

Wolves senior B lacrosse provides local excitement for fans, players



By Goldstream News Gazette

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Watching the Victoria Wolves celebrate their 8-6 win over Coquitlam in Colwood on Sunday night, one could have mistaken it for a key playoff game.

While beating always-scrappy Adanacs teams is cause for most Island players to rejoice, this expansion West Coast Senior (B) Lacrosse Association team hopes to win more such games this season.

Wolves' governor Chris Jackson, who engineered a return to senior B lacrosse in Greater Victoria, called the win "huge" and a sign of things to come for this group of former juniors and players who came home after playing senior B elsewhere.

"It's been 17 years since we had senior B in Victoria all these guys are finally getting a place to play meaningful lacrosse again," he said. "The guys are in there, they're happy as heck."

After taking a 6-4 lead on a third-period shorthanded goal by Dane Schoor, the Adanacs tied it on back-to-back goals from Evan Lovestead. With James Spence off serving a five-minute roughing penalty, the locals dug deep and got the eventual winner shorthanded from Max Fredrickson. Colin Bell gave the Wolves some insurance a few minutes later, scoring his second of the game with his team on the power play.

The victory was the first at home for the Wolves (2-0-1-1), who lost their home opener the previous weekend in overtime.

Team captain Adam Brown, one of a few Wolves who played last year with the league and playoff champion Nanaimo, likes the way this group of local players has come together and is starting to gel. He played against many of his teammates as a younger player and is enjoying this experience.

"When you come together, you get to see how good those guys really are," he said. "I think we're on the up and up, I think it's going to be a good season for us this year."

Defender Graeme Ross, 34, is one of several elder statesmen in this bunch. A one-time Shamrock who played senior C last year for the Victoria Tugmen, he put off retirement when buddies Rick Sanderson (Wolves GM) and Nick Agius (head coach) talked him into joining the new club.

"I couldn't resist, I love the game too much. I played with some of these guys in Nanaimo and played a lot growing up with some of these guys and I want to keep it going and have some more fun," he said.

Ross, who also scored Sunday and set up Fredrickson's winner, likes the combination of speed and skill in the Wolves' lineup. He predicts big things for this relatively young team. "I expect nothing less than nationals this year from this team. I feel that we've got the team to do it, and we've got the leadership and the fellows to do it."

Brown knows well the road his new team must travel this year to achieve success. And that means getting the better of his former teammates, who visit The Q Centre on May 26. "I can't wait for the Nanaimo game, it's going to be a good one," he said.

As for Jackson, the architect of this team, he sees the club already starting to develop its own style.

"What we're trying to do is make a brand of lacrosse that we're proud of, hardworking, hard effort, hard hustle, hard defence – that's what's going to bring fans out."

The Wolves have the long weekend off before that Thursday night game against the Timbermen. Game time is 8 p.m.

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