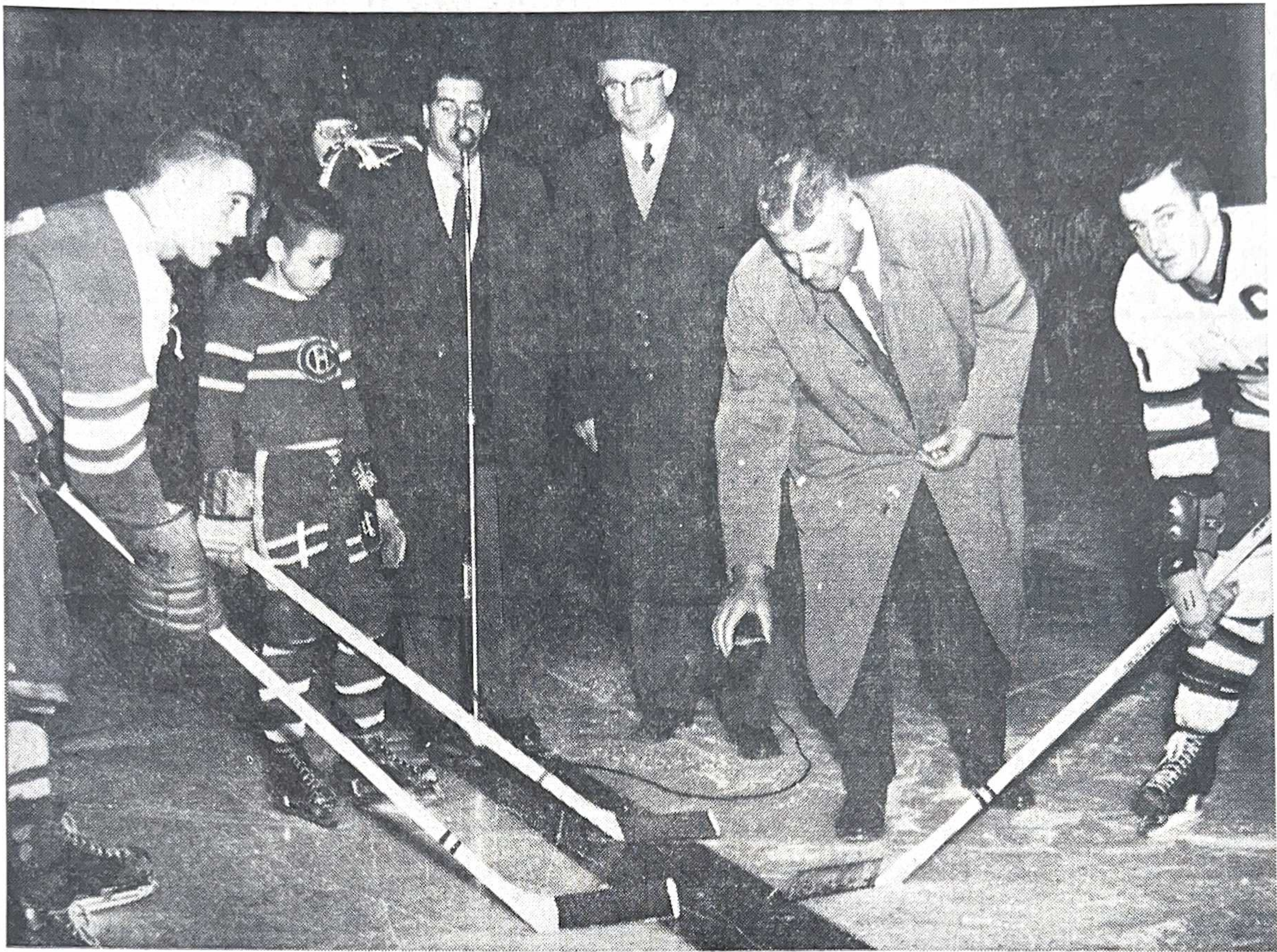




"Babe" Pratt Creates Local History

Walter "Babe" Pratt creates history as he drops the puck between captains Dave Kowal of Vernon and Bob Gruber of Kelowna to open the Okanagan Junior Amateur Hockey League Tuesday night. Later, Wayne Dye, representing the Vernon Minor Hockey Association, officially dropped the rub-

ber. Also in picture are Mayor Frank Becker and emcee for the evening Don Warner. The McIntosh Girls Pipe Band was on hand to entertain the 300 fans attending the first junior "A" league contest played here.

Vernon News Photo



"Babe" Gives Advice To Vernon Defencemen

Former National Hockey League defenceman Walter "Babe" Pratt gives advice to three young members of the Junior Canadians' blueline patrol prior to Tuesday night's OJHL opener at the Civic Arena. Listening

attentively are, left to right, Dave MacKay, Harry Wynnchuk and Warren Henry. Canadians lost a thrilling 5-4 decision to Kelowna Buckaroos in overtime.

Vernon News Photo

Panthers' Spirit Wanes — Cole

Vernon Panthers travel to North Kamloops Saturday for an Okanagan Mainline High School Canadian Football League game against Wally Cross Saints.

Panthers head coach Doug Cole told The Vernon News of a "let down" feeling within the club and said the boys

had "just not been turning out to practices regularly."

"I can understand the missing a practice once and a while, but lately they haven't had the spirit that goes with a winning club."

Cole said the club's general attitude is probably based on the fact that the best they

can do is a second-place league finish behind the Kamloops Red Devils.

Kamloops has a three win, one loss record with two games remaining. Vernon has a 2-2 record and could conceivably tie Kamloops in the battle for the Knights of Columbus trophy.

Panthers, co-defenders of the league title with Kelowna, would lose out in the final analysis, however, as they have not won a game against Kamloops and in the event of a tie, honors would go to the club with the best points-for-and-against record.

Cole didn't predict the outcome of Saturday's game. He said the Panthers are definitely the better club. "The defensive squad with centre Arvid Hoglund outstanding, is a smooth working unit, while the attacking team is improving although sputtering in spots."

"It all depends on whether the boys are willing to dig into practices and be in a fighting mood for Saturday's game," said Cole.

front-running Hotspurs at Kelowna's City Park Oval.

A Kamloops victory or a tie, coupled with a Vernon win over Penticton and the league's decision in favor of Penticton's protest, would give Royalites the fall title.

Fresh from their outstanding performance against United Sunday, Royalites are favored to continue their winning ways against a Penticton club which could only tie the winless Revelstoke team.

Playing-coach Carl Hahlweg will likely go with the same slick-passing combine which has picked up 14 goals in its last two league encounters. Only doubtful starter is centre-half Erwin Frank who is recovering from a head injury and a badly sprained ankle.

Game time is two o'clock at MacDonald Park.

OVSL STANDINGS

	GP	W	L	T	GF	GA	Pts
Kelowna	7	6	1	0	46	15	12
Vernon	7	5	2	0	30	18	10
Kamloops	7	4	3	0	23	27	8
Penticton	7	2	4	1	14	16	5
Revelstoke	8	0	7	1	10	47	1

Sports Digest

HOCKEY

Friday: Vernon at Penticton
Saturday: Vernon at Kelowna

Saturday: Grandview vs Lumby
Sunday: Grindrod vs Sal. Arm
 Armstrong vs HoL

SOCCER

Sunday: Penticton at Vernon
 Kamloops at Kelowna

Saturday: Vernon at North K.
 Kamloops at Penticton

Thursday, Friday, Saturday,
Sunday: Vernon Curling Club's
 Mixed Bonspiel.

Sizzling Shot Gives Bucs Junior Opener

First Okanagan Junior Game Played Here Before 300 Fans

By TERRY STEWARD

JUNIOR CANADIANS 4, KELOWNA 5

Vernon Junior Canadians were edged 5-4 by the Kelowna Buckaroos Tuesday night in a fast, hard-checking thriller that was decided in a 10-minute overtime period.

Over 300 fans at Civic Arena were treated to hockey played with the heart and played to win in the opening game of the newly-formed Okanagan Junior "A" Hockey League.

The teams skated, checked, shot, yelled and fought their way into overtime, then came out to play a calibre of hockey equal to that of any club with spirit to win.

The winning goal was fired at the five-minute mark of the overtime period by Buckaroo defenceman Phil Larden. The shot sizzled 30 feet and was still climbing when it hit the back of the net.

DIDN'T SEE IT

Netminder Bob Jones, screened on the shot, said he didn't see it until it hit the net. Cracked one Vernon defenceman, "if I had been in the way of that, I'd still be out there."

After ceremonies opening the first OJHL game and featuring Mayor Frank Becker, former NHL great "Babe" Pratt and the Vernon Girls' Pipe Band, the first puck was dropped by young Wayne Dye of the Vernon Minor Hockey Association.

Thirty-six seconds later, Kelowna had their first goal by Bob Gruber on a scoring play with Ian Angus and Phil Larden.

At 8:54 of the first, Dale Sorochnik engineered a play which set up Wayne Morris for the tying marker.

Kelowna again went one up at 15:51 on a goal by Martin Schaffer assisted by Sonny Herbst and Russ Evans.

FLYING PUCK

Morris caught a flying puck on the mouth shortly before the end of the first period. Three sutures were needed to close the gash on the upper lip of the speedy right-winger but he was ready to join his squad when the teams left the dressing room for the second period.

Vernon, with coach Odie Lowe's pep talk ringing in their ears, were determined to overcome the 2-1 deficit and at 2:37 of the second, Seiko Ouchi flicked the puck between the legs of Kelowna netminder Don Kennedy.

Seconds later, Ouchi again waltzed in to grab a loose puck and pop it over the sprawling Kelowna goalie to give the Canadians a one goal lead.

PRESSING ATTACK

However, a pressing attack by Kelowna, and the failure of Vernon to clear the puck out of their own end, resulted in a tally by Fred Thomas from Derek Pyle at 5:24.

Play became faster and checking became harder. Penalties to Sorochuk and Vern Wishlow failed to dampen the spirits of the teams and a scramble in front of the Vernon net culmin-

ated in a brawl between able Vernon defenceman Harry Wynnchuk and Kelowna's Don Culley.

Both boys were sent to the penalty box with five minute majors, the decisive result of the battle being registered on the face of Culley.

The score was still 3-3 after 40 minutes of bruising hockey.

Third period scoring got underway at 8:22 with Sorochuk giving Vernon the lead assisted by Jim Stephens and Dave Kowal. Sorochuk's tie-breaker lasted until, with less than two minutes remaining, Thomas tallied for his second goal to keep Kelowna in the game.

The overtime period was a fast and well-played affair giving the some 300 fans in attendance a look at what can be expected in future Okanagan junior hockey.

LACK OF EXPERIENCE

Lowe's squad was hampered only in lack of experience. Odie said, "they weren't clearing it out of their end but you'll see an improvement; because they want to play hockey."

The coach said he was very pleased with the game. Buckaroo coach Brian Roche agreed with him.

Roche said, "there isn't much to choose from between the two clubs." He said it was a good game, "there was a couple of bad decisions by the referees but it didn't cost anyone the game." Roche indicated he would like to see the junior games called a little closer.

There were nine penalties in the game including a ten-minute misconduct handed out to Kelowna's Gruber.

1st Period: 1. Kelowna, Gruber (Angus, Larden); 2. Vernon, Morris (Sorochuk); 3. Kelowna, Schaffer (Herbst, Evans); **Penalties:** Roland.

2nd Period: 4. Vernon Ouchi; 5. Vernon, Ouchi; 6. Kelowna, Thomas (Pyle). **Penalties:** Sorochuk and Wishlaw, Wynnchuk and Culley, Kineshenko.

3rd Period: 7. Vernon Sorochuk (Stephens, Kowal); 8. Kelowna, Thomas. **Penalties:** Culley, Wynnchuk, Gruber (10 minute misconduct.)

Overtime: 9. Kelowna, Larden. **Penalties:** None.

Juniors Hit Road For Two Games

The newly-initiated Okanagan Junior "A" Hockey League continues its schedule this weekend with Odie Lowe's Junior Canadians doing most of the road work.

With one game this week already under their belt, the Canadians travel to Penticton Friday night, then down to Kelowna Saturday.

Next home game is Tuesday when Vernon hosts Kamloops.

"It's a lot of work for the boys," said Lowe, "but I don't think it will hurt them."

He said 16 year old juvenile Larry Pirnak would be in the Canadians' net for the Penticton game as junior netminder Bob Jones was unable to make the trip.

Jones, who accounted well for himself in the Halloween league opener against Kelowna, will do the chores for Saturday's game.

However, word is still awaited from netminder George Beck.

Meanwhile, Kelowna travels to Kamloops Friday and Penticton makes the same trip Saturday.

Ladies' Afternoon Curling Club Offers Game On Tryout Basis

Vernon Ladies' Afternoon Curling Club reminds local ladies of the opportunity to try out the "roarin" game without any obligation to join the club.

Ice time at the local curling rink has been arranged for this afternoon and Friday from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Regular league action starts Tuesday during the same hours.

In addition to the tryout basis, the club is aware of the difficulties involved in attempting to curl and keeping on eye on baby at the same time. With this in mind they have re-introduced a baby-sitting service at the rink during league action.

No baby-sitting fee is charged. The service is included in the membership dues.

Where's Everybody?



Mayor Challenges Vernonites To Support Juniors

Mayor Frank Becker challenged the citizens of Vernon to give their support to junior hockey in an address prior to Tuesday night's Okanagan Junior Amateur Hockey League opener at the Civic Arena.

"This is the beginning of a new hockey era for Vernon and the Okanagan. For years I've heard people say, 'give us local talent and we'll support hockey.'

"Well, now we have the local talent and I challenge every citizen of Vernon to get out and support it," he said.

Seniors Killing Canada's Reputation

By IAN MACFARLANE

Former National Hockey League great Walter "Babe" Pratt has nothing against senior hockey, but he thinks touring senior clubs are killing Canada's hockey reputation overseas.

In Vernon for the official opening of the Okanagan Junior Amateur Hockey League Tuesday night, the ex-New York, Toronto and Boston defenceman said Canada should not be represented by a "bunch of has-beens" when it can offer the best junior players in the world.

"The CAHA should be sending junior teams to Sweden, Czechoslovakia, and Russia to see how their junior system compares with ours."

"I think an All Star junior squad would do a better job than a bunch of old pros," he

challenged.

Commenting on the introduction of junior "A" hockey in British Columbia, Pratt said it would take the province three to five years to turn out a Memorial Cup contender.

He said instead of deploring raiding tactics by prairie junior teams, B.C. officials should be thinking of importing prairie juniors into their clubs.

"It's impossible to build a Memorial Cup contender out of homebrew talent. No club has achieved this since Winnipeg Monarchs back in 1946, and I believe no club ever will."

But he lauded the OJAHL's policy of using local talent to get the league underway. "For one thing you'll never have salary trouble with homebrew juniors, and you'll never have

to worry about producing the same old faces year after year."

Asked if he thought the Western Hockey League would sponsor Okanagan junior clubs, Pratt said Vancouver Canucks were definitely interested in lining up a junior subsidiary, and it could conceivably be Vernon.

On the now-defunct Okanagan Senior Amateur Hockey League, "Babe" said its reincarnation depended on the success of junior hockey, and the number of players graduating from its ranks.

"It will take five or six years, but I think the question then will be whether or not a city can afford to support both."

"If the choice was left to me I would choose junior hockey for economic reasons.

No town in the Okanagan is big enough to provide 15 jobs to keep senior hockey players," he claimed.

"And I think if Okanagan fans see some top-notch junior stuff they'll never go back to the senior brand. Junior hockey is the most entertaining hockey in Canada outside of the National Hockey League."

"They make mistakes but can cover them up with their blinding speed," Pratt said.

He suggested the CAHA send one of its top eastern junior clubs into the Valley to give fans a sample of real junior "A" hockey.

"Junior hockey will go, but it'll take some time. In the meantime they should get the same breaks the seniors received from fans in the Okanagan," "Babe" concluded.