

Essos ready

Hard work, high-jinks

Perspiration, patter, and participation are the order of the day for the Vernon Essos as they prepare to swing into action once again tonight at the Vernon Civic Arena.

They'll be up against the rough-tough Kamloops Rockets who have proven themselves to be a no-nonsense squad in every respect.

Coach-manager Vern Dye has been putting the Essos through rapid-fire warm-up drills and solid scrimmage matches that are designed to get the boys in physical and mental shape for the contest.

Newcomer Barry Blakely, the bearded bomber from Whitehorse, Yukon, has been working out with the team and would appear to have gained himself a solid berth with the crew.

Pat Becotte, who came to Vernon under the urging of Bob Blanchette is looking better than ever and would appear to have completely recovered from the virus which plagued him through his first appearances with the club.

Bill Tarnow, although a doubtful starter in tonight's game has been working out with the club, sporting a cast to protect the broken

wrist-bone incurred in the last home encounter with Kelowna.

Al Alexander will be the man in the nets for the Essos due to the fact that Jack Gilroy is currently detained in the hospital.

The team would appear to be in top physical condition for tonight's contest as they were able to engage in a few moments of hi-jinks after Wednesday night's one and a half hour rugged practice session.

Forward Don Manson and defenceman Gordie Merrit were officially initiated into the team by the players from last year's Essos squad.

The initiation included a complete chest shave for the pair who were then dubbed "Itchy Manson" and "Scratchy Merrit."

A close observer to the proceedings was newcomer Barry Blakely who sat quietly in a corner nursing his beard. It would appear that he has fears for its safety when his turn rolls around.

With the hard-work and fun shown at Wednesday's practice, the Essos may have a renewed team spirit needed to weld them into a solid playing unit.

VERNON Jrs.



Esso's mascot

The artistic talents of defenceman Dick Marsh created this mascot for the Vernon Essos. Posted on the outside of the dressing-room door, the tiger is the symbol of how the Essos intend to perform on home ice. With the renewed team spirit evident among the team, it could be that they'll be feeding on a few Kamloops Rockets tonight starting at 8:30.