

NORTH SPORTS OKANAGAN

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Sports Editor

Jr. Blades Test Broncos Next

Hustling OJHL Newcomers Make Appearance Saturday

Vernon Blades will be trying to rope and hogtie a herd of Broncos this weekend in an effort to get back into Okanagan Junior "A" Hockey League contention.

Winless in four games this season the Blades desperately need a victory or two in order to stay with the rest of the galloping OJHL pack and they're banking on busting the league's newest entry, Penticton-Summerland El Rancho Broncos as a starter.

Easier said than done. The Broncos might be novices at this junior hockey business but they're learning fast, they're learning well and they can't be classed as pushovers.

They have said as much, if not in word, certainly in deed, since the OJHL season opened two weeks ago.

Tangling with the defending champion Kamloops Rockets right off the bat the frisky, young Broncos soon served notice they would be heard from loud and often this year. They lost both their games to the Rockets but by grudging scores of 6-4 and 4-1, the first one being forced into overtime.

The next weekend the Broncos battled the highly rated Kelowna Buckaroos and this time they managed a home and away split, winning 5-4 in Penticton and losing 5-2 in Kelowna.

Which brings us up to the present and their scheduled weekend go-around with the Blades.

The Broncos host the local junior contingent Friday night down in Penticton and make their first appearance of the season

on Civic Arena ice Saturday starting at 8:30 p.m.

The Blades can expect a stiff test from the Broncos in both games and unless they show more improvement in their playing form they could very well sport an 0-6 record after the weekend.

In four games to date the Blues have only scored 11 goals while allowing a horrendous total of 30. True, a number of key players have been missing from the lineup but this is only a partial excuse. The fact remains, the Blades still have lots of work ahead of them.

This weekend the squad will be bolstered by the addition of an experienced goaltender to back up Norm Schiman. His name is Jerry Mayer and he hails from the Kootenays. Coach Hap Schaefer says he will start Mayer Friday night in Penticton and, if he looks good, he will likely play again Saturday.

Schaefer hopes centreman Gary Koski, away visiting on the Prairies, will be back in time for the weekend action.

Ski Club Meets

The Vernon Ski Club is holding a general meeting Monday night at 8 p.m. in the Beairsto Elementary School library.

The coming ski season will be discussed with a ski film to follow. New club members are welcome.