

NHL lockout bumps Shevalier to IHL Roadrunners

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Acton Tanner

One thing was certain on Saturday night: Jeff Shevalier played hockey. The Los Angeles Kings didn't.

While it's not the script the Kings' 109th pick in the 1991 National Hockey League entry draft would have written heading into his third camp, Shevalier seems content in being able to play hockey, period.

"I had a great camp. The first day the coaches told me I had to score and be an all-round player. And after being told by (general manager) Sam McMaster and (coach) Barry Melrose that I had a really good

camp, they sent me down to get some quality playing time, since they knew there would be a lockout," Shevalier said on Friday before opening the 1993-94 season with the Phoenix Roadrunners, the Kings' International Hockey League affiliate.

An Acton Sabre product, Shevalier feels he was also dispatched to the minors, because the Kings have 22 players on one-way contracts (NHL salary only), "so there I go. I had a good camp, but there were also other things."

Things like half the Kings' roster consisting of players 29 and 30-years-old, who Shevalier feels are

getting one last shot from Melrose to be an NHLer. He said Melrose stresses clutch-and-grab, grinding hockey and likes tough players.

"But I'm not a fighter ... The Kings didn't have a good year last year, so maybe he (Melrose) is looking short-term with the veterans," said Shevalier, who was slotted at left-wing through camp.

However, he doesn't seem bothered by his demotion and vows he will dress for the Kings this year. That feeling was bolstered somewhat after management offered some encouraging words.

"They said I'm the No. 1 prospect

in the organization and if anyone gets injured they will call me up," said an elated Shevalier.

Shevalier, who scored 52 goals in 64 games with the Ontario Hockey League North Bay Centennials last season, obviously showed his worth to the Kings in his lone exhibition appearance against the Vancouver Canucks. The 20-year-old played on a line with former Leaf Yanic Perreault and former Detroit Junior Red Wing Kevin Brown.

"I played every other shift," mentioned Shevalier, adding his mates didn't hamper his own style.

Added the Erin resident: "It's satisfying knowing I can play with the big guys and play well, too."

He'll have to ride the buses and play with the little guys first, though.

Shevalier, who was named to the OHL's First All-Star team last year

as a left-winger, has only been a member of the Roadrunners for two weeks and says coach Robbie Laird won't let him know of his role with the team until after Game 10. While he'll play hard in the minors, Shevalier knows it won't be like life with the black and silver.

All the more reason for Shevalier to show what got him invited to the Kings' camp. And one thing is sure to remain constant: his upbeat manner.

"You always go to bed happy here, because there's always a chance you'll wake up and you've been called up (by the Kings). I'm going to give it my all in Phoenix and get myself noticed," he assured.

"And if other teams notice me, L.A. will have to call me up."

That's if they lace up the skates themselves this season.

Commitment needed from v-ball Juniors

AHS BOYS' V-BALL PREVIEW

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Acton Tanner

Yes, the Acton Redmen Junior Boys' volleyball team will take to the court to start the 1994 Halton high school season. That's the good news.

Whether the eight — two over the required six — players remain healthy and committed to the shaky program is what stands between a

potential .500 club and the bad news — no club.

"The positive way of looking at it," analyzed 10-year Redmen volleyball coach Ken Ellis recently, "is that everyone will play. What worries me is the kids we have left are committed now and are not bad athletes.

"But what we have is a bunch of unknowns in terms of commitment." Meaning, Ellis can't convince himself on whether

or not one or two Redmen players will pack it in to focus more on school or join the school band before the midpoint of the season.

What he does know, though, is that his players will not be pushovers this season — based on a decent showing at a recent Georgetown Rebels invitational tourney — and just might raise a few eyebrows.

"We lack height which will put a lot of pressure on our blockers, but what we don't have in height we'll make up in quickness," Ellis noted, adding he's lost a tall Matt Boycott, along with Scott McIntyre, to the Rebels Junior football team this season.

In any case, Ellis has already established his strategy, favouring a six-man-up defence and 4-2 offence to begin the season.

The defensive alignment will put responsibility on the two Redmen setters — Derrick McIntyre and Midget graduate Mike Morrow — to tip the ball back to the long-legged deep men, third-year Junior Trevor Malloy and returnee Jamie Birrell.

On the other hand, a 4-2 offence will mean less pressure on the setters. "But if a setter goes down, I'm in trouble," Ellis said.

Other Redmen members include Joel Lucier, a first-year Junior who hits well and has power; Robert Turpin, a member of the Midget Redmen basketball team last year; and Justin Koeslag, a hard-working, left-handed player who Ellis says "could be used in a variety of attacks if he gets his timing down."

"If we had a .500 season I would think we've had good success. I'll be happy if we can come together with the new system and get the fundamentals down," Ellis said.



OPEN WINNERS: Clockwise from left: John Bousfield, Steve Fleet, Brett Papillon — with the winning goal — and Troy MacDougall, led Red Dog Café over Four Seasons Restaurant 4-3 in the open division final of the Puck and Ball tourney at the Community Centre on Sunday. The Guelph Selects took the 35-and-over division with a 5-3 win over the Acton Neanderthals in the Acton Minor Hockey fund-raiser. (Paul Nolan photo)

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