

Crucial junior game coming up

The B.C. junior hockey race for playoff berths is rapidly coming to an end and there could be a real fight between four teams to make the last three playoff spots.

Penticton have the league pennant nearly sewn up with a 47-point lead. Kamloops currently hold second place with 32 points, only two ahead of Vernon, while New Westminster are two points behind Vernon for fourth place.

All three of these positions are in a somewhat shaky setting with the surprising awakening of the Kelowna Buckaroos who have come to life in the last 10 games winning eight and tying twice.

Wednesday night, Kelowna edged Kamloops in the Hub city by a 5-2 score and are now only one point behind New Westminster with 27 points.

Kelowna take on Penticton in the Peach city on Friday night and then ar-

rive in Vernon Saturday for a crucial game with the Essos.

Vernon are not the healthiest club at the moment, with the announcement last Monday that defenceman Dick Marsh suffered a broken jaw in the New Westminster game the day before. The doctor wants Marsh to be out of uniform until at least the middle of February.

This leaves the Essos' defence in a precarious position with only Tom Serviss, Bob Mayer and Alan Southward remaining for blueline duty.

Essos have only eight games remaining and there is no doubt their backs are against the wall. They must win almost all their remaining games, particularly with Kelowna, whom they meet three more times.

Ken Pollon, the other injured defenceman is still out of action with his left knee still giving him trouble and Tom William-

son's arm, although healing nicely, will not be mended for several weeks.

One bright spot on the Essos' horizon are the efforts of Tom Serviss, Jeff Wilson, Keith Rolston and several other Essos players.

In the last eight games, Serviss has averaged two points a game with a total of 16 points since the first of the year. He has a 10-point lead in the league scoring race and now has 25 goals with 47 assists for 72 points.

Jeff Wilson is well up in the scoring race, having picked up 10 points and Keith Rolston's 12 point splurge since the first of the year is also doing him in good stead.

Essos need lots of support Saturday night, with game time set for 8:30 p.m.

Because of the wind-up of

national Minor Hockey Week, the Essos will open the arena doors for all registered minor hockey players in the district.

All minor players are asked to report to the West centre doors (tractor entrance) to gain entry to the game free of charge.

Vernon Essos individual scoring to Jan. 22:

| | G | A | P |
|---------------|----|----|----|
| T. Serviss | 25 | 47 | 72 |
| J. Wilson | 32 | 27 | 59 |
| K. Rolston | 22 | 34 | 56 |
| L. Quechuk | 20 | 21 | 41 |
| J. Vachon | 11 | 18 | 29 |
| T. Williamson | 13 | 15 | 28 |
| L. Hackman | 6 | 17 | 23 |
| B. Mayer | 12 | 8 | 20 |
| W. Dye | 7 | 11 | 18 |
| M. Perepolkin | 4 | 10 | 14 |
| D. Marsh | 3 | 7 | 10 |
| B. Blanchette | 4 | 5 | 9 |
| I. Malinoski | 4 | 3 | 7 |
| K. Pollon | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| R. Reilly | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| C. Nelson | 1 | 0 | 1 |

B.C. Junior "A" Hockey League Scoring Statistics - games played up to and including Jan. 21, 1968:

| | G | A | P | PIM |
|--------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|
| Tom Serviss, Vernon | 25 | 47 | 72 | 56 |
| Randy Rota, Kamloops | 41 | 21 | 62 | 20 |
| Jeff Wilson, Vernon | 32 | 27 | 59 | 17 |
| Bob Mowat, Penticton | 29 | 28 | 57 | 30 |
| Ray Wallis, New Westminster | 25 | 32 | 57 | 63 |
| Keith Rolston, Vernon | 22 | 34 | 56 | 18 |
| Rick Beauchamp, Kamloops | 15 | 38 | 53 | 18 |
| George Watson, New Westminster | 20 | 29 | 49 | 14 |
| Jim Robertson, Kelowna | 13 | 32 | 45 | 28 |
| Wayne Schaab, Penticton | 18 | 26 | 44 | 9 |

Penalties - Individual, George Morneau, New Westminster, 104; Butch Deadmarsh, Kelowna, 97. Team, New Westminster, 546; Kelowna, 451.

GOALIES' AVERAGES

| | G | GA | Ave. |
|--------------------------------|----|-----|------|
| Doug Thompson, Penticton | 11 | 31 | 2.8 |
| Bob Belbin, Penticton | 15 | 46 | 3.0 |
| Bruce Johnson, Penticton | 5 | 17 | 3.4 |
| Murray Finlay, Victoria | 20 | 79 | 4.0 |
| Brett Kneen, Kelowna | 28 | 129 | 4.6 |
| Al Lang, New Westminster | 5 | 25 | 5.0 |
| Wally Denault, Kamloops | 27 | 146 | 5.4 |
| Lionel Trudel, New Westminster | 11 | 59 | 5.4 |
| Jack Gilroy, Vernon | 29 | 161 | 5.5 |
| Bruce Dowad, New Westminster | 9 | 51 | 5.6 |
| Ron Grahame, Victoria | 10 | 57 | 5.7 |
| Fred Boyer, New Westminster | 6 | 39 | 6.5 |

GOALIES HAVING PLAYED 4 GAMES OR LESS

| | G | GA | Ave. |
|--------------------------|---|----|------|
| Al Alexander, Vernon | 1 | 4 | 4.0 |
| Ray Mathews, Kelowna | 1 | 5 | 5.0 |
| John Bade, Kamloops | 2 | 10 | 5.0 |
| Jerry Allen, Vernon | 3 | 17 | 5.7 |
| Bart Hollinger, Kamloops | 1 | 8 | 8.0 |
| Jeff Ward, Victoria | 1 | 11 | 11.0 |

LEAGUE STANDINGS

| | GP | W | T | L | GF | GA | P |
|-----------------|----|----|---|----|-----|-----|----|
| Penticton | 30 | 23 | 1 | 6 | 173 | 94 | 47 |
| Kamloops | 30 | 16 | 0 | 15 | 173 | 166 | 32 |
| Vernon | 32 | 13 | 4 | 15 | 166 | 182 | 30 |
| New Westminster | 31 | 13 | 2 | 16 | 149 | 174 | 28 |
| Kelowna | 29 | 11 | 5 | 14 | 132 | 134 | 27 |
| Victoria | 30 | 8 | 4 | 18 | 104 | 147 | 20 |

In senior basketball

Panthers travel twice on weekend

Vernon Panthers of the Okanagan senior boys' high school league have two big games in store for them this weekend and they are both out of town.

Friday night, Panthers travel to Rutland to take on the second place Rutland senior squad and then Saturday night go on to Oliver where they meet last-place Hornets.

Coach Mac Tyler is hoping for a pair of wins to bring them up in the league standings. At present, Panthers are sixth place in the eight-team league.

Panthers may be without the services of first string guard Shane Murphy who is having problems with water on the knee. However, Gary Green will be moved up to forward and Gary Wheelhouse will take over centre spot on the front line string.

The next home game will see fifth place Penticton Lakers arrive in town on Friday, Feb. 2 and then the following night, Pan-

thers play host to fourth place Kelowna Owls.

So far spectators attendance has been on the increase with good calibre of basketball being shown by the home town squad.

The Vernon Tartans, senior girls' team, will not play preliminary games in the Rutland and Oliver series, but will be out in force to meet their opponents when Penticton Lakettes and Kelowna arrive the following weekend.

LEAGUE STANDINGS

| | W | L |
|---------------------|---|---|
| Kamloops Red Devils | 2 | 0 |
| Rutland | 2 | 0 |
| Salmon Arm Golds | 2 | 1 |
| Kelowna Owls | 1 | 1 |
| Penticton Lakers | 1 | 1 |
| Vernon Panthers | 1 | 2 |
| S. O. Hornets | 0 | 2 |
| N. Kamloops Saints | 0 | 3 |

Individual Point Standings

| | P | Ave. |
|------------------|----|------|
| Ross, Oliver | 43 | 21.5 |
| MacKermott, Pen. | 31 | 15.5 |
| Aynsley, Kelowna | 30 | 15.0 |
| Thors, S. Arm | 43 | 14.3 |
| Dravinskis, Rut. | 28 | 14.0 |