

ERNIE GARE, Head Coach of the Vernon Lakers, describes one of the drills for his recruits during opening night of the club's main camp Tuesday night at Priest Valley Arena. (Daily News Photo)

International flavor in camp

By JIM JUDD
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Sports Editor

There's an international flavor in the Vernon Lakers' training camp.

The local Junior "A" Hockey CLub opened their main training camp TUesday evening at Priest Valley Arena and among the 46 players who checked in were six Americans.

Oddly enough, neither General Manager Mel Lis nor Head Coach Ernie Gare did any scouting south of the border. Rather, the six made their way to Vernon of their own accord.

"One of them (Americans) was our last cut last year and he brought along one of his buddies this year," explained Lis.

Another of the youngsters, 19-year old Randy McGrew, played high school hockey in St. Paul, Minn. last season and came this way on the recommendation of one of Lis' professional links.

"The Minnesota North Stars scout (Les Jackson — now Director of Player Personnel) scouted him (McGrew) and referred him to us.

"Another guy just walked in this morning," Lis continued. "His dad played with Ernie down in Spokane."

Among the groups are also 18 players who toiled in Junior "B" last season. The majority of these are from the Lakers' Junior "B" affiliate team the Columbia Valley Rockies. However, players from every team in the Kootenay International Junior loop are in the Vernon camp currently.

There are also a few skilled players on hand with Junior "A" experience. Among these are the top scorers from two teams in the Peace Cariboo Junior Hockey League. Bart Kuntz toiled with the Fort St. John Huskies last year while Garth Geddes was with the Williams Lake Mustangs.

Another player, 18-year old Tony Everit, was with the Fort Saskatchewan Traders of the Alberta Junior League last year. Everit plays both forward and defensive positions.

Of course, there are a few familiar faces in the crowd as well. Rearguards Adrian Markin and Shawn Hendry, both 20-year olds, are expected to anchor the defensive corps for the Lakers. Both were impressive performers with the club last season.

Local workhorse Duane Dennis is back to add his own fiery brand of hockey to the team once again. Defenceman/forward Greg Olsen is also a returnee dying to get back into regular action with the club.

A few others may drift back in the coming weeks according to Lis.

Meanwhile, goaltending, normally a sore spot with the Lakers early in the season, has rapidly shaped up into what now appears as a strength for the Vernon club.

Lis has the two top goaltenders from the Kootenay International Junior "B" League in camp as well as one of the top midget-aged stoppers in the Pacific region.

Scott Bailey, a 16-year old, is the goaltender for the Pacific Region Under-17 team. Although he was invited to camp, Lis was pleasantly surprised and somewhat relieved when the young puckster showed.

"I'll put it this way," Lis said. "I feel better about our goaltending than I did this time last year."

Lis has been busy trading already too. The Vernon GM traded Curtis York, acquired from Summerland in the player dispersal draft, to Penticton Knights in return for the rights to defenceman Brad Heschuk. Heschuk, however, is currently in the Kamloops' Blazers' camp.

"I expect him to be here in five days," said Lis somewhat optimistically.

The Lakers are going with two shifts of 23 players each night in one and a half hour sessions. The club will play three exhibition matches this weekend.

Lions' running back leads B.C. to victory

VANCOUVER (CP) — It was capital punishment of sorts — at the expense of the sorriest football team in the Canadian Football League.

The punitive action was taken by the bruising offensive line of the B.C. Lions and their jet-quick running back, pint-sized Anthony Cherry, who rushed for 179 yards.

The result was a solid but often dull 24-11 victory by the Lions, which

Cherry, 25, came to the Lions this year after a brief stint with the San Francisco 49ers in the National Football League, mainly as a kick returner. He was injured in his second CFL game, but returned last month to provide the solid running game required by head coach Larry Donovan.

The Lions were somewhat boring on attack when they ran the ball 42