

# Vernon defenceman makes right decision



Many young hockey players face a difficult decision in their mid-teens. They must decide whether to pursue their hockey careers at the junior level or try to acquire a U.S. college scholarship.

Once the choice is made, there is no turning back . . . colleges will not accept a player who has performed at the major junior level.

Vernon's Jeff Finley must be feeling good about the decision he made last year. Finley had completed one season with Vernon Midget Reps and was being sought by U.S. college teams, as well as Portland Winter Hawks, of the Western Hockey League.

After many weeks of soul searching and a trip to Portland, he decided to join the Winter Hawks' organization. Finley spent most of the 1983-84 season with Portland's affiliate in the B.C. Junior Hockey League, Summerland Buckaroos. However, when Winter Hawks ran into a rash of injuries in the WHL playoffs, Finley got the call.

## ON DEFENCE

He impressed Portland management and has been a fixture on the Winter Hawks' defensive corps this season. In addition to his regular shift, he is now penalty killing and getting some duty on the power play.

His decision to go to junior hockey, instead of college, was made easier because of Winter Hawks' organization. Portland is recognized as one of the most successful franchises at the tier one level.

On the ice, Winter Hawks have an impressive record. Portland won the Memorial Cup in 1983 and last season reached the WHL's division final despite the loss of a handful of players who were recalled by NHL clubs.

At the gate, Portland has the highest average attendance in the WHL's Western Division.

## NHL DRAFT

In the NHL draft, Winter Hawks have a record second-to-none.

Portland General manager Brian Shaw says proudly, "In nine years, we've only had seven graduating players who weren't drafted by NHL clubs. That means 93 per cent of our players are chosen in the draft."

Winter Hawks are well represented in the first round of the NHL draft every season. In recent years, the top picks have included forwards Ken Yaremchuk (Chicago Black Hawks), Alfie Turcotte (Montreal Canadiens), Cam Neely (Vancouver Canucks), and Jeff Rohlicek (Vancouver). Rohlicek

was returned to Portland, by Canucks, after the NHL exhibition season.

When they are looking for defencemen, professional scouts look to Portland before anywhere else. Rearguards selected in the first round, from Winter Hawks, include Jim Benning (Toronto Maple Leafs), Dave Babych (Winnipeg Jets), and Keith Brown (Chicago).

Shaw predicts confidently that Finley will follow Portland's proud tradition. "There is no question Jeff will be drafted next year (1986)," Shaw said. "Because he plays for the Winter Hawks, he'll get lots of attention."

Portland's defence has experienced some problems early in the 1984-85 campaign. Winter Hawks are third in the Western Division with a 5-5-1 record. However, they have surrendered 81 goals in 11 games . . . an average of 7.36 per outing.

Shaw said, "We've only got one defenceman with WHL experience and our defencemen are making a lot of rookie mistakes. But, they are improving and by Christmas, we'll have the best defence in the league."

If Finley continues to improve during the next two seasons, like Shaw predicts he will, Jeff can be sure he made the right choice!



VANCOUVER (CP) — Statistics released Monday by the British Columbia Junior Hockey League:

## STANDINGS

### Coastal Division

|            | W  | L  | T | P  |
|------------|----|----|---|----|
| Langley    | 11 | 5  | 0 | 22 |
| Burnaby    | 10 | 3  | 1 | 21 |
| Richmond   | 10 | 6  | 1 | 21 |
| Nanaimo    | 8  | 10 | 0 | 16 |
| Abbotsford | 5  | 8  | 0 | 10 |
| Sidney     | 4  | 11 | 0 | 8  |

### Interior Division

|            |    |    |   |    |
|------------|----|----|---|----|
| Penticton  | 12 | 3  | 0 | 24 |
| Summerland | 9  | 5  | 0 | 18 |
| Vernon     | 8  | 8  | 1 | 17 |
| Merritt    | 7  | 6  | 0 | 14 |
| Revelstoke | 4  | 13 | 0 | 8  |
| Salmon Arm | 1  | 12 | 1 | 3  |

## SCORING LEADERS

### Coastal

|               | G  | A  | P  |
|---------------|----|----|----|
| Ruppel, Lan   | 18 | 31 | 49 |
| Ginetti, Bby  | 12 | 30 | 42 |
| Ware, Lan     | 19 | 20 | 39 |
| Poulin, Nan   | 19 | 18 | 37 |
| Major, Rich   | 17 | 18 | 35 |
| Dietrich, Bby | 14 | 21 | 35 |
| Dusevic, Lan  | 10 | 23 | 33 |
| Command, Sid  | 18 | 14 | 32 |
| Reimer, Rich  | 15 | 15 | 30 |
| Basco, Lan    | 15 | 15 | 30 |

### Interior

|               |    |    |    |
|---------------|----|----|----|
| Murphy, Pen   | 10 | 21 | 31 |
| Kinley, Rev   | 13 | 17 | 30 |
| Kidd, Pen     | 8  | 22 | 30 |
| Brost, Pen    | 15 | 14 | 29 |
| Winnicki, Pen | 6  | 22 | 28 |
| Scott, Pen    | 17 | 10 | 27 |
| Perrier, Rev  | 11 | 16 | 27 |
| Beddard, Sum  | 12 | 14 | 26 |
| Mowery, Sum   | 5  | 19 | 24 |
| Kowal, Ver    | 14 | 9  | 23 |

## GOALTENDING

### Coastal

|                | Min | GA | Ave  |
|----------------|-----|----|------|
| King, Rich     | 579 | 42 | 4.35 |
| Findlater, Lan | 664 | 60 | 5.42 |
| Furlan, Nan    | 397 | 39 | 5.89 |
| Loring, Abb    | 457 | 45 | 5.91 |
| Woodley, Bby   | 606 | 60 | 5.94 |

### Interior

|              |     |    |      |
|--------------|-----|----|------|
| McPhail, Pen | 400 | 23 | 3.45 |
| Pizzey, Pen  | 476 | 31 | 3.91 |
| Young, Ver   | 640 | 46 | 4.31 |
| Garnett, Sum | 343 | 27 | 4.72 |
| Doyle, Mer   | 300 | 24 | 4.80 |