

Lakers get defender for Kossan's rights

Rob Kossan, who spent three years with Vernon Lakers as a winger, didn't turn up for training camp and has no intention of playing for the local club this season. But, Richmond Sockeyes have given Lakers a player for Kossan's rights.

Richmond management traded Murray Baron, a defenceman, to Lakers recently for the playing rights to Kossan, formerly held by Lakers. If Kossan plays a game for the Richmond club, Vernon will receive a second player.

Kossan, who indicated he wouldn't be playing any more junior hockey, is presently attending Cariboo College in Kamloops, his hometown.

Either way, Lakers come up winners as far as Coach Mike Enemark is concerned. Enemark is pleased with the acquisition of Baron, whom he feels will help the local team.

"He (Baron) wanted to come here and he demanded to be traded to Vernon so we made the deal with Richmond for Kossan," Enemark said.

Meanwhile, Enemark released defencemen Kelly Sidoni and Mark Legare to make room for Baron and another defensive prospect arriving from Lethbridge Broncos, of the Western Hockey League, via Red Deer Rustlers, of the Alberta Junior Hockey League.

Both Darryl Weinburger, arriving via Red Deer, and Baron are 6'2" and 205 pounds. Added to the rest of Enemark's defensive corps, it adds up to a solid bunch on the Lakers' blueline. The smallest member of Vernon's defence is 5'11" and 195 pounds.

"I think I can definitely build one of the best defensive corps in the league," said Enemark.

In addition to the two new defenders, Enemark also has the services of Chris Saunders, Tony Christie, Brian Burlingame, Sean Hartnell, and Shawn Lofroth.

Besides the mobility and puck-handling ability of players such as Christie, Saunders, and Lofroth, Enemark has other options available due to the tremendous size at his disposal.

"We can put some defencemen up front from time to time to add size to our forward line," explained the Lakers' coach.

Following the Coast road trip last weekend, Enemark dispatched three 15-year old Vernon prospects to the local midget rep team. Gone are forwards Dennis Holland and Troy Mick and goaltender Glen Mitchell.

"We feel they just aren't ready yet," Enemark said. "We can



ROB KOSSAN
... two-for-one

always bring them up for games and we will. Dan Galbraith (midget rep coach) has indicated that there is no problem as long as times don't conflict with either their practice times or games.

"The experience has been beneficial for them. They can help us in the future... they all played well and they'll make my club next year for sure."

Lakers are in action at home, Friday night, when Langley Eagles will be in town. Vernon dropped a 7-4 decision to Eagles on the road, last Friday night, and would dearly love to turn the tables on the Eagles.

To help fans get into the spirit of the evening, Lakers' management will be throwing a "noisemaker" night. Any Lakers' fans who brings a noisemaker, of any sort, to the game will get a \$1 reduction in the admission price.

In BCJHL action Tuesday night, Abbotsford Flyers earned their first victory of the season by defeating Nanaimo Clippers 9-4. In the only other game, Burnaby Bluehawks beat Richmond Sockeyes 9-7.

Rob Reid scored three goals to pace the hometown Flyers while Bob Romano stopped 44 shots for the Flyers.

In Richmond, Rick Dietrich and Bob Ginetti each scored twice. Mike Moree scored into an empty net with 17 seconds left for Bluehawks.

Improved Kings remain winless

By The Canadian Press

Los Angeles Kings impressed Washington Capitals on Tuesday night at the Capital Centre, but not enough to leave with a win.

"They are playing more as a team and doing some things they didn't do last year," said Washington coach



apart early in the third period for the Islanders.

Despite being outshot 31-10 through the first two periods, the Islanders managed a 2-2 tie heading into the final period. And just 17 seconds into the third, Boutilier scored a fluke goal when his shot ricocheted off the glass behind the New York

Junior veterans left in limbo

By JIM JUDD
Daily News Sports

The current youth movement favored in hockey, from the pro ranks down through the junior systems, has done more than anything to change the face of hockey.

While it has opened the door for whiz-kids to ply their trade and flaunt their goods for all to see, it has also put a lot of good journeymen hockey players out to pasture long before their time.

Take for instance the major junior hockey category which dictates that no team shall have any more than two players 20 years old on their rosters, at any time. Some teams don't bother to carry two 20-year-olds since carrying a half dozen 15, 16, or 17 year olds will ensure them of a more competitive team a few years down the road, not to mention the possibility of having some of those youngsters drafted by the NHL as underage and so reap the monetary benefits of development fees paid players by pro organizations.

DINOSAURS

Whatever the reasons may be, 20-year olds are like dinosaurs around the major junior circuits in this country.

Previously, overage juniors still had several options available to them. Included among those was the availability of college teams to play for, though most were in Canadian colleges where scholarships were a rarity for hockey players until recently.

Other options included playing out their final year of junior hockey eligibility with a junior A club somewhere in the country. There have been years when junior A clubs boasted 12, or more, overage players on their rosters with Abbotsford Flyers of 1982-83, and Langley Eagles of 1983-84 being examples.

Things have changed in the Junior A ranks, however. No longer are clubs able to stock their rosters exclusively with players who are past their teen years. A year ago, the Cana-

dian Amateur Hockey Association decreed that junior A clubs could have a maximum of eight overage players on their roster.

FEW OPTIONS

Which all means that somewhere out there there's an awful lot of good junior hockey players who have even fewer options open to them than ever before.

A few fortunate ones will get a position with a college team, some may earn a spot on a senior hockey club, an intermediate club, perhaps a few lucky ones will become players in the International Hockey League. Most, sadly enough, will turn into also-rans, has-beens and non-sanctioned players in beer leagues all over the country.

And also, sadly enough, junior hockey fans in this country will miss the opportunity of seeing a mature, seasoned, and well-developed junior players in action.

Some players are already stepping into the professional and college ranks at the age of 18 and 19. Players who are chosen high in the NHL draft, but who are underage, find themselves either back in junior hockey or with a minor league affiliate for some additional seasoning designed to bring their standards up to professional calibre.

That extra year, or two, can make all the difference in the world at the pro level and equally so at the junior level.

But don't just take my word for it, see for yourself.

THIRD SEASON

Take for instance Greg Kowal, in his third season of junior hockey. It is also the final year of junior eligibility for Kowal and though he may not be stepping into the pro ranks next season, or even into semi-pro or college hockey, Kowal has proven what playing his last year of eligibility can do for a hockey player.

Last year the Vernon native struggled to score 25 goals, and

though on any given night he was among the best players on the ice for Lakers and he gave 110 per cent whenever he played, his play was often pale in comparison to some of his team-mates and his importance to the club often took a back-seat to other individuals.

Things are different this year. Greg Kowal is more than just a three-year veteran, he's leading the team in scoring and at the same time leads the club both on and off the ice with his experience.

Accordingly, Kowal was selected to be captain of the local club and the extra responsibility hasn't deterred his play but actually aided it in many ways.

"Being captain helps to change your attitude," said Kowal. "There's a little more pressure on you but I sort of like it. I think I have a little more confidence this year and it just seems to all be falling together for a change."

With nine goals in his first 10 games, and 16 points in all, it's easy to see that Kowal means what he says. Considering he got 25 goals playing with a much more talented and offensively-minded club last season, his output this year means that much more.

SIX WINS

Kowal seems to take a little more time around the net and the result is a scoring pace that could see him easily earn 50, or more, goals this season. Sparked by the example Kowal is setting, the other members of the club, all but four of which are newcomers, have played some of the best and most disciplined hockey in the league to date and a record of six wins, three losses and a tie, in the first 10 games, is evidence of their willingness to follow his example and give all they've got.

Maybe a hockey team comprised of good journeymen isn't exactly the flashiest kind, but a team that wins sure beats the hell out of a team of whiz-kids who can't get the job done.

