

Ready to dominate

David Kozier is the Kings' 'complete package'

By CHRIS SIMNETT

Free Press staff writer

He's too nice, shy and quiet to be a hockey player.

David Kozier doesn't stand out in a crowd, but he does stand out at the top of the stats sheet.

The 19-year-old Terrace native is one of those people who will help old ladies across the street during the day and help goalies think about finding another calling at night.

He proves you don't have to be outgoing to score goals.

Despite his scoring prowess (Kozier scored 32 goals and added 30 assists for 62 points in 57 games with Langley and Prince George last season), Kozier is as good a two-way player the Prince George Spruce Kings have.

"He turns coaches heads with all the things he does on the ice," says Spruce Kings head coach and GM Len McNamara. "He's very good in his own end and he's a natural goal-scorer."

Quiet and shy. Yeah right. That's just an act.

This kid has got a mean streak almost as big as his dedication to the game.

He was one of the few Kings who stuck up for his teammates last season and he sat in the sin-bin for just more than an hour and a half (91 minutes). He would gladly stay out on the ice that long after practice if the rinkies at the Coliseum would let him.

Long after his teammates have hit the showers, Kozier is still out there, flipping pucks at the net and skating circles around imaginary defencemen. He only heads to the dressing room when the Zamboni threatens to run him over.

"I like to practice my foot-



David Kozier does more than just score goals for the Prince George Spruce Kings. FREE PRESS FILE PHOTO

work and shooting mostly," he says of his lonely extracurricular ice-time. "I try to do a little bit every day."

Kozier knows the extra practice is his ticket to a scholarship, something he desperately wants to achieve this year.

"I've talked to a lot of schools during the summer," he says. "Some of them are coming out to watch me during September and October."

Kozier, who has his sights set on a 50-goal season, can't wait until the scouts get here.

"I play better when I know they're watching," he says. "I'm a lot more intense."

For Kozier, intensity isn't what will take him to the next level. Speed is.

While he has all the gifts, speed is something McNamara says the former Notre

Dame Hound midget has to work on.

"We've got some guys with some speed this year," says McNamara, who stole Kozier from the Langley Thunder early last season in a one-for-one trade for agitator Willy Mason. "The colleges are on him to get his speed up. Once he does that he'll be the complete package."

Some would say he already is. Surrounded by talented line-mates, Kozier has the makings of a dominant scorer in the B.C. Hockey League this season.

"I remember at the beginning of last season everything was just flying by me," he says. "Now I'm more up to speed. I feel I can take the puck and do something with it. Now, I feel like I can be a dominant player."

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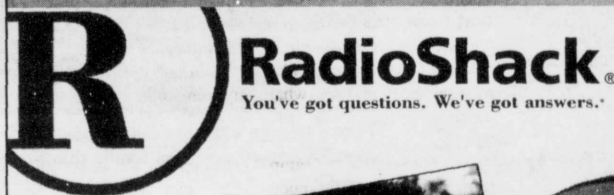
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