

RoughRiders pick Gareau, Petrash as captains

Written by Jim Ecker

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It was Election Day in the United States on Tuesday, when citizens all over the country elected new representatives or re-elected old ones.

The Cedar Rapids RoughRiders held their own election this week as well and picked Dylan Gareau as their captain and Corey Petrash as their assistant captain.

All of the RoughRiders got a vote. Coach Mark Carlson had veto power, if needed, but heartily endorsed the results, calling Gareau and Petrash good leaders and good choices.

Gareau, 19, is a forward from Richmond, Ontario. Petrash, 18, is a forward from East St. Paul, Manitoba, so both captains hail from Canada.

The new captains will be on display Friday when the RoughRiders (7-2-1) host Des Moines (4-7-1) at the Cedar Rapids Ice Arena at 7:05 p.m.

"It's a great honor," said Gareau, who served as an assistant captain with the RoughRiders last season. "It's something you take pride in, that the guys see you as a leader on the team. It's going to be a challenge, but it's something I'm looking forward to."

"When you find out you are the captain, you just feel honored and grateful that your teammates think of you that way."

The RoughRiders did not vote for the highest scorers on the team. Gareau has not scored a goal this season and has three assists. Petrash has one goal and four assists.

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Rather, the players voted for the best natural leaders.

"It's an honor to have the respect of the guys on the team," said Petrash, in his first year with Cedar Rapids. "We're both real happy to have that honor."

The players voted Monday. The results were announced to the team Tuesday.

Carlson wanted to wait for the RoughRiders to play some games and get to know each other before having the players vote for their captains, rather than picking the captains in preseason camp. Gareau got the most votes and will wear a "C" for captain on his sleeve the rest of the season.

"I think he really cares about the team and all the players and the organization and the community," said Carlson. "I think he has a lot of respect for everybody. I think he leads by example. Those are all qualities you're looking for in a leader on your team."

Carlson used many of the same words to describe Petrash.

"He works extremely hard," the coach said. "He's a respectful guy. He puts the team first. Again, all the qualities you look for in a leader."

The captains have duties on the ice and off.

"Really it's leading our team, making sure we're ready to play," said Carlson. "Watching over our team, at the rink and off the ice. It's a lot of responsibility."

Gareau said the captains can handle situations without having the coaches get involved. "We can deal with it without them, maybe taking care of some of the young guys," he said. "If they

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have questions, instead of going to the coaches, they can come to me. It's just little things, if they need help."

Gareau plans to handle being the captain in a "professional manner," he said.

"You don't need to beat someone down," he remarked. "Say it in a nice way and try to help them and make them learn from that, and also you learn from doing that kind of stuff as well."

Petrash has similar ideas.

"It's just leading by example out on the ice," he said. "Having big shifts, getting guys going, making sure there's energy out there."