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NEWS CONFERENCE/CONFÉRENCE DE PRESSE

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PRINCIPAL(S)/PRINCIPAUX: Dave Dickenson, Coach, Calgary Stampeders
Marc Trestman, Coach, Toronto Argonauts
Olivier Poulin, Director of Communications, Canadian Football League; and, Moderator

SUBJECT/SUJET: The 2017 Grey Cup Head Coaches' news conference is held with Calgary Stampeders Coach Dave Dickenson and Toronto Argonauts Coach Marc Trestman.

Olivier Poulin: Good morning, and welcome to the 105th Grey Cup Competing Head Coaches Press Conference.

Bonjour et bienvenue à la conférence de presse des entraîneurs chefs de la 105^e Coupe Grey présentée par Shaw. Nous allons débiter avec un photo op.

We'll start with a photo op at the front with both coaches. I'm Olivier Poulin, Directeur – Director of Communications and Public Affairs with the CFL.

Je suis Olivier Poulin, directeur des Communications et des Affaires publiques à la Ligue canadienne de football. C'est moi qui va animer cette conférence de presse aujourd'hui. Une fois que nos deux entraîneurs seront assis, il n'y aura pas de remarques d'ouverture. On va aller directement aux questions.

There won't be any opening remarks. As soon as we're done with the photo op, we'll go straight to questions. You guys are good? Good. Gentlemen, take your seats.

Alright. The first question will be from Terry Jones right up front. Francis, to Terry right there.

Question: Marc, we'll start with you. I was told that, back when Dave was at the point where he was going to decide whether he was going to play one more year, that you were interested in hiring him as an assistant coach. Is that true? And what are your thoughts about him and the career he's had? And after you respond, Dave, can – can you talk about Marc and what you've thought of him over the years?

Marc Trestman: Well, I certainly was familiarized with Dave when I got into the League and his – his history as a player and as a – as someone who was – wanted

to grow in the coaching profession. His brother, I knew his brother Craig, and we spent some time talking over the years as well. But to my recollection, we did have a discussion, didn't we?

Dave Dickenson: We did.

Marc Trestman: And it worked out the way it did. Here he is. So it says a lot for, you know, who he is, and got a lot of respect for what he's accomplished and what he's doing there and how he handles his team and how he handles the media, and – and every – every part of his game is something that, you know, we all in the League can be proud of.

Dave Dickenson: Yeah, it was back when – when I was cut by BC, and I was – I was impressed that – that Marc reached out to me, in a sense. I wanted to meet with him. I really did. I wanted to see what I could learn. I knew I could learn a lot, and – but I just hadn't at that point given up the dream of playing. So I told him hey, I'm – I'm going to try to keep this going. As – as it turned out, the – the career was pretty much over as a player. And – but then I stayed in Calgary with Huff. And – and yeah, ultimately I – I hope at some point – you know, we're kind of competing now, but I'd love to be able to sit down with him and – and learn, and also just see how he handles things as a head coach. I think he's, you know, probably as proven as any guy that we've had in our League for a long, long time, and – and I think football people like talking football. And I know – I think both of us just enjoy the game, and both of us would – would enjoy just, you know, sitting down and – and kind of comparing notes and seeing where we're at. And – not this week, though. We'll keep it for another week.

Olivier Poulin: Next question. Bruce, did you get one? Just right there.

Question: Guys, I was just wondering how you would like your teams to approach this week. There's a fine line between having a good time and – and preparation. I'm just wondering from both of you how you want this to be a business trip but also let the players enjoy it.

Dave Dickenson: See how polite he is? He lets the young go. For me, guys, it's do what you normally do. OK? So take care of your bodies and understand that, yeah, it's a different week, but I – I really believe football are routine type of people. We like schedules. Let's be organized, OK? Let's know where we're supposed to be, let's show up where we're supposed to be at, at the right times. Football first. I have done – been on record saying to try to be a little bit selfish, meaning you got family, friends, whatever you got here, fans, you know, you'll have time to go out to dinner and have drinks with them later on. So let's make sure it's football first. Stay on your normal schedule, and – and make sure you, you know, make it as normal a week as possible, and hopefully that increases your chance for success.

Marc Trestman: I can't answer it any better. It's exactly the same tone that – that we've used with our team, almost to a – to a T. I mean, we've got a job to do. We

know we're outside of our normal itineraries and our – our way of doing business on a weekly basis because of the – the extra – the distractions that we have, the same thing that's – that's Dave's – Dave's talked about. There's no different in how we're handling it. We got to remind ourselves each and every day why we're here, and that's to, you know, play a – play for three hours plus on – on Sunday night, and everything's – centres around that. You're going to have some time. If you have a good plan you'll have some time, you'll have family time, and – but most of the – the distractions that we could control we took care of beforehand. You know, get out of the ticket business, get out of the real estate business as early as you could in the week. We planned for that. And – and then it really is – I mean, Da—I may have said it a little bit differently than Dave, but I really said the same thing.

Olivier Poulin: Next question from Jim Morris up front here.

Question: Hello, Dave. Jerome Messam has seemed a little grumpy the last week or so.

Dave Dickenson: Maybe just to you.

Question: Yeah, maybe. Maybe I just rub him the wrong way, you're right. I guess my question is can you talk a little bit about Jerome, maybe the season he had, and maybe the last part of the season. He seemed maybe a little tweet (ph) and then just his sort of reaction.

Dave Dickenson: Well, I – I believe the running back position is the toughest one to maintain when you're in your thirties. I think it's a young man's game, you take a pounding, you're getting a lot of carries, a lot of catches. And for Jerome to be doing what he's doing at this age I think is a tribute to him, and – and he's doing a great job. I mean, he wasn't a focal or feature guy maybe earlier in his career, but we've been giving him a lot of touches and he gets a lot of work in our offence. And you know, I do think ultimately he was a little worn down. He's been fighting an injury for most of the season, and you know, it didn't look like he had that same jump at the end of the year. It was concerning to me. We challenged him, but he definitely rose to that challenge and – and gave me everything he had and had a great performance last week. So I'm not sure why he's grumpy. He had a nice performance and still went over a thousand, big time part of our team's success, and you know, I thought he had a great game last week.

Olivier Poulin: We'll go to the back of the room for Steve Simmons.

Question: Marc, this is – this is your first year coaching most of the players on your team. What in particular has impressed you about Posey, Edwards, and Wilder?

Marc Trestman: What's impressed me about them?

Question: About coaching them, getting to know them.

Marc Trestman: Great. I really love where Posey's at right now. He's gone through I think a personal transformation of how he approaches the game. He's become a selfless player. He went through some adversity throughout the middle of the season when he was injured. I think he – he came in really hungry, and has centred on – on proving himself. And along the way, I think because of – of the relationships that he has with his teammates and with S.J. and with the coaches that he has, I think he's grown up a lot as a person, and that's what I'm most proud of, of him. And he's been able to make plays when we've needed to make plays throughout the second – or the last third of the season, and that's exciting as well. So the entire development as a person and as a – as a player has been impressive and a – and a joy to watch.

Edwards. We all want to grow up and be like Armanti Edwards. That's all I can really say about him. Selfless, emotionally intelligent, highly competitive. Can't – smartest guy in the room and you don't get a word out of him. Every – everybody should have a chance to coach a man like Armanti Edwards. Great family, a great father, and a highly competitive guy who comes out and you know what you're going to get every day. Hard worker, unselfish, he'll do whatever you ask him to do. If he's got something to say to the team, he'll say it, but it – it's few and far between.

James Wilder, he's a entity within himself. He's – and you guys have found that out. He's – he's in the process of growing as a person. He had to earn the right to play. He did it through special teams and – and working at his craft, in understanding our protection packages, understanding our scheme. And then, when he was given an opportunity, he made the most of it. He has a millennial charisma about him, you know, that – that's – that is effective on our team. But the reason why it is is because he's backs it up. He's backed it up with making the decisions and taking care of the football, and – and in his own way, putting the team first and really working hard at that. So you know, that's what winning does. You know, winning and – and playing in games that – that matter does. And so I – I think overall, Steve, we – we've seen, you know, individual growth in each and every guy, both on and off the field.

Olivier Poulin: Next up are Farhan, Arash, and Sean Fitzgerald. Want to start with Arash? Alright.

Question: Dave, last year after the game you said you regretted the call on second and goal. How long did it take you to get over that?

Dave Dickenson: You know, as a play caller, any call you – doesn't work's a bad call. Doesn't mean you didn't do the research; doesn't mean you didn't have the time. You gave – try and put yourself in the best position to execute a call. But when you make a call in a big situation that doesn't work, it's – it's the wrong call. Now, maybe you had some – some things that you thought it was the right call. Maybe the defence just lucked into it and – and maybe found a way to stop it. So what I always enjoy about a play caller is I do like the – the chess match, but also, your players can

bail you out. I've made a lot of bad calls players have made plays on, make it seem like good calls.

So I get over it pretty fast. I didn't go over – get over the game, because I don't think any one player, one call can definitely tell you you won or lost the game with that. But I – I couldn't get over the game very fast, but being back feels good. Now we're just hoping to – to come out on the other end of it.

Question: Just to follow up, Bo said after that he said the ball should have been in my hands or Messam's. It seemed there was a little bit of friction early. Was there, and what were the conversations with Bo in the aftermath?

Dave Dickenson: Listen, I want players that want the ball. And so we have – we're the coaches, though. We decide what's going to put us in the best position to win. You know, I gave Mess a carry right before that. There was an injury. We probably would have continued with our offence, but it was an injury. They subbed in to their big – big people, and so did we. So we have a process. I'm glad they're – they're want the ball when it matters. I'm confident in all of my players, so – and same thing's happened this year. We – we do what we think's best for that situation, hopefully it works more than not, and then live with the consequences, and we've won a lot of football games, had a lot of success.

Olivier Poulin: Farhan.

Question: Dave, the last time you were at a Grey Cup in Ottawa, the big question was who should start a quarterback for the BC Lions: Dickenson or Printers. What do you remember about it?

Dave Dickenson: I remember Wally making the right decision, starting me.

(Laughter)

Nobody – come on, lighten up a little bit there.

(Laughter)

No, that was a weird week. It was a weird, weird week. Casey was the MVP that year. He threw the ball underhand during practice to – to save his shoulder. Now that I'm a head coach and a coach, you know, to me – and I think Marc would be on board with this – I want to see what I'm going to get in the game in practice. And when you can't do that, it makes it very difficult to have faith that that person can get the job done.

I had a tough year that year. I had more knee problems, and it's still – you know, it was a tough, tough year on my health. I was glad to get the opportunity. Felt like I gave it my all. Didn't turn out our – our – for – in our – in our favour. I had a lot of things about that game. I don't know about Marc, but I remember the losses a lot more than the wins, I really do. And – and oh-four stings. It really does. I think we did a lot of things wrong –

strategy, players. I think we had a fight on the bus the – the day before the game. It just wasn't the type of situation that I would want to happen for our team this year, so – and ultimately we lost. So that – yeah, you – when you lose, you look back in maybe a different light and – and certainly wish you could have done things differently.

Question: Marc, how different of a coach are you now than you were in Montreal and had the opportunity after that to be an NFL head coach?

Marc Trestman: I don't know that I'm any different. You grow and you learn from all the experiences that you have. It gives you probably more perspective on life than it does on football. But I'm still grounded in the platform of, you know, how to raise a team, how a team should function, how a team should practice, the type of lifestyle we – we should have in the locker room. I – I think those are – are universal principles that I – I stand by on a – on a daily basis. And – and you know, there's experience behind all new experiences that – that happen along the way, both with success and adversity, and I try to learn from those, and it gives you a new perspective.

And you got to keep learning. That – that's the biggest thing that I've learned, is you have to keep learning because you're dealing with the different kind of players each and every year. You're dealing with millennials now. They're – they're a different kind of player. And you know, when they – when they're – when they're older and – and they're more mature, it's different when they're younger. There – there's a different – different approaches that you have to use. But the bottom line is – is I still try to create the same environment in the same ways because I – I believe in it so heart—heartily. I think – I think they're universal principles that, you know, work in any locker room, but it's – it's – those are the things that we try to stand by each and every day.

Olivier Poulin: So we've got Sean Fitzgerald, Dave Naylor, Jim Morris, then Danny Austin.

Question: Question for Marc. When you guys arrived at training camp, there was only one assistant coach held over from the previous regime. More than half of the players in camp had never worn an Argos jersey before. You were new. How did you get the team together that quickly? Like, what was your learning curve.

Marc Trestman: Honestly, I – I think there was a lot of luck involved on my part as the head coach. I was able to keep Marcus Brady, who I knew. I was able to convince Corey to come out of retirement, which was just – the stars I think were aligned just right for that. I think Corey did a really excellent job of helping me vet the defensive staff, and we got the right guys at the right time. And offensively, really the same thing. I think coaching-wise, there was a little bit of luck involved. And the luck was that I didn't just get coaches who love to be teachers and teach the science of football, but I really got some amazing men, some really, really great men, great fathers, families, principles. And Dave knows. He's been around long enough that it's not easy to do with 15 coaches. And we had a couple of glitches along the way, and we fixed it, and we fell into a little bit of luck there too.

And then – and then player-wise, yeah, I knew we were getting we were getting with Ricky. You know, I knew that I knew enough. I knew the man and the leader and the type of guy we were getting. And then I really attribute to Spencer and the personnel staff that was here before Jim, and certainly when Jim got here, the acquisitions that we had. They did a great job of alleviating a lot of the first-year problems that you have, trying to get the wrong people out of the locker room as quickly as you can. And we didn't have any of that, and I give those guys credit. So we had a platform of at least starting with good people, that guys that love the game and were hard working.

And Jim came in and, you know, with the addition of Armanti and S.J. and Bear, that helped solidify us with guys who, you know, knew what to expect early on in the locker room and could be what's the term they use in – in politics? They could be the people that go out in front of the President and I mean, sponsors, or they're – I – I forget the name that they use down south, but those guys helped to explain, you know, what the heck was going on and why were we doing it this way and why do we practice like this and what's he trying to say here. I had a couple of guys on the staff that I'd work with, and then Marcus helped obviously as well.

So I attribute it to a lot of luck, quite frankly, and a lot of good fortune of having really good resources. We had great resources from from Michael and Sara, our ownership. And it was a work in progress, but a lot of people stepped up and make it a lot easier than it should have been, quite frankly.

Olivier Poulin: Dave Naylor.

Question: Marc, a year ago this week I remember talking to you when you were back home and – and asking you about your football future, and – and you were, I think, pondering whether you – where you were going to go. Could you walk us through the off season, how you were approached by Jim, how it came about? Were there other option you were considering, and why ultimately the decision to return to the Canadian Football League?

Marc Trestman: A lot of it I really don't remember, Dave. It happened so fast. I just think that once – once Jim got the job, you know, I thought that it's kind of interesting that Jim got the job, and it's kind of interesting that I'm sitting out there not coaching football. And it was a a family decision as well. There were things in our family that just made it right, that this was the right job at the right time, and that was really it. It wasn't it wasn't a lot of complicated things. It was OK, let's go up there. We love the League.

I mean, part of it is the love of the League, and the players in the League, and the type of players in the League. This is an amazing league. I say it all the time. Because you watch it every week. The grit of the players, the heart of the players. And it's universal. It's not just our teams. I think Dave would agree it's throughout the League. These

games go to the end for a reason, because of the type of men that are playing it, which makes this as unique a league as there is. And I love being a part of it.

And I knew that, by having Jim, I could coach and he could do what he does. He gets people in the locker room, and it's 24/7. And that's an environment I'm comfortable working in because I don't want that job. I trust him to get the players into the building, and he knows what we're looking for, and that starts with the type of person and man we're looking for, and we're willing to bring guys in to help them grow. We're willing to do that, and to be able to coach football. And that was really it. It wasn't very complicated. And it worked out for my family that it was the right decision.

Question: Dave --

Olivier Poulin: Danny Austin.

Question: Dave, after the Saskatchewan game, you were fairly open about not being pleased with Bo for kind of having a go at Duron Carter. You know with Shawn Lemon the guys are going to be, you know, talking back and forth this week. How are you managing that, and is it something you'd rather avoid?

Dave Dickenson: Well, I think we each have our own personalities, and everybody can be who they are. I don't know why as media you guys like to give so much attention to people that talk a lot. And that could be Bo or Lemon. So just let's focus on the game. I don't care what's getting said on those who's going to go out to eat, and I'm down here at the gym, or all the other stuff, talk about me type of stuff. Those aren't players I think Marc and I want on our team that are selfish guys. And whether our guys – those guys – I'm not saying they're selfish. I want team people and people that care about football. And they have to be solid, grounded people. And when he's talking family, I think football is a great family. I think your team, if you're going to win, it's because your team believes you're a family. And you take care of your family, but you don't necessarily need to get involved in all the other stuff. I know it might create interest and all that, but I think both teams deserve to be here. Both teams are playing good football right now. And to me, I hope the focus is on that versus over anything that's getting said on Twitter or anything like that.

Olivier Poulin: Dan Ralph.

Question: Gentleman, can you talk about what the advantage is of having been here before? You've – you're doing this for the multiple time, and this week is probably ingrained in what you do. What's the advantage of having been here before?

Dave Dickenson: You go ahead this time.

Marc Trestman: Well, any experience is a positive, right? You're able to spend time with your team and explain to them and – exactly what's going to happen and how it's going to happen, and all the things that we've already talked about. You know, you're not on your same schedule, you got to know when you want to eat, you got to know when you want to hydrate. You got to have a plan for the day. You got to know

when you want to get together with your segments. You know, you want to be concerned with that and, you know, the things that are going to help you win the game, be at your best for the game. So that's really it. It's just the experience of having done it and gone through just the logistics of preparing, meet—whatever it is, meeting rooms. That just all goes into it. It allows you to relax a little bit more because you've been through it and you know what to expect. And we got guys in the room who have experience, just like Dave does, and they've got to have a helping hand in. And we've got guys in every segment who's been here, and we're going to utilize their experience as well for the same reasons.

Olivier Poulin: Sylvain St-Laurent.

Question: Marc, you said before that millennials are different to coach than maybe players you would have coached ten, 15 years ago. How so exactly?

Marc Trestman: Well, it really goes to the phone. I mean, it goes to the addiction we have – all of us have to our phones and distracting us, you know, from our task. So they see it a little bit different. And that would be a whole symposium in the off season. It really would. But that doesn't mean that the universal principles of, you know, doing things the right way and being a professional have changed. That has never changed. And so it's finding different ways of sending messages to different guys from different places who see the world from different perspectives.

And really that's the exciting part of the job, is you stand in front of 60 guys every day and you know they're – not all 60 are going to hear the words exactly the way you're saying them. So every – each and every day you got to find, you know, ways of sending the same messages different ways so you can get all ears on it through your demeanour, through your actions, through video, whatever it might be. It's different ways of teaching because they learn differently. And like I said, that goes to an off season symposium on how to coach guys born between 1985 and now, I guess, or 2000, whatever that might be.

Olivier Poulin: Matt.

Question: For both coaches about your quarterbacks. Dave, where is Bo in his – his growth? This will be the fourth Grey Cup but the third he's going to start. Where is he in his growth? And Marc, about Ricky, you talk about Edwards, you talk about Posey, you talk about Wilder. They all smile when talking about the legend that is Ricky Ray. Being around him, how has that helped their growth?

Dave Dickenson: Well, I think if you're going to be a good coach, you need a good quarterback, especially in the CFL. I don't think any of us can be great coaches without a great quarterback. So for me, Bo is – I enjoy working with him. He's highly competitive. He is a hard worker. He wants to do things the right way. He likes football. I like people that – you know, because there's no, like, hundred percent right answer all the time, as long as you're on the same page and you're communicating things. And the

quarterback knows how you're trying to attack things, you have a much greater chance for success. So I think Bo's as good as anyone in the League. I'm sure happy to have him. I'm glad he's still in the CFL. Because I think skill-wise I think he could – he could function and – and be a good player down south. I've enjoyed working with him. I think he has gotten better leadership. He wants to be the guy. He waited his turn, I guess, and allowed himself to grow and maybe get that foundation before we gave him that opportunity. Once he's been the guy, he's had great success.

And I can say the same about Ricky, except he just seemed like – Ricky was like a starter like that. But he earned everything. He's a winner, a great leader. Guys just gravitate to those type of people. And you look at the best quarterbacks in the League, and you'll find the same personality traits and you'll find those in Bo and Ricky, and I think both of us are very lucky to have them as our quarterbacks.

Marc Trestman: Can you repeat the question, Matt?

Question: You talked about Edwards, you talked about Posey, you talked about Wilder and how they've grown. When you talk to all three of them, they smile when talking about the legend of Ricky Ray coming to Toronto to play (off microphone). How has playing with him helped them?

Marc Trestman: Well, Ricky Ray shows you that a leaders come in all different ways. Ricky Ray never says anything. I mean, if we're not in the quarterback meeting, he's not saying anything, other than calling the plays. I mean, he's not going to reach out and speak to the team unless I ask him to. And I haven't asked him very much to do that. Only on one or two occasions have I asked him to break the huddle at the end of practice. Ricky Ray is there to, he is really the surgeon. He's who just does it. But the words are not there. The vocal part of him is not there. That's not what he can do it. When he gets in there, he's going to something to say, he'll be very specific and right on, but he's not going to walk up and walk up and stand up in front of the team. That's just not who I've found him to be.

I know this. When I go to work every day, I can't wait to get there because I get to work with Ricky Ray every day. And everybody in the building who works there knows that we have hope because when we walk into the building, that Ricky Ray gives us hope. Just like Dave, he loves football. And when you walk into the meeting room, you want a quarterback who not only loves football, but really loves football and will do whatever it takes to prepare properly. And on the same part of it, he brings out the best in everybody because we don't want to let him down, right? So when I walk in there to a meeting, I want to make sure I'm totally prepared because I can't let him down. Because if I'm not prepared, he's going to know it, and that's going to affect him.

And that's the way it affects our players. They know they have to be prepared because they know how prepared he is. And you know, it's just energy that feeds on itself, that we don't want to let Ricky down, Ricky doesn't want to let us down, and – and that's kind

of how it works. But – but we're not going to get a lot out of Ricky unless you ask him a question or unless you ask him to speak to the team.

But you know, like Dave said, is as a coach, you're defined by who your quarterback is. And if your quarterback's not playing at a high level, you know, we wouldn't be here. It's the bottom line. The defence can play great, and you can have a great running game, you can have all that, but the quarterback's not functioning at an efficient level and he's not taking care of the football, he's not doing the right things with it, none of that stuff matters.

Olivier Poulin: Last question of the session this morning, with the Jim Shaky Hunt memorial question, Terry Jones.

Question: Shaky used to ask this question for decades, more to entertain himself or to – to break up the press conference when you guys started having too many Xs and Os involved, so --

Marc Trestman: Can you repeat that explanation?

Question: (Laughs). Obviously you've both been here and heard this question before, so I'll rephrase it somewhat. Marc, with your – now dealing with those millennials you talk about, has – has your philosophy with whether your players partake in sexual endeavours during Grey Cup week changed or not? And Dave, you brought your team here last year. You spoke your philosophy on the subject. You didn't win. Do you want them to do the opposite this year?

Marc Trestman: Well, you asked me the question has it changed or not. And so I'm just going to say it hasn't changed and turn it over to Dave.

(Laughter)

Dave Dickenson: Well, since we've both answered the question through the years, maybe I could ask you media guys if you guys are OK with having sex during the week of the Grey Cup. Because you're got a job to do, so, as players, so do we. And I'd rather leave it at that as well.

Olivier Poulin: Alright. Thank you, gentlemen. Thank you, coaches, and good luck on Sunday. Thanks, everybody.