

Wild melee in Kamloops

Essos lose on ice and in the stands

Screaming female fans fleeing from the stands, eggs flying everywhere and egg splattered Vernon hockey players fighting their way en masse into the bleachers, is a story in itself as Kamloops Rockets defeated Vernon Essos 4-1 in Junior "A" hockey action at Kamloops Wednesday night.

Rockets led 1-0 in the first period, both teams matched single goals in the middle stanza and then Rockets banged in two more unanswered goals in the

final period for their second win in five starts so far this year. For Vernon it was their second straight loss and their third in five starts.

Newcomer, Grant Evans paced the Rockets to their win with two goals and one assist with single markers coming off the sticks of Joe Beddard and Randy Rota. Vernon's one goal effort came late in the second period when Graham Elliott worked the puck to the Kamloops blueline, passed it to Lawrence Quechuk on

the left side who in turn made a rink wide pass to Keith Rolston who slapped it past goalie Wally Denault.

Essos kept a steady pressure on the Rockets throughout the first two periods of the game, missing several good chances in each period as they failed to capitalize on rebounds and other close-in plays around goalie Denault.

It was obvious to most spectators, particularly to press reporters sitting high up in the gondola that sooner or later trouble would erupt between Vernon players and Kamloops spectators as harrassment by the fans started the moment the game began.

Play was stopped several times in each period as arena attendants were called upon to clean eggs off the ice, mainly from the Vernon players' bench area.

There were minor scuffles among fans several times in the latter stages of the game, then with only 36 seconds remaining, the outburst finally occurred.

First indication of trouble was the sudden screaming of female fans as they burst away from the stands immediately above and beside the Vernon bench, amid a shower of flying eggs aimed in the general direction of the players sitting with their backs to the stands.

The next moment, the Vernon players, with eggs splattered all over their dark blue travelling uniforms, stormed into the stands in one mass attempt to get at the people who were throwing eggs and hurling insults at them.

For over 20 minutes, a wild stick and fist swinging melee followed with few if anyone making much of an attempt to put a stop to it.

Later, it was ascertained that at least three people had been injured, two of them unnamed Vernon residents who received cuts and abrasions to the face and head. It was also learned, that not one police officer had been assigned to the North Kamloops arena for the game. The RCMP did, however, show up ten minutes after the game had ended.

One of the more serious aspects is referee Doug McEwan's penalty assessment to Vernon's Tom Williamson. McEwan fingered Williamson off the ice following the major outburst with a match penalty. McEwan also assessed another Vernon player, Jerry Vachon a 10-minute misconduct at the same time.

The match penalty called against Williamson, presumably for attacking fans in the stands could be a very serious offence both to Williamson and the Vernon team as a whole. League president, Clem Bird of Penticton, will have to rule on the referee's report and he may as a result, ban Williamson from further play in the junior league this year. Also the BCAHA, could step in and stop Williamson from playing hockey in any organized league for the rest of his life.

One official said later, he does not understand how McEwan could pick out one player to penalize when every player on the team was involved.

NORTH

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Second phase lessons at pool

The second phase of the fall and winter swim lesson program starts today at the indoor pool in the Vernon recreation centre.

These lessons will be held twice a week, on Tuesday and Thursday for the next six weeks.

There will be lessons for all calibre of swimmers, from tadpole to seniors. Those interested can also take synchronized, diving, survival and intermediate lifesaving.

It is important that all those interested register immediately while there are still openings. Main object of the lessons is to de-

velop water safety and still have fun in the popular sport of swimming. Swimmers also find they develop both physical and mental abilities.

Also, by popular demand, a new phase of adult swim lessons are due to begin on Nov. 7, with lessons for this group of Tuesday and Friday for the next six weeks.

For the adults, there will be lessons for the beginner, novice and advanced groups, plus synchronized swimming for women and survival in the water for sportsmen.

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