

Gryphons' Lair
Issue 67



We hope that everyone is enjoying the summer weather! Hard to believe that the 2022/2023 football season is just around the corner, and next month we will be including recaps from our exhibition game on [August 20th](#) and our first regular season game against Western, in London on August 27th.

In the previous newsletter thread, we incorrectly labelled one of our players in a photo. Apologies to Spencer Masterson and Curtis Woodmansey for this mistake!

Many planning meetings have been happening over the past few months and we are excited to share with our audience the themes that will be tied to the home games this season.

GAME DETAILS

GAME 1 – ORIENTATION WEEK - the students will be moving in this weekend and the campus will be jumping. We will be hosting an FOGF membership appreciation on the rooftop of the pavilion (The Nest) during this game. A separate invite will follow.

GAME 2 – HOMECOMING, 50th ANNIVERSARY - The 50th anniversary of Alumni Stadium requires a special celebration. Bill Laidlaw and Alumni House will be hosting players from the 1970's team on The Nest to celebrate this milestone. There will be an Alumni Tent in the North Endzone for all other alumni to book their spot to join the anniversary festivities. More communication from Alumni House will be forthcoming.

GAME 3 – HIGHWAY 6 BOWL - Every year the Gryphons and the McMaster Marauders seem to battle it out. This year we will be formally instituting the "Highway 6 Bowl" and it will be played on a Friday night before thanksgiving. We will use The Nest to thank all of our deserving community partners but we will have a FOGF Friday Night party in the endzone during this game. Book this one in your calendar.

GAME 4 – THINK PINK GAME - The last regular season game is always the senior tribute. It will be coupled with our annual Breast Cancer Fundraising efforts. On The Nest will be the 1992 Yates Cup Championship team and their 30th anniversary of hoisting up the cup. More details will follow in a separate email.

HEAR FROM THE COACH

To get a preview on the 2022 season, we invite you to join us virtually on August 25th at 8:30pm to hear from Coach Sheahan about the 2022 recruiting class and his outlook for 2022. Please fill out this [form](#) and the link will be sent to you via email.

Enjoy Issue 67 of the Gryphons' Lair!



FOGF Golf Tournament

We had a fantastic turnout at Guelph Lakes Golf and Country Club for our annual FOGF Golf Tournament on Friday, July 22nd. Over 130 golfers joined us for a jam-packed day of golf, team pictures, hole contests and other activities!

Prior to teeing off, we were able to take a moment to honour the memory of Rick Kohler, an all-time Gryphon great and member of the 1984 Vanier Cup Championship team. On June 4th, 1999 during the 25th Man Golf Tournament at the Guelph Lakes Golf Club, Rick made a hole in one on the #10 hole. Thank you to Sleeman Breweries, who generously sponsored the 'Rick Kohler Memorial Closest to the Pin' contest on Hole #10.

Thank you to Rick's family members, Lisa, Jeff, Thomas, and Randy who were able to attend the tournament share some memories with us about Rick. The 10th hole at Guelph Lakes for our annual golf tournament will be recognized yearly as the 'Rick Kohler Memorial Closest to the Pin Hole'.

Our winning group of the day was Matt Maychak, Steve Warden, Shawn Holmes, Kyle Scott and Sieg Will, who shot 16 under par! Congratulations!

Our guests were able to connect with members of our current Gryphon Football roster and many of them happened to be incoming freshman for the 2022 season! It was great to introduce the players to many of our supporters. The players are looking forward to making you proud by claiming some big victories this season on the field.

Thank you to George Bortolato, Randy Dimitroff, and Bill Brown for all your planning, organization, and coordination of the golf tournament. The day was a huge success, and we are looking forward to the event next year!

Thank you to Andrea Lack, Cathy Condello, and Karyn Barnes from the Parents of Players, Jessie Kennedy and Sarah Garrett from the Lang Innovation Team, and other volunteers for helping with set-up, registration and the other various tasks! Your support made this event a success and we are so very lucky to have you!

And of course, to the golfers – thank you for taking the time to support our program and attend this tournament. We hope you enjoyed your time on the course and we look forward to welcoming you back for the 2023 golf tournament!



*Rick Kohler Memorial Closest to the Pin Hole
Photo Credit: Christian Bender*



*Brian Cluff always looking for that high five
Photo Credit: Christian Bender*



*Mark Brown teeing off
Photo Credit: Christian Bender*

Exhibition Game Announced

Our Gryphon Football team will be facing off against York University for an exhibition game prior to the season. The game will take place at Alumni Stadium in Guelph on August 20th at 1pm. Tickets are \$5.00 and can be purchased [online](#).



*Pictured left to right: Evan Spangenberg and Clark Barnes
Photo Credit: Sandy Warner*

Gryphon Talent Spotted at Canada Cup in Kelowna, BC

Coach Mark Surya headed to the West Coast in July to be a part of the coaching squad as an Offensive Coordinator for U18 Team Ontario. Coach Adam Kania and Coach Donnavan Carter also made the trip and were able to scout out some talent to prospectively join the Gryphon squad in 2023 and 2024. We look forward to building up these connections and adding to our dynamic roster in the months to come!



Pictured left to right: Adam Kania, Mark Surya, Donnavan Carter



Celebrations

New addition to the Sheahan Family

Congratulations to Coach Ryan Sheahan and his wife Jillian who welcomed a new daughter into the world on July 5th! Baby Riley and Mom are doing well, and big sister, Payton is just thrilled to have a little sister. We wish them all the best as they embark on this new journey with two kids!

Gryphon Alumni in the CFL

Jared Beeksma, a recent U of G alumni is heading back to the Hamilton Ti-Cats after spending some time with the Saskatchewan Roughriders.

Media release can be found [here](#).



We are very proud to see that many Gryphon alumni are making noise in the CFL and many former Gryphons will be added to our CFL board in the players room.



Kian Schaffer-Baker, CFL Standout

It seems that each month we have more updates about all-star alumni Kian Schaffer Baker! Kian continues to be highlighted in the media for his impressive start to the 2022/2023 CFL season!

Read the full article [here](#).



Photo Credit: Troy Fleece

Dynamic Duo of Johnny Augustine and Brady Oliveira


An impressive start the 2022/2023 CFL season for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers. As of late July, they are currently 7 – 0, and much of that success is due to the impressive efforts of Gryphon Alumni Johnny Augustine and teammate Brady Oliveira.

Read the full article [here](#).



Coach Mike O'Shea Leads Bombers to a Winning Streak

Be sure to check out this [great article](#) written about former alumni Mike O'Shea, who is the current Head Coach for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers. Many players and coaches have many positive things to say about Coach, including Dennis McPhee, our current Defensive Coordinator.



Featured Player

“I was attracted to the complete package that the University of Guelph had to offer – athletics, academics and student experience.”

A common quote that we hear from U of G student-athletes, and that complete package is why we were successful in recruiting Hamilton native, [Spencer Kennedy](#) in 2018.

Spencer attended St. Thomas More Catholic Secondary School in Hamilton, Ontario and was seeking a university that could offer him a sport management program and a reputable football program. And this is where the U of G came in, the timing could not have been more perfect as the university was about to launch a new Sport and Event Management Major within the Gordon S. Lang School of Business and Economics.

“I was looking at another university but decided to go back to high school for grade 13 and ended up being recruited by Guelph in October of 2018. I had a meeting with Coach Sheahan and Scott McRoberts, the Athletic Director at the U of G, and they talked to me about the new program that was about to launch. That conversation made me realize that I wanted to come to Guelph, and I was eager to join a school that had a growing business program.”

Spencer will be entering his 4th year in the Fall and plays the position of Wide Receiver. He came from an impressive high school football program at St. Thomas More, yet still had lots to learn and adjust to playing at the university varsity level.

“It was different. Managing football and school was quite different than high school. Playing at the next level, I learned how to wake up early and how to get things done, Coach Sheahan instilled that in us. It was an adjustment, but the veterans and the coaches provided a lot of advice and support to make that transition.”

Many of our student athletes will comment that the busy schedule works in their favour for academics, as they must develop exceptional time management skills and stick to a schedule to get everything completed on time, for both football and academics.

“A big advantage of being a football player is the routine schedule that it enforces. We are at the stadium for 5-6 hours a day and it gives you a mental break from studies and allows you to connect with players and get some exercise. I really enjoy the routine that being a student-athlete provides.”

A highlight course for Spencer was his 2nd year Event Management Course. He was placed in a group of 4 and had to design an event for the Scroscoppi FC soccer team in Vaughan, Ontario.

“This course was very hands on. We designed an event based off a budget, attendance and essentially had to make a plan for one of their soccer games. We had the opportunity to talk with the management team and see if they would implement any of our ideas for their season.”

These types of hands on courses are what make the business program at the U of G stand out. Our students can learn about the theory, and then have the opportunity to put it into action and apply it to real world situations. Spencer also has a passion for sustainability and had the opportunity to travel to Mexico with U of G professors and study the sustainability practices in other countries.

“Having the opportunity to travel while being a student is amazing. I wanted a university that focused on education first, and here is no better program than the U of G, because it offers the best of the best in regards to academics, football and support.”

After a cancelled 2020 season and a reduced schedule for 2021, Spencer is eager to have a full schedule for the 2022 season and a few games in particular are highlighted on his calendar. The first one being Western – a typical rivalry game. He’s also excited about the game on Friday, October 7th against McMaster. Being a Hamilton native, Spencer would love the opportunity to take the victory on that game. Coming in as a wide receiver, Spencer had the opportunity to work with then Gryphon, and current CFL rookie, [Kiondre Smith](#).

“I came in strong but didn’t come in fast. In first year, I was able to look around my environment and see what I needed to adjust to be able to perform and play at the university level. Being a Guelph Gryphon receiver, you need to be fast or else you won’t be able to compete. I was fortunate enough to learn from Kiondre Smith. Whatever he had to say, I was eager to listen. You can’t make a mistake around that guy because he will always see it and call you out. But it’s those little things that make us better.”

Spencer is taking full advantage of the facilities offered to our student-athletes and is working on his speed to be ready for the upcoming season.

“Everything in the Gryphon Football Performance Centre is state of the art. Some of the equipment I had never seen it before. The performance centre gives us an edge against other universities because a lot of the equipment is specifically meant for football players. Coach Kania knows how to use the equipment and leads us through really specific training programs to make us better, faster, and stronger.

Outside of the classroom and off the field, Spencer is always one to volunteer for community activities. He attended the [Bell Let's Talk Day](#) event in 2019 at a local elementary school and visited residents at assisted living homes and the Guelph hospital on [Valentine's Day](#) this past year.

“With some universities, it might be a few events a year and you have to take initiative to get involved with the community, but the Guelph football program provides us with those opportunities. It's always well planned, well organized and it's important to our team that we show the community that we care. We need to show our support to them because in turn they support us on game day.”

Thank you, Spencer for being a standout student-athlete at the U of G. We appreciate your dedication to the team, both on and off the field! All the best for the upcoming season!





Featured FOGF Member

Our Gryphon Football program is a community of people. It consists of coaches, players, alumni, parents, donors, friends, media crew, event staff, family members... and the list goes on. Every single person plays a role in the success of our team. From our parent group that hosts a tailgate that elevates our game day experience, to the marketing team that designs our graphics and builds our brand, and to our event staff who organizes and coordinate the entire game day so that we can offer our fans the best view to watch our players on the field.

We could write novels about how many people are involved in the process of making our program the best of the best.

If you've ever had the opportunity to walk through the pavilion, you would have been able to see firsthand a beautiful piece of stained glass art that was added to our pavilion to showcase our mascot, the Gryphon. It is these speciality pieces that make our program unique. Picture this – a potential recruit is touring the facilities and can see this one-of-a-kind piece of artwork that was designed by two parents of a former alumni, both FOGF members who continue to support the football program since their son graduated. That's special. This piece of artwork highlights the attention to detail that we put into our program and shows the level of excellence of our facilities.

It is our honour to write about Craig and Lynda MacRae for this month's FOGF newsletter feature.

Craig and Lynda's son Arran played for the Guelph Gryphons from 2014 – 2018 and was part of the Offensive Line. During High School Arran won a football scholarship to a prestigious US boarding school where he was heavily recruited by US Colleges. However, though his experience there he came to value the Canadian perspective and he decided to return to Ontario and sign on with the Gryphons.

“Our family really respected what Stu Lang was trying to do with the program. Arran was fortunate enough to take advantage of the many things that came with being a football player, from the tutoring to the counselling and the other forms of support” mentioned Craig.

Lynda noted that the minute they walked on campus, they felt special, they felt welcomed and were embraced as part of the football family.

Like many others have mentioned previously, it was clear that the Gryphon Football program is ‘more than just football.’

“It was such an elite program, the coaches were producing high quality football players, which led to entertaining games. But beyond that, the coaches were creating people and young men of character. How many programs can boast that they product high quality players and provide a gameday experience?” stated Craig.

Lynda and Craig were very active members of the football community when Arran was a player, from helping with the tailgate to playing an active role in the game day festivities. During Arran's experience of being a Guelph Gryphon, they realized that if they were going to put time and energy into anything, Gryphon Football was the place to do it.

Once Arran's playing days were over, Lynda and Craig joined the FOGF membership program in 2019.

“For anyone who is a parent of a kid who plays sports, whether it be baseball, hockey, football, etc., you'll know that it consumes your life and then all of a sudden it just stops. By joining the FOGF program, we were able to continue to feel involved even though our son no longer played on the team. The football community and the POP group was an extension of our family. We knew firsthand what it was like to have a son on the team, so we were happy to join the membership and support the current players, it's a rewarding feeling” mentioned Lynda.

Craig noted that something Stu Lang has taught him is the philosophy of teaching others to contribute, and the idea of it being a multiplication effect. If more people can contribute to the program, that results in more scholarships for players.

In addition to the support from the membership, Craig and Lynda have been extremely generous in donating pieces of art for our annual gala. This past year, Lynda created a beautiful piece of stained glass art that was included in our silent auction.

As mentioned earlier in the article, Craig and Lynda created some artwork for the pavilion and worked with Stu on creating this masterpiece to be hung in the entrance of the pavilion at Alumni Stadium.

We hope that our readers can visit the pavilion one day in the future and see for themselves this incredible piece of artwork. They also designed some drawings that can be seen in the players rooms on the second floor.

Although Craig and Lynda live in Nova Scotia for the summer months and don't return to their hometown of Kingston, Ontario until October, they still cheer on the Gryphons from the East Coast.

Thank you, Craig and Lynda for your continued support of our program! Enjoy the East Coast and we look forward to welcoming you back to campus soon (and Gryphon too!)



A black banner with a red and yellow Gryphon logo on the left and the text "Featured Alumnus" in a bold, yellow, italicized font on the right.

 **Featured Alumnus**

Defensive End, Defensive Tackle, Full Back, and Tight End. All 4 positions that Gryphon Alumni, [Lukas Brennan](#) played during his time at the University of Guelph.

This month's alumni newsletter feature is Lukas Brennan, from St. Catharines, Ontario.

We typically start all our interviews with alumni by asking what they studied at the University of Guelph and what position they played. We were not expecting to hear that Lukas played 4 different positions and played both defense and offence! What makes this even more impressive, was that he switched from the defense side to offence halfway through the season and had to learn a completely new playbook.

Lukas joined the Gryphon squad in 2015, and what a memorable first season it was – with the Gryphons clinching the Yates Cup Championship that year.

“It really set the tone for my career with winning a Yates Cup Championship in my first year as a Gryphon. I saw so much relief from so many people and especially the veterans after winning

that final game. Guelph was just starting to be seen as a provincially recognized powerhouse school, and so to be a part of that team was incredible.”

Lukas played for Team Ontario when he was in high school and many of the camps were hosted at Alumni Stadium, in Guelph. He was able to meet a lot of the Guelph coaches and made the decision to commit quite early. Something that attracted Lukas to Guelph was the distance to his hometown of St. Catharines as he wanted to be close enough that he was able to visit his family. Lukas noted that the atmosphere at the U of G was welcoming, and he felt like a person, not just a number.

When chatting about standout games or memories from his playing career throughout 2015 – 2019, Lukas remembered one game specifically in his 3rd year against Carleton.

“It was either my first or second game at Full back, and I only knew a small package of plays because I had just made the switch from defense to offence. A bunch of our receivers got hurt and so the play that we called was a counter, and it was my job to loop around to block a DB. I remember thinking to myself ‘is that type of move even allowed?’ and I was looking around to see if I got a flag after the play had happened. Turns out that the type of play was legal, and it worked really well for us because we ran the ball like 25 yards and we ended up repeating that play 5 times. We lined up again and I remember I had my hands on my knees and was about to be sick to my stomach because of how exhausted I was. Fortunately for me, someone on the other team was sick and we got an extra 45 seconds of rest to catch our breath.”

It was evident that Lukas was a team player and made a lot of sacrifices to help his team, like learning a new position halfway through the season. We reached out to Coach Cluff to get a quote about Lukas’ perseverance as a football player for the Gryphons.

“It was an honour to have had the opportunity to coach Lukas Brennan. Lukas was athletic, hardworking, tough, and coachable. He was an outstanding team-mate in our locker room and as a veteran he was a real team leader”. Lukas was part of our 2015 Yates Cup Championship Team and exhibited his athletic versatility by playing on both sides of the ball as a Gryphon. He played DL as well as switching over to the offensive side of the ball and played H-back in his last couple years as a Gryphon”.

-Coach Brian Cluff

Lukas’ impact to his teammates was felt both on and off the field. Not only was he a standout football player, but he was known for always making those around him laugh and smile.

“I had always been obsessed with comedy and stand-up since I was 7 or 8 years old. I was the valedictorian for my high school, and it was my first experience of writing speeches and trying to make people laugh. This is what sparked my vision to wanting to get into comedy when I was older. I gave a speech at every single Wildman Dinner, and always enjoyed making people laugh.”

It is a tradition for all senior players to say a speech at the annual Wildman Gala Dinner. In previous years, players have given a speech on behalf of their teammates, and Lukas was always selected to speak because of his humour and ability to engage with the entire audience. We are happy to say that Lukas is pursuing his career of comedy and is currently in his last year at Humber College studying comedy writing and performing.

“I am really grateful for this program at Humber, it showed me how to get started in my comedy career and I’m looking forward to increasing the comedy scene in Guelph, stay tuned for some upcoming shows in the Fall!”

Lukas’ advice to players is to ‘follow your heart and pick something you are passionate about and go in on it 100%. It’s better to focus on 1 thing rather than juggling multiple priorities.’

All the best with your comedy career, Lukas! We look forward to hearing about your continued success and can’t wait to attend one of your upcoming shows!





Training Talk

We are closing in on the final weeks of preparation. Across the country, Gryphon football players have been working to improve their size, strength, speed, and explosiveness through a combination of sprints, plyometrics, lifts, ballistics, and nutrition. Video and picture updates have been sent to me depicting gains and losses in weight, as asked for by the staff, as well as personal records being set in the gym by, you guessed it, simply following the program.

In the middle of July, Coach Carter and I were sent to meet Coach Surya, who was the Offensive Coordinator for the U18 Ontario team at the Canada Cup in Kelowna, for scouting purposes. Coach Carter and I took in 8 games and a multitude of practices to discover some new talent and more importantly, confirm talent already identified while being able to shake their hands at the recruiting fair. Without a doubt, we have a fantastic 2023 class identified, as well as 2024's, and we along with the rest of the staff will be working diligently to get the best student athletes under our roof for years to come.

Speaking of which, we are in the process of finalizing plans to open the doors to our state-of-the-art training facility to the surrounding community in the structure of a football training academy. We are working to finalize the name of the program, but if all goes according to plan, there will be two 30 athlete spots available in season to teach, and most importantly prepare, younger football athletes for the rigors of university football (and any level they may be attending prior to). We have been blessed with fantastic support for our football program and wish to offer a cost effective yet superior service to those athletes that play on our fields when we do not and support us in the stands on gamedays.

Finally, we excited to announce that our Gryphon branded weight plates are arriving in a few weeks courtesy of SORINEX. Stay tuned to all Gryphon Football media for the unveiling of these beautiful pieces of work.

Looking back at what I said at a similar point and time last year as we head into training camp, and feeling somewhat superstitious, I'll say it again: when this column is written in September, we anticipate all this work and planning will register a 1-0 record. And we remember who that was against...



Mr. Casasanta's History Class



Welcome to GFB – 100, summer school edition. I am your instructor John Casasanta, your resident Gryphon Football historian. GFB -100 is a master's class where we will delve into interesting and historical facts about all things Gryphon Football. Each month I will provide you with an interesting fact about the Gryphon Football program. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any of your own facts or stats to add to this segment each month. Forward any information, stat, story, or correction to

me at jcasasan@uoguelph.ca. The monthly goal is that you find this section informative and educational. I look forward to sharing with you all, so with no further ado let's begin.

This month's lesson focusses on a Gryphon legend, a long time Gryphon coach, and a man who garnered respect from not only his players but anyone who was fortunate to have interacted with him. Today we will discuss Coach Dick Brown. Mr. Bhu Singh ('96 Yates Cup Champion) please refrain from the after-school fisticuffs you are so well known for, make sure to keep that bracelet on your wrist and not wrapped around your knuckles. Ok let's get started.

There is an old saying: "Never meet your heroes or better yet don't learn too much about them." But in this case that saying does not apply. As I stated earlier today's focus will be legendary football coach Dick Brown. I was fortunate enough to meet Coach Brown in 1994, my rookie season with the Gryphons. Dudley Brown had introduced me to Coach Brown and, as only Dudley Brown could, he also introduced me to the legendary stories that followed Coach Dick Brown throughout his time with the Gryphons. "Did you know Dick Brown was the last professional football player to play without a mask?" "Dick Brown would just flick quarters at some of the young DB's and say "call home son, you're cut." "Dick Brown would demonstrate a drill whilst smoking a cigar, he would place the cigar on the ground and state 'anyone step on this cigar and you're cut!' and finally " Dick Brown came down the stairs after the Vanier Cup

win and had to fight the whole security staff to get on the field to join his players in the celebration of the greatest win in Gryphon history, can you believe that?!”

“The man couldn’t be stopped, he cut through those security guards like a hot knife through butter.” This was always followed by a great Dudley Brown laugh and a few instructions then the practice would continue. I always loved to hear stories told by Dudley Brown, especially his stories of Dick Brown. I was intrigued to learn more about Coach Brown and more so inspired to share with you accurate details about this legend. I was able to reach out to Coach Brown’s son Mark and, with his help, I was able to get the truth behind some of the stories and more importantly learn about a man who in my opinion is more than worthy of his legendary status.

His love for his family, his country and for this university is a story that must be told and, with Mark’s help, I am able to provide you with the story of Dick Brown. Dick Brown was born in 1925 in Cleveland Ohio, his father worked for the United States Postal Service and his mother was a stay-at-home mom. Dick Brown was one of three children; he had a half-brother who passed away at a young age and a sister Betty who he had a close relationship with his whole life. Coach Brown came from a close family, and this was evident when his entire family moved from Cleveland to Canada to be close to their son and brother. Dick Brown attended Cathedral Latin, a Catholic high school in Ohio. There he excelled in multiple sports and especially excelled in football. In 1939 the world was at war; World War 2 had begun, and the future seemed unclear. The Americans had refused to enter the war and decided to supply the Allies with the goods needed to defeat the Axis forces. But in 1942 the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and, since the Americans could no longer be spectators in this world stage, they too entered the Second World War. Coach Brown, who was 17 at the time, knew what he had to do and told his father he wanted to enlist. His father being a war veteran himself understood the importance of this obligation to defend freedom and face tyranny head on, he agreed with his son but wanted him to enlist in the Canadian Army instead. Dick’s father knew what it meant to be a black man in the American military, and he didn’t want his son to have to experience the same racial inequalities. He drove his son to Windsor where they enlisted Dick Brown in the Argyle Southerland Highlanders (this regiment still exists today). With a sense of duty and selflessness Dick Brown’s father knew the importance of defending freedom but at the same time, defending his son and his right to be treated with equality. This lesson was never forgotten by Dick Brown, and he spent the rest of his life promoting the importance of defending one’s right to freedom, one’s right for equality and the importance of family. When the Highlanders were deployed to Europe, Coach Brown saw plenty of action and experienced the atrocities of war. He saw things that no young man should see, and this experience haunted him for the rest of his life. But he understood the importance of what the Allies were trying to accomplish and his sense of duty persevered. Dick Brown was injured in combat, receiving shrapnel in his shoulder, arm, and face. Until the day of his death, Dick Brown had pieces of shrapnel in his shoulder and nose - a nose that he broke 13 times during his playing days! The same blast that sent him to the infirmary had also killed his best friend from basic training. Dick Brown experienced emotional and physical pain, the kind we couldn’t imagine but he persevered and survived to bring this resilience back to Canada and impact a countless number of young men during his coaching career. In 1945 the war ended and rather than returning to the US, Coach Brown came to Canada and became a Canadian citizen. He believed that Canada had more respect for people of colour

and he was given more opportunity to show who he was and, more importantly, what he could do if given a chance.

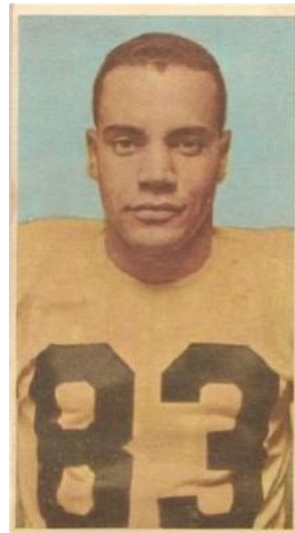
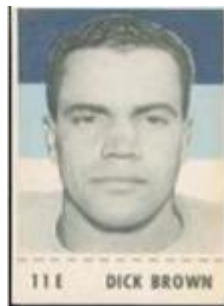
While attending the University of Toronto, Dick Brown played football for St. Mike's. His skill set was so impressive that in 1950 he landed a spot with the newly named Hamilton Tiger Cats. Before this the Hamilton club was known only as the Tigers. Dick Brown spent 5 years in Hamilton and won a Grey Cup in 1953. In 1955, he was traded to the Toronto Argonauts where he played for 2 years, and in 1957 he was traded to Montreal where he played one season and then retired. Most professional athletes retire because physically they just can't do it, but in Coach Brown's case he retired because it was what was best for his family and his responsibility to his wife and his young family. Back in those days pro football players had a second job in order to make ends meet. Dick Brown played football in the CFL but was a manager at Stelco in Hamilton and, with the move to Montreal, he would have had to give up this job and he decided that wasn't going to be what was best for his family, so he retired from professional football and remained as a manager at Stelco until 1968. Again, the sense of duty and selflessness had guided Coach Brown to make a decision that may not have been the best for an individual but what was best for the group, what was best for his family. We will see this again as we discuss his coaching career.

Once retired from the CFL and living in Burlington, Coach Brown started coaching football at the junior level. He coached with the Oakville Black knights where he coached legendary Gryphon Trainer, Fred Dunbar. He was the first head coach of the Hamilton Hurricanes; and he also coached the Burlington Braves. Word got around that Dick Brown was not only an excellent football player, but he was also an excellent coach. In 1968 when the University of Guelph Athletic Director Bill Mitchell was looking for a head football coach to help turn the program into a contender, Dick Brown was the number one choice. Dick Brown was the ultimate recruiter, when he left a family's home after a recruiting visit, the parents couldn't help but want to send their son to Guelph. Coach Brown exuded a quiet confidence with the perfect sense of humility, the parents knew this would be the right place for their son. Dick Brown was the head coach at Guelph from 1968 to 1979 where again he was faced with another decision to put his family before his own personal/professional accomplishments. In 1979 Gib Chapman became the Athletic Director at the University of Guelph and decided to give Coach Brown an ultimatum - "either make the playoffs and keep your job or resign this year and I'll let you keep the Facilities Manager title, but you won't be the coach of the Gryphons." Again, faced with the option of continuing his professional coaching career and ambitions or being able to provide for his family, Coach Brown made the one choice that made the most sense to him, he stepped down and kept his Facilities Manager position, another selfless act. The ultimate family man, Coach Brown always chose what was best for his family without a doubt.

Although he chose to resign, the incoming coach Tom Dimitroff immediately approached Dick Brown and kept him on his staff, he knew what he had in Coach Brown and there was no way he was going to lose him. When Coach Dimitroff left the program to pursue coaching opportunities in the CFL, Coach Mussleman was brought in and, just like Coach Dimitroff, he too kept Coach Brown on his staff. His skill, his character, and his ability to lead made him indispensable. Coach Mussleman left the program to go back to Windsor, Coach McNally replaced him and just like his two predecessors he too kept Coach Brown in the loop and kept him in the program. Coach

Brown stayed with the program up until 1994 when his health issues became too overwhelming. He quietly stepped away and asked for no fanfare or recognition. He did what he was supposed to do, he taught men, he coached football players and most importantly he believed in his players and gave them a sense of leadership that helped them to develop into the men they are today.

When speaking to Mark about the legendary tales of his father, he did confirm the face mask story, he said he couldn't confirm the quarters or the beating of the security staff but with a chuckle he said he wouldn't put it past him. He did however tell me a few other stories, like using his own personal money to bail out one of his athletes from jail, the harsh treatment of his son so he could prove to his players and his son that Coach Brown didn't give any free rides, everything was earned when it came to his program. A hard lesson to teach your son but one he believed was for the best. His love for his players was always in the forefront, he would joke 'don't get married during the season, I'll come to the wedding if it's not during the season' and finally the love he had for his own kids. Always supporting Mark and his sister Melanie right until the end. In Melanie's case an excellent athlete in her own right, she didn't want her dad to watch her games. So, Coach Brown would park down the road and watch from a distance in order to respect her wishes but at the same time support his daughter from afar. Whoever coined the phrase 'don't meet your heroes' never had a chance to meet Coach Brown, a great man who influenced a generation of Gryphons and who stood for equality and character no matter what position he held. I want to thank Mark Brown for his time and contribution to this month's lesson. Mark was gracious enough to spend some time with me while watching his granddaughters play soccer. It was great to catch up with Mark and to listen to stories about his dad. I hope you all enjoyed today's class. I look forward to seeing you next time when we discuss all things Gryphon Football. Class is dismissed.



July 13, 1970.

TO: Potential Gryphon Football Players:

It will not be easy to make this year's team. You should have started on a serious training program long ago, however if you are in doubt as to what to do, write to me immediately for a conditioning program.

Report to the Alumni Stadium no later than 10:00 a.m. on August 29th to have equipment issued to you. Gentlemen who, for reasons of travel connections, arrive on Friday night, August 28th will be supplied beds. ~~those gentlemen who are near Guelph may~~ receive equipment during the week of August 24th from 2:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m.. It would be wise to wear your own shoes for the camp, for comfort's sake, however we will supply shoes to those who have none.

When you come to camp be prepared to stay at school, since we will practise twice daily until Monday, September 14th when we open the season against McMaster. Bring all items of clothing etc. that you will need to last until the football season ends. This means the 21st of November when we go to the College Bowl. We will supply beds and meals until you are able to move into your permanent lodgings, but in no case will this extend beyond the first day of registration which is September 9th. All meals will be supplied even for those who do not require a room, i.e. those who are married, or live at home, or share an apartment, etc..

You will be expected to dress neatly at all times -- shirts must be buttoned up and tucked into your pants or Bermuda shorts. Shoes must be worn at all times. There will be no beards, nor beards, nor mustaches, nor bushy sideburns. Your hair must be SHORT! -- not only for hygienic reasons, but most importantly that you get a proper fit in your helmet.

Please write immediately and indicate:

1. Whether or not you will be at camp.
2. If you will require a room.

Dr. D.B. Fenton

On to the College Bowl,

Dick Brown

Coach Dick Brown,
Athletic Department,
University of Guelph,
Guelph, Ontario.



#NextGryphon

As the Fall season approaches, we continue to add talent to our Gryphon Squad! Welcome, Dillion and Aidan!

NAME	POSITION	HOMETOWN
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Dillon Todd	DL	Grimsby, Ontario *Transfer from Laurier
Aidan Mackrell	WR	Whitby, Ontario



For this month's segment, we thought we would assign some homework to our readers and test your Gryphon Football knowledge.

How many Gryphon Football players have been signed to the CFL since 1925? Email your answers to Jessie Kennedy (jkennell@uoguelph.ca) and the person with the closest guess will receive a Gryphon Football swag pack.

Good luck!



Did you know that [Dan Tocher](#) and [Jedd Gardner](#) are the only two receivers in Gryphon Football History with 2000 career receiving yards? These two alumni had the chance to meet at the FOGF Golf tournament last month!



August 25th @8:30pm – Coach Call, online chat with Head Coach Ryan Sheahan

- Register [here](#)



Photo Credit: Laurel Jarvis

Saturday, August 20th @1pm – Exhibition Game @ Guelph vs. York

Saturday, August 27th @1pm – Season Opener @ Western

Monday, September 5th @1pm – Home Opener @ Guelph vs. Windsor

Saturday, September 10th @1pm - @ Waterloo

Saturday, September 17th @ 12pm - @ Ottawa

Saturday, September 24th @1pm – @ Guelph vs. Queens *Homecoming

Friday, October 7th @ 6pm - @ Guelph vs. McMaster

Saturday, October 15th @1pm - @ Laurier

Saturday, October 22nd @1pm - @ Guelph vs. Carleton

Check out the rest of the 2022/2023 Football Schedule [here](#)



Attention all **FOGF Gold Members**: You will receive a season pass to all regular season home games this season and we will all be sitting in section C at Alumni Stadium. Your season pass

will be waiting for you on gameday at Gate 3 at the FOGF tent. You can purchase an additional season pass for \$30 and this pass will be added to yours at Gate 3 for pick up. Email me at brownw@uoguelph.ca with your additional season pass requests and I will be in contact with payment details. We are looking to celebrate all FOGF members on the Nest on Monday, May 5th during our home opener against Windsor. I will send an email to FOGF Gold Members in the next week or so to request your RSVP. First come first serve.



The Nest

Interested in becoming an FOGF Member? There are three different tiers to our memberships: Red, Gold and Black. To find out more information about our memberships and what is involved in each level, please click [here](#). For questions about the membership, please contact Bill Brown at brownw@uoguelph.ca



If you have any news or updates, we would be more than happy to share them in our upcoming newsletter. Please reach out to brownw@uoguelph.ca for any celebrations, announcements, or bereavements that you would like us to share.

See you at the exhibition game on August 20th!