Lakers' Mel Lis will learn price

By AL PATERSON
Daily News Sports

Vernon Lakers' owner and general manager Mel Lis will soon find out the price of success.

The vaunted Lakers, easily the class of the B.C. Junior Hockey League last season, stand to lose between two and five players in the National Hockey League entry draft Saturday at the Montreal Forum.

Lis said he expects to lose Dane Jackson and Dallas Drake but may also lose Mike Barkley, Chad Biafore and Phil Soukoroff.

"The scouts like Jackson because he has great potential," said Lis. "He has pro size (6' and 193 pounds), skates well and plays consistently well.

"He is also a good student so NHL teams know they'll get a good one in four years," added Lis. "I think he has the best potential of anybody on our team."

Dallas Drake is 6' tall but only weighs about 170 lbs. That could hurt his draft chances but he plays a finesse game, much like Wayne Gretzky and that will help him.

"I talked to scouts last year and I told them Dallas has scored a hundred points or more in every year of every league he's ever played for," said Lis. "Chicago, Detroit and Vancouver are interested in him. He has proven himself at every level but because of his age, he has to go in the first three rounds. That might hurt him. I think he could be the best player of the whole works (Vernon Laker players)."

Mike Barkley has an outside shot at being drafted, he was high on Hartford's list, but he was hurt in the playoffs and he didn't play that well in the post-season.



MEL LIS



DANE JACKSON

"Scouts tend to remember only what boy did what in the last game, they sometimes forget the last 58 (games)," said Lis. "Barkley has good size and moves the puck well."

Chad Biafore is another Laker who may hear his name announced at the draft table in Montreal.

"Chad is committed next year to the Portland Winter Hawks of the Western Hockey League and I know Montreal likes him," said Lis. "He has good wheels, carries the puck out of his own end well and has a mean streak in him."

Lis figures defenceman Phil Soukeroff may go in about the eighth round of the draft. Buffalo and Vancouver like him, probably because of his speed and poise.

Other Laker notables who are eligible for the draft include Darcy Martini, Wes Elliot, Mark Greyeyes, Jamie Steer, Duane Dennis and Greg Parnell.