

LAKERS HOST CENTS

Kossan has learned to roll with the flow

By anyone's standards, Rob Kossan is a veteran in junior "A" hockey. Therefore he is a considerable sounding board in momentary times of crisis such as that the Lakers are presently going through.

Now, in his third full season in a Lakers' jersey, Kossan has seen the same team rise from the ashes of obscurity to a bonafide contender in the course of his stint with the club.

In that same period of time, Kossan has also been witness to three changes of team ownership, and five coaching changes, which now includes two brief stints under former head coach Chuck Tapp.

Through the turmoil of the years, Kossan has also picked up a sense of how to traverse the situations and get on with the business at hand. He saw how the experienced players were able to aid the team through previous rough spots and the high-scoring winger knows that responsibility now rests on his shoulders more than anyone else.

"A firing this early in the season is quite upsetting to the team," said Kossan. "We had a

meeting when management told us and I know most of the team was upset and sort of confused . . . I don't think they know how to handle the situation."

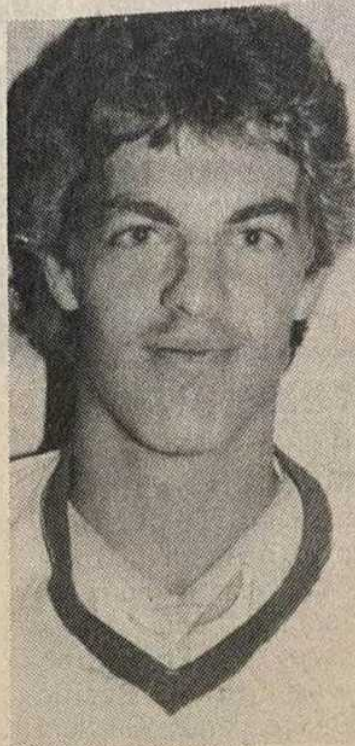
However, Kossan knows just what has to be done in order to keep things on the right track.

"The veterans will have to pick up the slack and help the rookies out," Kossan said. "We'll have to give interim coach Mike (Enemark) a lot of feedback so he can adjust and gain confidence and in the end help the team out."

Although some of the older players may have had reservations about playing under Enemark as coach, Kossan feels only time will tell if the former junior star can make the adjustment from player to coach.

"As far as his age in inexperience (as a coach) goes it will be a big liability for him (Enemark)," said Kossan. "It's hard for ex-team-mates to have him as a coach but we'll sure give him a chance and maybe things will work out."

Although Lakers appear to be struggling, the team has been plagued by a rash of early season in-



ROB KOSSAN
. . . third year

juries and a couple of suspensions that have depleted their veterans for the last two games.

Defenceman Gavin Shuya, who missed two games with a broken finger, and Regan Desroches who missed the last game with a strained groin muscle, will be back. Greg Kowal separated his shoulder in game two and will be out for another week at the least.

Meanwhile, veteran centres Gord Simpson and Nick Kapicki were assessed match misconducts and handed down three-game suspensions each for spearing infractions in game one.

In a brief while, though, the roster should be back at full strength.

"We haven't got a lot of our regulars in the line-up yet but when we get everything together we should be alright," Kossan said.

Enemark will have his first game behind the bench tonight when Lakers host Merritt Centennials at Civic Arena.

Centennials edged Lakers 4-3 last weekend in Merritt and the local club would like nothing better than to gain revenge for putting blemish on their early season record.

Tonight will also mark the debut of a new winger, — Randy Padeleck, who patrols the left side but could see some duty as a centreman considering the current lack of man power in that position.

Lakers are also in action Sunday night, in Salmon Arm, where they will face the Totems.