

Junior league lays an egg



The British Columbia Junior Hockey League executive came up with perhaps the most ridiculous idea, in the league's history, this week.

The league announced it is starting a contest called 'Shootout,' which will be a carbon copy of the NHL's Showdown series.

Major differences between the two contests will be the BCJHL games are not televised, and the contest will not be held between periods because the ice must be cleaned.

But, alas, the BCJHL contest will be run prior to the opening faceoff.

Showdown in the NHL was a great idea. It gave fans something interesting to watch between periods and prevented Howie Meeker from talking for 20 minutes.

Junior hockey games have a bad habit of starting behind schedule and this contest certainly is not going to help.

One of the league's referees said as far as he is concerned, he wants to get the game started as promptly as possible, and Shootout could hamper that.

Finally, my major objection to it is that I hope hockey fans still want to go to the arena to watch a hockey game, not an individual shooting contest.

I think I'll stick to Showdown, not Shootout.

GOOD ON PAPER

Could it be possible that Bill Hogaboam will win the NHL scoring title this year? On paper, anything is possible.

Hogaboam, a young centre with Detroit Red Wings, had the happy task last season of passing the puck to Mickey Redmond who had another 50-plus goal campaign.

It is quite possible that duo's new linemate will be Danny Grant, recently acquired from Minnesota North Stars.

Grant scored 29 goals with the North Stars last season, and with the more offensive minded Wings, should count about 35 this time around.

Redmond, who fires his wrist shot as hard as anyone in hockey, could get about 55 this year. If Hogaboam assisted on his wingers' goals, that would give him 90 points.

Hogaboam, himself, should score about 25 goals, making a total of 115 points. Sounds not too bad on paper.

But, Hogaboam may hit an early season slump and be sent to the minors or Grant could have trouble adjusting to Detroit and score 10 goals this season.

And then there's a couple guys on Boston...