

Ashby flourishes on the field for SAC's Saints



By Jeff Doner

In the midst of another successful season playing for the St. Andrew's College Saints (SAC) varsity football team, offensive lineman Adam Ashby has flourished and many have taken notice.

In November, the Saints defeated the Villanova College Knights 38 ? 21 to finish the season with an unblemished regular season record of 6 ? 0, reserving them a spot in the CISAA semi-finals.

In that game, the Saints made short work of the St. Michael's College Kerry Blues in a 37 ? 23 win, which put them in the CISAA finals against the UCC Blues for the fourth consecutive year.

Ashby, a grade 12 student and star player for SAC, has been a big part of his team's success on the field in just his third season playing the sport.

?I got so much better from last year to this year with help of my Ontario coaches and also my school coach,? he said.

?I went to school at Villanova and one of my coaches there wanted me always to play football,? he said, recalling how he first got into the sport. ?I went to school there in grade seven and in grade nine, he was always on me to start playing. In grade nine I wasn't really into it and then grade 10 I really got into it and started playing, which was a great decision, and I've loved it since.?

This season he played well enough to garner some attention from Team Ontario, who added him to their roster for the Canada Cup in Moncton, New Brunswick this past summer.

Ontario came away with a third place finish at the tournament, leaving Ashby with an experience he isn't soon to forget.

?It was a great experience for me and it was awesome to represent my province,? he said. ?Going through the whole stage of trying to make the team was a tough process, with lots of competition, it was good for my game and I learned a lot.?

At six feet and 275 pounds, Ashby said he has always played sports like hockey, tennis, golf, and skiing, but none have come as naturally as football.

?I really like the physicality. It's fun to go out and hit people,? he said. ?I've just grown a love football. I was also into watching it, but I never really knew how fun it would be and I just love every aspect about it.?

Making a career out of it is something he admitted to thinking about time and again.

?I want to make it to the next level and go to university and play football. I'm not sure what else. I'm just going to take it day by day

and keep working hard and see where it takes me.?

Looking ahead to the next step after the current season/school year, Ashby fondly gave credit to the football program at SAC for helping him take the next step.

?Ever since coming here I've grown so much as a person,? he said. ?My academics have gone up and I can't thank my coaches enough. Len Gurr has helped me grow as a player and a person. He's also my advisor and he has just helped me out a lot.

?Last year to this year has been a big jump and I think without coming to SAC I wouldn't have been ready to play for Team Ontario. All the hard work paid off on and off the field.?