

Lakers meet Shuswap at Civic Arena tonight

Fresh off an exhibition victory against Williams Lake Mustangs, pride of the Peach-Caribou Junior Hockey League, Merritt Centennials will take to the ice at Civic Arena for an exhibition encounter with Vernon Lakers tonight at 8 pm.

Despite the fact that Centennials are apparently off on the right foot for the season, Lakers' coach Chuck Tapp isn't too worried about tonight's match-up and even decided a warm-up practice today was unnecessary.

In his line-up Tapp will include a good blend of both rookies and veterans to give local hockey fans a good opportunity to assess Lakers' strength and depth.

Starting line-up will

feature an all-veteran line with speedy Nick Kapicki taking the draws while third-year man Rob Kossan and ace-veteran Bobby Wensley will pick up the wings.

Second line will feature veteran centre Dave Wensley between former Lakers' captain Gord Simpson and newcomer Rick Sparks. Third line will feature rookies Bruce major between Kirk and Thorsen while Derek Webb and Brent Doucette will dress as spares.

On defence, rookie Rob Hawkin, of Vernon, will team up with ace veteran Gavin Shuya in the starting line while youngster Jay Stark will join veteran Ken MacKenzie. Tony Christie and Regan Desroche will make up the

third string of defence.

Starting in net will be Kelly Muir with another rookie, Bob Moll in as backup.

Although none of Lakes coaching staff or management have had an opportunity to scout the Merritt team, they were on hand to witness Shuswap Totems' 13-5 victory over Revelstoke Rangers recently. Lakers will open their regular season against Totems Tuesday evening at Civic Arena.

"They look fairly good," said Tapp of Totems. "They're moving the puck well... they'll be tough."

However, Tapp had few good words for Rangers who, according to Lakers' coach, deserved to be on the short end of the score that night.

"I would hope he (Murray Lawrence) has got more players at home hiding in the bushes," said Tapp. "He'll be getting more cuts from Kelowna soon though."

The BCJHL officially gets underway Sunday night when Langley Eagles visit Burnaby Blue Hawks in a Coastal Division matchup. Tuesday night Burnaby will be in Richmond while Shuswap plays here.

The BCJHL will operate six teams in both the Coastal and Interior Divisions this season but there will be no interlocking play this season until the divisional playoff winners meet in the league final in April.

The Coastal Division is made up of Burnaby, Langley, Abbotsford Flyers, Cowichan Capitals, Nanaimo Clippers and Richmond Sockeyes. A one-year leave of absence was granted New Westminster Royals.

Abbotsford won the BCJHL championship last spring and also defeated teams from Alberta and Manitoba before losing in the Centennial Cup series in Toronto for the Canadian Junior A title.

Broncos unbeaten with Elway at helm

Although designated savior John Elway has been less than divine for Denver Broncos, they still have managed to remain one of only five unbeaten National Football League teams going into the third weekend of the season.

On Thursday, Cleveland beat Cincinnati 17-7 and Miami is at Los Angeles Raiders in a battle of two 2-0 teams Monday night.

LEARNS 100 PLAYS

Elways says the need to learn 90 to 100