

Fight and desire needed

Juniors lose will to win

By DOUG BULWER
Vernon Essos current slump in B.C. junior "A" hockey play has the beginnings of serious doubts as to their ability to stay up in one of the four playoff spots that are just around the corner.

Their loss to Penticton Tuesday night by a wide 8-2 score, merely brought the point closer to home. It was their third straight loss, making the winless streak at five with a tie to Kelowna thrown in since the first of the new year. Seriousness of their precarious position is made more obvious with the sudden surge of Kelowna from out of the league cellar into contention for any of the last three spots in the playoff picture.

Essos are still in third place in the standings, but have only two points on New Westminster and four on Kelowna. With 10 games left to play both Royals and Essos don't have much of a cushion, particularly since Kelowna has two games in hand and they

haven't lost in the past nine. There is no doubt the local boys are suffering morally and with the aggressive talents of Tom Williamson lost to them because of his broken arm and the doubtful start of Ken Pollon for this weekend's two-game swing to the coast, Essos have their backs to the wall.

Questions as to why the poor showing of late by the Essos are being asked daily and of course many armchair and sideline experts think they have all the answers.

An indication of where the trouble lies may have been revealed in the game against Penticton this week.

It was the difference between a new smooth running motor and the halting, sputtering of an old.

Penticton certainly proved their worth in their well-balanced play, with each line in turn playing as a solid unit, with every man doing his part in a well rehearsed manner. They showed no weakness as they

skated end to end, making the moves of a self-assured winner.

Vernon on the other hand, no matter how hard individuals tried, could not round out their plays such as they have done earlier in the season. There was no doubt in anyone's mind they were off balance and Penticton made sure they stayed that way.

The finger of blame cannot be pointed to any one player, coach Odie Lowe, or for that matter to the management. But some should feel a twinge of conscience as several definitely are not pulling their weight.

Some players are not skating with the plays, others are not making any attempt at defensive maneuvers such as taking an attacker out of the play. Others are literally standing around waiting for the other guy to do it all.

Vernon Essos can be a top-rated contender. They have proven this. But now they must rebuild this confidence by working once

more as a unit and not as individuals. Some should stop worrying as to who is getting all the points and start helping their mates, even if it is only with words of encouragement.

Most hockey fans watch a game because of the hard hitting tactics of good body checks but of late some of the boys on the team seem to have been injected with chicken blood. Punitive efforts by poke-checking with a stick at arms length are not good enough and some of the second and third line players should be made aware of this.

All in all, Essos can be the team to beat if they start to play together and stop worrying about the other guys faults.

Some sideline experts would like to blame Odie Lowe. Sure he has made miscues. But it is the old story. When a team is on top, the players are the stars. When they are slipping, then the coach is the goat.

There is no doubt the management has not been perfect in all its actions either. But even here the odds are against few others doing as well.

It takes team work from everybody, and at this stage of the game, no one can afford to sit back and let someone else do it alone.

By the way, if any stars were to be handed out in

the Penticton game, then Essos netminder Jack Gilroy should get all three, as he was superb and can be thanked for saving the rest of the team from being laughed out of the rink. He came up with 49 brilliant saves, bringing applause from the partisan Penticton fans on many occasions.

Curling

Thursday, Jan. 18
7 p.m. — "C"

1. Wetherill vs Sutherland
2. Ogasawara vs Atchison
3. Kurbis vs French
4. Briggs vs Hatch
5. Pouchard vs Simpson

9 p.m. — "E"

1. McConnel vs Shear-down
2. Kennedy vs Farynuk
3. Siemans vs Ferguson
- 4.
5. Kinnard vs Hunter

Friday, Jan. 19

7 p.m.

3. Business Girls
- 9 p.m. — "D"
1. Meek vs Bowes
2. Frizzell vs A. Green
3. Dickson vs Goulding
4. White vs Copan
5. Watson vs National

Saturday, Jan. 20 — Mixed League, 7 and 9 p.m.
Sunday, Jan. 21 — Kiwanis, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Commercial League, 6 and 8 p.m.

First time on record

Stamps win NOHL crown

Head of the Lake Stampeders fulfilled a dream of many years last Sunday when they wrapped up the NOHL pennant title for the first time since the league began.

Stampeders took good measure of the Grindrod Elks to record the much coveted win, walloping the Elks 6-2.

Although there are still games to play in the regular

schedule, Stampeders wrapped it all up with an envious eight win, one loss and one tie record to date for 17 points.

Nearest rivals are Lumby Frenchmen and Grandview Warriors with 10 points each. Lumby has two games scheduled and Warriors have only one left.

Armstrong Cougars have two games to go, but have only nine points and last place Elks are way down the list with six points and one game to go.

Stampeders, with a majority of Indian boys making the roster, displayed fine play during the season.

One of the happiest men in the arena Sunday night

was team manager Louis Marchand. He has spent years working for the club and the win is a credit to him for all his hard work.

Schedule of next Sunday games will have Armstrong meeting the Stampeders in the first game and Lumby taking on Grindrod in the second encounter.

Minor Hockey Week is now firmly established as one of the features of Canadian winter sports activities.

It has taken its position in our Canadian way of life because of the keen desire of people in all walks of life to support participation in Canada's National Sport by the youth of our nation.

A League standings

Scoring Statistics — Games played up to and including Jan. 16, 1968:

PLAYER	G	A	P	PIM
Tom Serviss, Vernon	21	46	67	56
Randy Rota, Kamloops	41	21	62	20
Bob Mowat, Penticton	27	28	55	28
Jeff Wilson, Vernon	29	25	54	15
Ray Wallis, New West.	24	29	53	61
Rick Beauchamp, Kamloops	15	38	53	18
Keith Rolston, Vernon	21	29	50	16
George Watson, New West.	20	27	47	14
Jack Taggart, Penticton	17	26	43	56
Jim Robertson, Kelowna	12	31	43	28

Penalties — Individual: George Morneau, New Westminster, 104; Ron Collingwood, New Westminster, 96. Team — New Westminster, 528; Kelowna, 447.

Goalies Averages	GP	GA	Ave.
Doug Thompson, Pen.	10	27	2.7
Bob Belbin, Penticton	14	44	3.1
Bruce Johnson, Pen.	5	17	3.4
Murray Finlay, Vic.	19	70	3.7
Brett Kneen, Kelowna	27	125	4.6
Al Lang, New West.	5	25	5.0
Jack Gilroy, Vernon	27	148	5.4
Wally Denault, Kamloops	27	146	5.4
Lionel Trudel, New West.	11	59	5.4
Ron Grahame, Victoria	10	57	5.7
Bruce Dowad, New West.	8	47	5.9
Fred Boyer, New West.	6	39	6.5

Bantam schedule

Thursday, Jan. 18 — 8-9 p.m., Credit Union vs Vernon News.

Saturday, Jan. 20 — 6-6:55 a.m., Credit Union vs Noca; 6:55-7:50 a.m., Vernon Sport and Marine vs Vernon News; 7:50-8:45 a.m., Rennick Lumber vs Blue Bears; 8:45-9:40 a.m., Rocky Husky vs Ernie Esso; 6:30-7:45 p.m., Bantam Rep Practise.

SUNDAY 3:30 PM. CBC TV—WATCH

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Ready for finals

Thursday, Jan. 25 — 8 p.m., Penticton at Kelowna.

Saturday, Jan. 27 — 8 p.m., Kelowna vs Penticton at Summerland.

Thursday, Feb. 1 — 8 p.m., Penticton at Kelowna (if necessary).

Saturday, Feb. 3 — 8 p.m., Kelowna vs Penticton at Summerland.

Series "B"
Sunday, Jan. 21 — 4 p.m., Kamloops at Vernon.

Wednesday, Jan. 24 — 8:30 p.m., Vernon at Kamloops (Memorial arena).

Saturday, Feb. 3 — 8:30 p.m., Vernon at Kamloops (if necessary).

Series "C"
This series will have the winners of the above two series meeting with the dates to be decided prior to March 1.

Jan. 31

will membership

by the Yacht Club in the recent visit to Vernon of TV personality Keith McColl of "Outdoors Unlimited" fame.

Mr. McColl in his own

SNOWMOBILE