

Long trip for tryout

Young players often travel hundreds of miles for tryouts with junior hockey teams.

However, few journey further than Kerry Gilbert, from Phoenix, Ariz. Gilbert is among about 30 players, including five goalies, hoping to land a job with Vernon Lakers, of the B.C. Junior Hockey League.

Gilbert is 1,700 miles from home, but travelling a long way to play hockey is nothing new for him. Last season, he played in the Minnesota Junior League.

Lakers' coach Mike Enemark said that unlike many Americans who come to Canada for tryouts, Gilbert is a good skater.

"He can really fly," Enemark said. "His skating is certainly no problem."

One thing that is against the 10-year-old forward is his physical stature Enemark said. "He is small . . . only about 5-8" and 150 pounds. We'll have to find out if he can stand the hitting in junior hockey."

One player who won't be skating for the Lakers this year is defenceman Larry Goertzen. Goertzen, who was obtained from Salmon Arm Totems last month, has notified Enemark that he plans to stay in Alberta this year.

"Goertzen has indicated he will not report," Enemark said. "But, he is still our property so we may be able to work out a deal with an Alberta club."