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## Yeomen looking good in '88

By KARIM HAJEE

Five years ago if you had told me the York University Football team was going to win the Yates cup I would have had you committed. Simply believing the Yeomen would make the playoffs would be reason to have your head examined. Today the thought of the Yeomen making post-season play is a very real possibility, and a Yates Cup on display at the Tait McKenzie building is not a far-fetched idea.

This new-found optimism is mainly the result of the coaching duo of Frank Cosentino and Nobby Wirkowski. It's doubtful that any student will remember the two in their playing days (I wasn't even born when Nobby Wirkowski was starring for the Toronto Argonauts). Just ask your father or grandfather and they'll tell you about the type of excitement these former quarterbacks generated on the field, not to mention the winning seasons they enjoyed during their careers. They have brought their winning attitude and flamboyant style of play to the York Yeomen.

Ever since Cosentino (Cos' to his players) and Wirkowski arrived, York has enjoyed winning seasons in all but one of the four years. That was last year when the Yeomen fell short of the playoffs after losing the last game of the season to Laurier. 1986 was a rebuilding year and the Yeomen weren't expected to come close to making the playoffs.

This year's team is solid. Adam Karlsson proved he was more than capable of handling the quarterbacking chores last year, and is ready to take command this season. The defence is perhaps the strongest part of the team. The only losses were Devon Hansen (to graduation), and Sean Foudy who is ineligible to play.

On offence the frick and frack combination of Ganis and Douglas in the backfield is now a memory. However, fine recruiting and strong player development on the part of Cosentino and Wirkowski will see these positions occupied by players who are very capable of filling the holes. Add the return of Louis Taffo, and the defence is without a hole.

The receiving corps proved they could play with the best the league has to offer. Add a few rookies, on 6'2" tall, and the result is a talented and capable receiving unit. York's offensive and defensive lines raise no concerns in the minds of the coaches, particularly the former, which boasts the return of Joe Marchildon.

For many seasons, the Yeomen have been the joke of the OUAA. Names like "Dork Football," or "No Men" come to mind all too quickly. Recently, those labels have faded away. Today, York could have one of the finest football programmes in the country. Yeomen players have been drafted as high as the second round in the CFL draft.

Over the past four years Yeomen fans have witnessed some of the most exciting college football this country has to offer. Last year's York vs. U of T grudge match is evidence that the Yeomen can play exciting football.

Yet, for some reason they have not received the recognition they deserve.

"We've only made the playoffs twice in our 20-year history. We aim to do it again of course, we still have to be able to get other teams' respect," says Frank Cosentino.

"I think we're starting to do that every game we play. Every game we've been involved in has been a good football game, it's been a tough physical game and we'll carry that tradition into every game. I look at us as a definite threat this year," Cosentino added.

This year's OUAA football season promises to be a fascinating one. Western is no longer immortal, especially with the departure of Blake Marshall and Steve Samways. The Guelph Gryphons have lost head coach John Musselman (to Windsor), but the team remains intact. U of T is too unpredictable, so it's best to expect a strong showing from them.

McMaster has yet to find the glory days of old, but are always a playoff threat. Wilfrid Laurier has always been York's nemesis regardless of the sport. Their only weakness is on defense where they lost some players to graduation.

The Waterloo Warriors have been rebuilding, and this could be their year—but then they say that every year. Windsor will be under new head coach John Musselman. Windsor proved they could play football last year, and a new head coach could be what they need.

Enter the Yeomen, a team that has lost only four '86 starters and displays a talent-filled roster with depth that could reach the bottom of the Atlantic.

If Adam Karlsson can stay healthy, York fans could discover the most impressive offence in the league.

In recent years Frank Cosentino has been accused of being too conservative. Last year that all changed. The offence threw an average of 35 passes a game, and that was with Ganis and Douglas in the backfield. This year will not be any different, especially with a stronger offensive line providing Karlsson with the necessary protection.

Seldom to University teams have a roster full of top returnees from the previous year. If the Yeomen are ever going to win a Yates Cup, or earn the respect they deserve this seems to be the season to do it.

Saturday afternoon the Guelph Gryphons come to North York Civic Stadium. If any team can test the heart and character of a team it's the Guelph Gryphons. More importantly, the coaching abilities of Frank Cosentino and Nobby Wirkowski and the programme that they have put together here at York will also be tested. For four years they have been building towards a playoff year. This is their best chance.



OFF & RUNNING: The Yeomen look forward to having a good season this year. The Yeomen make their debut at North York Civic Stadium this Saturday against the Guelph Gryphons.

JAMES HOGGETT