

ALOUETTES

Trestman helps QB Tebow boost his NFL draft stock

Heisman winner seeks out Als' head coach

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When University of Florida quarterback Tim Tebow recently decided to hire a private tutor, he didn't select someone from the NFL or even the NCAA. Instead, he decided on Alouettes head coach Marc Trestman.

While it's unlikely Tebow will play in the Canadian Football League, two sources have told The Gazette he's on the Als' confidential negotiation list — meaning, should he venture north, Montreal holds the first option on his rights.

Tebow is preparing for today's Senior Bowl in Mobile, Ala., a precursor to this spring's NFL draft. Highly scrutinized during this week's workouts, speculation is running rampant he could

slip into the third round of the draft. His critics said the 6-foot-2, 236-pound prospect will never make it in the NFL as a quarterback, forced instead to play running back, tight end or even, as hard as it would be to fathom, *linebacker*.

And that could eventually pave his way to the Als, where he certainly would get a shot to play his natural position — albeit for less money than he could earn in the NFL.

"I don't think he's good enough to play in the NFL," a source told The Gazette. "But there will be a ton of pressure on the Florida-based teams to draft the guy, especially Jacksonville. He's a Jacksonville native, and the Jaguars are having trouble selling tickets.

"He's God in Florida," the source said. "I'd be stunned if

he came to the CFL for a salary of \$75,000 or \$80,000."

Trestman's connection with Tebow and his family goes back some time. While the offensive co-ordinator and quarterbacks coach at North Carolina State University, Trestman attempted to recruit him in 2005 and developed a relationship with the QB's father.

So Trestman, a quarterback coach for nine NFL teams, was more flattered than surprised when Tebow recently elicited his help. The pair spent two days working at a Miami training facility. The next week, Trestman traveled to Los Angeles, handling the same assignment with Notre Dame pivot Jimmy Clausen.

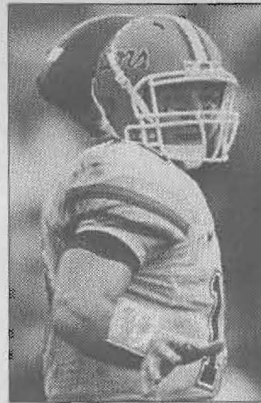
Trestman showed Tebow tapes of Als quarterback Anthony Calvillo. Calvillo and Tebow throw with an unorthodox long motion and rely on more of a windup. And

they're about the same height.

"A.C.'s an unbelievable quarterback," Trestman said. "His throws are on time and they're accurate. I tried showing (Tebow) there's lots of ways to get the ball to the open guy.

"But (playing in the CFL) isn't even a consideration for him at this point. He's got to take his shot in the NFL."

While many consider Tebow to be a marginal NFL prospect, Trestman is one of the few exceptions. He's quick to say scouting's an inexact science and added that it's fine not to be a finished product coming out of school.



GETTY IMAGES FILE PHOTO
Alouettes head coach Marc Trestman tutored quarterback Tim Tebow for the NFL draft.

Trestman pointed out that New England's Tom Brady was not selected until the sixth round (199th overall).

"There's more than just myself who think he can develop," Trestman said. "He has the ability to throw a lot of different passes. He has mobility and is quick-minded. He knows football and can throw it. Why can't he play in the NFL and excel?"

"I think, at this stage, there's a lot of comments and criticism. Give him credit. He's a special person and player. Who the heck knows? I feel it's way too early to say he can't excel."

Tebow, a Heisman Trophy winner, led the Gators to two national championships. In last month's Sugar Bowl, he passed for 482 yards against Cincinnati. But he operated mostly out of the shotgun formation for four years while running Florida's high-powered spread offence. That led to questions about his footwork, mechanics and delivery.

Trestman spent only an hour watching Tebow throw. The remaining time was devoted to meeting and watching film. "Obviously, we didn't focus on his mechanics or footwork," Trestman said.

"You can change him ... work on his mechanics, like a golfer changes his swing."

Tebow said this week he hasn't contemplated changing positions.

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