

Lakers host Totems

By JIM JUDD
Daily News Sports

Vernon Lakers will be looking for a little revenge when they open their BCJHL schedule at home, tonight, against Shuswap Totems.

Last year, Shuswap upset Lakers in the season opener.

Chuck Tapp was behind the Lakers' bench for that game and he'll be behind the bench again tonight, only this time Tapp will play the role of head coach rather than assistant coach.

"We want revenge since they beat us in the season opener last year," said Tapp. "We want to win our first game at home."

In spite of a storehouse of fresh talent and depth in their ranks, Lakers will be going mostly with their veteran players for their first home encounter.

"I'll be satisfied with just a win," said Tapp.

Meanwhile, Tapp had to trim six more players from his camp following Monday night's practice session.

The list of cuts included a handful of midget-age local players, a goaltender, and one veteran.

Gone is 20-year-old winger Brent Doucette while goaltender Bob Moll will be dealt to Merritt Centennials.

"I feel since we can only have Brent (Doucette) this last year, we would be better off bringing along younger players in hope of building for future teams," said Tapp.

Four other players, Jay Stark, Derek Webb, Jeff Finley, and Keith Chase, all local prospects, will be sent down to

spend another year in midget ranks.

One midget-age player who did not get sent back to minor hockey is Bruce Major. Major, for now at least, will see regular duty with the team.

"Bruce (Major) will be in the lineup," said Tapp. "He's proven thus far that he can handle it in this league so why not give him a shot?"

Major, though somewhat gangly at 6'3" and 170 pounds, displays a keen desire to play along with a lot of intensity and finesse on the ice. Despite his appearance, the 16-year-old possesses a mature attitude for the game.

"I'm mentally prepared for the hitting in this league," said Major. "When I was in midget it was a bit different but now I've got my mind made up I want to be first in the corners."

So far, Major has proven his ability to score goals and set up plays in exhibition games and scrimmages and would relish the opportunity to do the same thing in the BCJHL this season.

"If I play with the same wingers we'll be fairly productive," he said.

Tapp will have Shawn Oswald and Kelly Muir dressed for goaltending duties this evening.

"I'll probably start Kelly (Muir) and save Shawn (Oswald) for Friday's game against Revelstoke," said Tapp.

Defensively, Tapp will use his veterans Ken Mackenzie and Gavin Shuya along with Regan Desroches and Chris Saunders while the balance will include Tony Christy, Rob Hockin and/or Clay Cody.

Game time is 8 p.m. at the Civic Arena.

BRUCE MAJOR makes his junior hockey debut tonight when Vernon Lakers host Shuswap Totems in the BCJHL season opener, at 8 p.m., in the Civic Arena. Major, 16, starred in the Vernon Minor Hockey Association ranks before earning a spot with the Lakers. (Daily News Photo)

BCJHL

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