

**ALEX WEBSTER:
1931-2012**

Star back played for Alouettes

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A funeral will be held in Stewart, Fla., on Wednesday for former Alouettes star Alex Webster, who died on Saturday at age 80 after a lengthy battle with lung cancer and emphysema.

Webster was a Canadian Football League all-star with the Alouettes in 1954 before moving on to the National Football League's New York Giants, where he led their running attack for 10 seasons.

In his one full season with the Alouettes in 1954, Webster was an all-star. That was the first of three straight years when the Alouettes - led by quarterback Sam Etcheverry, receivers Hal Patterson and Red O'Quinn, and with Webster running the ball - were the most exciting team in Canada. They won the East Division three straight years, but lost to the Edmonton Eskimos all three times in the Grey Cup.

Webster led the CFL's East Division in scoring in 1954 with 80 points.

Unlike many stars from his era, Webster didn't spend much time talking about the "good old days" when he played, instead marvelling at the superiority of the modern game and modern players.

During an interview in 2008 for a Where Are They Now? feature in The Gazette, Webster was asked if he looked at Giants running-backs Brandon Jacobs and Ahmad Bradshaw as the modern version of what he and Frank Gifford did for the Giants in the late 1950s and early '60s.

"Well, they're a little bigger and they're stronger," Webster said calmly.

Then he shifted gears.

"You're talking about 50 years ago," he said. "There is no comparison between what we did then and what these players do today. In the first place, they're much bigger and stronger. They're faster and they know so much more about the game. They know what they're supposed to do on every play. They are prepared.

"When I was growing up, I didn't know anything about pro football. Today, the kids know what is expected of them in pro ball. While they're at school and college, they work and train and study in order to get better.

"This is completely different from when I grew up. These kids are much, much better than we were."

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