

Blades test Bucks

Promise a wild one—at least

The haves and the have nots are beginning to show in the Okanagan Junior Hockey League and for as many years as local fans would like to forget, the Vernon Blades are once again not among the haves.

The Blades, who had a three-game winning streak going for them until the Penticton Broncos took them to task last weekend, are presently nursing the wounds of two lost battles, 8-5 and 6-5. They get a chance to redeem themselves this Saturday night when they play host to the Kelowna Buckaroos, who toppled from their first place pedestal, also at the weekend, when they lost to Kamloops Kraft Kings 6-3.

Blades, whose best period of the six was their last (they outscored Penticton 4-1), can only hope that they have overcome some of the barriers that limited their scoring to only one line while the "big green men" were playing no favorites in scoring against every trio.

Coach Odie Lowe is expected to return to the Tom Williamson-Lawrence Quechuck-Ivan Malinovsky group as his first line while second and third strings could see just about anybody fitted at least once to try and get something going.

The Blades Production Line produced 10 goals over the two-game period, enough for a whole team to score two victories, while the remaining individuals teamed to come up with only one goal.

The unit of King Cam, Pat Hembree and Keith Rolston, appear to break out at any time (they are easily the biggest combo around the four team circuit) but the call of the penalty box has put a crimp in their style at times. Rolston, the steadier of the three, chalked up the Blades only other goal and neither of his linemates were in on it.

Other blueliners to impress are Ken Polan and Graham Elliott. Polan was credited with three assists last time-out and Elliott appears to be the steadiest defender. Youngster Bob Mayer (Midget age) also aided Lowe's boys Saturday night. Somewhat less than the size of blueliner Lowe would have liked, Mayer did however, move the puck as good or better than anybody else.

Game time Saturday night has been set for 8:30 p.m.

* * *

ICE CHIPS...Blades' Al Southward claimed he had been given the thumb during the argument that followed the high stick incident during Saturday night's game...no record of his being tossed from the game appeared in the game report,

which was signed by referee Art Davison and his linesman...Ivan Malinovsky continued to limp this week from a shot which he caught on the ankle during Friday night's game at Penticton...rumour has it again that Blades expect another player for this weekend...the NHL had its Uke and Kraut lines and the

Broncos have Ray Picco, Ray Rebelato and Larry Palanio...

.....

Blades' coach Odie Lowe reported late this week that a new defenseman will be in the lineup Saturday night when the Vernon Juniors play host to the Kelowna Buckaroos. He is Frankie Mark, an 18-year old youngster from Edmonton, Alberta. Game time Saturday is set for 8:20 p.m.

Ski Tips with Goudge member, C.S.I.A.

Now is the time to start selecting equipment while the shops still have a good stock on hand and before the Christmas rush.

Boots are the most important piece of your equipment. You should be prepared to spend at least \$30.00 — anything less will not give you the proper support you need. When fitting boots, wear one heavy woolen sock. Before lacing up, bang the heel down hard on the floor and this will place your heel in the proper position. Lace inner and outer boot snugly. Allow free movement of the toes for circulation — but no sideplay across the ball of the foot. In caring for your boots never apply anything that will soften the leather. Ordinary boot polish is recommended. Always keep in boot press.

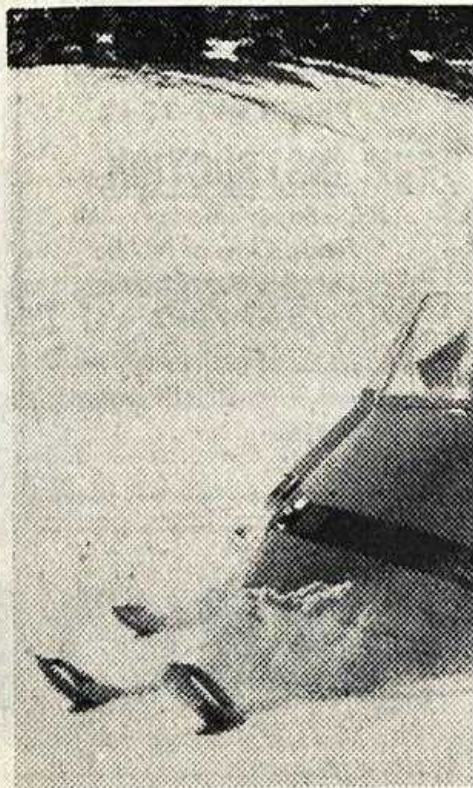
When selecting skis look for steel edges and a plastic lace of some sort. Good skis start as low as \$20.00. The correct length is acquired by extending the arm up and the ski tip should reach the bend in the wrist.

The flex of the ski is its ability to bend. Soft flex for powder snow and light skiers. Medium flex for packed snow and heavy skiers. Check skis for campee. Place them base to base and there should be approximately 3" space in the middle. Best choice for a recreational skier is a combination ski, rather than a Slalom and Giant Slalom or downhill which are for racing.

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the dull edge

... by Denis Feser, Sports Editor

Today's word or, old referees never die, they just blow away.

"You know, the refereeing is terrible here," he said.

"Yeah?" I said.

"Uh, huh. He's missed a lot of penalties. And his two linesmen aren't much help either. They don't make him look any better or his task any easier."

"Yeah?"

"Yeah!"

It's not worth it

Yeah! A referee's skates (or his linesmen's) are the toughest boots in town to fill. Whether he officiates in the Pup League or the NHL, he has the ignominious role of being one of the most unwanted and yet one of the most sought after persons in the sport today. Okanagan Junior Hockey League not excepted.

Which brings us to the real word for today. To allow a goal or not to allow a goal.

"I didn't see it," is the way referee Art Davison described the slashing charge against Penticton's Tom Madden during the

third period of the OJHL fixture between the Broncos and the Blades Saturday night.

It is an age old cliché referees fall back on when the going gets a bit tough and it only raises pertinent questions such as, "well, you didn't see very much else that night, why should it have been any different then?"

Defensively speaking, however, Canadian Amateur Hockey Association (CAHA) rules provide the referee with an out. In section 5, Rule 41 (your honor) which describes minor officials as somewhat more than zombie-like line watchers:

Linesmen are limited

(c) "They shall, when requested to do so by the Referee, give their version of any incident that may have taken place during the playing of the game." and further,

(d) "They shall point out the offender and report to the Referee at the first stoppage of play, their version of any infraction of the rules which incurs a Major or Match Penalty, or any conduct calling for a Bench Minor Penalty or a Misconduct Penalty under these rules."

The important line is, of course, "at the first stoppage of play." It doesn't say "when he sees fit he can blow his whistle until his little heart is content and then, in flowery language, describe what occurred in 100 words or less, as soon as the stoppage of play has been executed." It states merely that he can describe "his version" after "the first stoppage of play" and just as important from (c), "when requested to do so by the Referee." Period!

The final quoted passage (your honor) is to say, the Referee, who in this case was Art Davison, did not even have to ask either of his linesmen as to how Vernon's Rolston came to have an eight inch cut in his scalp. He could have assumed that the Blade player had been hit by a street car and simply faced the puck off at centre ice, instead of inquiring, listening and assessing the five minute major penalty to the Bronco offender.

A two referee system?

Which brings us to a sore point in the organization. It is as good a time as any for those believers to jump up and shout once more for the two-referee system or, at least, to giving the linesmen more power than that they are presently trusted with.

To say the referee can see everything is a falsehood, plain and simple. To expect as much is just about impossible. But the NHL continues its three man system with only one man "the boss." It must work okay, or at least, as well as they would like it to. (True, the NHL idea is a sound one, and most coincide with the CHA's ideas even though they — the NHL — are now allowing substitutions for major penalty getters while the CAHA is kicking around the idea of banishing players from a game who became involved in fist-cuffs.

As far as this corner is concerned, after watching the games here and in Penticton and Kelowna, a game gets out of hand usually through the lack of control of the referee, the respective coaches and, mostly, "some" of the players.

A referee can be blamed for not sticking to the letter of the law (your honor) from the outset. A coach should take it upon himself to let his team know the score before they step onto the ice. And a player, whether he is long on ability and short on brains or not, should practice just a little more tolerance.

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