

Irwin, Dave

FOOTBALL

Bel Brook (collection)

# Former Moira star may

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# wear Argo blue

## Dave Irwin starred in Guelph with Gryphons

For four years, David Irwin has been double trouble for defensive backs in the Ontario university football league — a speedy wide receiver with good hands.

Now he hopes to add another double — the double blue of the Canadian Football League's Toronto Argonauts.

Irwin was the third receiver chosen in the recent CFL Canadian college draft in Vancouver, the Argonauts' third choice and first in the fourth round, 30th overall.

A former Bay of Quinte all-star in both football and basketball at Moira Secondary School, the Guelph University Gryphon stalwart was surprised Toronto tabbed him at the draft.

"I'm pretty happy," said Irwin during a telephone interview from

Guelph after the draft. "That's one of the teams I figured wasn't interested in me. I didn't really know if they were looking for a receiver."

Irwin and several other highly-ranked Canadian university prospects were flown last week to Winnipeg for pre-draft workouts under the scrutiny of CFL scouts. Irwin was satisfied with his performance and knew he'd be drafted. Still, that didn't ease his draft day tension.

"I was hoping it would be on TV, but it wasn't," he said. "Basically, you just sit and wait for a phone call. I was a little anxious and I was glad when that phone

finally rang."

In Winnipeg, Irwin was at the top of the scale in testing for his position.

"Most of my test scores were competitive with the rest of the receivers," he said. "I was in the top two of everything. I didn't hurt myself, that's for sure."

In the 40-yard dash, the bread-and-butter test cherished by most football coaches, Irwin clocked an impressive 4.65-second time.

"That's what I'd been running at school so I wasn't disappointed," he said.

On the bench press, the Belleville native pushed up 225 pounds, 10 below his best-ever at Guelph.

At a bodyweight of 175 pounds, the lanky wideout knows he needs to add some beef to his frame for the pro game.

"I had a little trouble keeping my weight up," he said. "I don't seem to fluctuate either way. I'm just trying to eat as much good food as I can and train hard. I'm



PAUL SVOBODA

Sports  
Intelligencer  
Staff Writer

lineup.

"If I can put on a little weight I could probably play special teams. It's a good way to crack the lineup."

Irwin says he'll dive into his training regimen of jogging, sprinting and weight training until camp opens in June. Then, he says, he'll simply try his best.

"There's so many factors you can't control," he said.

"You've just got to go in the best shape you can be in and just do what you do best."

One factor definitely out of Irwin's control is the endangered CFL quota for Canadian players. With expansion teams in the U.S. cities of Sacramento, Las Vegas, Baltimore and Shreveport legally within their rights to ignore the

quota, the CFL's homebrew system may be scrapped completely.

"It would be nice to see them keep it," said Irwin. "Because it's been great for the growth of high school and minor football. Even if they don't have realistic aspirations, it gives kids a goal to shoot for."

"But I understand the position the league is in. Some guys would still do well, quota or no quota, but there's a lot of guys hanging around the league who won't be there if they drop the quota. You won't see too many local guys make it if they drop it."

Irwin realizes he's entering the CFL at a crucial and exciting time for the expanding circuit. He says the Canadian game "will take off in the States" and he hopes he and other Canadians can still be a major part of it.

"Fans always enjoy watching the team if there's a kid from their hometown playing," he said.

Come June, Irwin hopes he's Belleville's kid in the Argo lineup.



Dave Irwin

not going to be a 200-pounder, that's just not my body type. I don't carry much body fat but 185 would be nice.

"Strength is an asset, but the key is catching the football. Hopefully I can use that to my advantage."

And that's what Irwin has done as well as anyone in Canadian college football since earning a starting spot in the Gryphon lineup in his second season. Last year he earned prestigious All-Canadian honors.

Now he says he'll do whatever it takes to crack the roster of a rebuilding Argo squad.

"I really don't know much about the team, what they have in receivers or what they want," he said. "With O'Billovich (head coach Bob O'Billovich) being there, this will be his first full year back and it sounds like they're just giving everybody a shot. Hopefully I can go out there and win a spot on special teams the first year, and get in the