

# Lots Of Holiday Hockey For Fans

## Blade-Rocket Feud Resumes In Boxing Day, Sunday Set

Most people will be taking it easy over the holiday weekend, but not so the Vernon Blades Corporation—they'll be open for business as usual.

Their business, in case you didn't know already, is entertaining hockey fans. Also trying to win hockey games.

And they'll be out to accomplish both this weekend at the expense of a rival cartel from the North, Kamloops Rockets Co. Ltd., Kenny Stewart, proprietor.

Judging from their immediate past record against the Rockets, three straight wins, the Blades stand a good chance of transacting a successful "business venture" on the weekend.

Let's face it, they pretty well have to if they hope to stay in Okanagan Junior "A" Hockey League contention through the remainder of the season.

The Blades have lost

enough ground as it is, what with dropping a pair of games to second place Kelowna Buckaroos last week. If they lose any more they can be considered no better than third place finishers in the OJHL this season.

And it could be a last place finish if Penticton-Summerland Broncos want to get tough. They're only three points behind Vernon now and that's not much of a deficit to overcome.

The Blades open their two-game set with the Rockets Saturday afternoon (Boxing Day) in Kamloops starting at 2 p.m.

Sunday they're back here at the Civic Arena with the Rockets as visitors. This game also goes at 2 p.m.

Advance ticket sales for Sunday's game are already

on sale. They may be obtained from either Ernie's Esso Service or members of the Blades club.

In other league action some changes have been made in the schedule to facilitate a home game for the Blades on New Year's Day. Instead of Penticton-Summerland at Kelowna on Boxing Day, the Buckaroos visit Penticton and on Sunday it's Penticton-Summerland at Kelowna rather than Kelowna at Penticton.

This will allow the Broncos to visit Vernon on New Year's Day. The original schedule called for the Blades to play in Penticton.

The Blades probably won't be faced with the same drastic player shortage they had last weekend in that ill-fated series with the Buckaroos. Although they are liable to be short one or so (defenceman Gary Koski for sure) coach Hap Schaefer should be able to draw from juvenile ranks for reserve strength.

Centre George Watson, in particular, would provide a big boost to the juniors. So would defenceman Gordie Clarke.

Norm Schiman will likely start in goal again but Brian Woodward may be on hand to fill in should the emergency arise.

The Rockets may have lost their last three decisions to the Blades but you can be sure they won't be soft touches. They're in a tight battle for first place at the moment and they'll be going full blast to hold or, if possible, widen their one-point margin over Kelowna.

All in all it looks as if junior hockey fans are in for some top-notch holiday entertainment when the Blades and Rockets come to grips.

And why not — that's their business!

## In Exhibition Tilt

# Panther Cagers Outlast Alumni

Bouncy, bountiful youth prevailed over willing, able but not so vigorous youth Monday night.

Vernon Panthers, representing the youth movement, decisioned the older Alumni 97-87 in a fast paced exhibition basketball game at Vernon Senior High School gym.

However the Oldsters came away unconvinced as to the superiority of their young rivals. In fact they're clamoring for a re-

Panther star, was the Alumni's high man with 21 points. George Beardmore, one of the team's "imports" recruited for the occasion, dunked 10 and Bill Roth, another well known ex-senior, tallied nine.

The Panthers led 15-13 after the first quarter, trailed 38-34 at the half but came on strong to out-