



Every game is must-win

Vernon Vikings have only eight games remaining in their 66-game schedule, and they will probably need at least six wins to hold onto first-place in the B.C. Junior Hockey League.

Vikings hold a narrow lead over second-place Nanaimo Clippers and Vernon can't count on the red-hot Island club losing more than one or two more games. So, every game is a must-win contest for Vikings.

In their last eight games, Vernon takes on Kelowna Buckaroos four times, Merritt Centennials twice, Chilliwack Bruins, and Nanaimo.

Even Vikings' Coach Joe Tennant cannot be too confident about his club winning seven or eight of the remaining games. When you consider Kelowna has beat Vernon the last five times the teams have met, and Merritt has handed the Vikings two consecutive losses, you can see where the locals might run into trouble.

SIX HOME GAMES

Two things in Vernon's favor are their good schedule, and Nanaimo's bad schedule. Six-of-eight remaining Viking games are in Vernon. Clippers have a gruelling schedule in the next two weeks, including a swing through the Interior.

All of these remaining games would mean little if Vikings had not entered into a lengthy slump, which still doesn't appear to have ended.

The club is playing no where near its potential, and Vikings are a far cry from the team which was terrorizing the BCJHL in December and early January.

In their last 11 games, Vikings have five wins. Last-place Chilliwack Bruins have the same number of wins in their last 11 games. So, it hasn't been too tough for Clippers to close ground on Vikings.

But, Clippers have been rolling along in fine fashion. With only two losses in their last 22 games, Nanaimo has demonstrated it wants first-place.

It all makes for a very exciting final two weeks. With six home games left, a little fan support in the Vernon arena might give Vikings the added lift they need to hang on to the lead.

SWEATERS MISSING

Vernon Minor Hockey Association tells us numerous sweaters have disappeared from the equipment room in the arena.

Any boys seen wearing sweaters around town will be suspended from minor hockey immediately. If a sweater has mysteriously found its way into your equipment bag, you have until the end of February to return it to Borden Bare.

You can contact Bare at 545-2464 or 545-0778.

Just to prove they know what sweaters are missing, here is a list: Midget Rep White 11; Rendell Equipment 5; Acutruss 7 and 8; Kinsmen 14; Woolworth 1 and 3; NOCA 3, 4, 5, 11, 17, 18; Goodwin-Burniston 2 and 11; Ernie's Esso 6 and 11; and Art's Gulf 1 and 9.

Geniers 3 and 11; Butcher Boys 5 and 11; Vernon Sport 16; Bear Alignment 8 and 15; Standard Oil 11, 17, and 18; Rangers 7; and Canadians 10, 17, and 18.

Stealing a sweater isn't a gag, it is a crime.

Buckaroos nip Nanaimo squad

By THE CANADIAN PRESS

Wayne Krebs' short-handed goal early in the third period stood up as Kelowna Buckaroos nipped Nanaimo Clippers 2-1 in British Columbia Junior Hockey League play Thursday night.

In the other game, Merritt Centennials moved into a fourth-place tie with Langley Lords with a 12-4 decision over last-place Chilliwack Bruins.

In Nanaimo, Krebs' marker gave the Buckaroos a 2-0 edge after Brad Owens' first-period score. Geordie Robertson

spoiled Vic Malli's shutout bid with a minute left as the Clippers went with six attackers.

Kelowna, outshot 32-27, picked up nine of 15 minor penalties and each club had two fighting majors.

In Merritt, Greg Agar, Bob Wasson, Darryl Zelinski and Anthony Thomas scored two goals each for the Centennials who outshot the losers 62-36 and took period leads of 4-0 and 9-2.

Kevin Willison, Kirk Aulin, Dan Hlushko and Danny Rota scored for Merritt.