

# University football grads face rocky road to CFL

By DAVE BUNDAS

The plight of Canadian University football athletes chosen in last year's Canadian Football League (CFL) draft, has taken a predictable course this year leaving several York Yeomen shaking their heads.

Six Yeomen were selected in the draft but only two, TE Bob Harding who is on Ottawa's practice team, and Safety Darryl Sampson, who plays for Winnipeg, have been able to turn a few heads in the CFL. Receiver Steve DelZotto was cut by the Argos and returns to the Yeomen along with offensive lineman Eric Jensen, who didn't even bother trying out. "He's still young with a lot of schooling left," commented Asso-

ciate head coach Nobby Wirkowski, who felt Jensen could only improve continuing his eligibility as a university athlete.

Others are left disappointed. One such case involves last year's stand-out centre Rick Lococco. Cut by Hamilton after having been one of the 14 players chosen to an evaluation camp before the draft, Lococco was told to go back to school and move to the guard position. Lococco, however, does not have the money to return to school and is stuck in a no-man's land.

On the brighter side, the play of Darryl Sampson is a credit to coach Wirkowski's defensive squad and York as a whole. Sampson continues

to shine in his spot as free safety with the Blue Bombers, stepping into the lineup after an injury to the starting safety.

He has equally impressive statistics, running back kicks and punts. As of Sept. 2 he had 12 kick returns for 273 yards and a 22.8 yard average, and returned 25 punts for 264 yards and a 10.6 yd average, which is eighth in the CFL. (Just behind Chris Woods of the Argos who has a 10.7 yd average.)

Bob Harding is one rookie who has discovered how tough it is for a Canadian to crack the starting lineup in the CFL. Harding has dressed for two games but remains on the practice roster, after starting

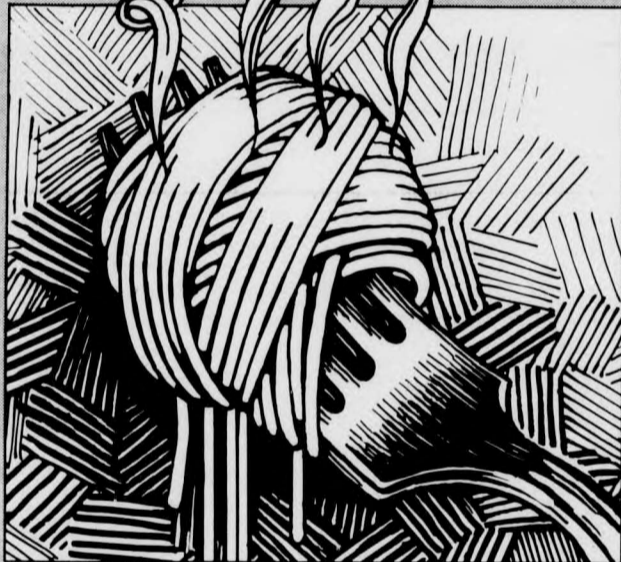
throughout high school and for the Yeomen the past two years.

His mother, Jill Harding, says he hasn't lost his enthusiasm or sense of humour. "Like anything else in life you have to accept the basic facts," Jill Harding said. "The situation in Ottawa (2-8 record) is a little unstable, and no one knows who's going to be there day to day. With USFL players being granted tryouts and veterans with their jobs on the line, you have to take it all in stride."

Elsewhere, across the country, a few other former Ontario university players have made CFL teams. Here are a few names to watch for in the CFL: Jeff Volpe (Guelph) is now starting at safety for Edmonton, but

according to Wirkowski the last time he saw him play he felt he still couldn't tackle the way Sampson can; Clorinda Grilli (McMaster) has seen action in the backfield for Ottawa; and Scott Lecky (Guelph) dresses for Edmonton as a receiver; finally, look for Paul Nastasiak (Laurier) next time the BC Lions are on television. **Bundas Odds:** York faces McMaster in a tough opening game at North York Stadium. The Yeomen defeated the Marauders 18-14 in last year's event, but came into the game with a new offensive scheme. Despite this, Mac will need a big defensive effort to win. Home field advantage makes the spread three points, and look for the Yeomen to cover.

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