

Erasing bitter taste the Adanacs' goal

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There'll be no time for moral victories this year with the Coquitlam Adanacs.

Fueled by bitter memories from last year's Mann Cup championship, where a couple of questionable calls by the referees played a role in a 4-2 series loss to Peterborough, the Adanacs aren't about to settle for second place again. They've got the perfect bench boss to demonstrate that fire, too.

First-year head coach Andy Ogilvie will take his place Saturday behind the bench in Nanaimo as Coquitlam launches the 2008 Western Lacrosse Association's regular season.

Despite missing a number of core players and with a few question marks, the Adanacs are aiming to improve on their 9-7-2 record last year and get back to the national championship and avenge that sour taste.

"I'm not coaching just to compete, but to win," Ogilvie said Monday, two days after the club finished a light exhibition schedule with a 12-9 loss to Burnaby.

The returning veterans who will head over to the Hub City can be counted on two hands, while the rest of the lineup will be littered with prized draft picks, hopefuls on tryouts and a few senior 'B' fillers.

And while he was hesitant to list any names, Ogilvie said that the game plan won't change.

"We'll be missing a few players this weekend, some still at school, some still coming off of the National (Lacrosse League) season," he noted. "But we'll have a good lineup - just not our best."

It's now the regular routine when it comes to the WLA, thanks to the prominence that local players hold on the professional circuit.

Nanaimo opened the season Sunday in Maple Ridge and were bombed 20-10. They were without three key pieces - Scott Ranger, Kaleb Toth and Kyle Couling - who all played for Calgary in the NLL

semifinal a day earlier. It's expected that the T-men will attempt to get all three in the lineup for their home opener.

Coquitlam general manager Les Wingrove suggested that the core of last year's team will be onboard, once the dust and spring weather clears. He also said veteran leaders like Rich Catton, Curt Malawsky, Bruce Murray and Jason Wulder may be in Nanaimo on Saturday.

"It's going to be a bit of a skeleton crew to say the least," Wingrove confirmed.

Just like last year, that means chemistry will be an evolving element to the club's game.

Two players who are turning heads already are rookies Dane Dobbie and Curtis Ptolemy.

Dobbie, chosen fifth overall, and Ptolemy, the team's third-round choice, are getting prime floor time to demonstrate their skills. Dobbie scored four times in the exhibition loss.

Once the team's veterans are committed and on the floor, things should come together quickly, Wingrove said.

"I think we have a good core of young players and a strong core of veterans, so it's a good mix," he noted. "We'll have both Andrew McBride and Andrew Biers back from injuries, so that should be a great help on transition and the defensive side."

For Ogilvie, the first month presents an opportunity for the players to establish a presence and impress the coaching staff, which includes longtime Adanac assistant Dennis Quigley and recently retired Dan Stroup, who will be working with the offence.

"We're looking at work ethic, attitude and skill level," Ogilvie said. "Their ability to learn as we go. They have to show they want to be here, but that goes for everyone."

The Adanacs' home opener is on May 24 (7:45 p.m.) when the New Westminster Salmonbellies visit the Coquitlam Sports Centre.