

Centre rejoins Lakers for final junior year

It was a long summer for Nick Kapicki, perhaps a little longer than most hockey players enjoy in the off-season. But, with a positive attitude and a fading tan, the speedy centre reported to Vernon Lakers' camp earlier this week.

Kapicki will suit up for the start of his third campaign with Lakers, Friday night, when the club hosts Sidney Capitals, at Civic Arena, at 8 p.m.

Despite the absence of most of last year's talented players for various reasons, Kapicki is looking forward to a good season. It will be his last year in junior hockey.

"Yeah, I'm looking forward," said the leathery tough centreman who led the team in scoring during the latter half of the 1983-84 season. "If I didn't want to play, I wouldn't be here. I want to have a good year and have some fun too."

As well as his scoring prowess Kapicki will be something of an answer to coach Mike Enemark's prayers for experienced players to help steady his young, but spirited, hockey club.

"I know I can help because it's a young club and all the vets can help out," explained Kapicki. "That means on the ice and in the dressing room."

Having had a week to observe the team in action and make a brief

evaluation of the other teams in the Interior Division, Kapicki concluded that nobody is going to run away with the division title. However, he knows Lakers are going to have to work hard for every success they achieve.

"The league is really balanced so I think a good year for this team (Lakers) would be to make the playoffs. We should work on our specialty teams during the season so that if we do make the playoffs we'll be ready."

Kapicki's personal goals reflect his mature attitude, which is directed more toward team goals than personal achievements.

"I don't think there will be anybody on this team with 100 or more points because we have so many guys who haven't played junior hockey before," offered Kapicki. "Last year we could walk into a place



NICK KAPICKI

... plays Friday

like Merritt and pick up four or five points each. Also with the teams being much closer in strength, it will be difficult. If I'm in the top 10, I'll be happy."

Kapicki has already missed two regular

season games in which Lakers defeated Revelstoke Rangers 8-2 and earned a 4-4 decision against the hometown Salmon Arm Totems ... a team which will likely be challenging for top spot in the Interior Division.

Practicing with the club since Monday, Kapicki has been working on a variety of lines but mostly with newcomer Greg Guest, a 16-year-old winger with a scoring touch that could prove a big asset to the club this season.

There is a good chance, however, that the veteran centre will be reunited with his long-time friend and team-mate Greg Kowal.

"I like playing with Greg," Kapicki said. "We've been together since bantam hockey ... we can count on one another and that might be a good influence for the younger guys."

