

York athlete swears he is an alien

By DAVE NEEDLE

What's your personal beef about sports these days? Come on, you've got one just like everybody else. You may not know it, but there's some monkey business going on right in our own backyards.

The thing that really ticks me off is that everything is getting so technical, refined, and expensive that we're losing out in the fun department. A colleague of mine recently assured me that the University of Toronto would defeat York in their volleyball match because of their greater proportion of Biology students on the team. As she put it, "Everybody knows that Biology students make the best spikers and setters."

Can you believe that? I can just picture some scout leaning on the shoulder of a guy dissecting a frog in high school and saying, "Son, volleyball's a great game and if you want to excel, then don't let the smell of that formaldehyde get too far away from your hands."

Even stranger were the antics of some of the athletes themselves. For example, did you know that not less than 60 percent of the competitive female swimmers at Lake-

head eat jello before every meet? Apparently it somehow improves buoyancy.

Burt Buzby, head of Sports Fitness Ontario, feels that jello analysis before and after swim meets is unnecessary. "I'm sick and tired of this subject, and besides I like jello," said an irate Buzby.

We've all heard horror stories from across the 49th parallel about recruiting and athletic scholarships. You know, access to easy dough for a few laps around the track, and clean cut boys from Nowhere, USA who, for the first time in their lives, find a few bucks in their pocket and no one to tell them how to spend it. So they get coaxed into buying some crack, only to meet the GRIM REAPER before turning professional.

Here, depending on your point of view, things aren't as tragic. But I know of guys using steroids, charging their legs with electrodes and doping their blood to improve performance levels. What happened to the good old days when an athlete improved his game by getting up and going to bed early, and by eating his Wheaties everyday.

And what about this NFL instant replay business? The way I look at it, if a ref's calling a bad game, he'll be calling if for

both teams. By the time the executives in the press box decide whether or not to reverse a ref's call, a smart team will snap the ball and continue play. And who decides which play deserves investigation?

From your own observation, have you noticed any dramatic improvement in the officiating of games? I haven't. Take the Dallas-Giant game as an example. Six to 10 penalties were called with less than two minutes remaining in regulation time and Dallas driving in Giant territory. No field goal. No tie. No overtime. No fun.

Remember when you watched a game on TV and players got dirty? I mean their clothes, too. Now with all this artificial turf you can't tell who's playing well by how much of his uniform is covered with dirt. A guy could play hard for two hours and come out of the game with a jersey he doesn't even has to wash.

Let's start having fun with sports again. It's not meant to be BIG BUSINESS with overpaid, idolized athletes going for the Big Bucks. Be thankful that here in Canada we can produce an educated University athlete who can also play the game of life.

Argonauts sign Heisman trophy favourite

By KARIM HAJEE

After months of secret negotiations, the Toronto Argonauts have signed quarterback and Heisman candidate Vinny Testaverde of the University of Miami Hurricanes.

Excilibur has learned that Testaverde will join the Argos after the college season. "Right now I'm just concentrating on winning the national championship," Testaverde said. "My agent called me late last night and told me of the deal he signed for me."

"I don't mind playing in Toronto, it's a nice city, they've got the Tower you know." Asked if he minds playing in the cold and damp Exhibition stadium, he said, "I thought they had a dome, you mean they don't?"

Testaverde signed for a reported three million dollars a year, and that's in U.S. currency. Coach Bob O'Billovich is aware of the high price being paid for Vinny and admits some changes will have to be made to compensate the fat salary. "We need

a star like Vinny in the league, maybe he'll be able to pack the stands like Kelly did in Buffalo," O'Billovich said.

"Sure we'll have to cut down our roster. We'll probably go with 15 the first season and we're not sure about the season after. Some players will have to go both ways, but it will be a great experience for them," O'Billovich said.

Some are fed up for the challenge, like place-kicker Lance Chomyc and running back Cedric Minter. "I've always wanted to try nose tackle or at least strong safety," Chomyc said. "With the way the CFL is, a kicker doesn't always last. Taking up a new position might be a good idea, and this is the perfect opportunity."

Cedric Minter, on the other hand, would like to use his speed on defence. "I think corner back would be best for me," Minter said. "I think if I can master the position in about two years, I could try the NFL again, this time as a corner."

Minter's optimism is appreciated, but will the change work? "I think if we can keep a good balance of players we could win the division again," said general manager Leo Cahill. "Marv (Levy) is with Buffalo right now, but he expressed an interest in coming up as a player/manager, which could provide the leadership we need."

The signing of Testaverde brings back memories of the Vince Ferragmo deal all too quickly. Testaverde will be accompanied by two other NFL refugees. Moving north of the 49th parallel will be wide receiver Anthony Carter and all-pro running back Tony Dorsett. The two will receive an estimated 1.5 million U.S. each for a season's work.

Anthony Carter displayed some enthusiasm towards the deal. "I've been looking at some films from the north," said Carter. "I bought a couple of tennis (?) racquets 'cause we don't get snowshoes down here. It's awkward moving around in

them right now, but I'll get used to it." Asked if he'll be playing two positions, Carter said: "We've got a no trade, no cut, no play clause, so I don't think I'll be moving around too much."

Tony Dorsett refused to comment.

Asked why they signed Carter and Dorsett, coach Bob O'Billovich said "They'll complement Vinny and besides they're NFL players."

Members of the media feel this is a step in the right direction. "Anytime you sign guys like Testaverde and Dorsett things are bound to get exciting," Pat Marsden said. "I can't see how this will fail. Let me tell you the CFL is gonna be exciting thanks to the Argos. Besides now I'll only have to memorize the names of 15 players."

Harold Ballard showed some signs of concern. "Let me just say that no matter what they try we'll

still kick their butts in. Besides, I've got something up my sleeve." What, he wouldn't say. Maybe he's got Brian Bosworth lined up with Herschel Walker and Charlie Joiner.

This is typical of the attitude the CFL coaches, managers, players and media have towards Canadian talent. Instead of investing small sums of money and some time to develop Canadian college players, they prefer to invest huge sums on athletes who have yet to prove they can play the Canadian way of football. There is nothing wrong with the Canadian game of football, it only needs to be truly CANADIAN. The problem begins with the attitude of those who run the league and present it to the viewers. There is an abundance of talent in the CIAU, it only needs to be explored and developed; it could save the CFL millions of dollars.

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