Gryphons' Lair Issue 76 May 1, 2023

We are sure that everyone has heard the news, but we had to make sure that it was the first thing we listed in this month's newsletter...

CONGRATULATIONS, TAVIUS ROBINSON ON BEING DRAFTED TO THE NFL!

Tavius, a Guelph native played for the Gryphons in 2018 and 2019, and then headed to Ole Miss in 2020. On Saturday, April 29th he was drafted in the 4th round, 124th pick to the Baltimore Ravens. <u>Tavius is the first University of Guelph player</u> to ever be drafted to the NFL.

We chatted with Tavius a few months back, check out the video here.

Congratulations, Tavius – your Gryphon Family is so proud!



April sure was an exciting month for our Gryphon Football Community – lots of great things to highlight to our readers in this edition of the newsletter.

What makes our Gryphon Football program so unique is that we are just as busy in the off-season as we are during the football season. We are a full-year program and have so many exciting upcoming events, camps and opportunities for our players and community. From Junior Camp on April 16th, to switching gears to Spring Camp the following week and then welcoming the Toronto Argonauts to the U of G for their camp – there's always some sort of activity occurring at Alumni Stadium.

Be sure to mark your calendars for June 1! The Toronto Argonauts will be hosting a pre-season game at Alumni Stadium and will be facing off against the Ottawa Redblacks. We look forward to having the Argos back on campus to utilize our facilities for their camp. We would like to offer our readers a special ticket sale to the North Endzone. You can catch the action right down on the field and enjoy the game in a licensed area. Family and friends are welcome, anyone aged 4 and up will require a ticket. Only 150 tickets are available for the endzone, so be sure to <u>purchase yours now</u>. Tickets are \$40, and include a drink ticket.



Pictured: Royce Metchie, current Argos Player and Gryphon Alumni

But even before the Alumni Stadium colours turn blue and white to welcome the Argos, we've got the 12th Gryphon Gala on May 6th. **We want to remind our readers that even if you are unable to attend, you can still bid in the silent auction**! We have over 60 items listed so be sure to check them out and start bidding! Whether you're a sports fan, love to camp, or enjoy visiting the spa – there is something for everyone!

Check out the silent auction <u>here</u>. Bidding closes on Saturday, May 6th at 9:45 PM. Please note that you must be able to pick up your item at the U of G. If you are not attending the Gala, winners will be contacted to coordinate a pickup date and time.

Enjoy Issue 76 of the Gryphons' Lair!



Coaching Staff Head to Iowa for Professional Development

Our coaches spent a few days south of the border at the University of Iowa with the Hawkeyes Football Program.

It was a great professional development opportunity as they were able to gain access to spring practices, workouts, and positional meetings, have strategic conversations with staff, and tour the Hawkeyes' top tier facilities including Kinnick Stadium.

Thank you to the entire Hawkeyes organization for a world class experience!



Pictured: Gryphon Football Coaching Staff

Junior ID Camp

Over 160 athletes from across the country joined us on Sunday, April 16th for Junior ID Camp!

Privileged with beautiful spring weather, the athletes tested a barrage of combine drills, competed in individual and team sessions, and received coaching from Gryphon varsity football staff and senior players, as well as professional alumni.

Thank you to all our volunteers and event day organizers – the day was a great success! Special shoutout to Andrea and Jay Lack for welcoming the parents of the athletes and for organizing our rooftop BBQ!

A huge thank you to all athletes that attended and congratulations to our Camp MVPs.

Quarterback - Will Russell Running Back - Paulo Ordonez Linebacker - Joel Chekwi Offensive Lineman - Mustafa Haleem Defensive Lineman - Alexander Pauletic Defensive Back - Elliot Blake Receiver - Jackson Taylor



Pictured: Camp MVP's

The annual FOGF Poker tournament was held on Saturday, April 21st and the event raised over \$2,000. Thank you to Dan Crabbe and Frank Tersigni for coordinating, planning, and running the event! Great to see so many FOGF members in attendance and Gryphon Football alumni.



Pictured: Top Row, Left to Right: Ron Aimola, Dan Crabbe Middle Row, Left to Right: Stu Lang, Heron Tait, Frank Tersigni, Randy Dimitroff, John Casasanta, Brian Cluff, Simon Chaves Bottom Row, left to right: Bill Brown, Tavius Robinson

Spring Camp

And just like that, we're back on home turf at Alumni Stadium for Spring Camp. The off-season schedule and training is quite rigorous for our players, and it was great to see that their hard-work has paid off as they looked quicker, faster, and stronger back on the field.

The Spring Camp schedule is similar to in-season practices, with film review, treatment, and team meetings being a part of the day. We're starting to get back into routine and can't wait to welcome fans back to our home-opener on August 26th.

Thank you to our POP group for hosting a BBQ at the end of Spring Camp after our scrimmage. It was great way to wrap up our training and take some time to connect with our players, parents, and supporters.



Pictured: Miles La Foucade



Pictured: Isaiah Smith



Pictured: Anakin Guthrie

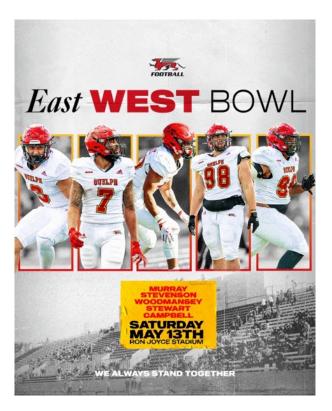


East-West Bowl Invitations

Five Gryphon athletes have been invited to the East-West Bowl which is taking place on the McMaster campus (Ron Joyce Stadium) on Saturday, May 13th.

Congratulations to <u>Scott Murray</u>, <u>Kaine Stevenson</u>, <u>Josh Campbell</u>, <u>Curtis Woodmansey</u>, and <u>Kristian Stewart</u> for being selected!

Read the full article here.



Winter 2023 semester Comes to a Close

That's a wrap on the Winter 2023 semester! Our athletes finished up their final exams during the last week of April and are now officially on summer break. Congratulations to all students on a successful semester, enjoy your well-deserved break!

Upcoming CFL Draft

The CFL Draft is happening on May 2nd. Good luck to all athletes hoping to have their named called!

Check out the CFL rankings here.

Bagayogo Receives Invite to Kansas Chiefs Camp

Congratulations to Siriman Harrison Bagayogo on receiving an invitation to the Kanas Chiefs mini rookie camp!

Read the full article here.



In honour of National Volunteer Week (April $17 - 23^{rd}$) we wanted to give a big shoutout to our incredible Parents of Players (POP) group. Truly the best group in the nation! We are so grateful to have you as such a big part of our program. The tailgate you plan and run on gameday is top-notch, and your constant support to our athletes is so appreciated.

Thank you for everything that you do!





"Growing up in Guelph, I would often watch many of the Gryphon Football games as a young kid. I knew a lot of the star players, and I always looked up to them. So, to now be on the team, is pretty special. It means a lot of play for Guelph."

Our player feature for this month, is Guelph native <u>Simon Chaves</u>. He attended Guelph Collegiate Vocational Institute (GCVI), a local secondary school known for producing great football players such as Jake Reinhart and Tavius Robinson. He initially chose the U of G because he was recruited for wrestling. Simon ended up having a good final year of Senior year of football, which opened up the opportunity to play for the Gryphons and be a dual athlete.

In a typical year, Simon would be busy with football in the Fall and then transition quickly into the wrestling season in October/November. He had a standout rookie year for wrestling in 2017, earning a 3rd place spot on the podium at the OUA championships. He went on to place 5th at USports Championships.

Technically, Simon's career as a student athlete at the U of G was supposed to end in 2021/2022. However, due to the pandemic, athletes did not lose a year of eligibility and, after having sustained an injury in the 2022 season, Simon is excited able to come back for one final season in 2023.

In the second game of the 2022 season and the 2nd punt return of the game, Simon suffered a torn ACL. He has been in recovery throughout the off-season and the coaches and his teammates were happy to have him back training on the field for Spring Camp.

"I've been working with Chris (DeZorzi - Team Physiotherapist) and the other staff throughout my recovery process and I am super thankful for their support and guidance. We've got such incredible facilities here at the Pavilion, it's convenient that I can do my strength workout, do some physical therapy, and utilize the tubs – it's all in one place."

Simon's first training camp in 2017 was right around the time that the new Pavilion opened. He used the old locker room during his first camp with the Gryphons, and since then has been able to take full advantage of all the resources, equipment, and facilities that are a part of the pavilion.

As one of our captains and a senior, Simon is always one to lead by example and volunteer his time to help out with community events, and various football initiatives. Most recently, Simon supported the Junior ID Camp by leading a few of the testing stations.

"It's important to get involved and help out the younger generation of football players. Beeks (<u>Jared Beeksma</u>), a Gryphon Alumni also came back to help and it was a full-circle moment for us because we attended that exact camp together in high-school. It's pretty neat to see the younger athletes walking through the stadium, testing out the equipment and working out in the gym. I hope they enjoyed their time at Alumni Stadium and use it as motivation to work hard and maybe they can be our #NextGryphon!"

Also in attendance at Junior ID Camp were former Gryphons <u>AJ Allen</u>, <u>Coulter Woodmansey</u> and <u>Eric Starczala</u>, who continued their playing career in the CFL. The CFL journey is one that Simon hopes to take on after this upcoming season.

Simon was signed to the Winnipeg Blue Bombers in 2022 and attended their camp last spring. He was let go on the last day of camp and was hoping to use the 2022 season as a year to get some better film. Of course, due to his ACL injury, that didn't happen, but he's motivated to have a strong performance in 2023.

When asked what he's most looking forward to for the upcoming season, Simon's answer was short and sweet: "Having a good year with the lads."

Thrilled to have you back in the lineup, Simon! All the best with your off-season training and we look forward to seeing you run out on the field at our home opener on August 26th.





FEATURED ALUMNUS

When kids are asked what they want to be when they grow up typical answers include: teacher, police office, doctor, or veterinarian. For those aspiring vets, they have their sights set on the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC) at the University of Guelph. Did you know that OVC is the only vet school in Ontario and is <u>ranked</u> #3 in North America?

Our alumni feature, Nick Gallo, is a proud graduate from the Ontario Veterinary College, class of 2000. Nick joined the Gryphon squad in 1994 as a Linebacker and has been a very active alumni with our program ever since he graduated. He currently lives in Guelph, Ontario with his family and owns a veterinary practice.

"Being a U of G student was the best 5 years of my life. University was a great journey and being a part of the football team was a big reason for that, I have nothing but great memories. Looking back on it, I owe a lot to Gryphon Football, I was able to make lifelong friendships, and they are still a big part of my life today."

As a vet student, Nick had a very rigorous academic schedule. Class would start at 8am and run until 5pm, with a lunch break. It was a gruelling time, but well worth it, according to Gallo.

"My time at the U of G was definitely busy. I was balancing my football schedule and my class schedule. A typical day for me included 8 hours of class, heading to the stadium for football practice, heading home to do a few hours of homework and then I would do it all over again the next day. And I enjoyed being busy, I knew I had to go to class, I needed to get my workouts in, and I never thought of any alternatives. I enjoyed the challenges of being a student-athlete."

When conducing these interviews with alumni and players, something that always come up in conversation are any lessons that players learned, or the skillsets that they developed, and how these things impacted their personal growth. Whether alumni go into marketing, business, the trades, or healthcare – regardless of their career industry, the skills they developed in regard to time management or discipline, can be applied to their career.

"Football helped me to be a better vet, I truly believe that it didn't hold me back. Outside of your typical 'football knowledge' I learned a lot about what it meant to be being a part of a team, how to work with people, and how to be a teammate. As a veterinarian, I am in the service industry, and work with people every single day."

Gallo made an impact during his time as a Gryphon and was the recipient of the Ted Wildman Trophy in 1999.

"One of my favourite parts of the Wildman Event, is that the previous Wildman winners are invited to attend, and we get to officially welcome the newest inductee. It's a pretty special moment, because we all know what it takes to earn that honour. Not only do you have to be an excellent football player, but you must perform well academically, and that's hard to do, it takes a lot of discipline."

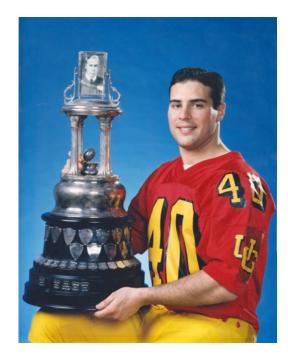
The Wildman Recipient in 2000 was none other than Jeremy Oxley, who just so happens to be the 2023 Honour Jersey recipient, who will be honoured at the upcoming gala on May 6th. Gallo and Oxley were teammates together at the U of G from 1996 – 1999.

"One word to describe Oxley is *dominant*, and that was evident the minute he stepped foot on campus. He was dominant his first year up until his last year and there was nobody like him. I was fortunate enough to play behind him as a linebacker and I didn't see a lot of offensive lineman come my way. The big guy ate up everybody and he made it easier for people playing around him, I don't think I was very good, he made me look good and I am sure the guys who played beside him would say the same thing. I can remember a moment from training camp in 1996. We were doing something called the Door Drill, which is for linemen, running backs and linebackers. The two linemen go against each other, with the running back and linebacker facing off. So, Oxley lines up, and he's a rookie and he was taking on a 3rd or 4th year lineman. I remember the big man goes out of his stance, grabs the OL man, tosses the OL to the side, grabs the running back and dumps him. The linebacker just stood there and was like 'what just happened?'. I had never seen that happen before, especially for rookies."

It's going to be a great night honouring Jeremy on May 6th at the Gala, and we look forward to hearing more stories from his teammates! Thank you, Nick for taking the time to chat with us and for sharing some memories from your time as a Gryphon!



Pictured left to right: Nick Gallo and Jeremy Oxley





We've changed up the format of our FOGF Spotlight! Introducing, Dan Crabbe!

DAN CRABBE



Current Career:

I'VE BEEN TEACHING FOR OVER TWENTY YEARS. I'M CURRENTLY THE ARTS PROGRAM LEADER AND SHSM LEAD AT GUELPH CVI. I'M Also the head coach of the varsity football team. I've had the privilege of working with some great student-Athletes who have gone on to play for the University of Guelph Like Simon Chaves, Brandon Ferigo, Anakin Guthrie, Job Reinhart, Tavius Robinson, gabe tersigni and spencer Swan. Watching them develop and excel both on and off the Field has been exciting. They're both gaels and gryphon Alumni and that's something special we will Always Share.

Favourite FOGF Event:

THERE'S TOO MANY TO CHOOSE JUST ONE. I LOVE GAME DAY EVENTS, GETTING TOGETHER WITH ALUMNI TO WATCH THE CURRENT Gryphons play. The best part is seeing a teammate you haven't seen in a long time and reminiscing and catching up with them. The stories of the past always seem to get better with age. The galas are also a great way to stay connected, raise money for the program and get excited for the upcoming season. My wife, andrea and I always have a fun time sitting with Friends and teammates, and celebrating and houdening the gryphon accomplishments.

Reason for joining the FOGF Membership Program:

BECOMING A MEMBER JUST FELT LIKE THE RIGHT THING TO DO. I WAS ALREADY VOLUNTEERING MY TIME WITH THE ALUMNI WHEN BILLY STARTED THE MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM. SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF BEING A GOLD MEMBER, LIKE THE GALA AND GOLF, I WAS ALREADY DOING. IT JUST MADE SENSE FROM A PRACTICAL AND SUPPORTIVE STAND POINT. I WANT THE PROGRAM TO DO WELL AND IT'S A GOOD FEELING TO KNOW THAT YOU'RE A PART TO FTHAT SUPPORT. LIVING IN GUELPH AND BEING A PART OF THE FOGF HAS BEEN BOTH EXCITING AND REWARDING. I HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO NOT ONLY BE AROUND THE PROGRAM BUT TO STAY CONNECTED WITH THE ALUMNI.

FOGF FEATURE GRYPHONS' LAIR







Welcome back to the April Edition of GFB - 100. 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 without further ado, let's begin. For this month's lesson we will continue with our pictorial retrospective of Gryphon Football. May's focus will be from 1975-1980. Thanks to the staff of the Ontarion for allowing us access to every issue beginning in 1952 with the OAC Aggies then Redmen and right up to today's Gryphons. I hope you enjoy this retrospective and for some of you I hope you enjoy seeing some of these great moments you were a part of. Enjoy!



Mailloux. Couch Charlie Baillie believes the Redmen will be in a very competitive position if he 'can fill two or three key positions.. Molson Stadium can look forward to some keen action from the Redmen this season.

GUELPH GRYPHONS

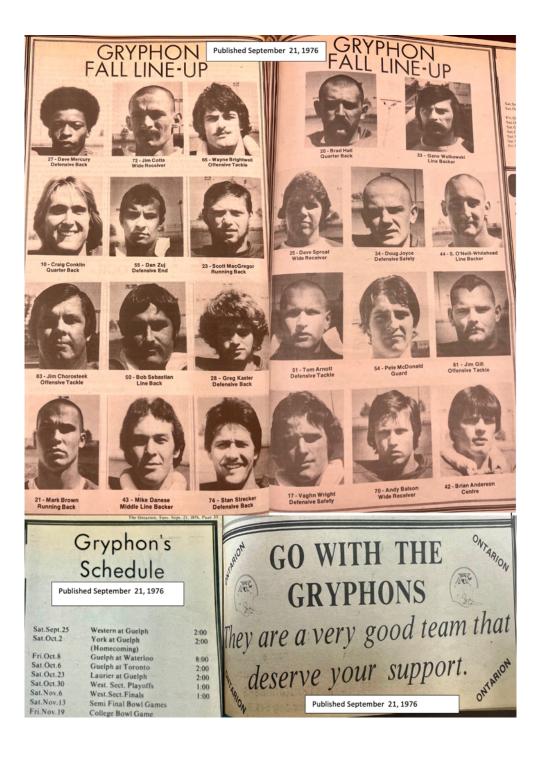
The Gryphons could suffer as a result of player losses through graduation, CFL acceptance and eligibility requirements. Wide receivers Craig Holt and Bruce Morris, and Dave Lane will not play this year, nor will ace punter Mike Telepchuck, now a coach with the Gryphons. This season's coaching staff provides Guelph with perhaps the best combination of talent the Gryphons have seen thus far. The defensive line is coached by ex-US All Conference centre, Roman Jaworowicz. Other coaches in the line up include such men as Dick Brown, ex-New York Jet Bill Starr,

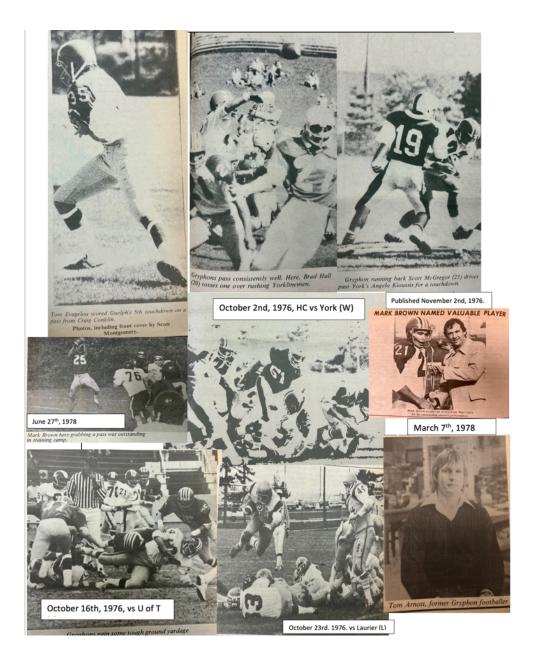
Canadian wrestling coach Londo lacoveli, be Nordoff, and ex-Hamilton Ti-Cat Bud Foluxevit The defensive line could be strong this season experienced players are returning to the line season Telepchuck is working with a very talented low receivers, but experience could be lacking here, most them being rookies. The Gryphons are working with large selection of rookies this season, comprise approximately 50 of the 75 team members.

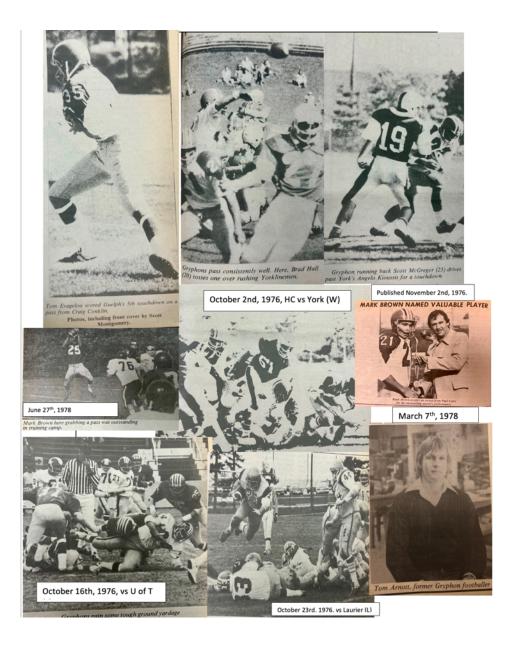
Guelph is also building up good quarterback steam, with veteran Brad Hall and ex-US Colle quarterback Craig Conklin.

The main question to be answered here is 'Can the rookie contingent support the seasoned veterans and carry the play?"

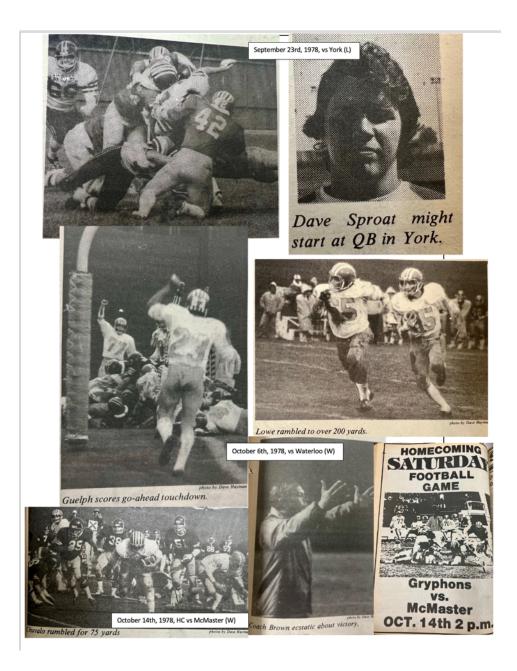


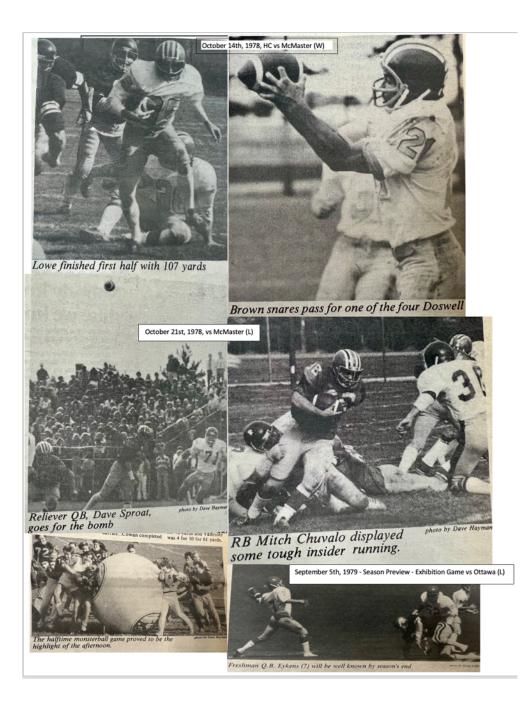


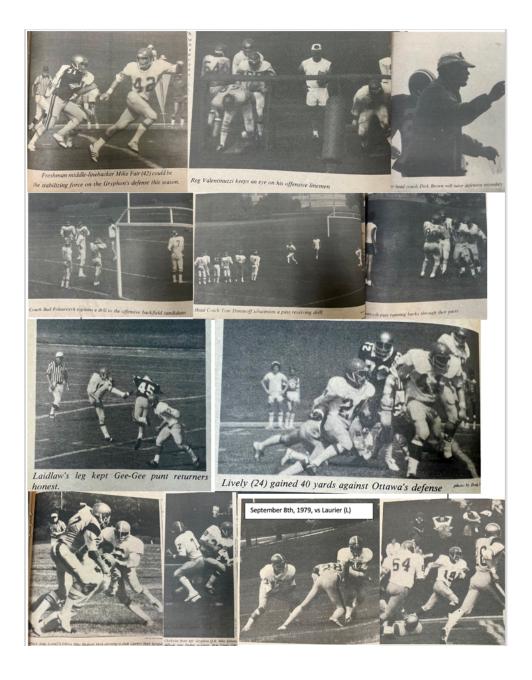
















I want to thank Patrick Sutherland for his time and contribution to this month's lesson. Patrick was gracious enough to allow me access to the Ontarion's archives. I am excited to be able to share 72 years of history with you with the help of Patrick and the staff of the Ontarion. I look forward to seeing you next time when we discuss all things Gryphon Football. Class is dismissed.



The month's Gryphons Gone Pro is Thomas Dimitroff. He played for the Gryphons in 1985 - 1990 and went on to have an impressive management career in the NFL.

Notable accolades include:

New England Patriots (2003–2007)

Director of college scouting

Atlanta Falcons (2008–2020)

General manager

- SumerSports (2022–Present)
 - Chief executive officer

We look forward to hearing more about Thomas' football journey during the Fireside chat at the Gala on May 6th!





Did you know that a former Gryphon Football player was recently named the World's Strongest Man? Mitchell Hooper played for the Gryphons in 2013 and decided to turn his focus to weight-lifting and strength training. Congratulations, Mitchell!

Read more here.



Our Gryphon roster continues to grow with the addition of 5 more commits, welcome to the Gryphon Family!

NAME	POSITION	HOMETOWN
Tumi Adeniyi	DL	Waterloo, Ontario
Jakub Kogut	DL	Brantford, Ontario
Aiden Kuepfer	Н	Hamilton, Ontario
Kenley Williams	DB	Brampton, Ontario
Noah Gravel	DB	Montreal, Quebec
Amrit Atwal	QB	Guelph, Ontario



SAVE THE DATE

CFL Pre-Season Game @Alumni Stadium, Toronto Argonauts vs. Ottawa Redblacks

- Watch the action from the North Endzone, licensed area
- Tickets are \$40 and include a beverage ticket
- Only 150 tickets available, so be sure to purchase yours now!

FOGF Golf Tournament – July 21st, 2023



FOGF MEMBERSHIP

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



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