Lakers sign goalie after beating Merritt

A scrambly 6-2 victory over Merritt Centennials Saturday night, in Winfield, gave Vernon Lakers their second straight win in B.C. Junior Hockey League exhibition season action, but it didn't make Head Coach Ernie Gare's job any easier.

Gare still faces some extremely tough decisions as to which players he will pare from the club's roster. Heading into the club's third exhibition contest Wednesday night in Rutland, against Kelowna, Lakers are still carrying 14 defencemen, any one of which is capable of playing in the BCJHL.

Gare released seven players following Saturday's game while signing two. Goaltender Barry Rysz who played for Dawson Creek Capitals of the Peace Cariboo Junior Hockey League last season, along with forward Jamie Graham who played for Edmonton midgets last year, were both inked.

Rysz is the first goaltender to sign with the club, which had eight hopefuls in camp looking for a spot. Though he's just 17 years old, the young netminder has been steady and impressive in the eyes of the Vernon coaching staff.

"He's very quick and he saw a lot of rubber last year in Dawson Creek so I think that really helped him," suggested Gare.

However, Gare also pointed out that any goaltender the club signs this early in the season will likely be a backup when the season is in full swing.

"We're still looking for another quality goaltender," said Gare. "Maybe one who's just a little older."

Considering that the club has lucked out in this regard both times in the past two seasons, there's certainly a good chance they will once again find what they are looking for. In the 1985-86 season they managed to find Kamloops' native Scott King, now with University of Maine, while last season the search for a netminder turned up Jason Palmer, who is currently with Seattle Thunderbirds of the Western Hockey League.

Meanwhile, Saturday night, newcomer Kent Ocsokowski scored twice for Lakers, who held period leads of 3-1 and 4-1 en route to their win over Merritt.

"It was a lot more scrambly than it was on Friday," said Gare who watched a squad full of rookies thump Penticton Knights 8-2 Friday night. "It wasn't as fast or as quick a game."

Veterans Ian Alger and Jason Fox scored once while hopefuls Brian Benson and Ed Bertuzzi rounded out the scoring for the local club.

Gare will once again use the opportunity of Wednesday's game against Kelowna to size up his newcomers.

"We'll still be looking at more rookies," he said. "I still have 14 defencemen so we'll have to make some more cuts after Wednesday.

"There's going to be some really tough battles for positions. We've got some quality defencemen here — I'm impressed with them as a matter of fact — we're really encouraged."

SPORTS BRIEFS

Skiers victorious at American meet

Two Vernon water skiers won jumping events during the recent Peach Arch Open Water Ski Tournament at Borderline Lake, in Washington State. Ken Hewson was first in senior men's jumping, second in tricks, and sixth in slalom. Tracy Wright was first in girls' jumping, second in slalom, and third in tricks. About 160 skiers from the Northwestern United States and Canada competed in the two-day meet.

First victory

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (AP) — Rosie Jones sank a seven-foot birdie putt on the 18th hole Monday to beat Nancy Lopez by one stroke in the $200,000 US Rail Charity golf classic, her first Ladies Professional Golf Association tournament victory since joining the tour in 1982.

Repeat winner

ENDICOTT, N.Y. (AP) — It may be difficult to believe, but Joey Sindelar was worried about his chances of becoming the first player to win the B.C. Open twice — even though he carried an eight-stroke lead into the final round.

"It was a blast," Sindelar said Sunday of playing with such a lead. "Although the only things that can happen to you are all bad, you're supposed to win and all you can do is goof it up."

Sindelar, 29, became the first repeat champion here with an 18-under-par 266.

He led after each round of the $400,000 tournament and his commanding lead Sunday held up, despite some final-round heroics by Jeff Sluman.

Sluman, who shot a final-round 6-under-par 65, got within four strokes of Sindelar, who shot 69 Sunday to lay claim to the $72,000 winner's share.

Michael leaving

CHICAGO (AP) — Chicago Cubs manager Gene Michael won't be back next year and may not even finish the season, says a published report.

Michael said Monday in a radio interview he had decided he didn't want to manage the National League team next year and the Chicago Tribune says general manager Dallas Green would accept his resignation, effective immediately.

Lacrosse champs

SARNIA, Ont. (CP) — The Sarnia Wreckers, who won just three of 20 regular season games, forced defending champion Fergus Thistles to overtime before losing 14-10 in the President's Cup senior men's lacrosse championship match Monday.

Can-Am of Newtown, N.Y., won the bronze-medal game in the six-team competition, beating Surrey, B.C., 14-9.

Canada tenth

ROME (CP) — Ben Johnson remained the lone Canadian to reach the medal podium at the world track and field championships, which ended Sunday after eight days of competition.

The Canadian team missed its final chance in the relay races, settling for two fourth-place results and one sixth.

Canada ended up 10th overall — thanks to Johnson's record-breaking victory in the men's 100 metres a week ago.

East Germany led with 10 gold, 11 silver and 10 bronze. The United States was second with nine gold, five silver and five bronze.