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Regehr ready to earn his pay

D-man looking forward to year

By [SCOTT FISHER](#) -- Calgary Sun

Robyn Regehr missed the dress rehearsal but the 23-year-old Flames defenceman will be ready when the curtain rises.

Regehr sat out both pre-season games in Edmonton last weekend but said his right shoulder will be good to go Thursday night when the Flames open the regular season in Vancouver.

"It would have been nice to be able to play in those games but it just means I'll have to do a better of mentally preparing myself to play," Regehr said.

"I know what I have to do to be effective out there.

"I feel pretty good. I'm going to have a few good days of practice so I'll be sharp on Thursday."

Regehr, who played with an injured wrist for most of last season, is eager to prove he's worth every penny his new contract will pay him.

He signed a five-year, \$10.5-million deal, the longest in franchise history, in the off-season.

"There are two ways you can look at it," Regehr said. "It's nice to have a five-year contract because you don't have to worry.

"But I prefer to look at it as now that they've rewarded me with that kind of commitment, it's my turn to go out there and give them what they want.

"That's the pressure that comes with that contract. I have to continually improve, help this team win and get to the playoffs."

Entrenched as one of the club's top-four blueliners, the 6-ft. 3-in., 226-pounder had the best seat in the house as three fellow d-men battled for the seventh spot.

As of yesterday, head coach Darryl Sutter hadn't decided who had emerged victorious but Regehr said it's impossible to make the wrong choice.

"It was a good fight. Mike Commodore, Jesse Wallin and Steve Montador -- they all played well and will make the decision difficult for management."

WALKING WOUNDED: Jarome Iginla was absent from yesterday's practice but the Flames star and his head coach downplayed any fears.

"He's fine, there's nothing wrong with him. It's the same thing echoing what we said last week," said DarrylSutter.

Iginla admitted he has a right hip flexor problem but pointed out it's not what plagued him last year.

"I played last game with it and it felt pretty good. It's just something that an extra day can help that much more. It's preventative."

He's not expected to miss Thursday's season opener.

Steve Reinprecht is doubtful for the game. The centre last week hurt the same shoulder that was surgically repaired but insists this injury is not related.

"It's improving," said Reinprecht who skated prior to the practice. "Most likely (I'll miss the opener) but I hate ruling things out."

Chris Clark, also nursing a sore shoulder, participated fully in practice and said he believes he'll be OK in time.

FLAMES ON THE TUBE: Shaw Cablesystems and the Calgary Flames have announced they will be joining forces this season.

Flames games will now be available to Shaw Digital pay per view customers in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

Shaw Flames pay per view kicks off with their first-ever broadcast against the Boston Bruins on Dec. 18, 2003.

Calgary games will be available in a five-game package for \$49.95. Individual games can also be ordered for \$10.95 each.

In addition to the games, the pay per view broadcasts will feature news and interviews, all in a commercial-free format.

http://www.canoe.ca/Slam031007/nhl_cal2-sun.html