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DAVE HOWE NAMED COACH OF THE YEAR

Two months to the day after leading his Cinderella football squad to an Ontario Varsity Football League championship, Niagara Landmark Window Spears Head Coach has been named Adam Division Coach of the Year. The 10-1 Spears upset the defending champion Mississauga Warriors 25-22 in a double overtime thriller on August 20th in London.

“This is a tremendous honour, but it really should be the *coaching staff* of the year award”, said Howe. “We had a bunch of very talented, team-oriented guys sharing the load – they deserve this award as much as I do”.

Knowing he might have some high school rivalry issues to deal with, Howe set an example by building a coaching staff with a wide range of experience: Division 1, Division 2/3, Varsity, CIS and OVFL. “A lot of the players and coaches didn’t know each other...it was important to show our players that despite the varied backgrounds, we were all on the same team”. As a result, Howe and his staff were able to get past the rivalry issues early. “We had Division 1 kids stepping aside for Varsity and Division 2/3 players”, said Howe. “It’s a testament to the calibre of players that exists at every level of high school football in the Region. But we also lost some great athletes, guys that couldn’t fit into the team-first approach. We didn’t have a lot of room for ego on our team”.

“This was a great group of young men and I’m privileged to have coached them”, said Howe. “We were a very close team, all on the same page and that’s how a team should work...one big unit. My personal greatest achievement this year was watching this team of individuals come together as a team. They have learned from each other and have made friendships that they will never lose. This season would make a great football movie!”.

NOTE: Coach Howe has requested that, space permitting, his entire coaching staff be recognized:

Dave Howe – Head Coach
Grant Phillips – General Manager/Governor
Adam Cook – Offensive Coordinator
Simon Gichard – Defensive Coordinator
Matt Wilson – Defensive Line
Mike Braico – Offensive Line
Geoff Keen – Special Teams
Larry Bone – Quarterbacks, wide receivers
Derek Stonier – Defensive Secondary
John Charette – Strength & Conditioning
Glenn Burke – Athletic Therapist

NOTE: A head shot of Coach Howe is included with this Media Release

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OVFL ALL-STAR TEAMS AND POSITIONAL MVPs ANNOUNCED

The Niagara Spears Varsity squad led all teams with seven players selected to the Adam Division All-Star Team. The Junior Varsity Spears had four players selected as All-Stars.

Varsity Spears All-Stars:

Blake Allen (Cornerback – A.N. Myer)
Kirstyn Carruthers (Linebacker – Blessed Trinity)
Mike Chmielewski (Defensive End – St. Francis)
Steve Patrick (Offensive Tackle – Governor Simcoe)
Adam Petrina (Wide Receiver – Blessed Trinity)
Ricky Savage (Tailback – Port Colborne)
Carlo Turavani (Kicker – Holy Cross) **

Junior Varsity Spears All-Stars:

Steve Cecchini (Linebacker – Denis Morris)
Jedd Gardner (Wide Receiver – St. Michael)
Ed Michel (Offensive Guard – Denis Morris)
Julian Tropea (Kicker – St. Michael) **

** Also awarded positional MVP honours

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Additional information on the Niagara Landmark Window Spears may be found at www.niagaraspears.com .

Additional information on the OVFL, including complete year-end standings and statistics may be found at www.ovfootball.ca .

Both Head Coaches would be pleased to speak with the media and may be contacted directly. Junior Varsity Head Coach Randy Nunn may be reached at (905)685-0135 (h), (905)980-1210 (c), or via e-mail at rnunn@niagaraspears.com . Varsity Head Coach Dave Howe may be reached at (905)937-4699 (h), (905)321-0973 (c), or via e-mail at howe@niagaraspears.com .