

## Spruce Kings After the Trading Deadline

Friday, 12 January 2007

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Westside Warriors at Prince George Spruce Kings

Prince George Coliseum - Prince George, BC

Game Time: 7:00pm

Heading into a three game weekend and the stretch drive towards the BCHL playoffs, the Prince George Spruce Kings have solidified their team picking up three goal scorers and a puck stopper at the BCHL trade deadline. The Spruce Kings have added depth up front by adding three high scoring forwards from across the country and the team also brought in a goaltender with WHL experience. All four will be put to the test this weekend as the Spruce Kings prepare for a pair against the Westside Warriors and a matchup with the Williams Lake Timberwolves on Hockey Day In Canada.

New members on the 2007 RBC Royal Bank Cup host team are Tyler Helfrich, Jason Yuel, Alain Joannette and Jordan White. Helfrich came to the Spruce Kings via the Fort McMurray Oil Barons of the Alberta Junior Hockey League. Helfrich led the Oil Barons on the score sheet with 18 goals and 32 assists for 50 points, just 5 shy of his previous season total. Tyler Helfrich, a 19 year old from Calgary, is a right handed shot standing 5'11" tall and weighing in at 190 lbs; look for Tyler wearing jersey number 15.

The Spruce Kings added more goal scoring and leadership to their lineup by bringing in a pair of team captains with solid numbers this season. Jason Yuel was second in scoring with the Winnipeg Saints of the Manitoba Junior Hockey League (MJHL). Wearing the 'C' in his third year with the Saints, Yuel had 30 goals and 29 assists in 42 games (12 powerplay goals, 4 shorthanded goals and 5 game winning goals). Yuel was named the MJHL player of the week prior to the Christmas break picking up six points in just two games (5 goals and 1 assist) including a natural hat trick. Yuel, a 20 year old from Winnipeg, 6'0" tall, 195 lbs and a righthanded shot; look for Jason wearing jersey number 24.

The Spruce Kings were also able to attract the captain of the Brancroft Hawks, Alain Joannette, of the Ontario Provincial Junior Hockey League (OPJHL). Joannette, in his second season in the OPJHL, was leading his team with 20 goals and 29 assists in 40 games (12 powerplay goals, 3 shorthanded goals and 3 game winning goals). Joannette is a 19 year old from Chelmsford Ontario, 5'9" tall, 170lbs and a lefthanded shot; look for Alain wearing jersey number 8.

The Spruce Kings also got their second goaltender in Jordan White, an 18 year old with Western Hockey League experience. White was the backup to Real Cyr with the Prince George Cougars until he was released and reassigned to the Quesnel Millionaires and then traded to the Spruce Kings in exchange for futures. The addition of Jordan White will lessen the load that Joe Rodwell bore during the month of December and will give both goaltenders an opportunity to prove themselves in net down the stretch drive and into the playoffs and beyond; look for Jordan White wearing jersey number 1.

After a month on the road and away from the Coliseum, the Spruce Kings will finally get back on home ice for three in a row starting and finishing with the Westside Warriors. The Warriors come into the game riding a bit of a high after posting back to back wins including an overtime decision against the Prince George Spruce Kings one week ago. The wins gave the Warriors sole possession of sixth spot in the Interior Division just five points back of the Spruce Kings. The Warriors were involved in two deadline deals trading away two of their top four goal scorers in defenceman Brock Meadows (7g and 25a) and their captain, Marcel Bruinsma (11g and 20a).

The Prince George Spruce Kings are looking for a successful weekend and an opportunity to close the gap on the third and fourth placed teams in the Interior Division, the Salmon Arm Silverbacks and the Trail Smoke Eaters. The Spruce Kings have six games in hand on the Silverbacks and four on the Smoke Eaters and perhaps the better schedule of the three. The Spruce Kings have a total of 22 games remaining in the regular season, twelve of sixteen being against Interior Division teams that currently sit below them in the standings — including the three games this weekend.

Spruce Kings fans will get their first chance to see the newest addition to the Interior Division, the Westside Warriors, on Friday night at 7:00 and then again on Sunday afternoon at 3:00 with the Williams Lake Timberwolves providing the opposition on Saturday night at 7:00. Advance game tickets are available from the Spruce Kings office or any Subway location in Prince George, the Spruce Kings boxoffice opens one hour before game time.

For more information, please contact the Spruce Kings office at (250) 564-1747.