

A bullet couldn't stop him

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THE GAZETTE

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LENNOXVILLE - The scar goes up the middle of Trent Guy's stomach, stretching perhaps 12 inches. That's because the surgeons had to go through the front, removing an intestine before they could get to the bullet lodged in his back.

One inch to the right, it would have struck his spine, resulting in paralysis. An inch to the left, and a vital organ almost certainly would have been hit, resulting in Guy bleeding to death.

"I do think about it," said Guy, 24, a receiver and return-specialist attempting to crack the Alouettes' roster at training camp. "I'm blessed to be here, blessed to be able to not only walk, but come out, play and compete.

"I sat out last year," added the 5-foot-9, 171-pound import from Charlotte, N.C. "I had a lot of time to think how blessed I am to be able to still compete for a job and get paid to do something I love."

Guy, 20 at the time and about to enter his junior year at the University of Louisville, was out celebrating the Fourth of July, four years ago, with his girlfriend when an altercation broke out at a downtown club. It was 2:30 a.m. and most people will tell you good things rarely happen at that hour.

"It's something I can't take back," he said, "but I don't regret being at the spot."

According to Guy, he was defending his girlfriend's honour after the assailant physically touched her. Again, according to Guy, the woman was sexually assaulted. Both parties, along with their friends, were evicted from the club. That's where the story should have ended. But as Guy was making his way to his parked car, shots rang out.

According to published reports, 19 bullets were fired from a 9-mm handgun, one striking Guy as he attempted to flee. He was the only person injured.



PETER McCABE THE GAZETTE

Trent Guy, a receiver and return-specialist, is attempting to crack the Alouettes' roster at training camp.

"I was so upset. It felt like I pulled a muscle in my back," he remembered. "I was running away. I assume pretty fast. To not get hit by 18 of the 19 bullets fired in your direction ...

"I felt how close it was to my spine," Guy added. "All I could say was 'thank you Lord,' because it didn't hit my spine. I could have been paralyzed."

Guy was able to return under his own power to the club, from where an ambulance was called. The fact the club was located so close to the hospital, and Guy was in prime condition, worked in his favour, the doctors told

him. He was rushed into surgery almost immediately.

Incredibly, five weeks later, he reported to the Cardinals' training camp, albeit 25 pounds lighter. He was ready for the school's first game.

Guy made his mark at Louisville as a returner. In 43 games, he accumulated 3,252 all-purpose yards. That included 1,980 on kickoff returns. He returned five kicks for touchdowns. Although Guy had a modest 43 receptions over four years, five were for scores.

He signed with the Oakland Raiders as a free agent in April 2010, only to be released before mini-camp. But

he also worked out for New England and Carolina, the Panthers eventually signing him. Guy spent that season on the team's practice roster but was released following the third exhibition game last year.

The Als are loaded at receiver, and it will be difficult to make the team at that position. The fact he can return, however, could work in his favour. Montreal's seeking a returner following the release of Tim Maypray. The team failed to get much production there last season, going through a number of players.

"It all starts at practice, learning what to do," general manager Jim Popp explained. "We have an extremely complex system and it's not easy to learn. The first thing is learning the system, so there's trust. Then it's performance. If a player performs well, he has got a great shot of sticking around in some capacity."

While Guy believes he can play receiver, he's like any import rookie coming to a new team, country and league. He knows he must learn the Canadian game, while picking up the Als' offensive system as quickly as possible. And then it's up to the coaches.

Somehow, one way or another, Guy will survive.

"I look at life differently. Life's short. It can be taken from you in an instant," he said. "God didn't feel it was my time. He kept me here for a reason. I'm not sure what that reason is - if it's to play football or something else. But as long as He allows me to play, I'm going to keep fighting."

"I'm going to play the game I love until I can't do it no more."

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To learn how the Als managed on Friday without head coach Marc Trestman, go to montrealgazette.com/thesnap