

I BRENDAN TRAINS TALBOT OF ARGOS!

Excerpt from "Talbot Catching CFL Elite Status" Toronto Sun, July 6, 2005

HE HAS a knack for making timely catches and he has certainly caught the eye of the Argos.

For wideout Andre Talbot, the evolution into a bona fide receiver has arrived at the most opportune time, a moment in time the fifth-year pro is relishing.

Just a few short years ago, the Laurier product was at the crossroads of a career he seriously considered quitting.

There were the injuries, the shuffling in and out of the roster and the team's financial woes, factors that weighed heavily on the 5-foot-10 Talbot.

Thanks to the urging of head coach Michael Clemons, the Argos' top Canadian evaluator and the team's conscience in Nick Volpe, Talbot decided to give it another try.

He returned a changed man, both physically and mentally, and Talbot has yet to miss a beat or a reception.

"Knowing where I was, it just makes me feel so great," Talbot said yesterday as the Argos continued to prepare for Saturday's home date against Saskatchewan.

"I left the game, I thought it was it for me because I had enough. To come back last year, start, contribute in our Grey Cup championship and do what I'm doing now is such a wonderful feeling.

"I've become a legitimate receiver in this league and as far as I'm concerned, hopefully, I can become a legitimate star."

Given the obstacles he has overcome, there is no reason to doubt Talbot will be among the CFL's best. Fearless and sure-handed, Talbot is coming off his first-career 100-yard reception in a 22-16 win in Calgary.

The game, though, was marred by Robert Baker's meltdown. In a move only Clemons could conceive, he waited until yesterday, when Friday's folly was moving toward the back-burner, to give Talbot a game ball.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Clemons provided Talbot food for thought in the team's season opener when the coach confronted the pass catcher in the tunnel leading to the Rogers Centre field.

"I told Andre now is the time to place yourself among the best receivers in our league," Clemons recalled. "You're ready now. The time is now to join the elite group."

Talbot believes a lot of his success has been mental. Former Laurier alumnus Brendan Fox, who works at Gary Roberts' downtown gym, introduced Talbot to natural medicine and the power of positive energy.

"Mentally and physically, I feel great," Talbot said. "At this level, what's important is taking that mental step."

An enlightened individual, Talbot works daily from 8 a.m. to noon as a viewer relations coordinator at Corus Entertainment.

NEW-FOUND LOVE

He has collaborated on art shows and is producing his own masterpieces on the gridiron.

"I have a new-found love for football," Talbot said. "I have a real office job in the morning and when I show up here (at the team's Mississauga facility), all I think about is how lucky I am to be able to do what I'm doing, no matter how long it lasts."

by FRANK ZICARELLI



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