

Three cheers for the... who?????

Don't let the sweaters fool you. It's not the old Vernon Blades you're seeing, but the powerful Vernon Essos as they gather around manager-coach Vern Dye for some advice during Monday night's practice session. Pat Becotte (foreground) con-

tinues to practice skating, but has one ear tuned in to the words of the coach. The Essos see action twice this weekend with matches against Victoria Friday, and New Westminster Sunday.



Who stole the puck?

When the pups go to practice at the Vernon Civic Arena, you can be sure to find at least one in every position, including flat on the ice. The youngsters have a great time during practice sessions, with as many as four teams taking to the

ice at once. From among these youngsters, under a well organized hockey program, will possibly come the future Vernon Essos, and maybe even an NHL star or two.

Top Essos

Quechuck, Dye and Vachon—top list

The big three for the Vernon Essos after 17 league games are Quechuck, Dye and Vachon. The three have scored a combined total of 48 goals and 39 assists.

When the statistics are broken down on an individual basis, Lawrence Quechuck tops the list with 17 goals and 16 assists for 33 points.

Close behind for second spot is Wayne Dye with 12 goals and 16 assists, a terrific record when one considers that he spent a lot of playing time in the penalty box during the first 12 games of the season.

Jerry Vachon has the third spot nailed down with 19 goals and seven assists for 26 points.

Even though he's had a late start, Pat Becotte is expected to join the top point getters before too much time has elapsed. Manager Vern Dye states that "Becotte is looking better every time out, and

he already looked good when he first came to us."

The players are undergoing rigid workouts in preparation for Friday night's encounter with the Victoria Cougars and Sunday's game with the New Westminster Royals who have pulled some real surprises in their last few games.

Whatever the opposition has to give, the Essos will have some way to block it. Dye has put the pressure on the team and states, "I have no intention of letting it off."

The Essos are skating hard during practice sessions — harder now than ever before. Practices are rougher in scrimmage than many of the games the team has played.

And, as a footnote to Monday's practice session, goalie Al Alexander has stated his intention of becoming the first goalie in the league to score an assist this year . . . if and when the opportunity presents itself.

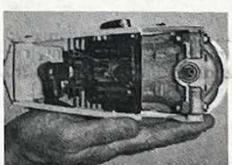
Here are the standings for the Essos to date:

	G	A	P
L. Quechuck	17	16	33
W. Dye	12	16	28
G. Vachon	19	7	26
J. Marsh	11	11	22

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Victoria set for weekend

Reports from Victoria indicate that the Victoria Cougars are making some "little improvements" in their playing, and little improvements mean a lot.

For the Capital City crew, the little signs are pointing out the fact that the Cougars now appear capable of winning more games than they can lose in their second B.C. Junior Hockey League season. There were no such signs in the first time around.

These signs are not excessively bright, but they have been mounting in recent games. Positional play has improved, and so has the defensive record—an indication that the two are related.

Individuals also have come along. Against Penticton, John Van Horlick turned in a tremendous game and rookie Scott Munro has discovered where the opposition net lies, scoring his first three goals after going scoreless in four previous games. The alternating netminders, Ron Grahame and Ed Forslund, have been steady and seem more certain of themselves.

The Cougars have had no difficulty scoring, and they are finding that goals are coming just as easy despite their attention to defensive chores. Things like team-work and positional play have been working wonders on the Victoria attack.

The islanders have come to realize that defence-men must work with forwards and vice - versa. This system has paid off handsomely for the Cougars as the defencemen have been picking up a lot of assists in recent games. They head-manned the puck with accuracy to wingers who have been setting themselves up in the correct positions.

The blue-liners have also been taking fewer chances which has enabled them to overcome situations which formerly caused them to be trapped at the wrong end of the ice in earlier games.

With all reports indicating that the Victoria Cougars are shaping up into a solid playing unit, the game Friday with the Essos should be a real "grandstander."