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"Every time I play them, it's with a chip on my shoulder," Als' Shawn Gallant says of Bombers.

Revenge motivates Gallant

Als' special-teams standout let go by Bombers

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Shawn Gallant played seven Canadian Football League seasons before making the playoffs for the first time in his career.

He won't have to wait as long for his second appearance. That it comes against Winnipeg, his former team, only adds to the subplot.

"Every time I play them, it's with a chip on my shoulder," said Gallant, who plays special teams for the Alouettes while backing up at safety and linebacker. "Trust me. If I can make some plays ... you always play hard against a team you played for, and a team that turned against you."

Gallant has bounced around the CFL.

Selected eighth overall by Saskatchewan in the 2000 Canadian college draft, he spent two seasons with the Roughriders. Saskatchewan finished last in

the West Division both years. The Roughriders made it to the playoffs in 2002, but Gallant was in Ottawa by then, selected by the Renegades in the expansion draft.

The Renegades failed to make the playoffs in their four-year existence. But Gallant had enough after three years and signed with the Blue Bombers as a free agent. Gallant finally received some playoff money last year, when Winnipeg finished third in the East Division, only to squander a 10-point lead at Toronto with 10 minutes remaining in the semifinal.

"I went from being overjoyed that I was in the playoffs to seriously wanting to cry," he remembered. "To know that you might never get that chance. Who knows if it'll come again."

Although Gallant tied for the league lead with Carl Kidd in special teams tackles, Bombers general manager Brendan

Taman decided not to re-sign him in 2007. Gallant weighed interest from Calgary and Montreal, electing to sign with the Als as a free agent.

"I did what (Winnipeg) wanted," said Gallant, 31. "It wasn't a blow to my ego, it was more frustration. Management wanted to go younger and cheaper."

Gallant, 6-foot-1 and 212 pounds, is busy preparing for Sunday's division semifinal at Winnipeg. The Als have a rich playoff tradition, never missing the postseason since the franchise returned to Montreal in 1996, not to mention four Grey Cup appearances in five seasons. Gallant looks at that history with envy.

"I'm taking nothing for granted," he said. "A lot of these guys have gone to Grey Cups. I've been trying for the playoffs and to get past the first round. I'm excited."

"Playing Winnipeg ... There would be no greater feeling than to beat them and move on."

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