



Summer is upon us but the players and coaches are hard at work getting ready for training camp. There are only 38 days left until players report to camp. The FOGF Golf Tourney is July 27th and the 1st Annual Captains' Lunch is August 12th. Please enjoy the 18th Issue of the Gryphons' Lair. For past issues of The Gryphons' Lair click [here](#).

## ***The Gryphons' Lair***

Issue 18 – July 2018

***What Happened in June?***

### **2018 Gryphons in the CFL**

With the Canadian Football League kicking off, here is a highlight of former Gryphon football players who currently make a living in the CFL. To read more, [click here](#).



### **Argos vs Redblacks Preseason Game Held at Alumni Stadium**

On June 7<sup>th</sup>, the Toronto Argonauts and Ottawa REDBLACKS came to Alumni Stadium for a pre-season game. It was an exciting game and, in the end, the REDBLACKS defeated the Argos 32-17 in the CFL's return to Alumni Stadium. We were very proud to see our Gryphons who have gone on to the CFL face off against each other. To read more about it and check out a photo gallery of the game, [click here](#).



### **Tom Dimitroff Honoured at the Gryphon Football Pavilion**

Tom Dimitroff Sr. was an architect of one of the greatest periods in the history of Guelph Gryphon football. Many of the players from the 1983 team, the Coach's final season, were fixtures on the 1984 Gryphons who would capture the only Vanier Cup in school history. Dimitroff passed away in January of 1996 but his contributions have not

been forgotten. That legacy was honoured this month.  
To read more about the event, [click here](#).



Guests chat on the rooftop patio during the room naming event honouring Tom Dimitroff

### **Convocation**

This month, our graduating players had their Convocation ceremony and we couldn't be more proud of them.





Orion Edwards, Justis Croasdale and Derek Drouillard pose for photos in their gowns outside the Pavilion

### **Pride Month**

June is considered Pride Month in several countries all around the world. June was picked to commemorate the Stonewall Riots that occurred in 1969. To celebrate Pride, we put up our Pride flag up on the pole on the Pavilion concourse.



### **New Additions to our Pavilion**

It seems as if we're always adding new things to make our Pavilion the best facility it can be. We've included a photo of our latest addition.



## #NextGryphon

Our newest NextGryphon is Kiondre Smith, who signed with the Gryphons this month. He is an amazing Wide Receiver from Bill Crothers Secondary School in Markham, Ontario. In his 2016 season, he had 537 receiving yards on 28 receptions, 353 rushing yards, an interception and seven touchdowns in seven games.

He also comes from an impressive lineage. His father is the former professional football player, Adrion Smith. Adrion Smith won the Grey Cup three times and was named a CFL all-star six times. We're very excited to have his son, Kiondre, join our Gryphon family.

To read more about him and check out a video of his Game Highlights, [click here](#).



## Touchdown with Todd

This month, we've mostly focused on workouts. It's all about preparing for the upcoming season and making sure we can play our best game.

We've been having workouts multiple times a week and we appreciate every workout that the boys can make it to. We understand they all have busy summers (classes,

jobs, etc.) so when they do come to the workouts, it's extra special.

One of our best attended workouts was Sunday, June 17<sup>th</sup>. It was our Captain's practice and despite it also being Father's Day, we had 50 of our athletes come to the workout. That really meant a lot to the captains and coaches.

We're looking forward to August, even though it will be a busy month for our team. Our training camp starts on the 9<sup>th</sup>, then we will travel Quebec City to play Laval Rouge et Or on the 18<sup>th</sup> and our first in-season game is against McMaster on the 25<sup>th</sup>. We're really excited for the Laval game; no other team has won as many Vanier Cups as they have, so it will be an excellent opportunity to practise our skills. Not only are they a great team, but Laval's Head Coach Glen Constantin has been very accommodating, which I really appreciate.

## *From the Parents of Players*

Exciting times are ahead for our Gryphons and equally as exciting for POP! Coming up in July, POP will be out assisting golfers at the FOGF Annual Golf Tournament set for Friday, July 27! We hope to see you there. Register today for a full day of fun, golf and excitement or just come out and join us for dinner, which is also exciting and fun!

To buy tickets, [click here](#).

Something else to look forward to is the August pre-season game at Laval. We're still working on securing a special group rate for our stay in Quebec - stay tuned!

Don't get our POP emails? Send us your contact info at [gryphonspop@gmail.com](mailto:gryphonspop@gmail.com), we'll add you to the list. The emails will provide a detailed view of what's happening in and around our Gryphon Football program. Stay connected - Stay updated - Rise As One!

Happy Canada Day Gryphon Nation!

## *Gryphons in the Community*

### **Summerfest**

This month, some of our players took part in the activities occurring at Summerfest. Summerfest is an annual, free event held at the University of Guelph for members of the Guelph community and Guelph alumni. This year, our players gave Summerfest attendees temporary tattoos and free tickets to our October 20<sup>th</sup> home game. It was a well-attended event and enjoyed by all!

To learn more about our involvement in Summerfest and check out a slideshow, [click here](#).





This month we would like to celebrate one of our Legacy Recruits, [Jack Tocher](#). His father is none other than Dan Tocher. Dan was a receiver at Guelph from 1986 to 1990 where he was named OUAA first team All-Star multiple times. During his time at Guelph, Dan set an OUAA record for receptions in a career and since then, he has been inducted into the Gryphon Hall of Fame and the 1980's Team of the Decade.

Now Dan is getting ready to send his son, Jack, to play for the same team he did. When asked what the importance of the Legacy was to him, Dan said: "The importance of the Legacy to me means that Jack (and potentially his brother DJ next year) will have the opportunity to play for a University and a team that means so much to our family. As a fan when I was a kid, to a former player and coach for the Gryphons, I have committed thousands of hours to the program over my lifetime, and now to see Jack embarking on that same journey, walking the halls I walked, becoming familiar with the same people that I knew when I was there is pretty cool."

We also talked to Jack Tocher about how he feels about being a Legacy Recruit: "I'm very excited and proud to be part of the same program that my father was. He is a Hall of Famer and set tons of records when he was here, but I really just want to pave my own path and be part of something great and something that all Gryphons before me built."

When asked why he chose Guelph, Jack said: "Well, I am a Guelph native, and my Dad coached the Gryphons when I was really young, so Gryphon Football was my very first exposure to the game of Football. From the time I first put on equipment at age 7, I knew I wanted to play for the Gryphons someday."

Because of Dan, we are able to look back on accomplishments within Gryphon Football. When asked what his favourite part of playing for the Gryphons was, he said: "I can't pin point one thing that sticks out, but high up there is my teammates and the locker room. If you have never experienced the closeness of a tight locker room, and how that translates on to the playing field as far as working for your brothers, then you wouldn't understand this. The result a team yields on the field, is directly related to the cohesiveness and chemistry of the team off the field. To know that we were "all for one" was incredibly valuable to me."

Because of Jack, we are able to look to the future to see what Gryphon Football has in store. When asked what he's most looking forward to in the upcoming season, he said: "I'm excited to move back to Guelph in early July and continue my training. I want to get acclimatized and familiar with the campus. I'm hoping to connect with some of the players who stay in Guelph over the summer and get on the field as much as possible. I'm also excited to spend more time with my family and friends in Guelph. Training

camp will be challenging but I'm hoping to be competitive and make it through camp healthy and prepared to contribute in any way I can."



From left to right: Jack Tocher, Dan Tocher and DJ Tocher

## *Featured Alumni*

This month, we'd like to feature alumnus Jeremy Oxley. Jeremy was a defensive player and part of the 1996 Yates Cup team. He was also a Wildman Award Winner in 2000. Since then, he has gone on to graduate from teacher's college and he has been teaching since 2002. He has worked predominantly at Eastview Secondary School but is very excited about his new appointment as Vice Principal at Nantyr Shores Secondary School beginning this coming September.

We spoke to Jeremy about his time as a Gryphon and he spoke about his experience very fondly: "I was recruited in 1995 by Pat Tracey. Pat decided to come to Woodstock and watch a kid from Brownsville play football. Pat made me a Gryphon and men like Brian Cluff taught me what it was to become a Gryphon for life. Being a Gryphon has helped me achieve many successes in life. I was recruited to Western and McMaster, and there is not a single day that goes by, that I regret my choice to become a Gryphon. I like being a Gryphon because it means you know what it's like to work

hard, sacrifice and commit!”

When asked what being a Gryphon has taught him, Jeremy said: “Being a Gryphon is something you carry with you for your whole life, it’s a badge of honor that I wear proudly. No matter the era, being a Gryphon means you become connected with a group of people that become your family for life. Playing football for Guelph has helped me develop a bond of brotherhood with likeminded people that strive for success and a belief to help those around them. It goes way beyond playing football, being a Gryphon develops you into a person who is resilient, a person who can handle pressure and, in the toughest times, fight through situations and achieve success.”

Jeremy’s answers are very insightful and it’s heart-warming to see that Gryphon Football has influenced men in a positive manner that motivated them to be resilient and persevere. We also asked Jeremy how he keeps in touch with other Gryphons; “Recently, I was a part of the D-line 1996 group that donated to the building of the new football facility and D-line room dedication. I try to attend as many Friends of Gryphon Football and alumni events as possible. I have also recruited players to play at Guelph. In general, I try to do what I can to help this community because it has given so much to me.”

We’re very proud that Jeremy has found so much inspiration at Gryphon Football and we appreciate everything he’s done to contribute to Gryphon Football.



A group of 96's hanging out with their coach 22 years later; brotherhood even after all these years. Front left to right: Jeremy Oxley, Coach Brian Cluff, Nick Gallo. Back: Chris Portwood

## *Featured #FOGF Member*

Each month we feature a Friends of Gryphon Football member and this month, we'd like to feature Heron Tait. Heron is a University of Guelph alumnus who went on to the CFL in 1995. At the time, he played for the Ottawa Roughriders and has since been named a member of the 1990s' Gryphon Team of the Decade. Recently, he started a job as a Project Manager for Angus GeoSolutions Inc. (AGSI) in Halton Hills. AGSI is owned by another Gryphon alumnus whom he met while working as a sales rep for another Gryphon alumnus. It seems to us that being a Gryphon comes with a lot of connections.

When asked what he liked about being a Gryphon, Heron said: "Who wouldn't like being a Gryphon!? A Gryphon is a mythical creature, which symbolizes power and majesty. They were the guardians to riches. Apart from the mythology, being part of this institution and community has had a profound impact on the person I am, my personal growth, and a community of people. This community really supports their own and it has been an honour to be a Gryphon. Whenever I visit Guelph it feels like I am returning to a large family. My football family is one that I treasure and try to foster. Wherever I go, I am proud to say that I went to Guelph and played for a team with such exceptional people."

When asked what he learned from being a Gryphon, Heron said: "Being a Gryphon has reinforced positive lessons of family. It has reinforced that working together towards a common goal and striving to achieve the best can be accomplished even in the face of adversity. Being a part of the football team specifically, reinforced in me that young men (and people in general), despite their socioeconomic backgrounds, culture, and spiritual makeup can overcome their differences to achieve greatness. We are able to work together towards the same goal. It is not to say that we failed to disagree, we were able to succeed despite those disagreements. For myself, I learned that I was mentally stronger than I initially thought. I discovered a strength and confidence that I didn't see in myself before. Just as importantly, I've found friends that will be a part of me for life."

We are so glad that Heron really enjoyed his time at the university, playing football, and that we are able to create a lasting impact on our Alumni. We asked Heron how he stays connected to other Gryphons and what he likes about being an FOGF member: "I stay connected to the Gryphon community by reaching out to friends that are still in the Guelph area as well as Gryphons outside Guelph. I've made lifelong friends along the way and I try to attend as many events that I can. When I see someone sporting a

Gryphon - as I did with my new boss - I tend to introduce myself and express my pride by letting them know that I too am a Gryphon. As well, I like being an FOGF Member because it allows me to keep in touch with my teammates, meet new members of the Gryphon family and support the team in a way that makes sense to me. The common theme for me here is family, and by being a member, I feel that I am contributing to helping the family.”



From left to right: Alrick, Dave and Heron.



**FOGF Golf Tournament – Friday, July 27<sup>th</sup>**



**Captain's Reunion – Sunday, August 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Guelph Gryphons vs. Laval Rouge et Or – Saturday, August 18th**  
Held in Quebec City

**Family BBQ – Monday, September 3<sup>rd</sup> (Post-First Home Game)**

**Decades' Dinner – Thursday, September 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Homecoming – Saturday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**Mother's TeaD - Sunday, September 30th**

To stay updated on our upcoming events, click [here](#).

# 2018 GRYPHON FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

## HOME GAMES



SEPT. 3



SEPT. 22

**HOME COMING**



OCT. 13



OCT. 20

## AWAY GAMES



AUG. 25



SEPT. 8



SEPT. 15



SEPT. 29



CORRECTION: Our first game is the 26th of August, not 25th. Our apologies.

## FOGF Memberships

This month, we'd like to talk about the Gryphon Football Challenge Coin. This idea came from the U.S. military where they have a long-standing tradition of carrying a special coin symbolizing identity and loyalty. These coins capture the essence of the individual's association in the military; representing their pride. These coins are carried by soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marine, lawmen and firefighters. Most importantly, coin checks are still part of military life and various penalties are still handed out for those found without their coin.

The friends of Gryphon Football decided to create and mint their own coin in this same spirit; to honour our fraternity of Gryphons. Each new member is presented with a coin which secures their place in Gryphon Football History. However, with great power, comes great responsibility. Once a member receives their coin, they must carry it at all times or face consequences. Wherever Gryphons gather, they will challenge each other by "coining". Coining is when a challenge asks to see the coin, if the challenged cannot produce a coin, they are required to buy a drink of choice for the member who challenged them. If the challenged member does indeed produce their coin, the challenger must pay for their drink. In fact, the games have already begun!



## *Share Your News!*

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](mailto:brownw@uoguelph.ca) for any celebrations, announcements or bereavements that you would like us to share.

## *Did You Know?*

Wildman Trophy winner and HOF player Rae German won the Grey Cup with the Hamilton Ti-Cats in 1965 and received his master's degree in agricultural mechanical engineering in 1966. In 2005, he was a project manager for the Jimmy Carter Habitat for Humanity program.

Sincerely,

Bill Brown '98  
Director of Football Advancement  
FOGF Membership Coordinator  
FOGF Gold Member Since May 2017

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