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THIS MONTH IN OTTAWA FOOTBALL HISTORY DECEMBER

Jim McAuley

December 3, 1955

All-Star Game played at Varsity Stadium in Toronto between East and West. The game ended in a deadlock, 6-6. Riders' representatives were Tom Tracy, Bob Simpson and Frank Dempsey.

December 3, 1969

Rough Riders were hosted at a Civic Testimonial Dinner held at the Civic Centre following a parade through downtown Ottawa streets ending at Lansdowne Park to celebrate the 29-11 Grey Cup victory over Saskatchewan at the Autostade in Montreal. Also joining the celebration were the Sooners, Canadian Junior Football League finalists.

December 3, 1975

Rough Riders placed 10 on the Eastern All-Star team; Tom Clements, Art Green, Tony Gabriel, Tom Schuette, Jeff Turcotte, Jerry Campbell, Mark Kosmos, Rod Woodward, Wayne Tosh and Dick Adams.

December 3, 1986

An agreement in principle was made for the transfer of the Rough Riders' ownership from Allan Waters to a local group headed by Whit Tucker.

December 3, 1986 Don Holtby resigned as Rough Riders' General Manager.

December 4, 1974

Eastern Conference All-Stars were announced. Riders named were Art Green, Rhome Nixon, Bob McKeown, Wayne Smith, Jerry Campbell, Al Marcelin and Dick Adams.

December 5, 1936

Sarnia Imperials (ORFU) defeated Rough Riders, 26-20, in Grey Cup game played before 6,000 at Varsity Stadium in Toronto. Riders trailed 26-12, but made a charge in the fourth quarter ending their final drive on Sarnia's 14-yard line. The West did not challenge for the Cup.

December 7, 1940

Rough Riders met Toronto Balmy Beach (ORFU) in Eastern final and were victorious, 12-5, on a snow-covered Lansdowne Park attended by 1,700 paid and 85 with car tickets. The Riders won the two-game total-points round, 20-7. Tommy Daley scored the Riders TD, while Sammy Sward booted five singles. Tiny Herman kicked a convert. Because the West and East differed in makeup of player personnel allowed, the winner of the Eastern final was declared Grey Cup champions.

December 7, 1972

CFL All-Stars were announced with three Rough Riders making the team; Jerry Campbell (MLB), Dick Adams (DB) and Wayne Smith (DE).

December 8, 1986

Tom Dimitroff was offered the Head Coach position with the Riders, but he chose instead to accept position as a scout with the Cleveland Browns.

December 9, 1939

Winnipeg Blue Bombers defeated Rough Riders, 8-7, at Lansdowne Park to win Grey Cup. The game was played on snow-covered turf. Riders took the lead on an Orville Burke pass to Rick Perley who lateralled to Andy Tommy who ran the next 30 yards. Blue Bombers' Fritz Hanson was an elusive figure for the Western team.

December 9, 1974

The CFL all-stars were announced and four Rough Riders' defensive players were honoured, namely, Gerry Campbell (MLB), Dick Adams (DB), Al Marcelin (DB) and Wayne Smith (DE). Rhome Nixon was named to a WR position.

December 11, 1909 Hamilton Tigers and Rough Riders were invited to play an exhibition game at Van Courtlandt Park in New York City. The game was sponsored by the New York Herald. The Tigers prevailed, 11-6.

December 11, 1955

Rough Riders announced the signing of Frank Clair to a two-year contract as Head Coach. He previously coached the Argonauts from 1950 to 1954.

December 13, 1975

George Brancato signed three-year extension as Head Coach of the Riders. Back as well were Assistants Tom Dimitroff and George Hughes.

December 14, 1980 Frank Clair ended his association with the Rough Riders after serving as Head Coach, General Manager and Scout.

December 15, 1977

CFL All-Stars included three Rough Riders; Tony Gabriel (TE), Jeff Turcotte (G) and Mike Widger (OLB).

December 15, 1980

CFL named their All-Stars for the 1980 season. Rough Riders' TE Tony Gabriel and OL Val Belcher were named to the team.

December 15, 1994

CFL Commissioner Larry Smith and Chairman John Tory visited the Rough Riders' offices to look at a team's books. Following the visit, the league allowed club ownership days to meet conditions to keep team alive.

December 16, 1977 Rough Riders announced signing of Tony Gabriel to new four-year contract.

December 17, 1980 Rough Riders chose to protect Ian Beckstead and John Park in the upcoming College Draft.

December 18, 1984 Joe Moss named new Head Coach of the Riders.

December 23, 1959 Russ Jackson named Canada's Outstanding Male Athlete for the year 1959.

December 23, 1959 Ottawa Rough Riders named Canada's Outstanding team in 1959 beating out Stanley Cup champions Montreal Canadiens.

December 23, 1959 Vince Thompson of St. Pat's was named Junior Interscholastic Player of the Year. He was awarded the Rough Riders Trophy.

December 26, 1975 CFL All-Stars included Art Green, Tony Gabriel, Jerry Campbell, Rod Woodward and Dick Adams.

December 27, 1987

Odessa Turner, Rough Riders' wide receiver in 1995, scored his first NFL touchdown while a member of the New York Giants. He scored on a 16-yard reception from Phil Simms in a 20-7 Giants victory over the New York Jets.

December 29, 1972 Rough Riders' Head Coach, Jack Gotta, signed a three-year extension with the club.

December 29, 1994 Rough Riders' President, Bruce Firestone, announced that the club was up for sale.

December 30, 1954

Chan Caldwell was the next to be interviewed for the vacant Head Coach position with the Riders. Cliff Spiegle declined the club's offer of \$10,000 plus \$2,000 bonus if he got team into the Grey Cup. He instead signed as Head Coach of Oklahoma A & M College.

Harris leads Winnipeg Blue Bombers to first Grey Cup win since 1990

Dan Ralph | The Canadian Press

CALGARY -- Andrew Harris and the Winnipeg Blue Bombers earned some long-awaited Grey Cup redemption Sunday night.

Harris scored rushing and receiving TDs as Winnipeg stunned the Hamilton Tiger-Cats 33-12 before 35,439 spectators at McMahon Stadium for its first Grey Cup victory since 1990. Harris put an exclamation mark on his stellar performance (134 yards rushing, five receptions for 35 yards) by becoming the first player ever to be named the game's top player and Canadian.

Harris, 32, of Winnipeg, is the first Canadian to capture Grey Cup MVP honours since legendary Ottawa quarterback Russ Jackson in 1969.

"That sounds good but the only trophy I want is the big silver one". Said Harris, who upon signing with Winnipeg in 2016 made ending the city's Grey Cup drought his top priority. "It's surreal, it's amazing, it's a dream come true.

"I'm so proud to be a Winnipegger. I can't wait to get back and share this with all of them."

Added backup quarterback Chris Streveler: "The parade's going to be nuts."

The Bombers earned \$16,000 apiece for the victory while Ticats players -- who wore their home black uniforms and were 10-0 this season at Tim Hortons Field -- received \$8,000 each. More importantly, Winnipeg ended its 29-year championship drought.

Hamilton's last title came in '99. The club also suffered its 16th straight loss at McMahon Stadium, the previous 15 coming against the hometown Calgary Stampeders.

Sunday's victory was especially sweet for Harris and Winnipeg starting quarterback Zach Collaros.

Harris, who earned his first Grey Cup in 2011 with B.C., served a two-game suspension this season following a positive drug test. That led to his being snubbed for the league's individual honours despite leading the CFL in rushing for a third straight season (1,380 yards).

"I just wanted to prove it to my teammates and deliver for my teammates," Harris said. "Everything else is whatever.

"We just wanted to win this game. We've been underdogs (and) counted out all year and even for myself I've been counted out and disrespected. It was a Blue Bomber-style game and that's how we wanted to do it."

Collaros had spent time this season with Saskatchewan and Toronto -- he was traded by both teams -- before landing with Winnipeg in October. He'd missed significant time recovering from a season-opening concussion suffered against Hamilton, which earned Ticats linebacker Simoni Lawrence a two-game suspension.

"Collaros has been great," said Harris. "Hopefully we can see him around our locker room."

Collaros, 31, completed 17-of-23 pass attempts for 170 yards. The six-foot, 219-pound American, who won a Grey Cup with Toronto in 2012 before guiding Hamilton to the '14 title game, is scheduled to become a free agent in February.

Streveler completed all three of his passes for 39 yards and a TD. Despite being plagued by a foot injury, he also ran nine times for 30 yards as 186 of the Bombers' 408 offensive yards in the game came on the ground.

Winnipeg also held the ball for 35 minutes in the game.

"We did get the running game going," said Blue Bombers head coach Mike O'Shea. "I thought Andrew had great vision . . . the offensive line was just pushing guys around.

"And then you throw in Strev, he ran really hard. Man, he's as tough as they come."

Hamilton came in as the solid favourite after a dominant '19 season. The Ticats posted a CFL-best 15-3 regular-season mark, a single-season franchise record.

Hamilton's high-power offence led the CFL in points per game (30.6), yards per game (395.8), passing yards (313.3 per game), first downs (398) and TDs (57). It featured receivers Brandon Banks (CFL's top player after 112 catches, 1,550 yards and 13 TDs) and Bralon Addison (95 catches, 1,236 yards, seven TDs).

On Thursday night, Banks was named the CFL's outstanding player. He was joined on the podium by teammates Chris Van Zeyl (lineman), Frankie Williams (special teams) and head coach Orlando Steinauer (coach).

But the Ticats had no answer for a tenacious Winnipeg defence that forced seven turnovers -- three coming on Ticats' first four possessions -- and six sacks. The Bombers had a plus-12 turnover ratio in the playoffs and over three games allowed 39 total points.

"They're a very special group and they made their special moments today," said Bombers defensive co-ordinator Richie Hall after winning his fourth career Grey Cup. "The ball is most important.

"You control the ball, you control the game."

O'Shea agreed.

"All three phases played well through the playoffs," he said. "But the defence today, boy, did they shine."

The Bombers' tough, rugged style of play on defence was very reminiscent of how O'Shea -- a three-time Grey Cup champion as a player with Toronto -- patrolled his area as a middle linebacker.

"I wouldn't make this team," he said.

Hamilton starter Dane Evans, who was pressured by Winnipeg's defence all game, finished 16-of-27 passing for 203 yards with a TD and two interceptions. He also fumbled three times.

Steinauer tipped his cap to the Bombers following the contest.

"We just couldn't grab momentum and credit them," he said. "Hats off to Winnipeg, Mike O'Shea and his staff.

"They played like champions tonight. I'm still proud of our guys. I told them they need to keep their head high. The bottom line is we didn't play like champions tonight."

Winnipeg (11-7, third in West Division) became the first third-place finisher to win the Grey Cup since the '05 Edmonton Eskimos. And after going 3-6 during the season on the road, the Bombers ended their dubious streak with a third straight road victory and fourth overall under Collaros.

"I've packed too many garbage bags," said an emotional Adam Bighill, the Bombers middle linebacker who earned his second Grey Cup title. "I only play this game to win championships.

"We're bringing it home to Winnipeg, it doesn't get any better than that."

Hamilton pulled to within 24-12 with Evans' four-yard TD strike to Addison at 11:43 of the third but the two-point convert was unsuccessful. Banks suffered a lower-body injury in the drive and didn't return. Justin Medlock booted a 41-yard field goal with three seconds left in the third and a 17 yarder with 6:33 left in the fourth to stretch Winnipeg's lead to 30-12.

An 18-yard Medlock field goal with three minutes to play put Winnipeg ahead 33-12. His 38-yard boot at 3:48 of the third gave the Bombers a 24-6 advantage.

Medlock finished with two converts, six field goals and a single.

Hamilton's Lirim Hajrullahu kicked two field goals.

The combination of Harris and an aggressive defence staked Winnipeg to an emphatic 21-6 half-time lead. Harris ran five times for 53 yards and a TD while registering four catches for 35 yards and a touchdown.

"I'm really excited for our players, for them to play so well in the game that mattered most," O'Shea said. "They're not going to have any regrets, they're not going to look back at plays they wished they had."

"Winning helps that anyway but they just played very very well."

This report by The Canadian Press was first published Nov. 24, 2019.





CHRIS O'LEARY
SENIOR WRITER
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A year ago this week in Edmonton, Randy Ambrosie was joined in front of the national media by the CFL's new partner, Mexico's Liga de Futbol Americano Profesional (LFA).

On Friday afternoon, Ambrosie will show how much things can change in just a year. The commissioner of the CFL will share a stage with representatives of 11 other football leagues from around the world, to officially form the International Alliance of Gridiron Football.

This year, Mexico (and Canada, of course) will be joined by Japan, Great Britain, Austria, Germany, France, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Italy.

There has been much talk about CFL 2.0 over the last year, about Ambrosie's ambitious plans to take the CFL to world and to recruit the best football players into the Canadian game. Friday will mark a rare opportunity for fans and media in Canada to see what this will look like.

CFL 2.0 was the commissioner's biggest focus on Friday morning, when he met with the national media for his annual State Of The League address.

"We are no longer the much smaller of two (leagues)," Ambrosie said in his opening remarks. "We're the second-biggest of many. Get used to that idea.

"We're about global partners. We're about global players who can stand...shoulder to shoulder with their Canadian teammates and their American teammates to take this game to new levels of success."

Ambrosie mentioned the other side of CFL 2.0, which gives Canadian players the chance to pursue football opportunities abroad. Twenty-five Canadians were recently drafted into the LFA and will have the opportunity to play in Mexico in 2020.

"That's about growing our game and giving Canadian football players more opportunities," Ambrosie said.

"Playing football and being a Canadian football player cannot just be about playing in the CFL. It has to be about more than that. I think we should all collectively all set our sights on being able to tell the stories of the 25 and then the 50, the 75 and 100 (playing abroad) and so on.

"Canadian players that are living out their football dream in other parts of the world and perhaps taking a little bit of Canada with them along the way. (They're) being ambassadors for our game and ambassadors for our country and I can get really excited about that."

Ambrosie looks at the legwork done on CFL 2.0 this past year, all of the partnerships formed and the sees the talent pool (a talent ocean, maybe?) opening up. He calls the CFL the world's largest global football league.

"We had nine players on our active roster this year and two practice roster spots, that's 27 (across the league)," he said.

"This coming year, we'll have two global spots with three practice roster spots that's 45. The biggest global football league in the world. We have to start thinking like that. We have to start acting like that. It is time for some good, old-fashioned CFL swagger to acknowledge and recognize our place in this sports landscape and be proud of it."

Here are a few other key points from Friday's state of the league.

Teams for sale

The for sale signs on the BC Lions and the Montreal Alouettes both came up fairly quickly once the floor opened to reporters.

On the Lions, Ambrosie said that the team's owner, David Braley and the Lions' president, Rick LeLacheur, have asked for the commissioner's participation in the process of finding new ownership for the team.

"I've had a chance to meet some remarkable people who are interested in owning the team," Ambrosie said.

"Those conversations are ongoing and I've had follow up discussions with a number of them."

Ambrosie called it a "Tuesday morning conversation" to be had after the Grey Cup and its festivities have wrapped up.

"I sense in David, he'll never yield his love for our league, never, because he has been such a big part of everything that's been good about us. My sense is that David is committed to the sale of the team and now we just got to find the right partner and David has to work out the business deal.

"It's kind of hard for some of these things to happen in the midst of all the noise of playoffs and the Grey Cup. I expect that those conversations will intensify in the coming weeks."

Ambrosie acknowledged that the on-field success the Alouettes have had this year has helped in the process of finding new ownership for that team. Their Eastern Semi Final appearance was a near sellout and the team was revitalized this year by head coach Khari Jones and the emergence of quarterback Vernon Adams Jr.

He said that he's working with a group that would prefer privacy until the deal is finalized, calling them the Montreal Alouettes Ownership Group.

"I come from the investment industry where I spent...almost three decades and I know that these transactions take time," Ambrosie said, noting that there have been conversations with strong candidates going back to May.

"I would confess that I would have liked to have gotten this done sooner," the commissioner said.

"We are very encouraged, very optimistic that the conversation we're in today is going to yield a successful outcome and get down to those last steps in the process. There's lots of i's to be dotted and T's to cross.

"I can't commit to a timeframe. I can't commit to a date but what I can say is I am very optimistic that the group we are in active discussions with today are deeply committed. They're a remarkably strong group. They would bring a whole host of capabilities to an ownership situation in Montreal.

"I don't know the answer specifically. What I can tell you is there's an amazing commitment being made by the Canadian Football League to getting this done and an equal commitment by the groups that we're in discussions with. That process continues and I hope to have a successful announcement sometime in the next few weeks."



3 of 9 | (Johany Jutras/CFL.ca)

Halifax update

Having Halifax become the CFL's 10th team hinges on a stadium being built in the Nova Scotian capital, Ambrosie said.

"The understanding with our friends at Schooner Sports and Entertainment is that it was always going to be...the discussions that where we go next always have to be based on the stadium issue being resolved. I believe that vote is going to be held by Halifax regional council on Dec. 10.," Ambrosie said.

"What I'm encouraged by is the dialogue they've had with the Halifax regional council. They've been doing a lot of learning there have been a lot of adjustments made to their plan that I think have helped bring about much-needed positive energy to the program.

"We are optimistic that the stadium will be approved. We will then move into full business planning...and that will be done in collaboration and partnership with Schooner Sports and Entertainment.

"Then we'll take that to our governors and share with governors. It's hard to build a business line until you know what the stadium is going to look like, because the stadium is the epicentre of your business model so to get that done, you just very quickly and intensely work with them to get that done and we'll take it to our governors. I'm optimistic."

After a successful Touchdown Atlantic game in Moncton in August, Ambrosie said that he wants to establish a regular presence in Atlantic Canada.

“We should always be in Atlantic Canada in some way,” he said.

“Somehow, some way we should always be there because those are great football fans. Our ratings in Canada were up 50 per cent this year. We went there for a football game and we embraced them and they embraced us back.

“We’re hoping for our 10th team, but I’d like to say to the people of Atlantic Canada you are part of the CFL family. We are in fact the coast-to-coast league.

“We’re going to find creative ways, if not through a franchise right now...we’re going to find creative ways to be there. We’re going to go back to Halifax and talk to Mayor (Michael) Savage we’re going to go back to Halifax and talk to the Premier. We’re going to find a way to be in Atlantic Canada. We’re going to help find a way to be in Nova Scotia and in New Brunswick and every part of that great part of our country because there’s a lot of football fans there and we need to embrace them.”

The Argos and growing the game within Canada

Ambrosie would like to also take strides with embracing fans in the country’s most densely populated area. The Argos had a difficult season on the field and still lag behind in Toronto’s sports conscience. This despite a strong and productive partnership with Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment, Ambrosie said. He was clear to say that when it comes to growing the Argos’ fan base and simply growing a football following in Toronto and the GTA, it’s not on one team or one sports behemoth that has many responsibilities.

It’s a CFL issue.

“I’d actually argue that (MLSE) has had some early successes,” Ambrosie said.

“Theirs is a business plan that is designed to be methodical. This situation that Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment inherited was created over a very long period of time.

“The problem wasn’t created overnight and won’t be solved overnight.”

Ambrosie said that whether it’s the respective sales of the Alouettes or Lions, or the Argos’ attendance issues, those teams can’t be expected to solve their problems on their own.

“This is not a Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment challenge. This is a CFL challenge this is an all-of-us challenge,” he said.

“We’ve got to create an army of committed and passionate partners to march into this massive market. We’ve got to get into the classrooms. We’ve got to go see grade four kids, kids in grade five, kids in grade six and we’ve got to tell them the story of our great game. We’ve got to take footballs (with us).”

Ambrosie told the story of an inner-city school in Hamilton that was won over by the Ticats. He sees that and thinks, why not in Toronto?

“That’s the opportunity, to get into those communities that might not know us today and invite them to (a game),” he said.

“I don’t want to send them a flyer. I don’t want them to see an ad in the newspaper. I want them to be actually invited by a human being that loves our game.

“(We need to) explain why this game is so important to Canada, explain some of these quintessential moments that so many of us identify with and then talk about the future with them being part of it. I think that’s the answer in our major markets and it’s something that we’re deeply committed to.”

Positive drug tests and award voting

Andrew Harris’ positive drug test created a wave of controversy in Winnipeg this year, with the ripple spreading out across the national football landscape.

A positive drug test for such an impactful player in the CFL is rare. While Harris contested the result, arguing he unknowingly consumed something in a supplement, he had to serve a two-game suspension. He proceeded to lead the league in rushing for the third consecutive year.

In any other season, he would have likely been the runaway choice (running back pun unintentional) for Most Outstanding Canadian — an award he won in 2017 — and perhaps even a Most Outstanding Player candidate.

That’s where things got complicated.

Those awards are voted upon by members of the Football Reporters of Canada and CFL head coaches. Harris didn’t secure enough local votes to become a team nominee, which eliminated him from any further award consideration (local nominees go on to division voting then finally league-wide voting).

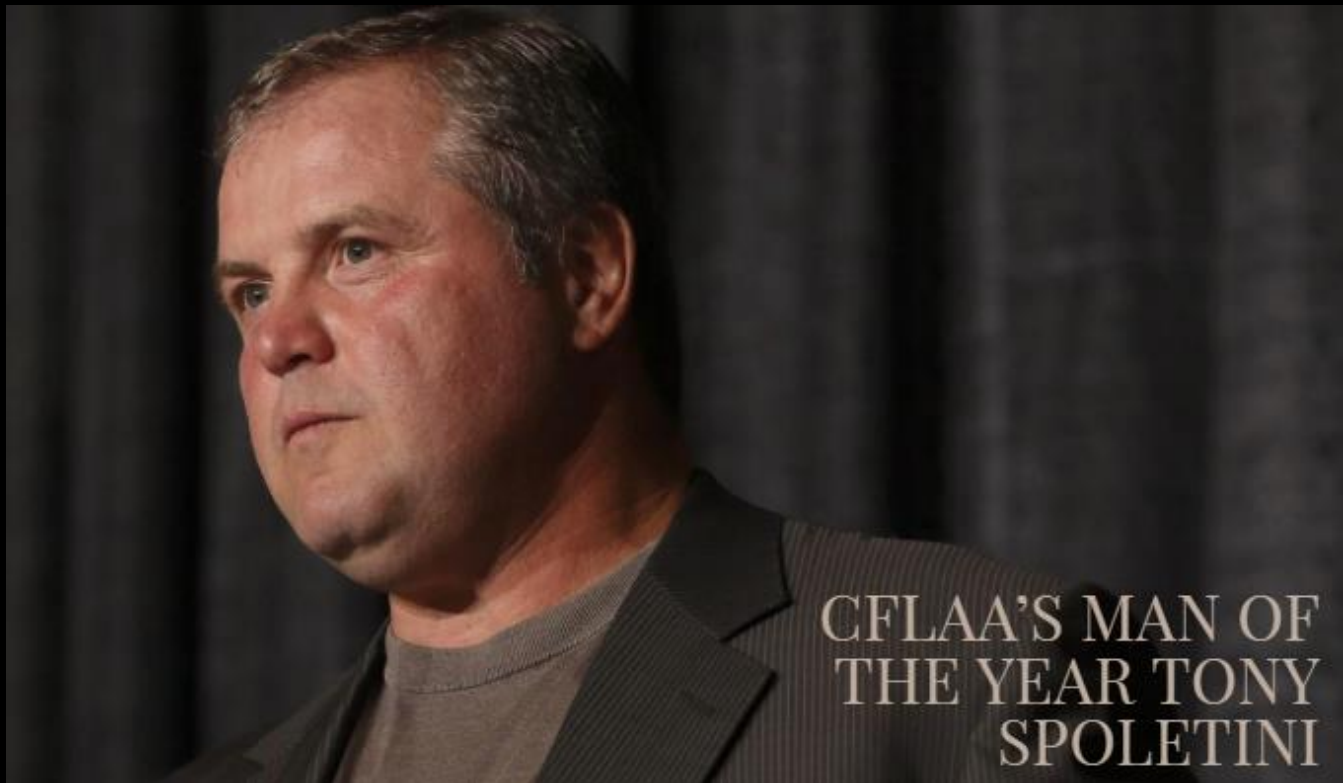
Like the media, fans were divided on this too. Harris has his supporters and detractors.

Ambrosie was asked if a rule might come into place in the future to eliminate those that test positive for performance-enhancing drugs from award voting.

“My honest answer is I had not thought about it. I don’t know that we had thought about it,” Ambrosie said.

“This has to be something we talk about with the players this offseason, is ‘Should we should we think about it differently?’

“I have to say, I’m excited to watch Andrew play this weekend. He’s definitely one of our game’s stars and I’m excited to see him play in the Grey Cup. But we haven’t thought about (the rule). I think it’s a conversation we will have with the players in the weeks to come.”



The Canadian Football League Alumni Association is proud to announce that Tony Spoletini revered Calgary Stampeder Alumni will be recognized as the “Man of the Year” honouree at this year’s Canadian Tire CFLAA Legends Luncheon during Grey Cup Festival in Calgary.

Tony was not only an accomplished athlete during his playing career but an outstanding citizen that continued to give back to the community in his post playing career.

“Man of the Year” honourees are chosen by the Calgary Stampeder Alumni Executive Board to recognize a lifetime of achievements both on and off the field in the host Grey Cup city.

” I am very very humbled and flattered to be recognized by my fellow Alumni to be selected amongst the many who give back so much to their sport and communities across the country. The CFL Alumni are the most approachable and genuine professional athletes. Being part of this fraternity is an incredible honor. I am very grateful.”

Tony is the oldest son of Italian immigrants. He has brought honour and pride to the Spoletini family name in Calgary through his many achievements and successes. Successful individuals are those whose drive, commitment, vision and passion set them apart. Tony has all these attributes and more!

Success has always been an integral part of Tony’s life. As a youth he succeeded on the soccer pitch and the football field. His high school team, the St. Francis Browns, were undefeated and City Champions for three consecutive seasons. He joined the University of Calgary Dinos, as a 17-year-old freshman, he was a member of two consecutive Vanier Cup Championships and Canada West Rookie of the Year. He was signed by the CFL Edmonton Eskimos in 1987 and was a member of the 1987 Grey Cup team. He signed as free agent with the Calgary Stampeder’s in 1989 and played

the remainder of his career with his hometown team. The 1991 Grey Cup loss to the Toronto Argonauts was his last game.

Tony retired from professional football in 1992 and joined his Stamp teammate cousins, Tom and Mike in the highly successful restaurant /catering, Spolumbos, Fine Foods and Deli. Spolumbos is a name recognized by many Calgarians not only for their fine products but also for the ongoing support for diverse organizations from church groups to the sport and fine art community.

Tony passion for football has never wavered and he has been one of the key people in the growth of Calgary minor football. He has coached Atom, Bantam, and Midget football dedicating hundreds of hours to young athletes. A parent of his Bantam football team wrote of his passion, fairness and remarkable sense of humour. "Win, lose or draw Tony could be found leading his team in song, in a humorous game or exercise. His young charges felt the real joy of playing the game".

Tony was instrumental in developing grass roots football within Calgary and surrounding rural areas. He was a leader in the development of the Calgary and Area Midget Football Spring league which has provided many players a new opportunity to play football.

Tony is credited as being the driving force behind the improvement and development of football venues in Calgary. He teamed with Calgary Cowboys Football Association executives and the Calgary Shriners to fund and build "Shriners Field" complete with lights: home field for the Midget and an Atom football leagues. As vice president of the Greater Calgary Amateur Football Association, he was in charged of fund raising and one of three members overseeing construction of the facilities at Shouldice Athletic Park. The facility is cited as one of the finest of its kind in Canada made up of three artificial turf fields, grandstands, press boxes, scoreboards, lights and entry plaza.

Tony has given back to his Alma Mater. He was a volunteer coach and is a significant supporter and important member of the annual Dino's 5th Quarter fund raising dinner as Co-chairman and Co-Master of Ceremonies. He is valued as a mentor and resource for the officer group and board of directors of this group. His personnel efforts have raised substantial dollars for Dino football scholarships. Tony has also volunteered his time as the color commenter for the Dino football games on the Fan 960.

He has been responsible for coordinating the Stampeders alumni spring football camps which not only provides young players a chance to learn the game from former CFL players but also raises money for the Alberta Children's Hospital. Tony is a former board member and currently an active member of the Stampeders alumni.

Tony also supports his Italian roots as a member of the Italian Sportsman Dinner Board. His personality, wit and charm as co master of ceremonies annually attracts sold out dinners. His amazing humour and talent have Tony receiving and volunteering for countless speaking and emceeing engagements for charities.

Tony has been recognized by Dino Football- Lou Goodwin Award for Outstanding Service 2008 and Football Alberta- Outstanding Service Award for Football in Alberta 2009.

Tony has brought his passion to every facet of his life: dedication to his family, Lisa and their three sons, philanthropic, he and his business partners support numerous causes and as a humble volunteer. His vision and drive has resulted in the development of football facilities which will benefit thousands of young athletes and adults for many years to come. His commitment as a coach, and contributions to the development football leagues for Calgary youth insures his “love of the game” will continue to inspire.





ALUMNI AROUND TOWN AT THE GREY CUP!



At SPOULUMBOS (Tony Spoletini owner)
Gerry Organ, Bill Johnson, Tony Spoletini,
J.T Hay & Jim Cain









CFLAA Legend's Luncheon 2019

The "must attend event" for CFL fans during the Grey Cup week of festivities has now become the CFLAA Legend's Luncheon with sell out crowds in 2017 (Ottawa), 2018 (Edmonton) and now in 2019 out in Calgary.

On Friday November 22nd at Stampede Park, 950 CFL fans including approximately 90 CFL alumni attended another hugely successful CFLAA Legend's Luncheon that saw over \$32,000 raised for our national CFLAA Support Fund. It is a truly unique setting where fans have a CFL alumni seated at their table for the entire event giving them the opportunity to get to know the player and his stories.

Our CFL Ottawa Alumni Association along with the support of OSEG donated two autographed REDBLACKS jerseys (Brad Sinopoli & Henry Burris) to the silent auction table that contributed \$540 to the total funds raised. As you can see from the pictures we have included in your newsletter, several CFLOAA members made the trip west and enjoyed the Grey Cup festivities along with many other CFL alumni from across the country.





CFLAA Executive Team

News from the CFLAA Annual General Meeting

The CFLAA Executive now consists of Brett MacNeil (Winnipeg) who continues as President, Bob Bronk (Toronto) who moves from Treasurer to Vice-President,

Jim Cain (CFL Ottawa) who moves from VP to Secretary, Dan Dott (At Large Director) who is the new Treasurer.

Warner Miles (Director of CFL Ottawa) has been approved as Ottawa's Alternate on the CFLAA Board.

CFLOAA member Bruce Hillary was confirmed as a CFLAA at Large Director for a second year.



RICHIE LEONE
2019 CFL ALL-STAR



RICHIE LEONE
EAST DIVISION ALL-STAR



NOLAN MACMILLAN
EAST DIVISION ALL-STAR





HE'S GONE FROM REDBLACKS, BUT RICK CAMPBELL WANTS TO BE A HEAD COACH AGAIN



Tim Baines | The Ottawa Citizen

When Rick Campbell spoke to Mark Goudie Saturday, he told The Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group CEO/president he wanted to step aside as the Ottawa Redblacks head coach.

Goudie asked the coach to take 24 hours, think about it — not to get caught up in the emotions of a 42-32 home-field loss to the Montreal Alouettes, the Redblacks' 15th loss of the season — a disaster from Week 3 on, when the Redblacks sunk deep into the quicksand.

On Sunday, Campbell, who had been the Redblacks' coach since Day 1 in Season 1 (2014) and helped them get to three Grey Cups (winning in 2016), told Goudie he was done, it was over. Call it irreconcilable differences — with Redblacks GM Marcel Desjardins. There were many layers to this story, a gradual buildup of discontent.

"The conversation I had with Rick, I had two," said Goudie at a Monday morning press conference. "One was where he let his views be known — I think he's been carrying this around for awhile. The request I had of Rick was that he take 24 hours to make sure this wasn't an emotional decision coming out of a difficult year and Friday's game. We talked again after 24 hours and I think he was pretty comfortable with where he was. Credit to him, he came up front and didn't feel he was going to in a position where he could give the Redblacks what they deserve next year."

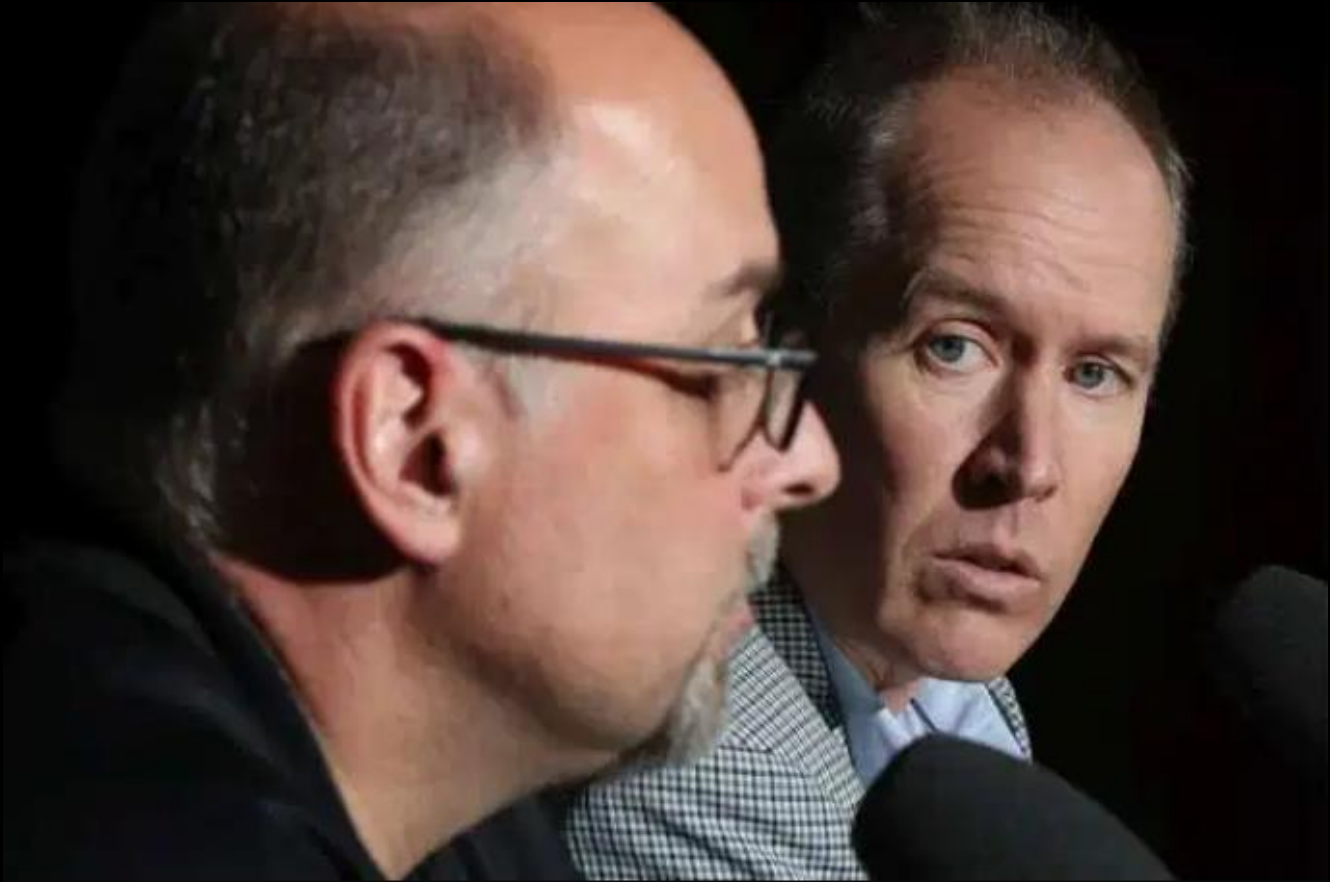
Goudie insists it didn't come down to a Desjardins vs. Campbell thing. He wasn't pressured into choosing one or the other — that wasn't what the coach asked for.

"If you know Rick, he's not that dude," said Goudie. "He didn't. We had a conversation that was more about Rick and his feelings about what he could and couldn't do."

There were howls of anger all over social media after the news of Campbell's exit early Monday morning. Much of the venom was being spit at Desjardins. Fans, it seems, quickly forget the teams he helped

construct went to the Grey Cup three times in four years. Broken record, right? I've always found Marcel to be extremely co-operative, fair and likeable, but that's just me.

Campbell said he was left with "a bad taste," after a "long list" of players and coaches were gone. But Desjardins insists Campbell was involved in the process of who stayed and who went.



Ottawa Redblacks General Manager Marcel Desjardins (left) and CEO Mark Goudie speed to the media regarding former Redblacks coach Rick Campbell during a press conference in Ottawa on Monday. *TONY CALDWELL / POSTMEDIA*

Rick was involved in all the personnel decisions we ever made," said Desjardins. "He was involved in the expansion draft in 2013, he was involved in every Canadian college draft we were involved with, he was involved with everything we did in free agency. Every time we set out roster for a game, the coaches set the roster — that was not me. Rick was continually and regularly communicating with me about not only our current roster but our roster moving forward.

"We did multiple times sit down to discuss 2019, what would we have done differently in terms of the off-season and during the season, and thinking ahead to 2020. At no point during any of that did he say anything about having issues with any part of our dynamic.

"Obviously in a 3-15 season, I have to ask more questions, just like I answer more questions to Mark and to the ownership. Sometimes I'm asked questions by the ownership group that only the head coach would know. That's the nature of the beast. But having said that, I was always trying to

stay positive with him relative to trying to figure things out.”

It's unlikely the highly respected Campbell will be unemployed long. The Edmonton Eskimos would be a logical landing spot if the team fails in the playoffs and head coach Jason Maas is gone.

“I definitely am up for (being a head coach) again,” said Campbell. “For me, it's not burnout. Sometimes things in life have a shelf life, sometimes relationships have a shelf life.



“I'm really hopeful this is going to be maybe a good springboard for me and for the Redblacks. I'm a football-for-life (guy) and I'm going to be excited about the next chapter — I don't know what that is. Sometimes when people do this, they know what's happening next. I actually don't. The scary thing is it's a bit of a leap of faith because I haven't talked to anybody. I'm going to be sad for awhile, but I'm going to keep marching on and be ready for the next thing. Sometimes things need to happen in life to slingshot you to the next thing.

“Something in my gut tells me it'll work out the way it's supposed to work out. I've had a few things big in my life change over the last few years — personally and professionally. I've taken some leaps of faith and it's worked out. I don't want to be afraid to keep moving forward. I've been coaching for 21 straight years without taking a break. I've seen a lot of what to do and I've seen a lot of what not to do. I've been able to work with a lot of people who have had a lot of success, I'm going to make sure I draw on that knowledge.”

What happens next for the six-year-old franchise will help shape the next several years. Building back the confidence of a fan base that's been soured by the loss of stars like Trevor Harris, Greg Ellingson, William Powell, SirVincent Rogers and now Campbell in the past year — add that to a dismal season — is crucial. How does the team appease RNation?



“I think it will be through actions, that will start with the hiring process that happens with the new head coach,” said Goudie. “I think we've built some thing pretty cool here with Redblacks football. We've got a good base. They've heard enough about the fact we went to three Grey Cup games in four years, that stuff is all water under the bridge. What we do next will be important. I don't think we're going to have questions fully answered until we start winning football games and people see we were able to recreate ourselves into the organization we expect to be.”



*“Nobody who ever
gave his best
regretted it.”*

– George Halas

TeamColorsByCarrie

MONTHLY HUDDLE MEETING

Date: Tuesday December 3

Time: 11:30am - 1:00pm

Business 12:00pm sharp

LOCAL HEROES 1400 Clyde Ave
Bleeker Mall (Clyde & Merivale Rd.)

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1940s Carleton football star and son of 1910s Rough Rider Al Abelson visits Ravens

Al Abelson was astonished as he toured the Carleton Ravens football locker room.

“It sure is different from when I played,” said the 91-year-old former Carleton running back. “We really had nothing back then.”

Abelson played for the Ravens from 1947-49, when the Ravens program – as well as what was then Carleton College – were still in their infancy.

Carleton College was founded in 1942 as a school primarily for veterans returning from the Second World War. In 1945, a group of engineering students got the Carleton football team off the ground. The school, at that time, was located on First Avenue. The football team was allowed to use a room – 12 feet by 15 feet – for changing.

“You could barely fit three or four people in there,” Abelson said, smiling at the thought of the luxuries afforded to today’s players. “We didn’t have a place to practice until they let us go to a practice field at Lansdowne Park.



The budget for the team was a mere \$100.

“We didn’t have much,” Abelson said, smiling as he recalled the program’s early days.

The 1947 season was Carleton’s third, and they also had their third head coach. Tiny Hermann, a former Ottawa Rough Riders star from Nova Scotia, had coached the team in its first year. He often found himself absent as he was working with the government on war bonds promotions, but would often enlist help from former teammates with the Rough Riders to help him coach. Des Bloom, who refereed all but one of the Carleton games in 1945, was the coach in 1946. For Carleton’s third season, former Ottawa Rough Rider quarterback Arnie Morrison, a teammate of Hermann’s on the 1936 Grey Cup championship team, was the new head coach.

“We loved Arnie Morrison,” beamed Abelson about his first coach at Carleton. “He was a great man.”

By looking at Abelson’s family background, it was no surprise that he was a star athlete. His father, Jess Abelson, was one of Ottawa’s greatest athletes of his time. He played for the Rough Riders from 1910 until 1915, when play was stopped during the war years. After returning from the war, he played for the Rough Riders in 1919 and 1920. Not only did he play for the Ottawa Rough Riders, but he was also a national rowing champion and was one of the city’s best basketball players. Al Abelson played both football and basketball at Carleton.

Dave McCann was the quarterback for the Rough Riders when Jess Abelson joined the team. A native of Carleton Place, McCann is one of the most significant men in Ottawa and Canadian football history. After his playing career was finished, McCann became a coach. He guided Ottawa to its first two Grey Cup victories, winning the title in 1925 and 1926. He would become President of the Canadian Rugby Union and would be the longtime Chairman of the Rules Committee. It was under McCann that the forward pass was introduced to Canadian rugby football, and it was also McCann who added a 12th man to the Canadian game.

“My father was born in Cleveland and he was a boy when the family moved to Ottawa,” recalled Abelson. “He loved sports. A lot of the athletes at that time played more than one sport, and to be a champion in two sports was a great accomplishment for him.”

Abelson was also a community builder. In 1918, he became the first Jewish Scoutmaster of the 39th Ottawa when he formed one of the first Jewish Scout troops in Canada. He later became president of the Tel Aviv Tennis Club.

Al was one of five children. One of his four brothers, Duke, was killed in World War II. His plane crashed in England as he was returning from a bombing raid over Germany. In 1945, Jess Abelson donated the Duke Abelson Trophy for Ottawa high school basketball teams to compete for.

In 1984, Jess Abelson was the first inductee into the Ottawa Jewish Sports Hall of Fame.

When Al Abelson arrived at Carleton, the team played in a league with St. Pat's College, Ottawa U. and the Queen's Comets, the school's intermediate team. Carleton won the first game of the season with a 24-3 win over St. Pat's at Lansdowne Park. Abelson scored a touchdown in the game. His Carleton backfield mate, John Stephenson, intercepted a pass and returned it 55 yards for a touchdown. The quarterback who threw the pass was St. Pat's star Johnny Ruddy, the father of 1970s Ravens stars John and Mike Ruddy.

As Abelson looked at an old team photo in the current Ravens locker room, he pointed to many faces as he recognized them. World War II veteran John Urquhart was in his third year with the team. He would play until 1948, hanging the cleats up at the age of 35. They were future Canadian soldiers. Doug Banton would be killed in action in Korea just metres away from his Carleton teammate, Clint Cowen. Frank McGee, who was the nephew of hockey legend One-Eyed Frank McGee and a great nephew of father of Confederation Thomas Darcy McGee, would become a Member of Parliament.

“Frank and I were good buddies,” Abelson said with a smile.

A retired lawyer, Abelson enjoyed his visit to the athletics centre at Carleton and is hoping to be more engaged with the program.

“It's really something to think of where we were 70 years ago and how far we've come,” Abelson said.

by Jeff Morris

The legend of Joe Miller

by Jeff Morris

In 1925, Joe Miller of Morrisburg became the toast of the town, leading Ottawa to its first two Grey Cups as a quarterback and then becoming its head coach.

Joe Miller was a celebrated Grey Cup hero in Ottawa, rivaling Henry Burris in popularity in his day. But while playing for the Rough Riders, Joe Miller also became a Stanley Cup hero.

While playing football for Ottawa, Joe Miller was also the starting goalie for the NHL's New York Americans. Joe Miller the goalie became famous for his part in an unusual footnote in hockey history, as he won the 1928 Stanley Cup for the New York Rangers. In the first game of the Stanley Cup final that year, Rangers goalie Lorne Chabot was injured. Miller, at home in Ottawa, had been designated as the back-up goalie for both teams, as teams only carried one goalie in those days. Montreal coach Eddie Gerard, who won Stanley Cups with the Silver Seven and had also played for the Rough Riders, agreed to allow Miller to play the remainder of the series. However, Rangers coach Lester Patrick would be forced to put the goalie gear on and play in goal for the remainder of the first game of the series.

Despite being one of the best players in Canadian football, Miller was not one of the better NHL goalies of his era. In fact, he was the first goalie to earn the nickname "Red Light", for the goal light going off behind him after every goal. In 1928-29, Miller would go back to the Americans, and then be traded to the Pittsburgh Pirates and then the Philadelphia Quakers – two defunct NHL teams of the era – while being Ottawa's football head coach.

By the way, goalie-quarterback Joe Miller is no relation to offensive lineman Joe Miller, who was part of the 1976 Grey Cup-winning Rough Riders team. Joe Miller is the only name shared by two men in Ottawa's Grey Cup history.



GEE GEE ALUMNI MONTHLY LUNCH HOSTED BY AL MOFFAT

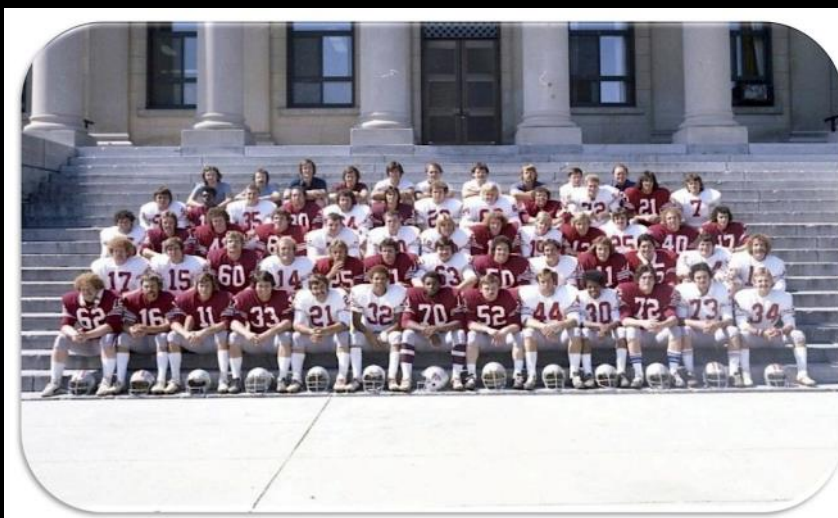


uOttawa
Football



From the left to right;
Barry Turner 65 to 69
Julian Hanlon 74 to 77
Martin Sevigney 68 to 71
Al Moffat 72 to 75
Bill McNeely 72 to 76
Ace Powell 66 to 69
Jeff Avery 72 to 75
Tommy Thompson 72 to 74

Every month the Gee Gee alumni get together for lunch at the University Restaurant. Always a good time! Al Moffat has been organizing this for us for the last two years. Anyone interested in joining us for lunch you are more than welcome! Every second Thursday of the month.



Our own Jim Cain received this set and pulled out this Royal Stafford Collectible - On the rarer side, this is Football series of the Canadian football clubs associated with the Grey Cup. Each of the 9 teams are listed on the saucer, and the cup features a certain team. This cup and saucer is the Ottawa Roughriders (now called the Ottawa Redblacks)

#37 Over the years from Jim McAuley

ROCKY ROCANO, 1938
 MERV VISNESKIE, 1971
 HERBERT MARSHALL, 1972
 TONY GABRIEL, 1975
 KEN MOORE, 1977
 JAIME YOUNG, 1980
 BUBBA BROWN, 1981
 SHANE IRELAND, 1985, 1986
 KYLE HALL, 1987
 TOMMIE WILLIAMS, 1987, 1988
 JOHN ULMER, 1989
 JERMAINE CHANEY, 1996



Message from your CFLOAA President

As we move into the final month of 2019, we as a local alumni association have had much to be thankful for and much to celebrate during this past year. As your president I am very thankful for all the hard work the Executive Committee has put in again throughout 2019 as well as very appreciative of all CFLOAA members who support our efforts with their paid memberships each and every year. It is your membership dues that allows your Executive Committee to put on the various alumni events that provides the opportunities to bring us together several times each year.

This year's events were highlighted by the induction of the 1968 and 1969 Grey Cup winning Rough Rider teams into the Ottawa Sport Hall of Fame on May 21st as well as Kaye Vaughan having his name raised to the TD Place Wall of Honour on Sept 21st. We also had our annual REDBLACKS Coaches Luncheon on March 9th at the Kanata Golf Club and our CFLOAA Golf Tournament took place on August 2nd out at the Hylands Golf Club. Intertwined in all of these events is our strong relationship with the Ottawa REDBLACKS and OSEG who continue to provide a truly unbelievable amount of support for our CFLOAA. I'm sure we all wish Rick Campbell success in his next position as he stepped down as REDBLACKS head coach at the end of the 2019 CFL season. Rick always made sure that all of his coaches who were in town attended our annual coach's luncheon to mix and chat with our alumni attendees.

I know Kaye Vaughan and his family were very appreciative of both the honour of having Kaye's name raised to the Wall of Honour at TD Place during the REDBLACKS game as well as the gathering that we had organized at the Prescott that Saturday morning. It was here that so many of Kaye's teammates and friends from his time in Ottawa gathered and shared some old stories and renewed their friendships from so many years ago. We were all so very thankful that George and Barbara Brancato were able to join us for the Prescott gathering as it was just 4 short weeks later that George passed away.

On behalf of your CFLOAA Executive Committee I would like to wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and I look forward to seeing you all out at the events we have planned for 2020.

Jeff Avery
CFLOAA President

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**JOIN OUR TEAM
TODAY!**
If interested in
volunteering with
the CFLOAA please
contact Jeff Avery

We are here to make sure your Membership experience is the best it can be...if you have any questions, suggestions or concerns please contact a member of the Executive team.