

2 young RoughRiders headed to all-star game

Written by Jim Ecker

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Erik Foley and Ryan Larkin are just 17 years old, but they've already reached the Tier I level of junior hockey with the Cedar Rapids RoughRiders and they've already been selected for a prestigious all-star game.

Foley and Larkin, who both turned 17 in June, will play in the All-American Prospects Game in Buffalo, N.Y., this Thursday night before making their debut with the RoughRiders in the season opener Saturday night at the Cedar Rapids Ice Arena against Dubuque.

The All-American Prospects Game will feature 42 of the top American-born prospects who are eligible for the 2015 NHL draft. The game will be played at the First Niagara Center, home of the NHL's Buffalo Sabers.

"It's a real big honor," said Foley, a forward from Mansfield, Mass. "I'll play with some great players down there. I'm really excited."

Foley and Larkin will leave Wednesday, play in the all-star game Thursday, return to Cedar Rapids Friday and play for the RoughRiders Saturday in a whirlwind of activity as the 2014-15 USHL season begins. Only the top young players in the country have been selected for the Prospects Game.

"It's exciting," said Larkin, a goalie from Clarkston, Mich. "My cousin was in it last year and he said he had a great time with it. Obviously, it's high-level competition. I'm really looking forward to it."

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Larkin's cousin is Dylan Larkin, who was selected by the Detroit Red Wings as the 15th overall pick in the 2014 NHL Entry Draft and is currently playing at the University of Michigan.

Larkin arrived in Cedar Rapids this past Thursday after being obtained in a trade from Muskegon of the USHL. He enrolled for classes at Linn-Mar High School Monday and will begin his senior year at Linn-Mar Tuesday.

Foley is a senior at Cedar Rapids Washington, so both young players will be juggling school, an all-star trip to Buffalo and competing for the RoughRiders this week.

Foley has committed to Providence College and Larkin has committed to Miami of Ohio, but neither player is sure if he'll enroll in college next year or the year after. There's a chance they'll spend two seasons with the RoughRiders before going to college.

Although his rights belonged to Muskegon, Larkin had been playing for the Michigan Warriors in the Tier II North American Hockey League. Now he's made a quick jump to Tier I hockey in Cedar Rapids.

"It's surreal," he said. "We really didn't have fans or a real crowd there (with the Michigan Warriors). Coming in and playing here in just the preseason is really more fans than I've ever played before. And now I'm really looking forward to getting the season started."

Eight members of the RoughRiders played here last season with Logan Von Ruden, Charlie Curti, Andrew Oglevie, Casey Jerry, Andrew Gaus, Dylan McLaughlin, Alec Marsh and Clark Kuster back for another season.

"I think we've got real good depth," Coach Mark Carlson said after practice Monday. "I think we're a little bigger this year, a little stronger. I like what I've see so far."

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"I like our depth," he said. "It's really competitive in terms of who's going to be in the lineup."

PRESEASON ROSTER

Number	Name	Position	Hometown	College Commit
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1. Ryan Larkin, G, Clarkston, Mich. (Miami of Ohio)
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-
4. Logan Von Ruden, D, Northfield, Minn.
-
5. Bryce Hatten, D,. Granger, Ind. (Miami of Ohio)
-
6. Derek Daschke, D., Troy, Mich. (Western Michigan)
-
7. Charlie Curti, D, Mound, Minn. (Yale)
-
8. Mitch Reinke, D, Stillwater, Minn. (Michigan Tech)
-
9. Aaron Thow, D, East York, Ontario (Clarkson)
-
10. Andrew Oglevie, F, Fullerton, Calif. (Notre Dame)
-
11. Callahan Burke, F, Boxborough, Mass. (Notre Dame)

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12. Casey Jerry, F, Hudson, Wis. (Mankato)

13. Matthew O'Donnell, D, Fountain Valley, Calif. (Vermont)

14. Andrew Gaus, F, Wexford, Penn. (Yale)

15. Jiri Fronk, F, Louny, Czech Republic

16. Hugh McGing, F, Chicago, Ill. (Western Michigan)

17. Dylan McLaughlin, F, Lancaster, N.Y. (Providence)

18. Adam Gaudette, F, Braintree, Mass. (Northeastern)

19. Will Harrison, F, Springfield, Va.

20. Jason Kalinowski, F, Stamford, Conn. (New Hampshire)

21. Alec Marsh, F, Bridgewater, N.J. (Penn State)

22. Ross Colton, F, Robbinsville, N.J. (Vermont)

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23. Brendan Harris, F, Las Vegas, Nev. (St. Cloud State)

24. Alex Jasiek, F, St. Louis, Mo. (Dartmouth)

26. Clark Kuster, D, St. Louis, Mo. (St. Cloud State)

27. Erik Foley, F, Mansfield, Mass. (Providence)

28. Zach Court, F, Winnipeg, Manitoba

33. Ben Blacker, G, Oakville, Ontario (Western Michigan)

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