

Vikings set sights on 700 season tickets

Vernon Vikings officially kicked off their 1974-75 season Thursday with a press reception.

For color, the Vikings had Philadelphia Flyers' defenceman Joe Watson on hand along with Vernon's Eddie Johnstone.

Vikings' new coach and general manager Joe Tennant announced that the club's season ticket drive and program sales campaign are now under way.

The club hopes to sell between 500 and 700 season tickets this season.

Tennant said, "Every house, apartment, and business in the Vernon area will be receiving a brochure within the next couple days, asking them to support their junior A hockey club."

Watson had several good words for Tennant, one of Watson's first coaches.

The bruising Flyer defenceman said Tennant got him interested in serious hockey about 15 years ago, in his home town, Smithers.

Watson said, "I was not seriously playing hockey and Tennant got me interested in making hockey my living. If it wasn't for him, I probably would not have made it to the NHL."

Thursday was a particularly happy day for Johnstone. He received word a contract from Michigan Stags, of the WHA, is on the way and it will give him a six-figure total over three years.

PUBLICITY TOO

Tennant, who besides

coaching and managing the club, will be looking after publicity and doing pretty well everything except selling popcorn at the games, said he will be letting people know about the club every way he can.

He said, "We have 2,902 seats in the arena and we want to see them all full."

Two subjects, which are becoming quite familiar in Tennant's conversations, the B.C. Amateur Hockey Association, and tier one junior A hockey in Vernon, received extensive discussion.

Tennant said the BCAHA hurt more hockey players in this province than anyone would ever believe.

He said, "One of the main reasons so few players from B.C. ever made it to the NHL is that there was a no body contact rule, up to midget age, until five years ago."

TIER ONE

On the subject of tier one hockey, Tennant said the Western Canada Hockey League is going to be looking for another team in B.C. soon

and if the fans support the Vikings, and Vernon gets a 5,000 seat arena, a tier one club could possibly locate here as soon as 1975.

Vikings will be sending about 70 players to Medicine Hat Tigers' training camp, which opens Sept. 4, for rookies, and Sept. 8, for veterans.

Tigers are Vernon's tier one affiliate and any cuts from Medicine Hat come to Vikings' camp.

Still time to register

There are still a few openings left in the Vernon District Riding Club's Western Horsemanship Clinic, which starts Saturday.

The clinic, which is being conducted at the riding club grounds in Coldstream, runs daily to July 31.

Doug Henry, of Okanagan Falls, will be the instructor.

To register, or for further information, call Mrs. J. LaLonde at 545-0803.

Leos dump Stamps in season opener

VANCOUVER (CP) — Lanky Monroe Eley of British