

Young defenceman makes adjustments

Local hockey fans get their first opportunity to see Vernon Lakers, tonight, when they host Revelstoke Rockets in B.C. Junior Hockey League exhibition action, at 8 p.m., in the Civic Arena.

Rockets edged Lakers 3-2, Thursday, in Revelstoke.

Youngest player on either team, and probably the entire BCJHL, is Vernon's Keith Chase. Chase, who played with Vernon Bantam Reps last season, turned 15 in April.

WAS NERVOUS

He admits he was nervous before his first junior game in Revelstoke. "I didn't really know what to expect," he said, "but once I got out on the ice, I was okay."

The 180-pound defenceman said the biggest difference between bantam and junior hockey is timing.

"The guys in junior are so much faster... I have to time my hits completely different than I did last

year."

Lakers' Head Coach Murray Lawrence plans to cut 12 players this weekend, but said Chase has an excellent chance of sticking with the club.

"Keith held his own quite well in Revelstoke," Lawrence said. "He needs some work with his timing, but that will come. I don't think he'll be out of place in junior hockey."

CLEARING NET

One other thing that is giving Chase some problems is clearing the front of his net. He said, "There is no way I'm going to move some of the guys in this league so I have to outsmart them. I have to tie them up and lift their sticks at the right time."

Chase is the first player from the Vernon pee wee team, that won the B.C. title in 1980, to play with a junior A team. Several other members of that club tried out with Lakers, but were cut and advised to spend at least one year in the midget division.



KEITH CHASE
... timing

"I'm surprised I'm still with the Lakers," Chase said. "Because of my age, I didn't think I had much of a chance. I've tried to make up for my lack of ex-

perience with hard work... I guess that is what got me here. I'll just keep working hard and see how it goes. I wouldn't be upset if I was cut and sent to the midgets, but I'm going to do my best to stay in junior A."

WITH ROY

Chase, who was paired with 18-year-old Tom Roy in Revelstoke, said playing with guys three or four years older than him hasn't caused any problems. "I'm getting along with everyone," he said. "I don't think there is any resentment from the other players because I'm younger than them."

Chase and the rest of the Lakers will get their first look at one of the strongest teams in the league Sunday, when they host Kelowna Buckaroos. He said, "I know Kelowna and Penticton have great hockey teams, but I'm not going to go out there in awe of them. I'll just go out and do the best job I can."