Sockeyes play Lakers in rematch

It could be a BCJHL championship preview.

It will certainly be a battle of last year's B.C. Junior Hockey League playoff finalists. The Richmond Sockeyes make their one, and only, visit of the regular season to Vernon Saturday night to meet the Lakers at 8 p.m. And Richmond Head Coach Orland Kurtenbach siad he isn't sure what kind of game it will be but said we can be assured his team will "come to play".

The Sockeyes are coming off an impressive 10-1 over the New Westminster Royals this week. The Lakers were also impressive in dumping the Penticton Knights 6-1 earlier this week.

Richmond has seven returnees off last year's Coastal Division champion squad and have several notable youngsters in the lineup as well. One of the key Richmond figures tonote is Mark Kaufman. You'll have no trouble spotting him because he will probably be the smallest player on the ice. But he's an extremely skilled player, one that has already spent some time in Europe despite being just 17 years old.

"They wanted more than a one year committment from Mark and he wasn't prepared to give them that at this time," said Kurtenbach. "Tony Bobbitt is another of our returnees, he along with Steve Kopzeig are a couple of players hwo give us valuable experience."

In goal, the Sockeyes have a couple of big lefties, Kevin Balding and David Lee. Both goalies are slightly more than six feet tall, Balding from Prince George and Lee from Burnaby.

Another player from Richmond to note is Jason Jennings.

"Yes, he has played well so far this season," said Kurtenbach. "He's taking a regular shift and working hard. Brad Dickson has matured a lot and he's a big asset to our hockey club."

Kurtenbach said he felt the Sockeyes were better organized at this time of the year than they were last year at the same time, but admits the final roster isn't set yet.

"It's early yet, a lot of things could happen," said Kurtenbach.