



Media Release

For
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Every year at Grey Cup, the Canadian Football League Players' Association presents the Tom Pate Award. It is not an award presented on one's ability to perform on the field, but rather it is an award given to players who display qualities that distinguish them from their peers off the field as well.

Tom Pate had a unique combination of outstanding sportsmanship and dedication to the league and the community. He was educated at the University of Nebraska where he majored in business administration, and played first-stringer with the Cornhuskers. After shuffling through various teams, he became a star with the Hamilton Tiger-Cats. In October 1975, however, his stardom as well as his life was abruptly ended, when in his fourteenth game against the Stampeders in Calgary, he suffered an aneurysm in the fourth quarter. Pate, only 23 at the time, never regained consciousness and died just two days later.

Each year Players on all 8 teams choose a teammate to win this award and represent their respective team. The recipient embodies the qualities that distinguished Tom Pate; qualities that recognize a Player with outstanding sportsmanship, a Player who has made a contribution to his team as well as to his community and to his Association. From the 8 Team winners, the CFLPA chooses one special Player to be awarded as its Tom Pate Award winner.

The Winner of this year's Tom Pate Award will be announced at Grey Cup with all other C.F.L. Awards at the Players' Awards Evening on Thursday, November 24, 2011.

The 2011 Team Tom Pate winners are:

FROM THE MONTREAL ALOUETTES - WALTER SPENCER

Walter is an 8 year CFL veteran and was a 3rd. round draft pick. He was the Alouettes Most Outstanding Special Teams Player in 2007 and a Grey Cup Champion in 2009 and 2010.

Walter started www.topplayer.ca as a way to raise money for a high school student, Paul McCrary who was paralyzed in a football game. By reaching out to high school coaches, city councilors and local union reps, this initiative raised over \$11,000.00. Walter spends a great deal of time mentoring young football players, and feels that allowing them the opportunity to interact with Pros can inspire them and help make the community stronger.

Overcoming a life threatening assault last year to come back and play professional football again has given Walter an even stronger commitment to help as many people in his community as he can. He is expanding Topplayer to include a training facility in his home town of Windsor, On. to help make the path to university easier for athletes.

FROM THE TORONTO ARGONAUTS - BRYAN CRAWFORD

Bryan has played his entire 7 year career with the Argonauts. He has been heavily involved in many of the Team's community initiatives that involve the well-being and mentoring of young people. As an active participant of the Argo's programs such as Huddle up Bullying Prevention, Stop the Violence, Level the Playing Field and Agro Recess, Bryan has had the opportunity to speak at assemblies about his personal experience with bullying, the negative impact it can have and the tools to deal with it.

Bryan's external charity initiatives include ALS Society of Ontario and Right to Play and his personal initiative Climb for Cancer. Climb for Cancer is a fundraising and awareness event that has participants challenging themselves to climb stairs for 1 hour to raise funds and awareness for cancer research and treatment at the Juravinski Cancer Centre in Hamilton, On.

When asked why he has chosen to be so involved in his community, Bryan's response is being a professional athlete is a means by which he can make a greater impact in the community. It's afforded him a great platform to make a difference in the community he loves so much.

Bryan is also the C.F.L.P.A. Representative for the Toronto Argonauts as well as a team captain. He is the link between his teammates and the Club and is humbled by the trust his teammates place in him in allowing him to assist in personal matters.

FROM THE HAMILTON TIGER CATS - KEVIN GLENN

The Tiger Cat quarterback has been the Purolator Tackle for Hunger spokesman since 2006. He was the East Division Most Outstanding All-Star in 2007, holds the Ti-Cat record for most passing touchdowns in a single season (2010) and this year he surpassed 30,000 career passing yards.

In 2010 he started his own initiative: Kevin Glenn's Touchdown for Kids. For every touchdown scored by Kevin during the season, local Tim Horton's owners will donate \$200.00 to the Tim Horton's Children's Foundation.

In addition to Kevin Glenn's Touchdown for Kids, he frequently helps teammates Marwan Hage and Dave Stala with their game day programs that bring underprivileged kids to the Ti-Cat games. Kevin participates in more than 50 appearances each season and countless more in the off-season.

Growing up in Detroit, Michigan, Kevin benefited from programs run by athletes that he looked up to and has always wanted to give back to children in a meaningful way.

As a C.F.L.P.A Representative for his team Kevin is the conduit between his teammates and the Club. He makes himself available to them both personally and professionally and is a leader both on and off the field.

FROM THE WINNIPEG BLUE BOMBERS - IBRAHIM KHAN

Ibrahim is the National Spokesman and member of the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada as well as a councilor and member of the Children's Variety Club. He helped to organize a few Players at this year's ComicCon Convention which helped to raise almost \$2,000.00 for Kids Sport Manitoba as well as developing the Obby Khan Flag Rugby Program. This program is geared to both boys and girls under 18 and has reached over 1300 children in the 2 years it has been running.

Ibrahim started Khan's Kids to give under privileged kids in the community the opportunity to attend and experience a CFL football game. Ibrahim has also been involved in many other charitable community initiatives from reading awareness to participating with Winnipeg youth community football as a guest coach.

As a recognizable member of the community Ibrahim feels he is blessed to play this great sport in Canada and it's his responsibility to give back to the community which supports him and to reach out to those less fortunate.

Obby is also this year's recipient of the Bomber's Cal Murphy 'Heart of a Legend' Award. This is the third time he has won this award, voted on by his teammates and goes to the Blue Bomber player who best demonstrates outstanding sportsmanship and dedication to the CFL and community.

FROM THE SASKATCHEWAN ROUGHRIDERS - MIKE MCCULLOUGH

Mike, in his 9th season with the Riders volunteers more than 120 hours of his time each year to organizations. Along with fellow Rider, Jeremy O'Day, Mike started the Rider Charity Golf Tournament. The money raised from the tournament is donated to local charities.

Mike is a Board Member for Jesse's Journey – a foundation that provides funding for research into Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy. Jesse's Journey is especially dear to him because his son Cole lost his battle with the disease on February 17, 2009. He is also on the boards of the Chris Knox Foundation, Sask Sick Kids Hospital Foundation and Jesse's Journey as well as an ambassador for Kidsport.

Mike first became involved in the community because he felt it was his duty as a professional athlete. Then in 2005 when his son Cole was born and diagnosed with Epilepsy as well as Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, he found himself spending most of his time in hospitals. Seeing first hand how difficult a time some kids have it, Mike made it one of the biggest goals in his life to not only raise awareness and funds, but raise their spirit as well.

Mike was the inaugural winner of the Jake Gaudaur Award which recognizes the attributes of the longest standing CFL commissioner and distinguished Second World War Veteran. It is awarded to a Canadian CFL player that best demonstrates the attributes of Canada's Veterans.

This is Mike's third Tom Pate Nomination.

FROM THE CALGARY STAMPEDERS - KEON RAYMOND

Keon was signed by the Stampeders in 2008 and has been with the Club his entire CFL career. Although born in St. Louis Missouri, Keon, his wife and kids make Calgary their off-season home where he actively represents his team in the community.

Keon speaks at middle schools, churches and community centres as well as volunteering for the Henry Burris All Star Weekend Football Camp.

When asked why it's so important to give back to his community his response is simple, he was one of those kids that didn't have much and looked up to professional athletes for guidance and encouragement. Being blessed with this God given ability he feels it's only right for him to guide and encourage the minds of today's youth, no matter what your situation or where you come from, there is still hope.

As a C.F.L.P.A. Player Representative he leads by example and shares his knowledge and positive outlook on life with his teammates.

Keon has the record for the longest interception return in Stampeders history (117 yards).

FROM THE EDMONTON ESKIMOS - AARON FIACCONI

Aaron is a 10 year CFL vet who has been with the Eskimos since 2007. He is on the Board for Brick Sports as well as the Boys and Girls Club of Edmonton. This initiative helps kids that do not have the means or stability to participate in a team sport get the equipment and knowledge that's needed to play.

As part of the Huddle for Haiti 7 CFL member team, Aaron traveled to Haiti earlier this year with other Players to bring compassion and excitement to a country devastated by a natural disaster. A good portion of this endeavor was self-financed and was a life changing event both mentally and physically but helped to bring an awareness of knowing he can make it through any tough situation.

Aaron is very involved with the Eskimo's initiatives including, Playbook for Success which helps kids realize the importance of an education, leadership and team building, Boston Pizza High School Camp that mentors young players, United Way Coats for Kids, White Out for Domestic Violence along with many others.

As the Fans are what makes this League so special, Aaron feels that giving back his time is his reward to being able to serve them both on and off the field. Every community he has lived and played in has shown him such love and respect it's his privilege to give it back. The youth are our future and he places a premium on giving them the inspiration, passion and means to make their community a better place to be, to have an impact on their future no matter how large or small.

Aaron is a C.F.L.P.A. Player Representative and leads by example each day. He feels that each member of the Team has the ability to make change in a positive way and he is a big advocate of having more Eskimos make Edmonton their off-season home to give back in any way possible the good that's been bestowed them as Players.

FROM THE BC LIONS - JR LAROSE

JR is a 6 year CFL vet. This is the second time that JR has won this award for his Team the BC Lions.

JR is a spokesperson for Ending Violence Association of BC. He was involved in their public service announcements for the 'Break the Silence on Violence Against Women' campaign and will be involved in their inaugural season of school visits in 2012 as part of this initiative.

In 2008 JR founded LaRose Athletics which brings professional athletes to aboriginal communities in BC, Alberta and Saskatchewan as way to expose at-risk youth to positive celebrity influences.

When asked why he chose to be so involved in his community, JR's response is; when he was in elementary school, Henry 'Gizmo' Williams paid a visit to his school and inspired him to become an athlete. He feels that as a professional athlete he has a great opportunity to give back to his community.

JR believes that you should practice what you preach and that with hard work, persistence and determination you will ultimately succeed. In the locker room he makes sure the new players on the team feel welcomed and always tries to give extra effort to be a positive team player.

PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS OF THE TOM PATE MEMORIAL AWARD

2010	Wes Lysack	Calgary Stampeders
2009	Marwan Hage	Hamilton Tiger Cats
2008	Jeremy O'Day	Saskatchewan Roughriders
2007	Milt Stegall	Winnipeg Blue Bombers
2006	Mark Washington	BC Lions
2005	Danny McManus	Hamilton Tiger Cats
2004	Barron Miles	Montreal Alouettes
2003	Steve Hardin	BC Lions
2002	Greg Frers	Calgary Stampeders
2001	Rick Walters	Edmonton Eskimos
2000	Mike Morreale	Hamilton Tiger Cats
1999	Jamie Taras	B.C. Lions
1998	Glen Scrivener	Winnipeg Blue Bomber
1997	Mark McLoughlin	Calgary Stampeders
1996	Michael "Pinball" Clemons	Toronto Argonauts
1995	Mark McLoughlin	Calgary Stampeders
1994	O.J. Brigance	Baltimore Stallions
1993	Michael "Pinball" Clemons	Toronto Argonauts
1992	Danny Barrett	B.C. Lions
1991	Stu Laird	Calgary Stampeders
1990	Ritchie Hall	Saskatchewan Roughriders
1989	Matt Dunigan	B.C. Lions
1988	Hector Pothier	Edmonton Eskimos
1987	Nick Arakgi	Montreal Alouettes
1986	Tyrone Crews	B.C. Lions
1985	Jerry Friesen	Saskatchewan Roughriders
1984	Bruce Walker	Ottawa Rough Riders
1983	Henry Waszczuk	Hamilton Tiger-Cats
1982	David Boone	Edmonton Eskimos
1981	Ken McEachern	Saskatchewan Roughriders
1980	Jim Coode	Ottawa Rough Riders
1979	Peter Muller	Toronto Argonauts
1978	John Helton	Calgary Stampeders
1977	Ron Lancaster	Saskatchewan Roughriders
1976	George Reed	Saskatchewan Roughriders

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Deanne Mitchell
Executive Assistant
P: (905)664-0852
E: d.mitchell@cflpa.com