

FROM ROYAL CITY TO TIGER TOWN

The STA's Michael Bladon asks the University of Guelph's Bill Clausen, and Stephen Day and Steve Lowe of the Hamilton Tiger-Cats Football Club how it came about that the team's 2013 season home games would be played at the UoG's Alumni Stadium after Hamilton's Ivor Wynne Stadium was to be demolished.

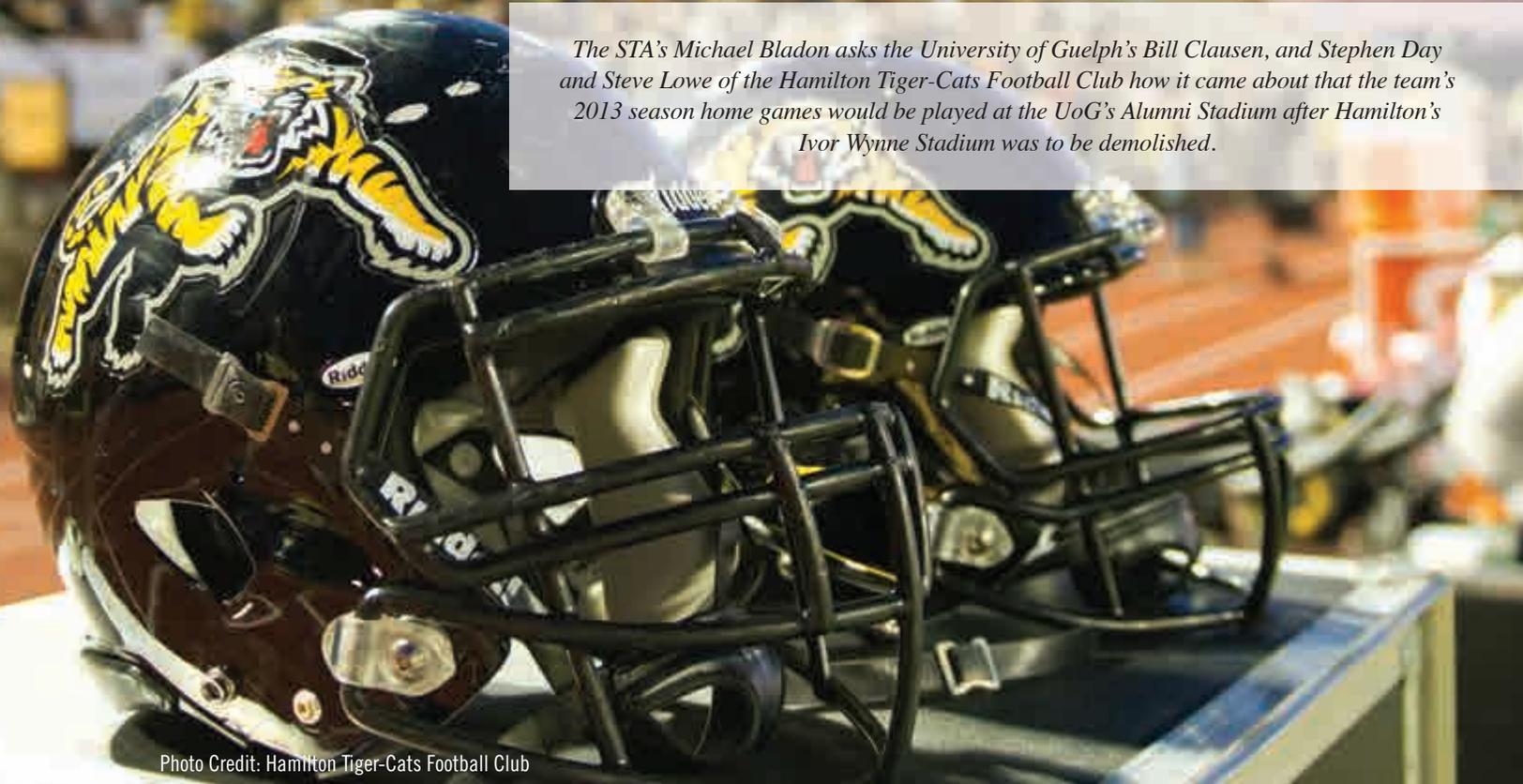


Photo Credit: Hamilton Tiger-Cats Football Club

Q&A with Bill Clausen, Facility Manager, University of Guelph

STA: *When were you first informed the Tiger-Cats would play at Alumni Stadium?*

Clausen: There were rumours back in August 2012 but nothing substantial was requested until October 2012. At that time negotiations went full time.

STA: *Did you participate in the initial meetings with the Tiger-Cats?*

Clausen: Once the decision to host the Tiger-Cats was made by the University's Senior Administration a number of people from various departments across campus were involved in finalizing a contract. Tom Kendall the Athletic Director, Frank Cain the Business Development Manager, Dave Easter the Marketing Manager and I were the Athletics Department staff involved. Campus Police Services led by Robin Begin and Pat Martin, Parking Services Manager Ian Weir, Hospitality Services Director Sylvia Willms,

and Paul Mesman and Dan MacLachlan from Physical Resources were all part of the team led by Brenda Whiteside, Associate Vice President.

STA: *What was the involvement and what were the responsibilities of the University of Guelph before games?*

Clausen: Athletics ensured the field was groomed and safe to play on; we put out the corner flags, provided protective matting to cover the jumping pits and runways along the sideline, laid down track protection matting and put the team benches in place. Athletics staff setup the scoreboard controls and provided technical support during the games. Athletics staff also ensured the stadium was clean before each game. Physical Resources provide ongoing technical support for electrical, mechanical and structural issues ensuring the stadium infrastructure was operating in a safe and efficient manner. Campus Community Policing provided security support along with Guelph City Police and the private firm Star Security ensuring that no small issues developed into major problems.



STA: And after games?

Clausen: Working with the TiCat Customer Services Team, the Green For Life group and Chantler Environmental Services, Athletics staff ensured that the Stadium and the entire game day site was returned to normal state within hours of the game ending.

STA: What staffing did the University of Guelph provide for Tiger-Cat games?

Clausen: I was the Project Manager for the TiCat contract and I was on site for each TiCat setup day and game day from early in the morning until well after the game ended. We also scheduled an Athletic Facilities operator to be present on game days to do last minute setup and cleanup jobs as well as provide technical support for the CFL supplied score clock operators.

STA: How was the University of Guelph team affected?

Clausen: Positively for the most part, I believe. They got to see

football at the next level and have a greater appreciation of what they will have to do to get to that level themselves. There were a couple of times when the Gryphons had to practice on Varsity Field because the TiCats were playing or the stadium field was being prepared for a TiCat game.

STA: Describe the field maintenance regime. Does it differ, and if yes how does it differ, from that before the Tiger-Cats came to town?

Clausen: Field Maintenance was done as prescribed by Field Turf to ensure we maintained our warranty and it was no different than what we did before the TiCats came to town. Davan Landscaping, as part of the Stadium Construction project, is contracted to do the field maintenance at Alumni Stadium. They would groom the field based on hours of use. Early in the season when the field was not as heavily used it might be two or three weeks between groomings, later in the season it was weekly as hours used increased to 80 hours per week.

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STA: How is the stadium cleaned following each game?

Clausen: Chantler's Environmental Services and Green For Life were contracted by the TiCats to provide complete environmental services before, during, and after each game. Despite some game days where the weather was just plain terrible, they did an excellent job.

STA: On October 26th both the Hamilton Tiger-Cats and the Guelph Gryphons took to the field. How did that work behind the scenes?!

Clausen: Very well. We knew about the potential double header well in advance. The Athletics Department Event Management staff Jill Taylor and Facility staff Andrew Godard met with the TiCat game staff, devised a plan of action and made it work. The TiCat game ended at 4:15pm and the Gryphons kicked off at 8:00pm. The switch-over worked exceptionally well with both teams doing the work necessary in an effective, efficient and economical manner.

STA: What situations encountered during the season were the most difficult to resolve?

Clausen: To be honest once the decision was made to host the TiCat games we really did not have any real difficult situations. We all worked together as a team with the goal that the players, coaches, spectators, officials and television audience had the best experience possible.

STA: What were the easiest?

Clausen: Dealing with the TiCat staff was exceptionally easy. Steve Day the Project Manager, Steve Lowe the Marketing Director, Maurice Grant, Game Day Manager and all the support staff were great to work with. As is normal there were some miscommunication moments but we worked through them to provide a great experience for all.

STA: The Hamilton Tiger-Cats donated \$500,000 to the University of Guelph. What was that to be used for?

Clausen: The TiCats made a \$400,000 donation to the University's Better Planet Project specifically to the Athletic Facility Project portion of the campaign. The remaining \$100,000 has been used to fund minor renovations, repairs and upgrades to the stadium.

STA: Was there revenue sharing with the Tiger-Cats? If so, what was shared?

Clausen: No there was no revenue sharing with the TiCats.

STA: What did you most enjoy about the experience?

Clausen: Working with an excellent group of people from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences to make a once in a life time series of events happen successfully in Guelph at the University.

STA: What did you dislike about the experience?

Clausen: It would have been greatly appreciated if the weather had cooperated a little better!

Q&A with Stephen Day, Director of Stadium Operations and Guelph Project Manager, and Steve Lowe Director of Marketing of the Hamilton Tiger-Cats Football Club

STA: When did the organization find out you would not be able to play at Ivor Wynne Stadium in 2013?

Ti-Cats: We started looking into potential options for the 2013 season in December 2011. Talks with the University of Guelph began in August of 2012.

STA: When you approached potential universities what requirements/guidelines did you present to them?

Ti-Cats: We needed to present them with the CFL Operation Guidelines to make sure they fully understood the specifications and requirements that would need to be fulfilled in order to host a CFL game.

STA: Was the University of Guelph high on your list as you entered negotiations?

Ti-Cats: The University of Guelph was high on our list due to the proximity to Hamilton, the physical layout of their stadium footprint, and their strong desire to share in the tradition of the Hamilton Tiger-Cats Football Club. We wanted to keep the games in a commutable distance for our season seat holders while also moving to a market within our regionalization zone. The University had also done a



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number of upgrades at Alumni Stadium, field turf and stadium lighting, which made the possibility of hosting a CFL venue that much more realistic.

STA: Can you explain what was required and the logistics involved in acquiring and integrating extra seating, washrooms, change rooms, parking, policing, etc.?

Ti-Cats: The University of Guelph and the City of Guelph were both very helpful in navigating through all the necessary permitting involved in setting up such a large scale temporary stadium. We worked closely with Tower Events to design and construct the temporary seating at Alumni Stadium. William Scotsman proved a temporary box office and both temporary locker rooms. GFL Environmental Corp. and Chantler's Environmental Services provided all necessary services for waste removal. We also worked closely with Electri-Tech Services Inc, WalterFedy, Regal Tents, Drexler Construction, Connors Construction, and Battlefield Equipment Rentals who all worked tirelessly to meet the tight deadlines to get the stadium up and running for our first pre-season game on June 20th.

STA: What is the seating capacity and how does it compare to Ivor Wynne Stadium?

Ti-Cats: The seating capacity at Alumni Stadium was expanded to seat approximately 13,500 and provided a smaller, intimate venue with great sightlines for all fans. Some additional premium seating was added on a game by game basis on the track area surrounding the field of play. Comparatively speaking, the new Tim Hortons Field will have a seating capacity of approximately 24,000.

STA: How did the teams get from the change rooms to the field?

Ti-Cats: Teams walked from the change rooms to the field. We created a pathway through the back of house area for field access for the players. A short portion of the walk was through the South Concourse along Alumni Walk. This was a favorite location for fans to watch both teams enter the field and they were able to take pictures, high five players, and get a random autograph.

STA: Would you change much of what you did in Guelph this year if the new Tim Hortons Field in Hamilton is not finished and you need a stadium for the 2014 season?

Ti-Cats: Overall the transition to Guelph went smooth and not a lot



At the end of season, the dismantling of the temporary seating begins.

of changes would be made. All reports from Infrastructure Ontario are that Tim Hortons Field will be constructed on time and ready for the 2014 season.

STA: How many volunteers were involved at home games? What were their responsibilities?

Ti-Cats: We had few volunteers for home games but we utilized approximately 350 employees to run our game day operations. This included our regular game day staff, customer assistance team, security, parking services, and concession staff.

STA: Approximately how many fans have travelled from Hamilton to Guelph?

Ti-Cats: I do not have exact numbers as this changed on a game by game basis. It would be safe to say that in general the stadium consisted of 70% Hamilton based fans and 30% Guelph and surrounding areas.

STA: Were you pleased with the number of Guelph fans who attended?

Ti-Cats: We were pleased with the number of Guelph fans who attended and are looking forward to seeing our new fans from Guelph make the trip down Highway 6 to cheer on the Ti-Cats at Tim Hortons Field.

STA: Overall thoughts of the season with regards to playing at Alumni Stadium? The City of Guelph?

Ti-Cats: Overall, our season in Guelph was as successful as we could have anticipated. We developed a strong working relationship with the staff at UofG and the intimate atmosphere in Guelph provided a definite home field advantage. The University and City of Guelph welcomed the entire Tiger-Cats organization and supported us throughout the year. Thank you to the City of Guelph and the University of Guelph for sharing in our 2013 season. •

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