100 prospects attend Lakers' rookie camp

By DON KENDALL
Daily News Sports Editor

About 100 hockey players have a singular goal this week.

The players, from throughout Western Canada, are attending the Vernon Lakers' rookie camp, at the Priest Valley Arena. Every one of them, aged 15-19, hopes to impress the coaches enough to warrant an invitation to the main training camp, which gets under way Tuesday.

"I can't tell you exactly how many kids will be on the ice tonight," said Lakers' General Manager Mel Lis. "Some of the guys we expected haven't arrived yet. But, on the other hand, there are some players here who we didn't know were coming."

Lakers' Head Coach Ernie Gare said he expects 10-12 rookies to earn invitations to the main camp. The rookies are practicing twice per day, until Friday, when an intra-squad game is scheduled.

One rookie has already impressed the coaches, will attend the main camp, and has an excellent chance of sticking with the B.C. Junior Hockey League club.

Centre Dallas Drake is expected to fill one of the holes created by the loss of veterans Kevin Scott, Shawn Howard, and Al Young. Scott and Howard have received scholarships from U.S. universities and Young has signed a contract to play professional hockey in Europe.

"Drake should help us," Lis said. "He has all the tools. He is great with the puck, a natural scorer, and he can take a hit."

For Drake, who has spent three seasons with Rossland Warriors, of the Kootenay International Junior 'B' League, this is his third trip to Vernon's training camp. "I was disappointed that I didn't make the team last year," he said. "But, I decided to come back again because I like the coaches and the organization. This year, I'm going to make it."

Drake has the credentials to play junior 'A' hockey. As a 15-year-old, in 1985, he collected 53 points with the Warriors. The following year he was third in the league scoring race with 126 points and last year he captured the scoring title with 135 points, including 55 goals.

"My first goal is to make the Lakers," he said. "Then, if I play well in Vernon, I'll start thinking about getting a scholarship. I want to go on to university."

Among the other Kootenay players lured to Vernon's camp is Drake's linemate from Rossland, Martin Jensen.

"Martin should make the team," Drake said. "He is big, tough, and he can score goals." In other words, the perfect winger for a rangy centre.

Sets record at Games for disabled

BRANTFORD, Ont. (CP) — John Baxter set a world record as the Canadian Foresters Games for the Physically Disabled began Tuesday.

Baxter, who's sightless, lifted 262 kilograms in the deadlift section of the power-lifting competition. The lift is a world record — in the over-40 masters age group — for blind athletes.

"I enjoy the sport," said Baxter, 41 and who weighs about 320 pounds, after the lift. "It's the one sport in which a blind person can compete on a equal