

Interview with Doug Hargreaves

The Coach and Football at Dal

by Dennis Cuvelier
and
Greg Prince

This discussion with football coach, Doug Hargreaves was conducted with the idea of obtaining some informative material on football at Dalhousie so that the Dal fan could better appreciate the team performance and assemble a more positive attitude towards football. Incidentally the interview was held the day before the U.N.B. game.

We came out of the interview happy, for the fact, that we now had a much clearer insight into the Dalhousie football program. By reading this, we hope you will experience that same satisfaction.

PURPOSE OF THE FOOTBALL PROGRAM AT DALHOUSIE:

Coach Hargreaves stated that the main consideration at Dalhousie is to provide an arena (outlet), for the athlete to compete at his own particular skill level. "Of course," he added, "any coach wants to win, this is part of the competitive spirit."

BACKGROUND:

Hargreaves has been involved with football for the past fifteen years. Prior to coming to Dal, he put in five years at the Royal Military College, in Kingston, Ontario.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF THE 1972 DALHOUSIE TIGERS:

From what we could decipher from Hargreaves, his primary objective is to have a top notch contending team at the end of three years. He stated that Dalhousie would not be at the College Bowl in Toronto this

year.

The discussion then moved into Coach Hargreave's coaching philosophy encompassing recruiting, motivation, conditioning, exhibition games and player-coach relationships.

RECRUITING:

The majority of the Atlantic intercollegiate football teams recruit. Dalhousie's recruiting program this year can be termed a passive one.

Basically what Coach Hargreaves did was to send out 2,800 letters to the entire male population of Dalhousie inviting each to attend an Introductory Football Camp and then, if so desiring, to attend the varsity camp. He felt 100 prospective players might show up. Thirty nine prospects showed up at the camp.

One might ask why Coach Hargreaves did not recruit with a different method. His feelings on the subject of recruiting explain why. He spent five years at R.M.C. "recruiting" in the sense we have come to know it. His aim, fifteen years ago was to become the best coach in Canada. Recruiting was his means for this end.

Five hard years of recruiting at R.M.C. produced for Coach Hargreaves "one complete football player." He believes the recruiting system to be dishonest, phony, etc. He went on to say that potential players are becoming too choosy. They would prefer Queen's over R.M.C. They would go to the teams offering the most fringe benefits and competition. Therefore Hargreaves did not go knocking on doors because he was simply 'fed-up' with today's recruiting philosophy.

THE PLAYER-COACH

RELATIONSHIP:

Hargreaves told us that the coach knows the team better than any player. The players have no concept of what is involved in a one hour and forty-five minute practice. "The player must give his full intention to learn." He went on to say that anything a player does off the field reflects on the coach and the team as a whole.

Hargreaves went on to emphasize the fact the player's only obligation is to perform and execute his football skill to the best of his ability. That is, the player must perform to his capability for the hour and a half of practice and for the one game a week.

"The player has to be prepared mentally and physically. If not, he is not likely to live up to his contract. I do have the axe if the player refuses to co-operate."

When questioned on how to motivate a football player, Hargreaves remarked that he doesn't know, but his aim is to teach the player in the best manner in accordance with the latter's individual talent. The player, he believes has to largely motivate himself. "Pep talks are gone. That's Hollywood stuff, but one occasionally has to blow his stack to get things moving."

EXHIBITION GAMES:

A lot of students and outsiders were wondering why the Dal football team had no exhibition games lined up for the year. Before the interview we both

felt there should have been pre-season games. Following our talk we knew why there was not. Briefly stated the reasons are as follows:

(1) The season was to start September 30. They planned to have an introductory camp of about 100 hopefuls for the first week and a half in September. Half of the coaching staff would not be available until the first of September. They believed that ten days would not suffice to get these players and those returning varsity players into proper shape. Hargreaves believes that 14 practices are compulsory before hitting can occur.

(2) Besides this, the team was to have a new offense and defence. There is also pressure during exhibition games, Hargreaves added, placing pressure on the players, pressure from the alumni, the press as well as pressure placed on the coach. "I do believe in exhibition games if the conditions are right." They did not have the conditions at Dalhousie this fall.

Therefore, a desire to screen a hundred individuals at an introductory camp, summer jobs, financial costs, limited facilities, pressure from varied sources and the time factor, all contributed to the decision to bypass any pre-season games. If practices could have started on August 1, Dal might have had these.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Hargreaves has not cut any

player who went out for the team. They have 11 returnees, and 38 players in total.

The new football coach at Dal stresses offense, defense, and kicking. He is very interested in the mechanics of kicking and is ably assisted here by the renowned Australian football player, Dr. Frank Pyke.

Hargreaves believes that a team must have the personnel to score. "If I had but 12 good players, they would be put on offense."

"Mount Allison beat us because of our offensive mistakes. Our defense held them to 1 touchdown."

As an athletic director he believes crowd control at football games is the biggest problem. "Because of the language etc., I wouldn't take my kids to an intercollegiate game. I couldn't enjoy a game myself. The function of the athletic program is to give persons a chance to compete at their own athletic level."

It is unfortunate that all interested students could not have been at the interview with Hargreaves. It was truly a worthwhile experience. Interviewing for us is more interesting than writing up what was said. We hope that you have a better understanding of the overall football picture at Dal and that you will actively support it. Hargreaves, his coaching staff and the team truly deserve all the support we can give them.

Hargreaves once stated that "the similarity between R.M.C. and Dal football teams is that they both have the tail between their legs — everybody is down on them." Last Saturday Dal defeated U.N.B. 22-21. We hope this might help the situation.

Dal Serves Up Another

by Dennis Cuvelier

Last Saturday, October 7, at the Halifax Commons' Tennis Courts Dalhousie University won the annual Atlantic Intercollegiate tennis tour-

Football!
Dal over UNB
22-21

nament.

Congratulations are extended to Larry Langley, John Primrose and Bruce McArthur, all incidentally, who are Nova Scotians. We do not have to import our tennis players.

Let's see now, that makes two championships in a row — Golf and Tennis, and with Dal beating U.N.B. in football who knows? Everybody loves a winner.

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