

Grey Cup fever hits 100!



Toronto Argonauts' victory caps off week-long festival celebrating football

By Jessica Nyznik

It's four hours away from the 100th Grey Cup game in Toronto and the streets between John and Simcoe on Front Street are filled with smiles, laughter and the occasional, "AAR-RGGOOO'S" chant from a crowd of enthusiastic fans.

Amid a sea of blue and red jerseys, hints of additional colours are peppered among the thousands of people. Although their teams may not have made it into the Grey Cup, proud fans support their teams by donning their uniforms. Team shirts for Saskatchewan Rough Riders, Winnipeg Blue Bombers and Hamilton Tiger Cats are just a few to be seen on the streets.

The aroma of pork is undeniable as enthusiasts walk down the street with a variety of ribs, pulled-pork sandwiches and hotdogs. Gator BBQ, Bone A Fied BBQ, Pistol Petes and Blazing Big Rib are lined up alongside each other, showcasing their trophies, making it that much more difficult for customers to choose.

The slight flurries that began an hour ago have vanished and the weather is co-operating nicely for a street festival that many have been anticipating for some time.

"I've been waiting for three weeks. I just love it. All of it," says 34-year-old Karyn Kennedy, who is sporting a straw cowboy hat with a CFL logo on it. Arriving from Kitchener, Ont., Kennedy is accompanied by her mother, brother and nephew. They will be among some of the lucky fans to enjoy the Grey Cup from inside the Rogers Centre.

David Lashly, of Castleman, Ont., is a Montreal Alouettes fan but will be supporting the Argos. He is excited to be attending his fifth Grey Cup. His wife, Cavelle Lane, is not a football fan but came along for the ride.

"I enjoy the hype and meeting people who have travelled here from across the country to see the game," said Lane.

Another Alouettes fan, Damien Lewis, is rooting for the Argos. With a painted face, and wearing a 100th Grey Cup jacket, it is obvious that Lewis is caught up in the hype.

"The 100th Grey Cup is going to be phenomenal – even more than the game itself."

With free concerts and DJs playing on an outdoor stage, people bop their heads and dance to the music as they stroll along the street. While some stop to buy a bit of merchandise or snack on a free food samples, others take a minute to throw a rock on a mock curling lane set up by Rock Solid Productions.

The energy on the streets is undisputable and fans from opposing teams high-five one another as they pass each other by. The animosity that is often apparent between play-off team supporters is nowhere to be found.

Chad Kackert runs past Stampeders defender Chris Randle during his match against the Calgary Stampeders at the Rogers Centre Sunday. Kackert was named MVP after the Argonauts captured the 100th Grey Cup, winning 35-22. For story and more Grey Cup photos, see page 3.

Photo by Alicia Wynter

Grey Cup celebrations more than a football game

By Vivek McCague

The 100th Grey Cup Gala is the event where everyone that is someone in CFL shows up to mingle and enjoy.

Usually galas are held in extravagant venues such as the Carlu or the Palais Royale. However, this time the gala was held in the SkyDome (Rogers Centre). On the way into the SkyDome there was a red velvet carpet laid down on the ground, giving the venue a high-class club air. As you follow the red carpet you are led down the 100 level stairs to the field ready for the football game. Before you get onto the field you walk through a large inflated football helmet greeted on the other side by attractive young women asking if you would like a glass of white wine. Behind them you can see two other young, attractive women, one opening the wine bottles and the other pouring the wine into glasses laid out on a table covered in black velvet cloth.

As you progress further, there is a sort of podium with CFL league teams, helmets with special artwork available for auctioning later. Now you can get a clear look at the venue and see all the decorations from the tables with the table number on an Argonaut's football sitting on a podium surrounded by either red or white roses and candles on both sides of

the table. The lighting is dim and warm you could say it was almost romantic.

There were various stations of food in a buffet style-one had cold cuts and cheese on large silver plates embroidered with designs around its margins. Another table had large silver pots filled up to the brim with mouth-watering red chili. You could see the steam rising from the pot in the toasty, warm light. The following table had skewered sautéed sizzling shrimps with some rice seamlessly settled beneath. The last table had miniature burger buns and burgers called 'sliders'.

The DJ is playing country and pop songs through the see-through glass touch-screen table that has all the controls for the music. As a photographer approaches, the stage he is on to take photos, the DJ swiped all music controls in his scooter, stands up and also thanks everyone for their support and that it is much appreciated.

The DJ stops the music suddenly and Chris Rudge, executive chairman and CEO of the Toronto Argonauts walks onto the stage in a casual black suit to thank everyone for coming to the gala. Shortly after David Onley, lieutenant governor of Ontario drives onto the stage in his scooter, stands up and also thanks everyone for their support and that it is much appreciated.

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Photo by Justin Tang

Fletcher Armstrong, chair of the Calgary Grey Cup Committee, lets out a "Yahooo" while mounted on Marty the horse last Thursday on Toronto's Front Street. Horse and rider were denied entry to the Royal York Hotel during their attempt to recreate the 1948 spectacle when a fan rode a horse through the hotel's lobby.



Laval Rouge et Or receiver Guillaume Rioux raises the Vanier Cup after the Rouge et Or defeated the the McMaster Marauders in the 48th Vanier Cup at the Rogers Centre in Toronto on Friday.

Record-setting crowd takes in Vanier Cup

By David Zammit

As you walk into the Rogers Centre in downtown Toronto last Friday, you would swear the place was shaking off the foundation with all the screams from at least 30,000 fans all dressed in purple to support the McMaster Marauders.

Not all the fans are dressed in purple, however. The Laval Rouge et Or were the small supported crowd, with fewer fans travelling the distance to come to Toronto.

“We have been waiting for this moment since the last years loses. We have been putting all of our effort on the field game in and game out this season,” said Laval Rouge et Or defensive end Arnaud Gascon-Nadon.

The Rogers Centre was host to a record-setting crowd for the 48th Vanier Cup with 37,098 in attendance beating the previous record set in 1989 when 32,847 watched the Western Ontario Mustangs defeat the Saskatchewan Huskies.

This year saw the tides turn in the Rouge et Or side especially in the second half of the game. Friday night's top player of the game was the game changer for sure as Maxime Boutin brought his electrifying legs, running for 253 yards, to go along with two touchdowns and a MVP of the 48th Vanier Cup and his name in CIS record books as the second most rushing yards, in Vanier Cup history.

The first quarter was a lot of defense and not much ball movement, not anything to write home about.

The second quarter looked a little more open and quarterbacks and receiver were starting to make plays, Laval got up 12-0 quickly, but Kyle Quinlan picked up his team and marched them down field before Quinlan punched in the one yard run to get McMaster on the board 12-7.

With a minute left before the half time, Quinlan made two passes that were great. One was a 43 yarder, and the other was a 59 yarder, putting McMaster on top of the score for the first time in the game, with 14-12 going into half time.

After the half, McMaster packed it in early and went home, or maybe thought they had already done enough, because when they came back out for the second half they didn't look like the team that was leading at half time.

As the third quarter went on you could start to see Rouge et Or had something to prove. As Boutin started to heat up the game started to slip from the hands of McMaster.

Laval started to pull away with the game and show they deserved the CIS record breaking seventh Vanier Cup.

At the end of the third quarter, the game was almost done with Rouge et Or already up 31-14. It didn't seem like McMaster wanted to win, either. It was kind of like a dog giving up on the bone. It looked like they just rolled over and fell asleep.

Laval shut down McMaster's offense, after half held them to zero points in the second half while Rouge et Or exploded for 25 points in the second half.



Laval Rouge et Or running back Maxime Boutin makes an explosive move past McMaster Marauders' Nicholas Shortill during third quarter action. Boutin went on to receive the MVP honours with two touchdowns and 253 yards rushing.

Concert series part of Grey Cup festivities

Classic rock songs set to footage of vintage football and Grey Cup festivities

By Benjamin Priebe

The Metro Toronto Convention Centre is cleared out and dark, except for a large stage, several massive TVs and of course the beer and drinks bar.

Around 6 p.m., a crowd of hollering middle-aged men and women decked out in team colours begins to slowly trickle in, quickly becoming a torrent of fans.

The Molson House Concert Series kicks off its second night with a live DJ remixing classic rock songs to pump up the crowd, set to old footage of vintage football and Grey Cup festivities.

He mixes songs with a heavy bass beat that resonates in your chest. Seven dollar bottles of Molson Canadian and Coors Light were served and the security barriers were tested by a crush of bodies excited for the opening act of Canadian Music Hall of Famers, Myles Goodwyn and April Wine.

In the meantime, Master of Ceremonies Dominik Diamond, disc jockey at Q107, tells a slew of jokes while rooting for the Toronto Argonauts.

He promises an amazing show of Canadian musical talent and then brings out three young women dressed in tight referee uniforms who dish out free swag to the crowd.

T-shirts, hats and alcohol sets the stage and makes the crowd rowdy. Dancing, drinking and rooting for the team abound under the coloured light show in front of the stage. One particular older woman has decided she should jump the security barrier and takes a seat beside the photographers and security guards. When she is asked to leave, she insists she has her own media pass and uses her beer can to simulate the lens of a camera.

Finally, after much ado, the stage lights come to life and Myles Goodwyn and April Wine take to the stage at 7:30 p.m. Little introduction is needed and the band jumps right into fan favourite Oowatanite. The bells of Roy Nichol and shredding guitar of Goodwyn wake up the long-waiting audience and they all begin to sing along.

Afterwards, Myles Goodwyn and April Wine kept the momentum moving with Roller, Gypsy Queen and then Just Between You and Me, which caused one solitary lighter to be put in the air.

The lights go dim and roadies begin dismantling and setting up new

equipment, readying the stage for Kim Mitchell's performance. Audience members indulge in lager and ale and make runs for pizza or pulled pork sandwiches.

Mitchell and his band took to the stage, opening up with Lager and Ale. The crowd cheers and packs up against the security barriers, pumping fists and singing along with this three-time Juno award winner.

Kim Mitchell has a rather laid-back performance, with little flashing lights and a stationary posture, until Mitchell picks things up with Rockland Wonderland. The set continues through Go for a Soda, I Am a Wild Party and of course, Patio Lanterns.

There seemed to be a bit of tension after Kim Mitchell's performance, perhaps because this older crowd had little idea who exactly Big Sugar was, a reggae blues rock band from Toronto that has been around since 1988.

Much of the older audience actually filed out of the hall at this point, up the series of four elevators, either for cigarettes, fresh air, or to avoid anything they hadn't heard before. Many of them did not return in time for Big Sugar's debut on stage.

The roadies did a very interesting number, covering the stage in a

myriad of instruments all wrapped in Rastafarian coloured duct-tape and smoke machines began to kick off. The air became heavy and thick and the lights turned a deep orange.

The remaining audience members varied in age but were mostly male. They knew this would be a very intense show and several people yelled “Goooordie!” as lead singer and guitarist Gordie Johnson sprinted on to stage followed by a keyboardist named Friendliness, who carries a large bowl full of burning incense.

A quick blessing of the stage occurred and then the band, after greeting their captive audience, jumped into a cover of The Black Keys song Howlin' for You.

Turn the Lights On was up next and Johnson picked up a double-headed guitar while Kelly Hoppe on the saxophone did a single microphone duet with him. The show was high energy but you could tell the night was getting late and the crowd was getting tired.

Finally, around 11:30 p.m., the concert ended and those who did not make the early exit crushed together into the escalators and past a small group of Grey Cup cheerleaders to stumble into their beds for the night.

Gala...

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Now the SkyDome's field is almost reaching its capacity. There are quite a few people at this inflated football game where you could throw the football through a hole to score points. Almost everyone was trying to beat their friends at it or get them to come over and try it. The Argonaut's cheerleaders are walking around in there blue and white mini skirt and short tops waving their pompoms in the air, stopping to talk to the guests and have their photo taken with them.

There were several stages set up where Canadian Pop singer Chris Willis, country singer Brad Mates of Emerson Drive, Jon Dretto 14-year-old guitarist and Madison Kozak, a 15-year-old singer, performed for the crowd.

Walking around on the field, you could find Damon Allen who led the Argos to their 15th Grey Cup championship in 2004, talking with others. Michael Luttrell Clemons, nicknamed Pinball by Tom Cudney because of his running style, who was awarded CFL Most Outstanding Player in 1990, was shaking almost everyone's hands and giving them hugs.

Everyone was happy chatting with friends, family or someone new they met. The overall ambience of the event was very jovial. Once more the DJ brought the music to a standstill and Chris Rudge walked onto the stage, letting everyone know the gala would be ending in half an hour and everyone should start making there way out. He ended his speech with the Argonaut cheer:

“Argooooooooooooooooooooooooooooos.”

Argo domination!



By Alicia Wynter

A total of 53,208 fans filled the Rogers Centre in Toronto on Sunday representing their favourite teams from across Canada. Lining up for popcorn, hotdogs, pizza and pop, the fans prepared for the game of the year.

The Toronto Argonauts fought their way through the regular season with a new coaching system. Scott Milanovich, who was named the 42nd head coach of the Toronto Argonauts, along with his coaching staff, lead his team to victory at the 100th Grey Cup.

The Argonauts entered the finals against the Calgary Stampeders with a 2-0 advantage during their regular season. Having this advantage may have been the motivation the Argonauts needed to win the Grey Cup that all of the CFL players had their eyes on.

Two touchdown passes were made by Argonauts quarterback Ricky Ray as running back Chad Kackert ran the field. Kackert was named the game's MVP finishing with 195 all-purpose yards on 28 touches. The game's Most Valuable Canadian award was given to defensive end Ricky Foley.

The Argonauts played as if this was the last time they would ever play, taking out one Stampeders' player at a time with injuries.

Coming back from hip surgery, Noel Prefontaine punted 283 yards. Chad Owens, who was named the 2012 Most Outstanding Player, gave Toronto a 7-0 lead with a five-yard touchdown.

As the crowd counted down the last 10 seconds of the game, Milanovich was soaked with orange Gatorade by his team, fireworks went off, the Stampeders sauntered off the field as the Argonauts jumped, hugged and kissed each other in celebration.

Family and close friends poured on the field to congratulate their brothers, husbands and sons with proud tears falling down their cheeks.

Double blue and white confetti filled the air and Argonaut children played and made confetti angels while their fathers hoisted the Grey Cup for all to see.

Photo by Alicia Wynter

Armond Armstead hold ups the Grey Cup after the Argonauts won the 100th Grey Cup game Sun., Nov. 25, 2012. The Argonauts took on the Calgary Stampeders at the Rogers Centre in Toronto, Ont. in front of 53,208 fans. The Argonauts had home field advantage winning 35-22.



Photo by Vivek McCague

The 100th Grey Cup gala was held on the field of the Rogers Centre during festivities last week.



Photo by Tijana Martin

Fans celebrate outside the Rogers Centre Sunday after the Toronto Argonauts won the game.



Photo by Jenny Robertson

Lance Miller made a huge scene at the 100th Grey Cup Festival on Front St. in Toronto, Ont. to show is pride and support for the Toronto Argonauts.



Photo by David Zammit

Toronto Argonaut fans hold a replica of the Grey Cup and carry it through Toronto earlier this week, hoping their team would win, which they did Sunday.



Photo by Alicia Wynter

The Argonauts celebrate their 100th Grey Cup win on top of a stage as blue and white confetti falls at the Rogers Centre. Photographers and reporters rushed the stage to get as many photos and interviews as possible with the team.