

Good attitude at camp



CENTRE GORD Simpson is one of only two veterans currently in Vernon Lakers' training camp. Simp-

son said everyone is working hard and there is a good attitude on the ice. Daily News Photo

There aren't too many familiar faces around the Vernon Lakers' training camp, in the Priest Valley Arena.

Only two players who spent last season with Lakers, Gord Simpson and Richie Odiorne, are on hand. Rookie Head Coach Murray Lawrence promised to rebuild the team after a disastrous 1981-82 campaign, and with only two returnees, it appears he is determined to keep that promise.

Simpson said there is a good attitude in camp.

GOOD ATTITUDE

"There are guys coming and going every day so it will be a while before we can really tell who'll be on the team," Simpson said. "The guys who are here now have a good attitude and are working hard."

Simpson admits he almost didn't return this year after the turmoil that surrounded the team, both on and off the ice, last season.

"Three of us went over to Vancouver, from Nanaimo, to meet with the coaches (Lawrence and assistant Chuck Tapp) in July," Simpson said. "We were impressed with them and decided to come here."

The other two players are winger Peter Oliphant and defenceman Don Raintala. Raintala is in camp, however, Oliphant is in Seattle hoping to land a berth with Breakers, of the Western Hockey League.

"Peter told me he'll probably come back to Vernon if he doesn't stick in Seattle," Simpson said.

PENALTY KILLER

After a great 1980-81 season with Nanaimo Midget Reps, Simpson spend most of his rookie year in the BC-JHL as a penalty killer and defensive specialist. The 18-year-old centre said he doesn't mind working in those capacities again. "I'll do whatever the coaches want me to do," he said.

Coaching was one of the big problems last season, according to Simpson. "The players just couldn't get along with the coach (Gord MacBeth)," he said. "As the season progressed, it affected our performance in the ice."

FOUR COACHES

Lakers are employing a four-coach system this year. Lawrence will be aided by Bob Gregorash, Kim Weberg, and Tapp. "I think the four-coach system will work," Simpson said. "One thing is for sure . . . they'll keep us in line."

Meanwhile, Lawrence plans to have the roster trimmed to about 40 players today. Four players have arrived from Kamloops Oilers camp and another four are expected this weekend.

Oilers and Lakers do not have a formal affiliation, but are co-operating under a working agreement.

Vernon has an intra-squad game scheduled Saturday, at 4 p.m. in the Priest Valley Arena.