

James Xavier

Eskimos have taken notice of football talent

What about the Argos?

Mike Leonetti

The commitment that has gone into improving York's football program in the last few years is starting to pay off.

At least five members of the Yeomen football team could be playing in the Canadian Football League next season.

Four Yeomen have already signed contracts with CFL teams while another is on the verge of signing. CFL teams have also expressed interest in two other York players.

Three sign

Grey Cup champions Edmonton Eskimos signed no less than three Yeomen.

Offensive guard Peter Janiuk, who was picked in the third round of the Canadian University player draft, defensive end Trent McCabe and kicker Sergio Capobianco are under contract with the Eskimos.

Both Janiuk and Capobianco did not play for the Yeomen this past season, although they were team members for the previous two seasons. Their academic standing required them to withdraw from York for at least one year.

"Peter Janiuk has an excellent chance of making the team," Pickett says, "because he has size, quickness, and strength. His pass blocking ability should fit him in well with Edmonton."

Pickett also adds that Janiuk would have been higher in the draft had he played this season.

As for Capobianco, Pickett believes that the kicker is a definite pro prospect. Capobianco's strength is his place kicking thus he could be an asset in both the CFL and National Football League.

"Edmonton may be the best place for Sergio because they are one of the few teams who keep

two kicking specialists (punter and place kicker)," explained Pickett.

With the punting position already filled by the best in football, the Eskimos will likely look at Capobianco as a place kicker. Although it will be difficult to unseat veteran Dave Cutler, whose age is starting to catch up with his skills (accuracy and consistency).

With McCabe, Pickett credits the defensive end's 6 ft. 4 in., 250 pound frame and his experience at other professional camps as giving him an extra edge in cracking the Eskimo squad.

"Trent is strong on the pass rush. The CFL teams look for the quickness that he has from the defensive end position," says Pickett.

Calgary Stampeders

The Calgary Stampeders have signed defensive back Dan Koenig, an often underrated player in York's secondary but due to his injuries this past season he was left out in the annual university draft.

"Dan has a good chance of sticking with Calgary because they are looking for Canadian defensive backs," says Pickett. "He has the size and speed and he's a very intelligent player."

Montreal is interested in defensive end Charles Laing. Montreal's organization is still in a state of confusion but the AIs could certainly utilize the 6 ft. 3 in., 235 pound Laing because they are in separate need of Canadian linemen.

Laing's strength and quickness make him a probable candidate on the AIs roster.

Pickett has also indicated that CFL teams have expressed interest in centre John Ponziani and receiver Neil Dalgarno.

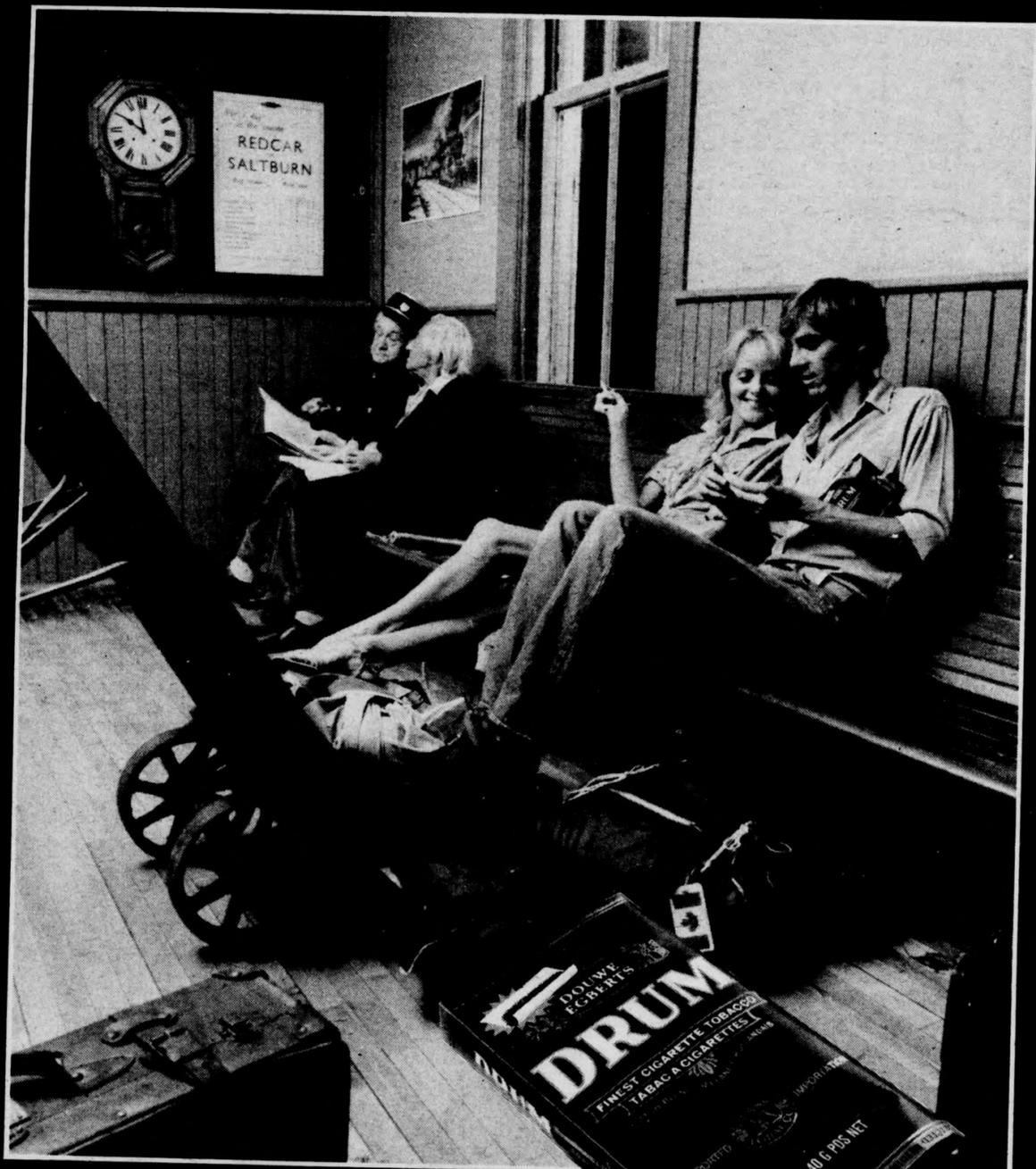
Mixed emotions

Pickett naturally has mixed emotions about the players who could land professional jobs.

"I hope they make it because they deserve it and have worked hard. I know that if they get the opportunity to play they will do well. If these players make the CFL it will help our program."

At the same time Pickett admits he would not mind seeing the players back with the Yeomen next year because they will definitely help the team.

The interest expressed by the CFL indicates that York is producing quality athletes and that the football program has a strong commitment from all those involved. It speaks well for York to have Edmonton sign three York athletes because the Eskimos do the most thorough scouting job and are by far the best organization in Canadian football.



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