

CFL players lobby league commissioner about their concerns

CIAU in big trouble if CFL expands south

by Josh Rubin

You can forget all the rhetoric on this one.

Despite public pronouncements to the contrary, officials and players in both the CIAU and CFL are terrified of the CFL's proposed expansion southwards.

In fact, some of the CFL's top home-grown players have even started up a committee to lobby league commissioner Larry Smith about their concerns.

Winnipeg Blue Bomber guard Bob Molle, a 7 year veteran, dismissed arguments that players pushing to keep the quota are suggesting Canadian football doesn't measure up.

"In the U.S., they've got so many schools competing, so many kids playing football, and they've got athletic scholarships—it's a whole different system," said Molle, who ironically played his university football with Simon Fraser, which plays its regular season against small U.S. independent schools.

"Up here, the focus isn't football, it's academics, and that's the way it should be. In the States, they're turning out a bunch of illiterates," Molle continued, adding "how can anyone say we're on the same level?"

Bernie Custis, the Toronto Argonauts' director of Canadian scouting, agrees with Molle that the focus of Canadian university football programs is academics, but that's where the two men part company.

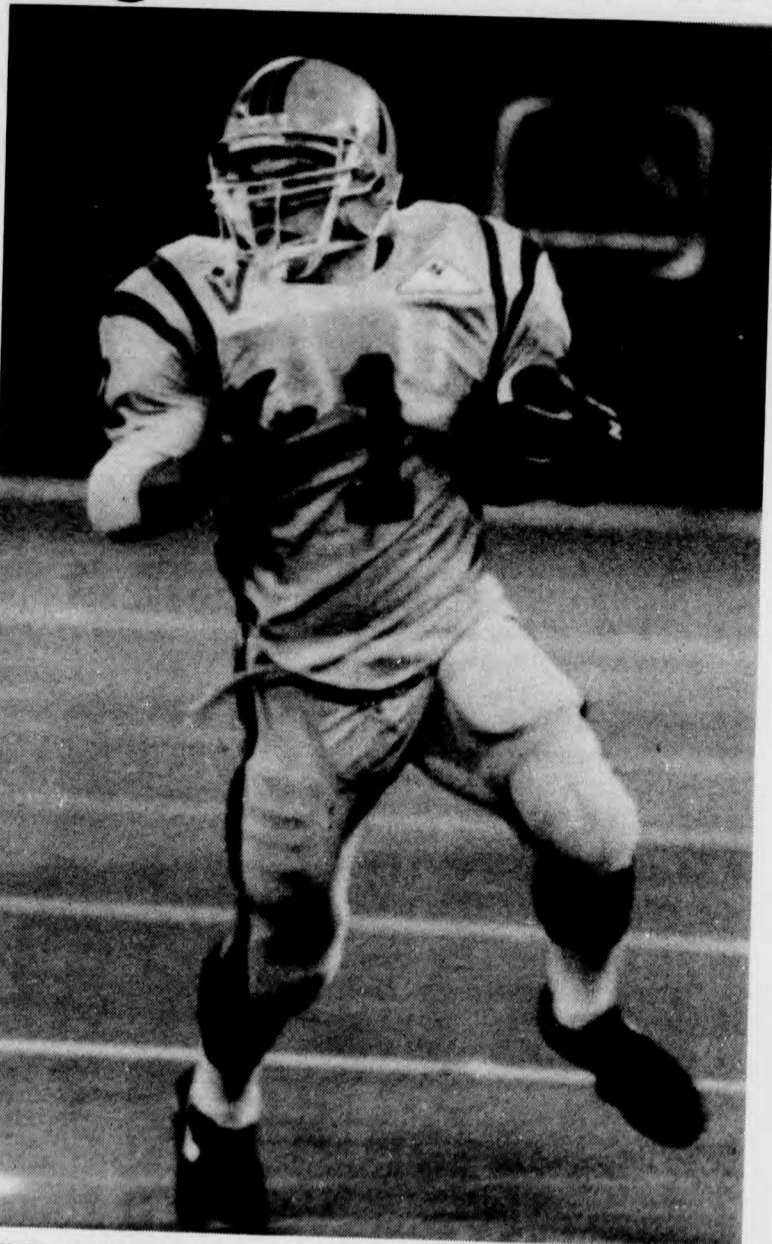
"The goal of schools playing football in Canada hasn't been to act as a breeding ground for CFL talent, but I still think a lot of Canadian guys could compete on an equal footing with American players," said Custis, who himself served several years as the head coach of the OUAA's McMaster Marauders.

Ottawa Rough Riders GM Dan Rambo also feels Canadian content would survive in the CFL without a formal quota, but acknowledges there probably wouldn't be as many CIAU grads in the pro game.

"There's no doubt the lack of a quota would affect the number of Canadians in the league, but I guarantee you there will still be some," Rambo said.

Still, he'd be sorry to see the quota go.

"I've worked with the quota for a long time, but I'd respect any decision the league makes," Rambo



MVP of the Vanier Cup, Queen's Brad Elberg, races for a touchdown in last week's victory over St. Mary's. CIAU college players may not be CFL bound. • photo by Michele Boesener

added.

Doug Hargreaves, who coached the Queen's Golden Gaels to a Vanier Cup win this year, will also be sorry to see the quota go, but understands why the CFL is planning to move southwards.

"I think the CFL has made a sound business decision, but I think they've lost contact with what made the league great. I want Canadians to have the

opportunity to play in their own football league," Hargreaves said.

While Hargreaves feels dropping the quota would have a significant effect on the number of Canadians in the CFL, it wouldn't have much impact on the university game in this country.

"There are so few players in the CIAU for whom making it to a pro team is the reason they're playing

that I don't see the lack of CFL spots creating much change at the university level," said Hargreaves.

Ironically, it may be Rambo's own team who force the CFL to get rid of the quota—Ottawa owners Lorne and Lonnie Gliebman have been threatening to move the team to Orlando, Florida unless they can get more concessions from Ottawa city council.

Any doubt about whether an American team in the CFL would mean the end of a Canadian content quota is quickly erased when talking to both players and coaches.

Argo head coach Dennis Meyers,

for example, feels that U.S. immigration laws would forbid such "discrimination," and Canadian teams would be forced to drop the quota in order to remain competitive.

"As a coach, all I'm concerned with is that the other teams are playing by the same rules that I am," Meyers said.

Asked whether CIAU grads would be able to compete for CFL positions on an equal footing with U.S. players, though, Meyers wasn't so sure.

"There are some Canadian guys

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UPCOMING EVENTS



• graphic by Sandra Brewster

gymnastics

(Yeomen) - York Invitational - Sat. Dec. 5 at the Academy of Gymnastics located at 20 Barnes Court, Concord, Ontario, 738-1577.

hockey

(Yeomen) - vs Waterloo - Thurs. Dec. 3 at the Ice Palace.

volleyball

(Yeowomen and Yeomen) - doubleheader vs University of Toronto - Tues. Dec 1 at 6:00p.m. and 8:00p.m. in Tait Main Gym.

track and field

(Yeowomen and Yeomen) - @ Western - Sat. Dec. 5.

basketball

The York Yeomen Nike Excalibur Classic basketball tournament will be held at Tait McKenzie Gymnasium on December 28, 29 and 30.

The Yeomen also play in the Dalhousie Tournament January 1, 2, and 3.

fencing

York fencing club will be having their membership drive January 4th to the 7th.

They will be also be competing in 3 meets in the month of January. On the 9th and 10th, the Carleton Invitational, January 16 and 17 the Ottawa Participation, and January 30-31 is the York Invitational.

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