

# Shorthanded Blades Swamped By Injuries

## New Players By Next Game Promised After More Losses

Gloom prevailed in the Vernon Blades camp over the weekend as the already shortstaffed club tried to find enough whole bodies to ice a team for two games on the road.

The raft of injuries on top of the shorthanded situation enabled the Blades to absorb two more whopping defeats 15-3 Friday in Kelowna and 8-3 Saturday in Kamloops.

Kelowna was fired up and ready for the Blades Friday night as the Vernon squad picked up their only win of the year against the Bucks in their last outing.

Buckaroos fired nine goals past Norm Shiman in the first period as the Vernon netminder had trouble locating the puck. Juvenile Gerry Allen came on to finish the game and played strongly despite a porous defence in front of him.

In Kamloops Saturday night, Vernon gave the game all they had but with only two lines and one of them on the limp they just couldn't hold out for the whole 60 minutes.

The score stood 4-3 with nine minutes remaining in the game but the Kraft Kings hammered in four more counters in the last nine minutes.

The new coach of the Blades, John Zahara, promised new faces for the next game, December 27, in Vernon.

"We can't go on this way," Zahara said. "There were only 11 players on the club when we took over

and now injuries have cut this number down.

He listed — Bob Stein bothered by a sore back; Vern Colley, out with a bad shoulder; Scott Smith, sick with the flu; Gord Clarke, lost through a suspension.

Added up that leaves seven of the first 11 he had when the Minor Hockey took over last week.

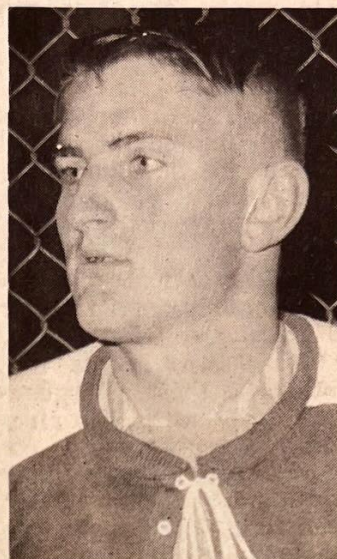
With the collapse of Prince George PeeGees it is hoped that two players can be landed in time for the next game along with several prospects from the prairies.

"We must build up to at least 12 players in a hurry," the new coach said.

Bright lights in the two losses on the weekend were the play of speedster Ivan Melanoski and utility forward Maurice Wernick. Wernick kept up his pace of one goal a game since being shifted to a new line and the hard skating Melanoski bailed the club out somewhat by taking a shift on defence.

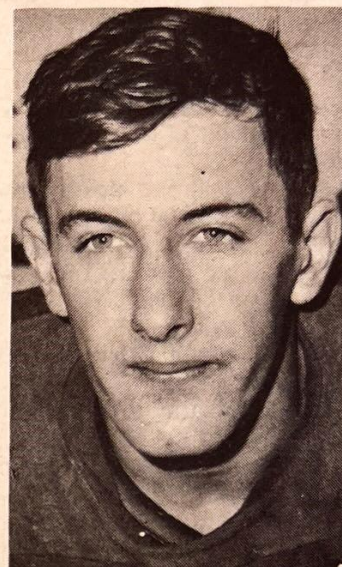
Blades could only dress two defencemen for the weekend games which left the club more than a trifle weak in front of their own goal.

Details on the incoming players are expected to be finalized this week, according to the new club management.



**MAURICE WERNICKE**

... goal a game.



**BILL NIXON**

... tries out with club



## Luckies Tackle Totems In Civic Arena Tuesday

Vernon Luckies will be out to hold onto the lead in the Okanagan Mainline Intermediate League when Kamloops Totems come to town tomorrow night.

The pesky Totems are right on the heels of Luckies in a bid to take over the league lead.

Luckies will dress their strongest unit to try and put some breathing room between them and the Totems.