

Community Profile

Aggressive style, firm commitment trademark of Ravens coach

By SARAH FISHER

Essex Ravens head coach Glen Mills approaches life with one single philosophy — don't save your 'A game.' Mills expects his players to 'leave it all on the field.' Regardless of the outcome in sports and in life, he says, hard work is always the best approach.

Football is more than a sport for Mills. He watches and plays other sports, isn't fanatical about keeping up with statistics, but the Ravens' first and only coach since joining the Ontario

Varsity Football League 10 years ago sees a definite analogy.

"I believe football is not just about football, it's about life," Mills said Aug. 10. "You get knocked down and you have to get back up."

Mills, 38, has connections in the CFL, NFL and NCAA football, but his career and experience are based in Essex County. He graduated from Essex District High School in 1987 where he was on the football and wrestling teams. He attended the

University of Windsor and was a defensive lineman and linebacker for the AKO Fratmen, a team of athletes needing more experience before playing at the university level.

Although he had aspirations of the maze and blue of the University of Michigan, he adapted to life after the Fratmen, and got a job working with young offenders.

Mills married in 1992 and his family grew over the years to three daughters. Today Danielle is 21, Jordyn is 12 and Madison is eight. The family is currently awaiting its newest member. Laura Mills, a French teacher at Holy Name School, is expecting.

Years before the Essex Ravens started, Mills was building his career as a coach. In the early 1990s he started coaching the Essex Axmen, a lacrosse team. That job overlapped with his return to EDHS where he coached football for eight years until 1997. From 2000 to 2004 he coached football at St. Thomas Villanova High School. Over the years his skills have been recognized and he was asked to help coach the Junior Global Football Championships in 2000 and 2001. In 2002 and 2006 he was part of the coaching staff for the Canada Cup.

The Ravens are Mills' greatest coaching challenge.



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This week the coaching staff will start to review the team's 2006 season including their Adam Conference loss Aug. 5 to the Guelph Bears in the semifinals. The Ravens have finished 7-1 in the last two years.

Mills describes himself as an aggressive coach who places big demands on his players, but says he is also willing to put himself out for them. Many of the Ravens want to play at the university level in Canada or the U.S. Mills will use his contacts and accompany players on recruiting trips, as long as their focus includes academics as well as football.

"If your grades are bad, don't even ask me," Mills said. "I won't even think about it."

His colleague and former coach, Mike Morencie, praises Mills' coaching style. Morencie, the University of Windsor Lancer football coach, coached the Fratmen in the 1990s when Mills was a player. He said Mills has avoided a trap many coaches fall into.

"I would say he coaches very aggressively and expects a lot from his kids, but not very many coaches coach that way anymore," Morencie said. "They want to be friends with their players and that's a mistake. His players know that he cares for them and they work hard knowing he has their best interest at heart."

Mills recognizes that his players work hard. He also

recognizes the support from the community. He said other OVFL teams are envious of the Ravens' facilities, including a new weight room, updated clubhouse and the fact that they have a team physician. He is happy the games routinely draw crowds of 1,500 and more for playoff games. That support has allowed the program to expand. The junior varsity team was added in 2000 and the pee wee team was added this year.

Mills hopes the future will include coaching full-time. He would like to lead a university team, and says he doubts he'd change his coaching style.

"Play every game like it's your last game," he said. "Leave it all on the field."

Celebration of Two Cultures

Lucho De Sedas and Los Selectos is one of Toronto's best Latin bands — and they are coming to Leamington.

Named the best Latin Band at the Latin Industry Awards Canada 2005, Lucho De Sedas and Los Selectos will perform at this year's Celebration of Two Cultures.

The Migrant Worker Community Program will be presenting their annual Mexican-themed festival at

the Arts Centre, Sunday, September 10, from 3-7 p.m.

Los Selectos was founded by its director, Luis Rey De Sedas, in 1999 and won the Best Tropical Band trophy at the Orgullo Latino Awards Canada last year.

Luis Rey De Sedas, artistically known as Lucho De Sedas, has more than 35 years experience as a singer and has shared the stage with many talented Latin bands.

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