

Quarterback Porter released

Als entering season with Marsh, Neiswander backing up Calvillo

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Once again, it would seem, the Alouettes are potentially in a precarious position should anything happen to veteran quarterback Anthony Calvillo.

That doesn't make them unique in Canadian Football League circles, which is why Montreal signed Quinton Porter last January to a three-year deal — one that included a \$30,000 signing bonus that counts against the salary cap. Porter, who spent five seasons with Hamilton, passing for more than 4,000 yards, provided the Als with an experienced security blanket.

Until Friday, when he was one of 11 players released. Among others jettisoned of note were linebacker/rush-end Mike Lockley and cornerback Seth Williams.

When Porter joined the Als in the dead of winter, less than a week after they lost head coach Marc Trestman to the Chicago Bears, he was under the impression he'd have a chance to compete for the backup quarterback position.



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taking a lot of hits. A couple of throws were a little off as I was getting hit."

The Als will now enter the season with Josh Neiswander and rookie Tanner Marsh backing Calvillo up. Neiswander, entering his third season with Montreal, has a strong arm. Marsh, meanwhile, has looked impressive despite limited playing time. Against the Argonauts, he completed 4 of 7 for 79 yards, including a 47-yard touchdown to Michael Campbell — who was released on Friday.

"It's a battle. Porter's played a lot. Neiswander has been developed. And a rookie that has looked outstanding," Popp said earlier Friday, before the team announced its transactions. "It's a big decision on our part which direction to go."

Porter shouldn't be unem-

Following the first week of training camp this month that scenario seemed to change in Porter's mind. He told The Gazette he asked general manager Jim Popp for his release at that time.

"I was taking the position that, if I wasn't going to be given a chance to compete to be the backup, I'd rather get a chance somewhere else," Porter said Friday evening by telephone. "When I met these coaches (Dan Hawkins and offensive co-ordinator Mike Miller) I quickly realized that wasn't going to be the case.

"There was nothing I could do. And I definitely didn't do enough to change their minds," Porter quickly added.

Porter completed 8 of 17 passes for 178 yards, two touchdowns and one interception, in Montreal's opening exhibition game against the Tiger-Cats. But he wasn't nearly as effective Thursday, at Toronto, completing only 2 of 9 attempts for 13 yards. He also fumbled with the Als in scoring position, although a teammate recovered.

"I couldn't get anything going," he admitted. "I was

he could back up the frequently-injured Buck Pierce. Or in Edmonton, where Matt Nichols is lost for the season with a torn knee ligament, leaving the Eskimos with Mike Reilly.

Lockley dressed for 14 games last season, his first with Montreal. He registered 15 defensive tackles and three quarterback sacks while forcing two fumbles. But the Als signed Ejiro Kuale as a free agent from Toronto and have decided to play him at rush-end, although he was a linebacker with the Argonauts. That made Lockley expendable.

"E.J. was brought in for a reason," Lockley said. "They chose him. That's their decision.

"I felt like I played good. I had a sack in the first game, hit the quarterback, pressured him. In the second game I was sick. I still went out and played. I got a tackle for a loss and brushed the quarterback.

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