

## **Toronto Argonaut Michel Dupuis is MS Ambassador for Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Toronto - Argos rookie Michel Dupuis knows what it's like to face a potentially disabling disease. Diagnosed with multiple sclerosis at age 25, he is now helping others with MS by becoming an MS Ambassador for the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada.

Two years ago Dupuis felt a sharp pain in his right eye followed by numbness and a tingling in his legs. After having a magnetic resonance imaging test, he was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Medication is helping to manage the disease, and he has been back playing football ever since.

As one of the leading tacklers on special teams for the Toronto Argonauts, Dupuis immediately accepted the invitation to be an MS Ambassador. He has adopted the MS Society's mission as his own - to be a leader in finding a cure for multiple sclerosis and enabling people affected by MS to enhance their quality of life.

"I can't spend my days living in fear that something is going to trigger another attack. Last year when I was playing for the Ottawa Gee-Gees and was feeling really good, I decided that I wanted to go all the way to the Vanier Cup so I could remember it for life."

Dupuis not only helped the Gee-Gee's win the Vanier Cup, he also won an award for team spirit. "I set goals like that for myself all the time now," said Dupuis, a native of Quebec. "I just don't know how MS will affect me in the long run."

There is currently no known cause or cure, but treatments are available for some forms of MS and research advances are giving hope to all people with MS - a hope that Michel carries with him every day.

"We welcome Michel as an MS Ambassador," says Alistair M. Fraser, MS Society national president and chief executive. "We hope that his strength, perseverance and team spirit will inspire others to support this important cause and to become MS Society volunteers."

To honour Michel and his new role as an MS Ambassador, the Toronto Argonauts and the MS Society of Canada have teamed up to present MS Day on Friday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2001 in a home game against the Calgary Stampeders at the SkyDome. The Argonauts donated \$5 from every ticket sold with a special ticket voucher. These vouchers allowed friends of the MS Society to receive a special discount on their ticket price. The MS Society of Canada is the only national voluntary health agency in Canada with the dual mission to both find a cure for MS and to enable people affected by MS to enhance their quality of life.

For more than 50 years, the MS Society has funded research projects lead by internationally renowned scientists, has provided services for people with MS and their families, has worked along side people with MS in advancing the rights of people with disabilities and has made the public aware of MS and its effects on Canadians. The MS Society raises funds from the public to support these programs.

Multiple sclerosis is an often disabling disease of the central nervous system, and Canada has one of the highest rates of MS in the world. Its symptoms are highly variable and unpredictable, but can include vision and speech problems, extreme fatigue, lack of balance and coordination

and even paralysis. Approximately 50,000 Canadians are affected by multiple sclerosis, which usually strikes between the ages of 20 and 40.

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