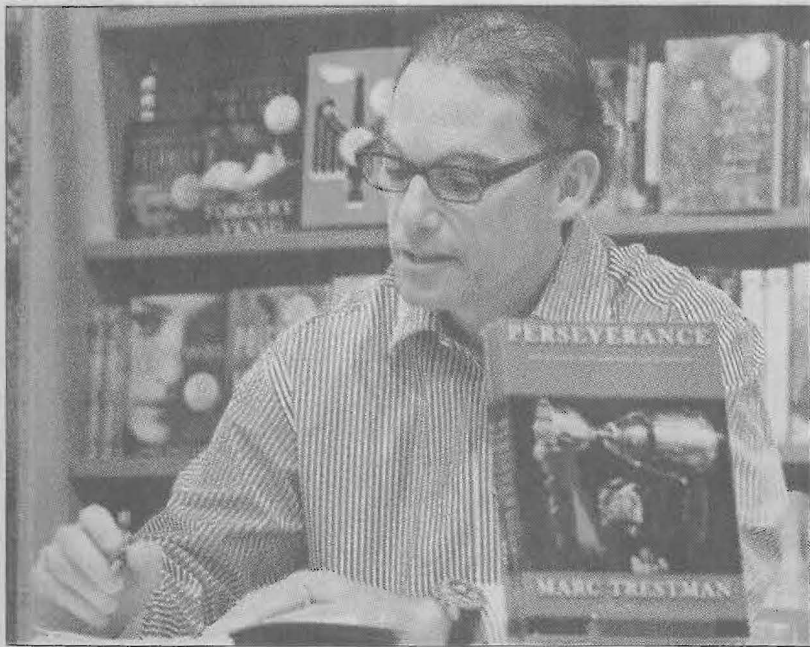


SPOTLIGHT STORY Alouettes field boss Trestman launches new book about leadership

Coach's perseverance pays off



DAVE SIDAWAY THE GAZETTE

Alouettes head coach Marc Trestman signs copies of his new biography *Perseverance, Life Lessons on Leadership and Teamwork* yesterday.

Like every good Jewish boy, Marc Trestman got a degree in law, likely pleasing his parents in the process – it's that or becoming a doctor. And yet, he has failed to spend even one day practising law.

Instead, Trestman became a football coach.

And when Trestman was named head coach of the Alouettes in 2008, at a time when he believed his days in the sport had ended, his knowledge and experience of the Canadian Football League consisted of a limited run as a guest coach at the team's training camp the previous spring.

Since then, Trestman's teams have merely won 26 of 36 regular-season games – including a franchise-record 15 in 2009 – played in two Grey Cups, won one championship, and Trestman has been named the league's coach of the year after being a finalist the year before.

So, Trestman has established himself as the proverbial square peg trying to fit into a round hole – a guy



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who does things unconventionally. And now, he can add the title of author to his impressive résumé with yesterday's Canada-wide release of *Perseverance, Life Lessons on Leadership and Teamwork*, a motivational biography in which he collaborated with Minneapolis-based sports author and motivational speaker Ross Bernstein.

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Text TRESTMAN124 to 11-2-11 to get more on this story.

TRESTMAN 'I've learned leadership through adversity and success'

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And, while we believe Trestman was kidding when he said "yes, absolutely" he was gunning for our job, one just never knows. Then again, Trestman in the media?

His book contains a box with his three rules of dealing with the media, including this gem: The media aren't your friends.

Ouch. It's like he's the reincarnation of the very alive Don Matthews – albeit with more dignity and class.

"I don't want it to be about me," Trestman said during a phone interview prior to yesterday's book signing at a downtown store, and barely more than a week before veterans report to camp at Bishop's University in Lennoxville.

"This is outside of my comfort zone. It's a risk," Trestman said. "There will be different opinions on why I did it. I've exposed myself and

didn't hold back while paying reverence to those I've worked with. Writing takes a lot of discipline, as you well know. It was very detailed, trying to do it right and say the right things without disrespecting anyone. My intent was to treat everyone with the proper respect."

Bernstein, 40, once a pupil at one of Trestman's camps as a youth, reconnected with him close to a decade ago, when he interviewed Trestman for another book he was writing. They seemed to form a bond. Trestman called the author again in 2006, after he had been fired by North Carolina State, pitching the book idea to him. And so began a three-year odyssey.

"I've written a lot of celebrity sports books – and dealt with a lot of jerks," Bernstein said. "But Marc cares. He's so thoughtful and cares about people. He's a great listener. He doesn't say a lot, but he's

deep and is thinking. He's very detail oriented. He's a lawyer, so is very processed in his thinking. You can see his wheels spinning and him thinking."

It wasn't always this good for Trestman, 54. While working for eight National Football League teams and two more in NCAA Division I, and alongside legendary head coaches and some of the game's most dynamic quarterbacks and receivers, he was fired a "small handful" of times and uprooted his family, by his count, 12 times.

"When you're fired on your wedding day," Trestman said, "and when you're fired on your birthday, that's not easy. You have issues to overcome. It's through (wife) Cindy's influence that I was allowed to grow. She was the one who pushed me.

"It (getting fired) hurts for a while, but it's harder for your family. They're the ones who

have to find a new grocery store, doctor, friends and a new house. It's not an easy thing for you to move your family while, at the same time, it's not hard for you to go to work at a new job."

It's this adversity, and overcoming life's challenges,

"This is outside of my comfort zone. It's a risk."

MARC TRESTMAN

Trestman attempts to relay. Yes, there are plenty of football stories and anecdotes, he explained, but there are lessons everyone can certainly relate to.

"It's a book about how I've learned leadership through adversity and success," he explained. "There are great football stories written for anybody. But there are leadership

messages and adversity messages."

The lowest point of his life, Trestman said, came in 2006. He "made a decision to get out of the NFL" in 2004, after a season with the Miami Dolphins, becoming the offensive co-ordinator and quarterbacks coach at N.C. State. Trestman made a conscious decision to settle in Raleigh, vowing to his two girls they would get through high school without relocating.

Fired at the conclusion of the 2006 season – part of a sweep of the entire staff – Trestman was muddling over what to do with the second half of his life when Als management called.

"We plan, and the universe changes," Trestman said.

Anyone can be a leader, Trestman believes. And, whatever he's pouring into the Kool-Aid obviously has worked since his arrival in Montreal, although the mes-

sage potentially becomes more difficult to deliver with each passing season.

But that's a story for another time.

"It's all in the results you see, on and off the field," he said. "It's not the Grey Cup or wins and losses. It's having a positive influence, doing the right thing and trying to be as good as you can. Give your best with the intent of making them their best.

"I look at leadership as serving others without consideration of what you get in return. Helping people be the best they can be. If you put people first, it's hard not to get things back."

Proceeds from the book go to the Marc and Cindy Trestman Foundation for Alzheimer's Research.

Cindy's mother died from Alzheimer's in 2007.

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