"To the players I will say this. You are NEVER more important than the team. You are NEVER bigger than the team."

league. Yet, they seem to be more public than other situations.

The biggest part of this story isn't the severity of the actions of these players, but the fact these players are actually being held accountable for these actions.

It can't be easy for coaches to make these decisions, especially since all three players who are no longer with their teams were team leaders. Bruce and Armstrong were both the team leaders in receiving yards, and Armour was a definite force on the Stampeders defense.

I give full respect to all three coaches that made the decisions to let these players go. John Hufnagel started it in Calgary with the choice to release Armour. It wasn't just one incident that brought Coach Huff to this decision, and it wasn't a decision made lightly. He actually took three days to decide what to do. It had to have been a tough one to make since days before, Armour's physical showed an irregular heartbeat, and the Stam-

peders made a very public effort to stand behind Armour.

Winnipeg's situation may have been caused by a bad decision by a rookie head coach, but never had to get where it got. Derrick Armstrong refused to play after being asked to rotate in as the Designated Import. Armstrong dressed for the first game of the season, but refused to go into the game, even when his teammate Terrence Edwards went down after taking a heavy hit. After that show of selfishness, what was left of the relationship between Armstrong and Bombers Head Coach Mike Kelly, went right out the window, and Kelly made the choice to release Armstrong.

The Toronto situation involving Arland Bruce and Argos rookie Head Coach Bart Andrus came about because Bruce's actions off the field were showing a lack of respect for the system Andrus had set up. Andrus had made things very clear, from the beginning of training camp, what he expected of his players. Bruce was late for meetings, he left his playbook on the plane, and was acting like his "star status" had earned him a pass from having to follow the rules. That prompted Coach Andrus to suspend Bruce for his actions. Bruce then took it to the media showing his displeasure, and making some statements that may even make Terrell Owens cringe.

Andrus didn't waste time standing up for himself. He realized that the Argos could not afford Bruce's hefty \$190,000 paycheck, or his "Owens-esque" ego.

Most of the time I would shake my head and wonder why players are allowed to act this way. This time I am nodding my head in approval of the actions of these Coaches. I think Coach Hufnagel set the precedent early, and maybe even gave Kelly and Andrus the extra courage needed to hold their players accountable.

I am even guessing Hufnagel gave a stern warning to Stampeders DB's Dwight Anderson and Davonzo Tate after their shoving match after their defense gave up a BC touchdown in Week 4. Any more tantrums from either might see them looking for jobs elsewhere. The nice thing about a precedent is that both Tate and Anderson know Coach Huff has released

Pigeon Toed

Stevie Baggs, defensive end for the Saskatchewan Roughriders, is pigeon toed. This is why it sometimes looks strange when Baggs is running. There are actually many professional athletes that are pigeon toed and it doesn't seem to be affecting Stevie Baggs much. He already has 3 sacks and an interception on the season.

a player before for his disrespect for a teammate, he might do it again.

This is a situation I hope younger football players and coaches are watching carefully, and I will give this bit of advice.

To the players I will say this. You are NEVER more important than the team. You may have more talent than anyone on the team, but you rely on every other player to pass to you, hand off to you, or more importantly, block for you. You may have learned to make plays without much help from your team, but all it takes is one player to decide not to try as hard holding off a tackler, and you could see

yourself with a ACL or MCL tear that could compromise your career. Always be a player that others WANT to go to the end of the earth for. You are NEVER bigger than the team.

To the coaches, I will say this. You have the chance to stop many of these egos from getting too big early on in their football years. Many coaches enable these players, and feed their egos by making the player above everyone else on the team. These players are given special attention, and are exempt from following the rules that every other layer has to follow. This shows players from an early age that everyone is out for themselves, as many coaches only care about "Winning at all costs". It is less about their players, and more about their reputation as a coach.

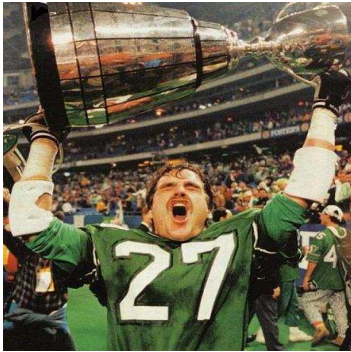
I will admit must be hard to keep some players accountable, and I wouldn't condone straight up releasing a young player. There are always ways of holding them accountable, and showing the rest of the team these actions will not be tolerated. It will always be better off for the team. It may mean you might lose a game, but it's not about you and your win record. It's about coaching these players to be the best athletes they can be. When they really learn that



The Choke in the Prairies

By: Avry Lewis-McDougal

A Humorous Look at the 20th anniversary of the Saskatchewan Rough Riders Grey Cup team



Glen Suitor: Ah its good to be back with the Old boys. Me, Ray Elgard, too bad Kent couldn't be here but its still good. The Riders are winning 22-0 and I work for TSN, what could be better?

About 20 minutes later

Gord Miller: Touchdown Eskimos! Arkee Whitlock scores and the Eskimos take the lead!

Glen Suitor: WHAT THE HECK! YOU HAVE TO BE KIDDING ME!

(Glen Suitor runs from the table that all the members of the 89 Riders are sitting at and runs into the Riders locker room)

Gord Miller: Matt, Are my eyes failing me?! Is that our own Glen Suitor running onto the field in full uniform?!

Matt Dunigan: My goodness it is, look! Glen is pulling Lance Frazier off the field and is taking his place at DB! This is unbelievable!

Glen Suitor: All right boys let's do this!

Gord Miller: Ray drops back to pass and he its Maurice Mann down the middle! Suitor tries to catch Mann but he can't do it he's pulled up lame!

Glen Suitor: Ouch! My hammy! Oh don't worry guys I'll pop a guy on this next play!

Gord Miller: Ray, hands off the ball to Calvin McCarty, McCarty could go....he runs over Suitor! Touchdown Eskimos!

Glen Suitor: Ohhhh! My back! Guys can you give me a hand up?

(Other Roughrider players all help to pick up Glen from off of the turf)

Matt Dunigan: Look at all those young guys picking up a teammate that's old enough to send them to their rooms with no supper, what a classy bunch of guys.

(Glen is brought to the sidelines and put onto the Riders bench)

Coach Ken Miller: You ok Glen?

Glen Suitor: Yeah I'm fine just give me a minute and I'll be ready to help stop the bleeding!

(After many more plays in which Eskimo wide receivers blow past Glen Suitor)

Gord Miller: And well on the 20th year reunion of the 1989 Roughriders, Saskatchewan blows a 22-0 lead, lose 38-33, and Glen Suitor makes a comeback and ends up straining muscles and dislocating virtually every part of his body that could be strained or dislocated. Let's send things down to Sarah Olesky who is with Glen on the sidelines flat on his back.

Sarah Orlesky: Glen why did you spontaneously come out of retirement and play the rest of this game?

Glen Suitor: I just wanted to show that I still had something left in me and help the team....oh my body hurts! (Glen opens container of Tylenol)

Sarah Orlesky: Uh Glen you know that Tylenol has ribohydrokensäure which is banned by the CFL....

Glen Suitor: I don't care I'm going back into retirement now let me be with my Tylenol!



Should the BC Lions Start Jarious Jackson?

By: Josh Dhani

The answer to that title question would be, "Heck yeah!"

On July 16, 2009, BC Lions fans witnessed quarterback Buck Pierce go down with an injury. The Lions ended up winning the game with a score of 40-22, and it showed a sign of what skills their backup quarterback had. Jarious Jackson showed what he can do on the football field.

He threw a pair of touchdowns that game as he created a tandem with Geroy Simon. Jackson had thrown for 362 passing yards and four touchdowns that game, showing that he deserved to be the man when Pierce is out.

Jackson also created a tandem with Paris Jackson, and after tearing up the Eskimos, Jarious and Paris Jackson were named the CFL's Finest Players of the Week. BCLions.com then named the group called the "Jackson Two," which sounded somewhat similar to the Jackson Five. But no need for music, this is the Canadian Football League.

After the powerful performance, Jackson also displayed speed as he is a good scrambler in the pocket. He also ran for 20 rushing yards on three carries during that 40-22 win. But after that, the Lions were destroyed by the Calgary Stampeders in a 48-10 loss the next week. It looked the Lions were literally stamped.

Buck Pierce had a very poor performance which brought Jackson in, who scored the only touchdown of the game on a one-yard dig. Although he didn't play that good, at least it wasn't as worse as Buck Pierce's.

Now it brings me to something, should the BC Lions start Jarious Jackson?

I mean, come on, they have the best backup quarterback in the CFL right now. Let's

Buck Pierce Jarious Jackson



In 4 Games Played



In 2 Games Played

653 passing yards
4 TD's
5 INT's
71.7 QB Rating

368 passing yards
4 TD's
2 INT's
107.2 QB Rating

examine the stats of Buck Pierce and Jarious Jackson: (Up Top)

See now? Jarious Jackson is coming close to Buck Pierce's passing yards despite Pierce playing two more games. Jackson is already beating Pierce to it in touchdowns. He has less interceptions and he has a better rating than Pierce.

Overall, Jackson has been much better Pierce this year. He already has the same amount of stats even though Pierce has played more games. It is surprising actually. Pierce has been playing very poor this year and Jackson has shown quite an improvement this year.

I really do think Jarious Jackson deserves the job as starter. He has the speed, the quickness, and the arm. Jackson also has more knowledge of the game than Pierce as he also had some playing time in the NFL for quite some time. I do think the BC Lions should think about making a switch.

With the Lions at 1-3, and their only game that was won was when Jackson started, I think it's time to switch and get back to contending for the Grey Cup. The clock is ticking, and Jackson is waiting.

The Lions need to make a move now.

What Does the Future Hold for Graham Harrell?

By: Chase Ruttig



After much speculation, Texas Tech product Graham Harrell decided to sign with the CFL's Saskatchewan Roughriders after getting cut by the Cleveland Browns in training camp.

This was big news as Harrell was a college star and a Heisman candidate. Obviously, it was going to be big news no matter where he went.

All hoopla aside, the question is: will Graham Harrell live up to the hype and become a great quarterback in the CFL?

I say yes, and while it may be easy to say this, there are several reasons to prove this point.

He absolutely tore up every defense he came across in college and will probably be remembered as one of the most prolific passers in Big 12 history.

He is also a winner, as he nearly lead his Texas Tech Red Raider squad to the BCS National Championship game this year,

pulling off an epic game winning drive against in-state rival Texas in the process.

Even more importantly, Harrell is not coming to the CFL for off-field or injury related issues, issues that usually plague most NCAA stars who come to Canada. He was just severely overlooked during the scouting process and the combine.

Harrell should enjoy a smooth transition into the Canadian game, as the extra receiver and wider field will compliment his skills. Harrell excels in the passing game, and the CFL is a passing league.

Another question would be: will Harrell get sufficient playing time in Saskatchewan? When he signed, the consensus was that he would basically be parked on the bench behind Darian Durant and Steven Jyles. This left many fans scratching their heads.

But, the Riders abysmal offensive performances during the first month of the season have created a quarterback controversy in Regina. If the lacklustre play of Durant and Jyles continues, it may be only a matter time before we get to see Harrell in game action.

Once Graham Harrell gets adjusted to the the differences between the Canadian and American games, it is only a matter of time before he becomes a star in the Canadian Football League. In the process, he will become an example to NCAA players that there is life after the NFL and it resides north of the border.

The Tiger Cats Season So Far...

By: Brandon Marsdin



Well, it was same old same old for the Tiger-Cats walking into this season, as the team lost both pre-season games. First, to the Winnipeg Blue Bombers 32-22 on June 17 and then again on June 23 against the Toronto Argonauts 27-17.

Then the regular season arrived and again the Tiger-Cats and the Grey Cup looked not meant to be. The Ti-Cats fell to the Argos 30-17 in week one. But, the Ti-Cats managed to rebound from the loss in week two with a surprise victory over the BC Lions 31-28. This would give them a .500 record of 1-1 and it kept a glimpse of hope of this franchises turn around.

In the third game, the Ti-Cats ran over the Blue Bombers cruising to a 25-13 victory. This would put them one game above .500 at a 2-1 record for the first time since the 2004 season. It also achieved the winning of two games in a row.

Something that hasn't happened with Hamilton since the 2006 season.

Unfortunately, the streak ended in week four as the Ti-Cats fell to the Montreal Alouettes 21-8. But, the team continued to play defence amazingly as Montreal coming into that game was averaging 41+ points a night.

The Tiger-Cats managed to hold them to under 30 and were actually up 6-0 at the end of the first quarter. It was not their defence that was the problem it was that they weren't playing offence with very good effi-

"One thing is for sure this Hamilton Tiger-Cat team is done sneaking up on teams"

ciency.

Something had to be done to pump up this offence and something was done a trade for Argos Wide Receiver Arland Bruce was made by Ti-Cats GM Bob O'Billivich or "Obie" for short, in exchange for defensive lineman Corey Mace (who has signed a 1-year deal with the NFL's Buffalo Bills), third round pick in 2010 and a conditional draft pick in 2011,

on Wednesday, July 29th, 2009.

Which brings us to last night, where Arland Bruce was scheduled to make his Ti-Cat Debut. Although individually, it wasn't a very good debut as he only got two touches of the ball and 23 yards, it definitely was effective team wise as everyone stepped up and Bruce commanded a double team. Deandra Cobb played well and earned himself the nickname "Lion Tamer".

Cobb ran for a total of 167 yards and 2 TD's on Friday night, topping his numbers of 175 yards and one TD on July 10th. That happened the last time the Ti-Cats played the Lions.

One thing is for sure this Hamilton Tiger-Cat team is done sneaking up on teams. They are in the hunt for the Grey Cup having the second best record in the east at 3-2. If Montreal losses next week's game against the Argos and Hamilton beats the Edmonton Eskimos. Hamilton becomes tied for top place in the east.

CFL Rookie Rankings

By: **Giants27**

(Examining the Rookies in the CFL)

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As of week three...

Rookies always make an impact. Whether they're returning kickoffs, catching passes or sacking quarterbacks. The purpose of this column is to try and rank the top ten rookies in the CFL. Every team but the only unbeaten team have been mentioned. This isn't shocking, since Montreal didn't have many holes to fill this offseason.

No. 10-DB Bobby Keyes, Edmonton Eskimos: Keyes began his career with the Washington Redskins before moving on to the Birmingham Steeldogs and Dallas Desperados.

So far, this season Keyes has recorded 14 tackles, tying him for the lead in tackles with some more rookies who'll you'll meet later on.

No. 9-DE Odell Willis, Calgary Stampeders: After going undrafted in 08' out of West Georgia, Willis signed with the AF2's Peoria Pirates. He was later traded to the Green Bay Blizzard.

Willis has put fear in the hearts of all quarterbacks out there, with three sacks.

No. 8-DB Darren Toney, BC Lions: Toney joined the Carolina Panthers in 2008, before being cut. He signed with BC this off-season and has been impressive.

For the season, Toney is tied with Keyes with 14 tackles, surpassing preseason expectations.

No. 7-DB Lin-J Shell, Toronto Argonauts: No, Shell doesn't have 14 tackles

like Keyes and Toney, but the former Orlando Predatos, Philadelphia Eagle and New Orleans VooDoo does have something Willis has.

Shell has two sacks and adds to that with one interception in his rookie season in Toronto.

No. 6-LB Kye Stewart, Saskatchewan Roughriders: Stewart a product out of Illinois State has done outstanding on special teams for the Roughriders.

Stewart has seven special teams' tackles along with two on defense. He is also seeing some time at linebacker.

No. 5-DE Greg Peach, Edmonton Eskimos: Peach graduated from Eastern Washington after setting the school record for most tackles for a loss in a career with 63.

As a CFL rookie, Peach has 14 tackles and on top of that one sack.

No. 4-RB DeAndra Cobb, Hamilton Tiger-Cats: Cobb has impressed after spending three years out of football. Following his Michigan State career he joined the Atlanta Falcons in 2005 and the Jacksonville Jaguars in 2006.

During his CFL rookie season, he has 25 rushes for an astounding 142 yards. Cobb also has eight catches for 88 yards and a touchdown.

No. 3-RB Martell Mallett, BC Lions: Mallett is in his first professional stop after having 2,888 yards on 582 carries with 27 touchdowns at Arkansas-Pine Bluff.

He has rushed for 171 yards and a touchdown on 37 carries. Mallett has also

caught nine passes for 114 yards.

No. 2-WR Titus Ryan, Calgary Stampeders:

Ryan has made three NFL stops, but never saw any game action in Kansas City, New Orleans and Carolina. So, after not getting any attention in America, Ryan decided to go north.

And boy has he made an impact. So far, he's gotten eight kick-offs for 248 yards, which includes a 104 yard score.

No. 1-WR Emmanuel Arceneaux, BC Lions:

Making his first pro stop following a successful career at Alcorn State, Arceneaux has been nothing short of impressive.

He has caught nine passes for 143 yards and has added three touchdowns which puts him behind grizzled veterans Avon Cobourne, Joffrey Reynolds and Geroy Simon.