

OF THE CFL

Volume 1 Issue 3




Trading Franchises: Meet Your New Team

***Printers Back in BC**

***Jones Back in Saskatchewan**

***Bryant Traded to Calgary**

A man in a blue shirt and dark jacket is speaking at a podium. The background is a dark wall with CFL logos and a stylized star. A thin black line points from the text to the man's mouth.

In closing, I'd like to remind fans to pick up the latest copy of "Fans of the CFL".

**Fans of the CFL: This is our League. This is our Voice.
<http://fansofthecfl.blogspot.com/>**

Message From the Editor

There has been a lot of player movement in the Canadian Football League over the past month. A lot! This is uncommon for the CFL, where trades and mid-seasons shake-ups are usually about as common as a Richie Hall outburst! In this, the third ever edition of “Fans of the CFL”, we take a look at some of transactions that have recently transpired. The article: Gearing up for the Stretch Run, gives each team a grade on their recent moves. A number of articles in our team section also focus on how each team did. On a side not, I feel much more confident about this version of “Fans of the CFL” than last time. For the last issue Scribus was used to create the magazine, which seemed to create some problems. We have also added a couple of new writers for this issue, but

we are always looking for new writers, especially for our team section. If you would be interested in writing for “Fans of the CFL”, send me an email at roughrider-freek@hotmail.com. Also, I’d like to take this opportunity to remind everyone that “Fans of the CFL” is free to subscribe to. If you would like a free subscription, send me an email.



**Jonathan Hamelin
“Founder of Fans of the CFL”**

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September in the CFL: Who's Hot? Who's Cold?

Hot



Calgary's Jermaine Copeland
343 receiving yards, 4 touchdowns



Saskatchewan's Luca Congi
12-13 on field goals, 12-12 on converts



BC's Ricky Foley
9 tackles, 4 sacks

Cold



Winnipeg's Fred Reid
39 carries, 191 yards



Saskatchewan's Stevie Baggs
5 tackles, 1 sack



Toronto's Cody Pickett
69/116 735 yards, 3 interceptions

Could Chase Daniel Eventually Follow Graham Harrell's Career Path?

By: Giants27



Graham Harrell was a Sammy Baugh Trophy winner, Johnny Unitas Golden Award winner, AT&T All-American Player of the Year, 3-time All-Academic Big 12, and a Heisman Trophy candidate.

Despite, all of this collegiate accolades, Harrell went undrafted out of Texas Tech and received tryout invitations with the Cleveland Browns and

then tried out for the UFL.

He went unsigned both times.

Following his UFL tryout, rumours started that Harrell could sign with the Saskatchewan Roughriders of the CFL.

Those rumours eventually transpired as he signed with the team on July 20 and was immediately placed on the inactive list as he adjusted to the Canadian game. Harrell has yet to make his debut.

Chase Daniel on the other hand was a one-time Heisman Trophy candidate (2007), Second-team All-Big 12, Big

12 Male Athlete of the Year, First-team All-Big 12, Second-team All-American, Maxwell Award semi-finalist and also a finalist for the Manning Award, Walter Camp Award, Draddy Trophy, and Davey O'Brien Award.

Needless to say, that's a bit more than Harrell's accolades, yet Daniel has faced the same treatment as Harrell has in the NFL.

Daniel spent the entire training camp with the Washington Redskins before being cut. After being cut, while the Redskins were assembling their practice squad, he was told he'd be added to it. However, the Redskins opted to go with ex-Kentucky Wildcats quarterback and New York Giant cut (ironically, the Redskins first opponent in 2009) Andre Woodson.

After being shown the door by the Redskins, Daniel has opted to take his show to New Orleans under the mentoring of gun-slinger Drew Brees. Luckily, for Daniel the New Orleans quarterback situation is less log-jammed down the road as the only backup

"In my opinion, Daniel staying in the NFL for the short term would be a mistake for him down the road, and taking the path blazed by the likes of Warren Moon, Doug Flutie and Graham Harrell makes sense for him and his potential team."

is almost 40-year-old Mark Brunell.

Now, odds are Daniel will see limited time on the active roster and even less time on the field. But a situation that has gone unmentioned in the media is the fact he could decide to go

the CFL once his deal with the Saints expires.

As you may or may not know, most of the league has little to no backup qb depth. It also doesn't hurt that Daniel is a prototypical CFL quarterback (6'1", 219), and has solid arm strength, along with time in one of the toughest conferences in the NCAA.

In my opinion, Daniel staying in the NFL for the short term would be a mistake for him down the road, and taking the path blazed by the likes of Warren Moon, Doug Flutie and Graham Harrell makes sense for him and his potential team.

The Great Moncton Debate



Steve Thompson and Tobi Writes debate whether or not the CFL should award a franchise to Moncton.

The Great Moncton Debate: CFL Targets Wrong City in Moncton

By: Steve Thompson

Mark Cohon, the commissioner of the Canadian Football League, was interviewed at half-time during the Labor Day game between Toronto and Hamilton. He said next year the CFL was contemplating playing a regular season game in Moncton, New Brunswick.

There is nothing wrong with playing a game there, except that—in terms of expansion—Moncton can't help the CFL.

When I wrote my first article for Bleacher Report, it was about CFL expansion in Canada. Based on population only, I divided the potential new franchises into three groups; short term, long term, and very long term.

The short term cities were Quebec, London, and Kitchener.



Could Kerry Joseph one day be throwing touchdown passes to Kamau Peterson in Moncton? Steve Thompson doesn't think so.

The long term cities were Halifax, Oshawa, Windsor, and Victoria.

Then there were the rest in the very long term, including Moncton.

Moncton was chosen because it is building a stadium for the 2010 World Junior Championships in

Athletics. If only the cities in the first two groups showed such spirit.

Sadly, the problem with Moncton is it is still too small. Its population as of 2005 was 126,000, making it the 29th largest city in Canada. In five years, Moncton had grown by 9,000, making it the 21st-fastest growing city in Canada.

The new stadium reflects Moncton's small population. It will only have 10,000 permanent seats. The plan for the CFL game is to put an equivalent number of temporary seats, giving Moncton the same amount of seats as Montreal, the smallest stadium in the CFL.

That's no help for the CFL in terms of immediate expansion. They want stadiums of 25,000 permanent seats, minimum.

The Moncton game is good for increasing interest in the CFL in the Maritimes. There is no reason why a regular-season game can't be played there every year. But because of Moncton's small population, one game a year is all that can be managed for the immediate future.

As mentioned above, only three Canadian cities have the population and the growth rate to get awarded an expansion franchise right now. Quebec has a population of over 700,000, and Kitchener and London have populations between 450,000 and 500,000.

Football is doing well at the university level in these cities. Laval, Laurier, and Western all have outstanding football programs. Canadian football has some roots here.

All that is lacking are investors and stadiums.

The CFL should be looking for ways to stimulate interest in these three cities. Quebec would be a great rival for Montreal, and Kitchener and London have

a natural rivalry with each other and Hamilton.

But nothing seems to be happening for the CFL in these cities. Small Moncton is the only city taking even a half-step towards getting a team.

The CFL needs to start talking to the locals in Quebec, London, and Kitchener to see about staging regular season and exhibition games, with an eye to getting a permanent franchise.

If it could be shown that there is interest in the CFL in those cities, perhaps investors will start to believe in the league and step forward.

Then the CFL will not be limited to its eight or nine-team format that seems to have been here since the beginning of its existence.

The Great Moncton Debate: The CFL in Moncton: A Winning Idea

By: Tobi Writes

In response to Steve Thompson's article: CFL Targets Wrong City in Moncton

Moncton is not the Canadian Football League's goal. Halifax is. But how do you get there?

I have made this point to several others who have attacked the "CFL in Moncton" idea. Moncton is a means to an end for the CFL Board of Governors. Playing in Moncton is frankly an excel-

lent idea for the CFL to try to get to their ultimate goal.

Moncton Mayor's Lorne Mitton and George LeBlanc were smart to put this together. Mitton got the stadium built and LeBlanc worked the deal with the CFL. This deal is a win-win deal for everyone but Halifax politicians. And the cherry on top is that the biggest winner is the City of Moncton.

But let's start with what the CFL gets out of this.

Moncton built a near CFL sized stadium. It has 10,000 permanent seats with 10,000 more temporary seats currently be-

Could Stefan Logan one day be running the ball for a CFL team in Moncton? Tobi Writes thinks so.



ing put in place. For building this 20,000 seat stadium, they are getting CFL games for their effort. This sends a loud (if possibly inaccurate) message to cities like Kitchener and Windsor that while they might not get teams, there is a good likelihood they'd get some CFL games if they build a stadium. It reinforces to cities like Quebec City that they

It is no secret that building a usable stadium is the biggest hurdle to getting a city in the CFL front door—that has been the conventional wisdom for quite a while—but Moncton getting games makes the transaction appear a lot less theoretical.

Moncton is tiny in terms of Canadian cities with only about

126,000 people in their CMA (Census Metropolitan Area). The fact that the CFL will work with them suggests a friendlier CFL than say when Windsor's mayor talked to them a few year back. Is that true? Probably not. It is highly likely that the CFL owners

"Moncton is a means to an end for the CFL Board of Governors. Playing in Moncton is frankly an excellent idea for the CFL to try to get to their ultimate goal."

are still the ruthless, self-centered, untrustworthy batch they have been for years, but the perception this creates among fans will likely help them a bit in their quest for stadiums and stadium im-

provements in Quebec City and Ottawa.

The CFL also finally gets an acceptable home for a "Touchdown Atlantic" game. Playing in Halifax in a stadium that caps out at 11,000 seats required essentially double price tickets (\$40-62) to generate the necessary revenue. Playing in a 20,000 seat stadium in Moncton can be done with more normal \$25-30 tickets. That allows TD Atlantic games to be played more frequently without fearing a fan backlash arguing price gouging.

The CFL will easily sell out the 20,000 seats at that price. Playing once or twice a year out there will be enough to excite Maritimes fans, but not enough to risk "overexposure"—the games seeming too

Gearing up for the Stretch Run

By: Jonathan Hamelin

The coming of September means that school is back in session.

Children, used to the lazy care-free days of summer, have to once again adapt to the routine of school. The routine of getting up early, sitting through a number of classes' everyday, and doing homework. These children have had to adapt to this system.

Similarly, in the Canadian Football League, managers have also had to adapt.

Nearing the stretch run to the playoffs, managers have had to decide if the players they currently

boast on their roster are good enough to get the job done. This season, managers have clearly felt their rosters



Many teams have been busy retooling their rosters for the stretch run. The Edmonton Eskimos brought in former Roughrider Reggie Hunt.

need retooling, as there has been a large amount of player movement over the last

month.

Some players were traded, and some were released and sought a new start with a different team. But which teams made the best moves to set themselves up for the stretch run? With school back in session, it's time to give each team their report cards on their recent moves.

Calgary Stampeders Grade: A

With a porous defence and an inconsistent offence, it was time for the "Defending Grey Cup Champs" to make a change. To improve on defence, the Stampeders added middle linebacker Tim

Johnson, half back John Eubanks and defensive lineman Tearrius George, Charlton Hughes, Jim Davis and Devone Claybrook. By revamping their front seven, the Stamps have already drastically improved their defence. Kudos to the Stampeders management for recognizing that change was necessary.

The Stamps also made the headlines for a big trade. The Stamps acquired young receivers Romby Bryant and Arjei Franklin plus some draft picks for O'Dell Willis, Jabari Arthur and Titus Ryan and some draft picks. Though the Stamps gave up some young talent, they picked up two promising young receivers. Romby Bryant had been struggling in Winnipeg, so Calgary could be a perfect destination for him.

Fellow writer Greg Bates takes a further

look at the Stampeders in his article: [The Calgary Airlift](#).

Saskatchewan Roughriders Grade: B+

The Roughriders were reunited with some of their former players over this past month. The Riders welcomed back return-man Jason Armstead. The move has turned out well, as Armstead has helped improve the Riders return game. Saskatchewan also signed former player Kitwana Jones, who had been released from the Eskimos. The Riders were smart to bring back their former special team's demon.

Edmonton Eskimos Grade: B+

To help improve their linebacking core, the Eskimos signed former Roughrider/Alouette Reggie Hunt. Hunt has yet to suit up for the Eskimos, but he could prove to be a solid acquisition. Edmonton also acquired defensive back Bryon Parker from the Toronto Argonauts, and signed defensive back Randee Drew and defensive lineman Jerome Haywood. The changes on defence should

make Edmonton a better-rounded team.

Montreal Alouettes Grade: B

The Montreal Alouettes haven't many changes over the past month, but with the best record in the CFL, they didn't really need to. One change that Montreal did make was to develop a better killer instinct. Montreal usually seems to falter at this point of the season, but they have currently stepped up their game. They won a close game against the BC Lions and then crushed the Winnipeg Blue Bombers. They look ready for the post-season.

BC Lions Grade: B

The big move out of Lions camp was the signing of former quarterback Casey Printers. With Jarious Jackson out, and Buck

Pierce's history of injuries, the Lions needed a dependable starter. Printers has had his best success in his career with the Lions. To be successful, Printers will need to keep his attitude in check. Currently sitting in the Western basement, the Lions needed to make a big move like this.

Hamilton Tiger Cats **Grade: B**

The Hamilton Tiger Cats haven't made any big moves as of late. Then again, they made a pretty big splash earlier in the season acquiring Arland Bruce, a move that has turned out quite well for Hamilton. Currently sitting at 6-6, which in no way guarantees them second place, it was surprising to see Hamilton not bring in any players for the stretch run.

Toronto Argonauts **Grade: C**

The Argos was involved in a couple of

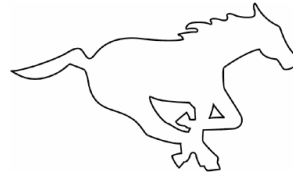
big transactions lately. The team traded away cornerback Byron Parker to the Edmonton Eskimos for future considerations. Parker had been a solid cornerback for the Argos, but there was no room for him after he came back from a NFL tryout. Be that as it may, the Argos still could have used the depth at cornerback, which makes this move kind of strange.

One positive move for the Argos was bringing back kick returner Dominique Dorsey. Toronto was in desperate need of a spark, and Dorsey is capable of delivering that spark.

Winnipeg Blue Bombers **Grade: C**

The Bombers finally had enough with Romby Bryant's sophomore slump, as they shipped him along with Arjei Franklin to the Stampeders. While many have tried to examine the winners and loser of the trade, it was

really beneficial for both the Bombers and the Stampeders. The Bombers got rid of two under-achieving wide receivers, and picked up a promising defensive end and wide receiver. Still, the Bombers have done little else to fix up their porous offence. The team has not tried to bring in a quarterback to replace Michael Bishop, even though he has been struggling.



CFL



“Team Reports”



Team Writers Needed For: Saskatchewan Roughriders, Edmonton Eskimos, Montreal Alouettes. Send me an email at roughrider-freek@hotmail.com

The Rise and Fall of Casey Printers

By: Paul Taylor



“‘How did Printers end up having to settle for a place on a practice squad?’ The answer reveals a tumultuous career with several ups and downs.”

One of the most surprising pieces of news, which emerged from the month of September, was the decision by the B.C. Lions to bring Casey Printers back into the fold after a four-year absence. The veteran quarterback has been signed to a practice roster contract and it will be interesting to see how this plays out.

The last time we heard from Printers, he had been released by the Hamilton Tiger-Cats. When the (at that time) worst team in the CFL can voluntarily cut ties with a player considered one of the most talented quarterbacks in the game, something's not right.

Here's a player who inspires extreme reactions in fans who either love him or hate him. The question is 'How did Printers end up having to settle for

a place on a practice squad?' The answer reveals a tumultuous career with several ups and downs.

Born in Texas, Printers played the majority of his college years at Texas Christian University (TCU) between 1999 and 2001, quarterbacking the team to three straight Bowl games.

"It's safe to say that Casey Printers is at the crossroads of his career. The question is, 'which way will he go?'"

This included two appearances in the Mobile Alabama Bowl, highlighted by his capturing the Most Valuable Player award in TCU's 1999 victory.

However, after three successful seasons with the Horned Frogs, Printers asked to be

transferred to Florida A&M following a disagreement with TCU head coach Gary Patterson over how the teams offence was run. The first hint of the perception that he was selfish reared its ugly head.

The Texas native wanted Patterson to throw the football more, so he could showcase his talents for the pro scouts. Given that TCU had enjoyed a successful period with the system in place, and a certain Ladainian Tomlinson running the ball, this was never going to happen.

In Florida, Printers went 7-5 as the move backfired. Only 1,517 passing yards and 12 Touchdown throws resulted in him going un-drafted in the 2002 NFL draft.

After this setback, the B.C. Lions came call-

ing in 2003, offering a three-year contract to be their third-string quarterback. To begin with Printers saw little playing time.

However, his fortunes changed in 2004, winning the backup role and then becoming the starter after David Dickenson was injured.

This led to a breakout season, displaying his for everyone to see. During the 2004 season, Printers passed for over 5,000 yards and nearly 500 on the ground, while accounting for 44 touchdowns. The end result was the CFL Most Outstanding Player of the year award.

Entering the playoffs, Printers was confident of capping an impressive season by winning the Grey Cup. Unfortunately, fate had other ideas. He sustained a shoulder injury in the fourth

quarter of the West Division final and Dickenson came into the game to lead the Lions to an overtime victory.

Entering the Grey Cup, Lions head coach Wally Buono made the controversial decision to start Dickenson. On the biggest stage in Printers career so far, he didn't even get onto the field as the Lions lost 27-19 to the Toronto Argonauts.

The quarterback believed that B.C. would have won the game if he'd started. A lot of people saw this as further evidence of his 'me-first' attitude. However, you could argue that he had a valid point given his production during the season.

Buono and a lot of Printer's Team Mates did not see it like this, viewing his reaction to not starting in the Grey Cup as proof that

he was bad for team chemistry.

However, the Lions were still prepared to offer a 3-year \$1 million contract extension prior to the 2005 season, which Printers declined. This proved to be a pre-cursor for his season, becoming embroiled in a quarterback controversy with Dickenson and hindered by ongoing injury problems.

In 2006, the Lions made another 3-year contract extension offer, this time for \$1.2 million, which was also turned down due to interest from the Kansas City Chiefs. Unfairly a lot of people viewed this as looking out for number one.

However, numerous professional athletes would and indeed *have* made the same decision when faced with a similar choice.

Playing in the NFL had always been Printer's ambition. Growing up, he dreamed of following in the footsteps of his favourite player, Warren Moon.

The Chiefs signed him to a 3-year \$1.03 million contract. Unfortunately the quarterback struggled during the pre-season. This resulted in a roller coaster 2006 season as he was cut, resigned to the practice squad and promoted to the Chiefs 53 man roster.

After being demoted back to the practice squad, Printers returned to Vancouver to attend the Lions West Division Final playoff game. Interestingly though, he was barred from the sidelines by Buono. Furthermore the B.C. players reportedly threatened to throw him out if he attempted to enter the locker room, yet an-

other indictment against Printers character.

At the end of 2006, the Chiefs signed Printers to a further 3-year contract and promoted him to the active roster. Again though he was released, prior to the start of the 2007 NFL season, apparently surprised by the decision as he felt he'd done everything asked of him.

Next it was back to the CFL, as the Hamilton Tiger-Cats signed him for \$500,000 a season, making Printers the highest paid player in Canadian Football.

This proved to be a complete disaster. In one and a half seasons, he had numerous injuries. Even when Printers actually played, his form was erratic, resulting in completing only 53 percent of his passes,

with a 6-14 touchdown-interception ration.

It's safe to say that Casey Printers is at the crossroads of his career. The question is, 'which way will he go?' There's no denying his talents, but the former Ti-cat is somewhat of an enigma.

It's all very well having ability, but there's that double-edged word 'potential' to deal with. At what point does potential stop meaning someone who has the ability to succeed and start translating to a player who had all the talent in the world but failed to live up to the hype?

If we're not there already, then we're very close to finding out the answer with Printers.



The Great Calgary Air Lift

By: Greg Bates



“With most of the most glaring problems on defence, and with equally devastating injuries throughout the lineup, the Stampeders initiated the Great Calgary Airlift.”



The most common question that a coach asks his players is "How bad do you want it?" The question that has been placed before the Stampeders players, coaches and management is the exact same question, how bad do you want it? With the Grey Cup being held in their own backyard, the Stampeders have made it known that anything less than a return to the championship game would be unacceptable. With that in mind, the Stampeders made sure that they bought back the majority of the offensive talent that they had last year. Defence was a different story though, and the Stampeders struggled out of the gate against the run and the pass. In a year where none of the teams, with the exception of the exceptional Alouettes, have managed to find any consistency, the Stamps, who were odds on favourites to repeat, stumbled out of the gate with a terrible 3-4 start. With most of the most glaring problems on defence, and with equally

devastating injuries throughout the lineup, the Stampeders initiated: The Great Calgary Airlift.

New players, who in any other year might have been given a chance to learn the CFL game, were either benched or sent packing. Young players with promise were traded to get veteran help, and coaching philosophies have radically changed. In order to get a better understanding of the changes we need to break things down by categories.

New signees.

Tim Johnson – MB

The Stamps just couldn't stop the run. Rookies Tristan Black and Tray Blackmon really struggled early as young middle linebackers tend to do. Enter Tim Johnson, the former Raiders linebacker who has stepped into the middle and shored up the Stamps run defence. With 29 tackles since his arrival 5 games ago he's been another really solid discovery by Jim Barker.

"The question that has been placed before the Stampeders players, coaches and management is the exact same question, how bad do you want it?"

John Eubanks – HB

With no disrespect to Donavon Tate, he just wasn't working out, and the Stamps half backs featuring Tate and Ronnie Amadi were not scaring anyone. This was mainly due to their inexperience in the Stamps system. Former Bomber and Redskin John Eubanks has stepped in nicely and bought improved speed in man to man coverage and better physicality. With 13 tackles and an interception in 6 games, he's been a positive addition in terms of the Stamps defence against the

pass.

Tearrius George – DE

A standout for Calgary in 2007, who left to find his fortune in the NFL, George returns and has become part of a vastly improved and completely revamped defensive line. With 6 tackles and a forced fumble in 3 games, George has come off of the end with blazing speed and caused chaos in the backfield.

Charleton Hughes – DE

Thank you Eagles! Stamps fans were hopeful that Hughes would return but were not optimistic due to his outstanding rookie campaign last year. But, the Eagles did send Hughes back, and they obviously did a good job with him in training camp as he looks better than he did last year. Dominant off of the end, Hughes has 11 tackles and 4 sacks in two games. Hughes has brought much needed pressure to opposition quarterbacks and his contain off of the end has helped the Stamps run defence immensely. His

return also cleared the way for the Stamps to trade Odell Willis to the Bombers.

Jim Davis – DT

It was clear that the Stamps interior defence was doing them no favours in the first 7 games of the season and Jim Davis has gone a long-

“With all of these changes how can the Stamps build enough chemistry to get back to the Grey Cup game?”

way in solidifying the middle of the field. After a solid year in Edmonton last year, he was cut loose because of injuries and depth questions and arrived in Calgary in time to help the Stamps in their sweep of the Eskimos in the labour day home and home. With 8 tackles, 3

sacks and 1 forced fumble in 4 games Davis has become a key part of the Stamps completely revamped defensive line.

Devone Claybrooks – DT

Despite having two solid seasons in Montreal, he was cut loose and sat on the sidelines for the first half of the year before becoming part of The Great Calgary Airlift. Despite only having 11 tackles in 5 games and no sacks, he's made running up the middle a lot more difficult against the Stamps. However, with the inevitable return of Mike Labinjo, he might lose his every down status. He can still be a great depth player.

The Injuries

There's no question that the Stampeders have been hammered by injuries, Brandon Browner has returned after 4 games, however his place was taken by Stamps Keon Raymond. Raymond had become one of John Hufnagel's favourite players due to his ability to play any position in the secon-

dary and fill in as a outside linebacker. Ken-Yon Rambo is out for the season with a severe injury, leaving Calgary without a legitimate outside deep threat. Ryan Thellwell, who was enjoying a immensely productive season, recently went down with a season ending Achilles Tendon tear. Along the offensive line, Rob Lazeo missed time due to an elbow injury and 2nd year stand-out Jesse Newman has missed time, opening a spot for Tim O'Neil.

On the defensive side of the ball, besides Brandon Browner, the most significant injury was to Mike Labinjo, which forced the Stampeders to rebuild their defensive line on the fly. Brandon Smith, who was expected to be a major factor in the secondary, has yet to play a game and is expected to miss the rest of the season.

Beyond that, the Stampeders have had injuries to other players that have dramatically affected the teams depth and hurt the teams Im-

port/Non Import ratio.

The Trade

There's no question that this trade would not have taken place if the injury to Ryan Thellwell had not happened. Losing your best wide out is devastating, but losing his replacement and a Canadian to boot is a doomsday scenario that no team wants to face. Because of the pressure to return to the Grey Cup, John Hufnagel couldn't afford to wait and see if the teams younger prospects could grow into starting roles. With that and with probably a great deal of regret the stamps sent O'Dell Willis, Jabari Arthur and Titus Ryan as well as two future draft picks to the Winnipeg Blue Bombers for Wide Receiver Romby Bryant, Arjei Franklin a third round pick and a undisclosed draft pick. The question has to be, will the Stamps will miss three good young players? The answer will certainly be yes in the long term, but in the short term they probably come out ahead in the

deal.

Its no secret that Titus Ryan had tailed off over the last few weeks and had developed fumbilitis. While he was an effective and dangerous special teams returner, he failed to take advantage of the opportunity of filling in on the Stamps decimated receiving core. O'Dell Willis started like gangbusters and had a short run as the leagues leading sack master. However, Willis tended to be a one dimensional straight up pass rusher, and offensive lines adjusted to his game and he lost effectiveness. The return of Hughes and George and the imminent return of Labinjo made Willis expendable. Probably the biggest regret though is the loss of Arthur, who had the potential to be a very good Canadian receiver down the road. The Stamps needed receiver depth now and were willing to make the move.

On the other side of the ball, Romby Bryant should be a decent

enough replacement for Rambo, and if he can learn the Stamps offense, he should take some weight off of Jermaine Copeland. In his first game, Bryant caught 4 passes for 38 yards, but should see his role increase as he gains chemistry with Stamps QB Henry Burris. Franklin didn't see much action for the Stamps but he is an intriguing receiver especially if Thellwell's injury is career ending.

The Fallout

With all of these changes, how can the Stamps build enough chemistry to get back to the Grey Cup game? The Stamps continue to try to find a level of offensive and defensive consistency that has eluded them thus far, but in the last five games the Stamps have compiled a record of 4-1. They got a win over the Argonauts, a sweep over the Eskimos in a labour day back to back and a tight home win against the Lions. The Stamps still have one of the toughest schedules in the Western

Division down the stretch, and integrating new players into the system and finding consistency is going to be key. There is a certain amount of confidence placed in the coaching staff, who have been exceptional over the last two years.

PAT

Jermaine Copeland continues to make a strong case to be nominated for the CFL MVP award. With 12 touchdowns and 886 yards through 12 games, Copeland has been a one man receiving core considering that Nik Lewis still hasn't found the end zone and Brent Ralph has struggled this year. It's about time the Stampeders have gone to a run first offense and Joffrey Reynolds has responded with strong games against the Argo's the Eskimos and the Lions moving into 4th place in the CFL, Reynolds is also closing in on some fairly significant career milestones. With 11 more yards Reynolds will hit the 7000 yard mark joining former Stamp Kelvin Anderson and passing Earl Lunsford for second in all time Stamps rushing. Reynolds is also within 40

yards of his fifth straight thousand yard season.

Henry Burris has also hit significant career markers. With a touchdown pass against the lions he passed Doug Flutie for the Stampeders lead in touchdown passes thrown with 141. Burris also became the Stamps all time leading passer as he moved past Flutie with over 20,551 yards.

Tune in next month for another look at the Stampeders month that was. Until then, I'm writing this column and I'm guessing that your not.

Edmonton Eskimos: Shake-ups Will Help Bring Team Closer to CFL Grey Cup

By: Giants27

Edmonton's defense has undergone numerous major changes over the past month. They acquired defensive back Byron Parker from Toronto and signed defensive back Randee Drew, linebacker Reggie Hunt, and defensive tackle Jerome Haywood.

When you look at it, you initially see aging veterans (Hunt and

Haywood), an injury-prone player (Drew) and a player who failed to

"Edmonton's defense has undergone numerous major changes over the past few days as they acquired defensive back Byron Parker from Toronto and signed defensive back Randee Drew, linebacker Reggie Hunt, and defensive tackle Jerome Haywood."

crack the lineup in Toronto, potentially due to him "not learning the play-

book" as coach Bart Andrus explained it.

But, when you look at it further, you see a 6-6 Eskimos team that holds a one-game lead over BC, and a three-game lead over Toronto for the fifth out of six spots in the playoffs.

Also, Edmonton has given up the most points in the league with 369. The next closest is Saskatchewan with 331. Edmonton is adding Hunt, a seven-year CFL veteran, to a line-backing core who's most ex-

perienced player is four-year CFL vet Maurice Lloyd.

Haywood was brought in to replace the injured Dario Romero.

While Haywood isn't as talented, he has seven-plus years of CFL experience and will likely combine with six-year veteran Kai Ellis in leading a group that contains two two-year veterans and a group of rookies.

Now Parker and Drew, while they are not as experienced (Parker has four years in the league, Drew has

two), bring some talent to the team.

Jason Goss leads the secondary in tackles with 39 and Kelly Malveaux leads them with two interceptions .

Both Parker and Drew should help in the tackling game with Drew having 86 (67 in 2007) and Parker having 99 (40 in 2008), while Parker has 18 interceptions with a season high of eight in 2006.

Bringing in these four players should, in my opinion, allow the Eskimo to pass the Roughriders and Calgary Stampeders, who are both 7-5.

All they need now is for the offence to step up from the fourth best (based on points for) in the league.



“Bringing in these four players should, in my opinion, allow the Eskimo to pass the Roughriders and Calgary Stampeders”

Arland Bruce: The Knight in Steel Armour For the Hamilton Tiger-Cats

By: Jonathan Hamelin

Arland Bruce suiting up for the Hamilton Tiger Cats? It is something no one could have predicting heading into the season.

However, after disputes earlier in the season with Toronto Argonauts head coach Bart Andrus, who thought Bruce's attitude was detrimental to the team, the Argos shipped Bruce off to the Hamilton Tiger Cats.

While Hamilton was undoubtedly acquiring the services of a top notch receiver in the trade, fans wondered if Bruce's attitude would be detrimental to the Tiger Cats, who were currently riding a two game winning streak.

Bruce didn't immediately help the Tiger



Cats offence, as he spent the first game returning kicks, but he soon began to emerge as a

In only his second start with the team, Bruce racked up a team-high 78 yards against the Edmonton Eskimos in the win. The Tiger Cats lost the next week in a valiant comeback effort against the Saskatchewan Roughriders, a comeback helped by Arland Bruce. Bruce had four catches for 98 yards and one touchdown catch that

helped spark the failed comeback.

Bruce had 119 yards and two touchdowns two weeks later against the Edmonton Eskimos. In the Labour Day home and home series against the Toronto Argonauts, Bruce had games of 115 yards, and 48 yards with a touchdown.

Arland Bruce's numbers have been impressive to say the least. He has around 700 yards since joining Hamilton and has finally given the team a solid receiving threat to compliment Prechae Rodriquez.

But, what has been most impressive about Arland Bruce in Hamilton has been his attitude.

Bruce was basically called out in Toronto for being a horrible team player. Then,

Bruce was traded to a Tiger Cats team that had been historically bad for some years in a row. Many thought Bruce would be a poor team player in Hamilton as well.

But Arland Bruce has checked his attitude at the door ever since he has arrived in Steeltown. He was willing at first to have a limited role with the team until he got more accustomed to the offence and he has not caused any notable controversies among his teammates.

Hamilton currently sits at 6-6, putting them at second place in the East. With Toronto and Winnipeg both struggling, Hamilton looks poised to claim a home playoff game. In their recent success, they have leaned on Arland Bruce.

For a Hamilton Tiger

Cats team that has been struggling for several seasons, Bruce may just be the knight in shining armour the team has been looking for.

Winnipeg Loves the CFL, Not the NHL

By: Steve Thompson

So sorry Mythbusters. It seems your city isn't being taken in by your rhetoric. You'll have to pine away for the Jets on your own. You can drown your sorrows while watching a Blue Bombers game at the new stadium.

In light of the Jim Balsillie ruling, once again barring Hamilton from the NHL, and the obsession of Canadians for getting another NHL team, it is refreshing to look at the Winnipeg situation.

There is a lobby group in Winni-

peg called the Manitoba Mythbusters (with whom I've had frequent clashes) that wants the Winnipeg Jets back at any cost. They insist that their small arena is NHL sized, yet even the management publicly stated that it was for the AHL alone.

When Winnipeg opted to build a new arena, they could have built a proper NHL size one of 18,000-plus and then gone after a team in trouble like Phoenix or hoped the NHL would offer them an expansion franchise.

But they did not. Why?

Because Winnipeg does not trust Gary Bettman and the NHL Board of Governors. So instead, they built an arena that suits they own needs, one for the AHL Moose. Their decision is justified because we've all just witnessed how hard the NHL fought to prevent another Canadian team from joining their ranks.

Winnipeg remembered how too easily the NHL let the Jets, Nordiques, and Whalers depart and then contrasted it with how the NHL fought to the death to keep a bad franchise in Phoenix. They don't want that kind of trashy treatment.

Why should Winnipeg, like Hamilton

spend millions of dollars building an NHL size arena to try for a franchise from a league that has shown anti-Canadian policies since 1967?

Why should they build an arena for a team that may never come back? They believed they should put their sports money elsewhere.

So instead of building an arena, they are building a new stadium for the team they already have, the Blue Bombers of the CFL.

Unlike the NHL, the CFL values its Canadian franchises and hopes they flourish.

They would welcome Balsillie or any other Canadian investor with open arms if they tried to build a CFL size stadium in a city like

London, Kitchener, or Quebec.

Winnipeg opted to build for something solid, not something pie-in-the-sky. They are the least blinkered city in Canada about the NHL.

They chose to invest in the CFL. They made the right choice. They're getting something for their money that is going to be staying in their city for a long time.

So sorry Mythbusters. It seems your city isn't being taken in by your rhetoric. You'll have to pine away for the Jets on your own. You can drown your sorrows while watching a Blue Bombers game at the new stadium.

Montreal is the Bench Mark of the League

By: Steve Thompson



"The Alouettes are the best team on both sides of the ball, boasting the fewest points allowed and most points scored. It's tough to beat that combination."

The most certain factor the current CFL season is that Montreal is the bench mark of the league and the team to beat for the Grey Cup.

Since returning from Baltimore in 1996, the Alouettes have had a competitive team every season. The only

problem is that they are the Atlanta Braves of the CFL—lots of play-off appearances and little to show for it. Their only Grey Cup has come in 2002.

They'll never have a better chance to win it than this year. After last week's demolishing of Hamilton, they have little to fear from their eastern rivals—two bad teams and one up and coming developing one.

Even better is that their western opposition is weaker. Saskatchewan is still learning to win

under Darian Durrant. Calgary is not the Calgary of last year. Edmonton is a threat when Ricky Ray is on—when he's not, the Eskimos suffer because they have the worst defence in the league. Finally, B.C. lost too much talent to be a threat.

The Alouettes are the best team on both sides of the ball, boasting the fewest points allowed and most points scored. It's tough to beat that combination.

Anthony Calvillo is having another outstanding season. Ben Cahoon leads a fleet set of receivers, the offensive line is solid, and Avon Cobourne is as good as any running back in the CFL.

The defence has been equally good and so have the special teams, led by Larry Taylor. It seems that Montreal has all the pieces of the puzzle not only to win this year, but for several years in a row.

Still, there is the choke factor. For some reason, Montreal almost always seems to let the Grey Cup slip through its fingers. This year, even getting to the Grey Cup would be a failure. The Alouettes must win it all.

The only way the Alouettes can be stopped is for somebody to get hot. Nobody else has put together a long win streak like the Alouettes have.

No other team has righted itself to play

consistently well. It would be better for the CFL if another team reached up to the Alouettes level instead of Montreal playing down to everybody else.

So, the Alouettes are the betting man's choice for the Grey Cup. But, remember Tom Brady and the Patriots before you wager.

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