

THE FREE PRESS SPORTS

SECTION **B**

VOL. 7 NO. 47

THURSDAY, APRIL 19, 2001

PHONE 564-0005

The Thursday PLAYBOOK

► McNamara takes UNBC job

UNBC's lengthy search for a new athletics and recreation co-ordinator came to an end early this week.

Len McNamara, a former Spruce Kings coach and general manager, was named to the position. McNamara succeeds Jim O'Meara who left the position last summer, leaving the post vacant for much of 2000.

McNamara has experience with university-level sports from his time as on-ice helper and statistician for the UBC varsity hockey team and also has a bachelor's degree in physical education and commerce from UBC.

The athletics co-ordinator at UNBC oversees the fitness centre, the men's and women's varsity basketball teams, the junior varsity program and intra-mural sports.

► Flick on the podium

Kali Flick brought back a north zone trophy after winning a bronze medal and a fourth-place finish in the two slalom events in Smithers at the final BC Alpine North Zone Merrill Lynch race of the season.

Flick was the only PG Alpine Ski Team member to win one of the north zone trophies for highest total season points in the K2 women's division. Katie McMillan, Brian Bennett and Shannon McClary all won gold in individual events. Kirsty Flick, Jenna Eisbrenner and Katie McMillan won a silver medal each and Ruth Farnan brought back a bronze in the April 13 giant slalom.

In total PG Alpine Ski Team racers were good for 10 top-three finishes at the final meet of the season.

► Boxers off to Spruce Grove

Four pugilists from PG's Inner City Boxing Club are in Spruce Grove, Alberta this weekend for the Alberta Golden Gloves.

Kristian 'the Beast' Witso is competing in the 178-lb senior division, Kristy Hillen is in the 126-lb senior female class, Penny Davidson in the 132-lb senior female and Becky Pegues in the 100-lb junior C female.

Working out the nerves

Young arms look to replace some veteran Grays

By **DOUG BROWN**

Free Press staff writer

Brodie Norn is nervous.

He's nervous during try-outs for the Prince George Grays junior baseball team.

The 19-year-old infielder and pitcher also admits to being nervous each and every time he steps onto the mound during a game.

If nerves are the problem for Brodie Norn then joining the Grays is the equivalent of immersion therapy. "I get nervous really easy actually," admits the lanky Norn while taking a break from the Grays open try-outs Sunday. "Whenever I step onto the mound or even the infield. But after a few pitches are thrown I forget all about those."

Norn grew up in Prince George, progressing through PG Little League and Babe Ruth. And for the past four years he's followed the progress of the Grays as they grew from fledgling team to last year's pennant-winners. He's watched older teammates from the senior Knights move on and join the junior team. And he's known that's where he wanted to go.

"I wanted to better myself and see what I could do," says Norn. "And I wanted to challenge myself."

But the challenge for the Freeman Park graduate may not be the calibre of baseball as the calibre of pressure. The Grays draw the largest regular baseball crowd in the city during the summer months and even being photographed and interviewed by local media isn't quite old-hat yet to the rookie thrower. There's also the small matter of living up to the standard set by last year's team — a league pennant can be inspiring, but it can also be depressing.

"The Grays last year were a great team, no doubt about it," says Norn. "And I think there is a little bit of pressure to live up to that. But I expect it."

John Kazakoff also has expecta-



Assistant coach Chubb Williams put Grays hopefuls through their paces Sunday at Monty Gabriel Park. DOUG BROWN/FREE PRESS

tions, but they have nothing to do with last season. The Grays coach and general manager has charted an uphill climb for his team that hasn't wavered since their first season. They finished then with an 8-28 record. That

improved each year until last season's spectacular 25-7 finish. The loss of starting pitchers Simon Stoner and Ryan Lupul has raised questions about

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