

# York football a product of chronic underfunding

cont'd from p. 1

second-lowest in Ontario; McMaster is at the bottom. The \$38,000 allocated to football, of which \$1,500 alone covers the cost of athletic tape, is not even in the same ballpark as Western's \$100,000 for the same sport. The league average is between \$55,000 and \$60,000.

Along with the underfunding problem, misrepresentation of athletes and recreation by the chairman Norman Gledhill and associate chairman Roger Seaman has added insult to injury. At the end of the '88 Football season, Chambers approached Seaman and requested \$10,000 for the football programme. Chambers was later told that the provost does not have any money for football.

**"I have nothing to do with Athletics and recreation."**

— Norm Gledhill, Chairman of Physical Education, Recreation and Athletics

When asked about the \$10,000, Provost Meininger was baffled. "No. I was never asked by them (Seaman and Gledhill) for money to help football."

Seaman contends that the provost told him, "I don't have a cent for football."

When Norm Gledhill was asked to comment on the underfunding of athletics and recreation, he said, "No. I have nothing to do with athletics and recreation."

Meininger feels that money alone will not solve the problem. As provost, Meininger is responsible for all of the funds that the university gives to athletics and recreation.

But he says, "Simply putting money into the programme will not solve the problem. We must also examine the coaching and the recruiting."

However, in order to attract new high calibre coaches, the university must come up with the money to pay them. As for recruiting, the football team has a recruiting budget of zero dollars. Although money may not be the only problem, it appears to be the most important one.

Yeomen football head coach Nobby Wirkowski's biggest problem is underfunding. Without an adequate recruiting budget, it is difficult to field a competitive team. "We don't have the dollars to bring people (football prospects) in, put them up, house them and feed them so that they can visit the campus. And certainly the Westerns and all the other schools do that, and they make very good use of that. We just do not have any dollars for recruiting."

Another problem for the gridiron team is the lack of a second full-time coach. Most teams in Canada have at least two, even three full-time coaches on campus. In 1984 and 1985, there were three on-campus coaches: Wirkowski, Frank Cosentino, and Mike Eben. Along with these coaches came budget increases to the football programme. In those two seasons, York finished with five and two records.

But 1987 and 1988 first saw the loss of Eben, then Cosentino. Coupled with two subsequent budget cuts, York now has the current 1-6 Yeomen.

**"I would not hesitate to put \$150,000 to \$200,000 into the football programme."**

— Provost Tom Meininger

Meininger has said that he could be convinced to help: "I would not hesitate to put up \$150,000 to \$200,000 into the programme if I could be assured that high school football in Toronto is not on the decline and that it is important to



university life." In fact, the Toronto area alone has over 90 high schools with competitive football programmes.

Football is not the only programme suffering. The men's gymnastics team has captured fourteen consecutive national titles, yet they do not have a proper training facility and they must set up and dismantle their apparatus before and after every practise.

Similarly, the women's volleyball

team is consistently ranked among the best in Canada, but they must raise their own money to compete in tournaments.

Still, Meininger feels that the university is doing enough. "There is enough money," he says "but it's a question of priorities; the money could be managed differently." When asked if he felt that money directed specifically to athletics and recreation was being managed properly, Meininger said "No. But again

it's a question of their priorities."

The other great obstacles for athletes is the lack of proper facilities. The Tait McKenzie building is an antiquated high school gymnasium that was originally built to accommodate only a few thousand people.

Now, with York's student population pushing 45,000 full- and part-time students, we still have only have the Tait building.

There is no on-campus stadium whatsoever. The football team must travel off-campus to Esther Shiner Stadium to play their 'home' games.

The rugby and soccer teams play their matches on the fields next to the Ice Palace where there are no stands to speak of. Fans must sit or stand in the wet grass and mud.

The national champion Yeomen hockey team plays in the Ice Palace, originally intended as a practice rink.

The Track and Field Centre was a welcome addition, though York students can only use it until three p.m. on weekdays, and the Track and Field Centre alone is not adequate to attract media coverage.

CHCH-TV, which covers university athletics in Ontario, has refused to broadcast home games at York because of the inadequate facilities.

Graham Wise, York's hockey coach, feels that a successful programme would bring the university some much needed exposure. "When a team is successful, it obviously spreads the name of the university." He points to McGill. "Last year, they won the Vanier cup and look at the amount of exposure that university got."

Wise says it's time to do things right: "If we're going to run a programme, let's run it properly. And if we run it properly, it will be a good programme and it will be a strong programme."

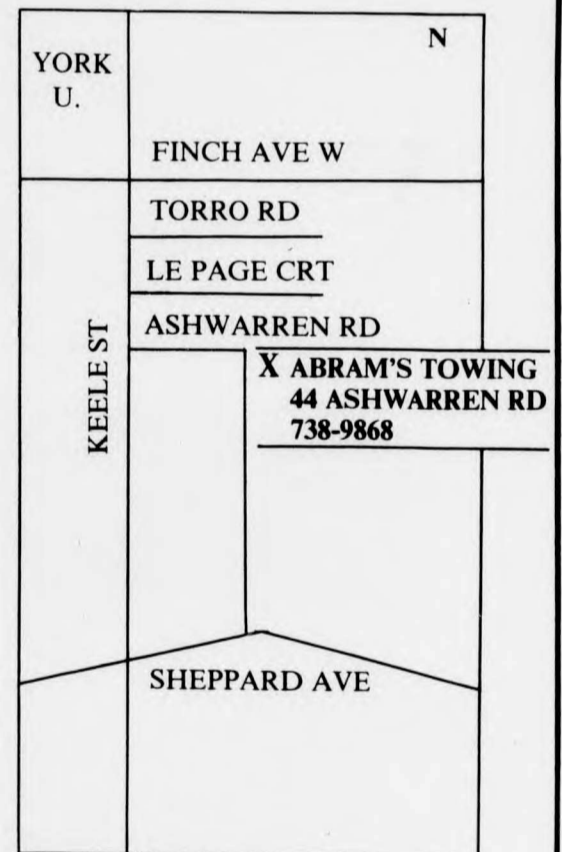
"The needs of our athletes have been ignored long enough," said York's head athletic therapist Ed Nowalkoski. "Just take a walk through our facilities and then do the same at U of T and compare the two."

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