

60 players on the ice

The fun is over . . . now the serious work of cutting out a hockey team from the available talent begins for Vernon Lakers' Coaches Chuck Tapp and Mike Enemark.

Lakers' main camp got under way today at 9 a.m. with the second practice scheduled tonight at 8 p.m.

Lakers' rookie camp was held last week with about 60 hopefuls in town. Over the course of the weekend, Tapp and Enemark singled out those players they felt had what it takes to possibly make it in the BCJHL. The rest they sent home or back to the minor hockey system in Vernon.

"We made some cuts Sunday," said Enemark. "We narrowed it down to about 35 rookies."

"Going into main camp it looks like we'll have about 40-45 guys out including a few walk-ons that we'll probably get."

There were no practices Monday.

Veteran Gavin Shuya is impressed by the first days of the Lakers' camp and feels things will go better for the team this season because of it.

"There's more talent and a lot bigger guys as well," said Shuya, who at 20 years of age is playing out his last year of eligibility in junior hockey. "We should be able to make a pretty good team."

There was some indecision on Shuya's behalf on whether he would be returning to the Lakers' fold following a bout of controversy the young defenceman had with former coach Murray Lawrence toward the end of last season. However, a new coach and added enthusiasm made the difference in Shuya's final decision.

"One of the big reasons why I'm back is because Chuck's here (Tapp)," said Shuya. "He's a guy who's up front and he told me I have two possibilities . . . either a Canadian college scholarship or a European tryout."

Shuya obviously has a great deal of respect for Tapp and feels Lakers' new coach has a good overall knowledge of the game.

"Chuck really knows what he's doing," added Shuya. "He runs a good practice and keeps the players interest up."

Tapp and Enemark will make more cuts today with an intra-squad game scheduled for Wednesday which will give local hockey fans an opportunity to see what's in store for them this season.