



Mark Wald — 'only' 234 pounds

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Persistence pays — \$108 per second

By MARTY KNACK

Mark Wald knows there are few vocations where he can earn \$108 a second.

Obviously, it's rare even in the Canadian Football League for someone to receive so much money for such a short span.

But that's what Wald, an offensive lineman trying to make it with Edmonton Eskimos, earned during the 1980 Grey Cup game.

Wald dressed for only his second game of the season. He didn't play much — 76 seconds, according to his calculations — but was given a cheque for \$8,190 as his share of the winners' purse.

Wald looked back on last season after practice Monday at Concordia College on the second day of Eskimos' training camp.

He had just finished going through a rigorous two-hour workout and stayed late to work with fellow centre Ted Milian, quarterbacks Tom Wilkinson and Brian Broomell, and kicker Dave Cutler.

Wald is an individual who makes it in sports through sheer determination.

He attended training camp with Eskimos for the fourth time in 1980. He finally played in his first league game on Sept. 14, after safety Pete Lavorato failed to respond to treatment for an injured ankle.

Now Wald is back for his fifth try, hoping to find a spot because of the retirement of centre Bob

Howes. But he will gladly serve as back-up to Milian, the likely candidate to start in Howes's place.

"I know how they feel," he said, when it was mentioned that his chances of making the team had improved because centres Tony Dippolito and Tim Hook had been released after the first practice.

"I've got to encourage these other guys, too," he said, referring to players like Mike Reid, listed behind him on the depth chart, and John Logan and Patrick Sheahan.

Logan and Sheahan are listed as defensive end-linebacker and offensive guard, respectively. But now they were snapping the ball under a hot afternoon sun.

"I can't be a back-stabber," said Wald, reflecting on his past experiences. "I got cut every time. Last year I got cut during the pre-season after a couple of games and still got to play in the Grey Cup game."

He trained hard in the off-season, emphasizing technique in workouts with former Eskimo Mark Coflin, now with Toronto Argonauts, and came into camp 12 pounds lighter than last year.

Wald realizes his size leaves him at a distinct disadvantage. He weighs only 234 pounds.

"But like my dad (a 140-pounder) told me, it's not the size of the dog in the fight, it's the fight in the dog.

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It won't be easy. The Eskimos open training camp this weekend at Concordia College and things promise to be tough for the 80 hopefuls, including 43 veterans, battling for 34 spots on the roster.

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