



Lakers in the News

NORTH BAY
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A DAY IN YOUR LIFE

Quarrie a Rock on 'D'

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While the inaugural Nipissing Lakers men's hockey roster continues to be carved into shape, at least one thing is certain.

They'll have a potential Rock on the blue-line.

That's because defenceman John Quarrie, who plays competitive lacrosse during the offseason, saw his rights snapped up this month by the Toronto Rock as their sixth pick in the National Lacrosse League Entry Draft.

I always wanted to get drafted at something, just as a little bit of motivation," said the Elora, Ont., native, who finished the summer season of the Ontario Junior 'A' Lacrosse League with the Orangeville Northmen. And to be drafted not only into pro lacrosse but the Toronto Rock is fantastic I think. I've got a couple of buddies on their (roster) I played junior 'B' with."

Success has certainly come tumbling down like an avalanche this summer for Quarrie, even before the Rock selected him Sept. 9 as the 53rd overall pick in the NLL draft.

Exactly a month ago Wednesday, Quarrie captured a national junior 'A' lacrosse championship in the Minto Cup playoffs with his Orangeville Northmen by toppling the Brampton Excelsiors -- the same team the Northmen came from

behind to beat in the Ontario championship and one which included Lakers forward Andrew Marcoux.

About a week later, Quarrie and Marcoux were on their way to North Bay to join the Lakers for their first ever training camp and, according to Marcoux, Quarrie hasn't let his teammate forget who has a Minto Cup title on his resume.

I tried to get him over there in Orangeville but it didn't quite work out," Quarrie said of Marcoux, who grew up playing in the same 'AAA' hockey system as Quarrie as both grew up on the outskirts of Guelph. So we played them in the provincial final, and they were up 3-0 in a best-of-seven and we came back and beat them in four straight.

We met them again in the national final, and it was pretty even the whole series, but if I can bring it up a little bit, I'll bring it up against him."

Of course, bygones are bygones now as the two friends are expected to be amongst the Top-12 skaters on the Lakers roster when Nipissing opens the Ontario University Athletics regular season Friday at home against the Queen's Gaels at 7 p. m.

Marcoux scored both goals, Sept. 19, during the Lakers preseason opener against the Ottawa Gee-Gees. Meanwhile Quarrie scored a goal and added three assists in two games on the weekend as the Lakers won the York Lions invitational tournament.

That's almost half the number of points Quarrie collected in 68 OHL games with the Oshawa Generals in 2008-09, when he had one goal and eight assists in his second season of major junior hockey.

I have a totally new role on this team than I did in Oshawa and I like it a lot more," said Quarrie, who also played a little bit of netminder at the end of Monday's practice -- though mostly for fun. I was a physical, stay-at-home defenceman (with the Generals) and I would probably take the puck to the red line and dump it in and change.

But now I've got the opportunity to jump up in the rush and, if I make a mistake, it's something that you learn from."

After hearing about Quarrie's exploits in lacrosse, when he was sixth on his team in scoring with 17 goals and 33 assists in 20 games, Lakers head coach Mike McParland believed there was some unlocked potential" in his defenceman's game and hasn't been afraid to give Quarrie, or any other defenceman for that matter, the chance to roam.

He's very good defensively . . . but when he's playing lacrosse and getting two or three points per game, then he's got to have some good hands, too," McParland said.

Besides, I don't know anyone who would say no to scoring more."

Mostly, though, Quarrie is excited to begin the season, especially after exhibition wins over York and Toronto on the weekend.

It just shows that we have what it takes to compete in this league and we found out sooner rather than later," he said. Just winning that tournament gives us a boost of confidence and going into Friday. It should help us a lot."

ICE CHIPS

* McParland said he will make an announcement Wednesday about his plans to trim the Lakers' roster. He pared down the number of skaters in camp by three last week and was expected to make more moves after the weekend.

The Lakers will also announce their new captain and associate captains during a news conference Wednesday at 2 p. m. at Memorial Gardens.

* Several players are on the mend after the weekend tournament. Forwards Dan Watt (toe), Dave Cappadocia (head) and Adam Simms, along with defenceman Ernie Currie (MCL strain), were among those nursing injuries Monday, McParland said.

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