

Vikings battle Cents tonight

Vernon Vikings have won six of their last eight games, and in the process, they have beaten every team in the B.C. Junior Hockey League except Merritt Centennials.

Vikings get a chance to improve their record tonight when they battle the hot-and-cold Centennials in Merritt.

A win tonight for Vikings would put them within one point of first place Kelowna Buckaroos, and give them a comfortable eight point lead over third place Penticton Broncos.

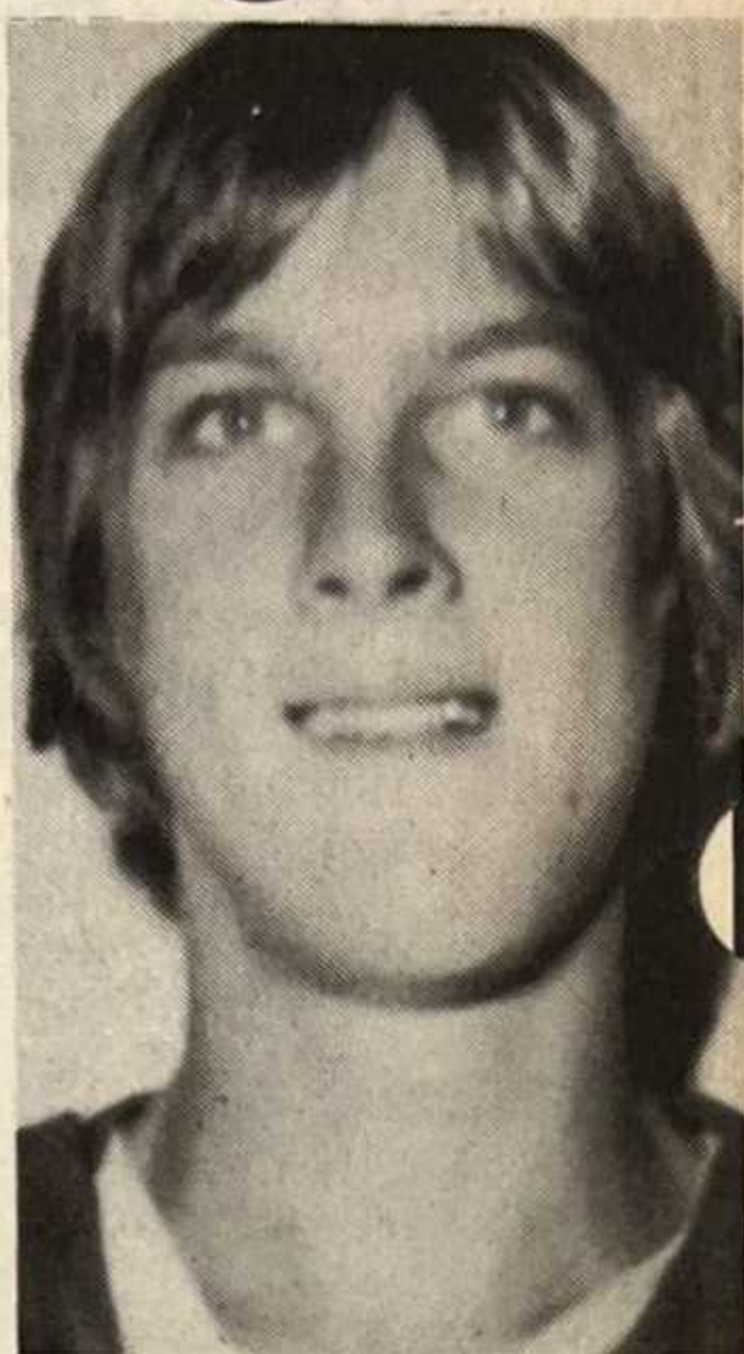
'Hot-and-cold Centennials,' is the understatement of the year. Merritt is lingering in last place in the BCJHL's interior division with 13 points, 17 back of first place Kelowna.

TOO MANY GOALS

On occasion, Merritt comes up with an excellent game. In fact, during the last month, Vikings have lost to the Cents twice. But, when Merritt is cold, they are bad, as the club's 8.09 goals against average proves.

Vernon coach Joe Tennant plans on going with the same line-up which was successful on last week's coast swing.

The line Merritt will have to stop is Ron Areshnekoff between Gary Gilchrist and Greg Walmsley. In five games



RON ARESHNEKOFF

... centres hot line

last week, the unit accounted for 26 points.

After tonight's game, Tennant is giving the team a four-day holiday and most of the players are returning to their homes for the weekend.

Vernon's next game is Nov. 29, at home, against Kelowna.

In the only BCJHL game Wednesday, Nanaimo Clippers defeated Chilliwack Bruins 8-4.

Union suggested in junior hockey

LONDON, Ont. (CP) — Brent Imlach says Canadian major junior A hockey players need their own union and he has offered to help them set it up.

Imlach, a former junior hockey player in London and now partner in a firm called Pro Athlete Career Planning in Toronto, said in an interview Wednesday that major junior players "had a gun at their heads" when they signed contracts this year.

"The kids either signed or they didn't play," said Imlach. "They had no choice but to sign. It was too late for them to go any place else."

This year's junior contracts contained clauses which call for a player to return 20 per cent of his first three years of professional salary to the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association which would distribute it to clubs the player had played with in amateur hockey.

The amateur owners insisted on the clause after they failed to get the World Hockey Association to agree to pay the amateur leagues for each junior drafted.

Imlach said that when the juniors were faced with the new contracts this year, they had no bargaining power.

"That's one reason they need their own association."

Imlach, son of Punch Imlach, manager of the National Hockey League Buffalo Sabres, said that when the new contracts were presented, he invited team captains of several Ontario major junior A teams to a meeting in Toronto to offer help but club owners found out about it and threatened to suspend some players. As a result, only five showed up for the meeting.

"At first we considered taking out an injunction but it would have taken too much time," said Imlach.