

School booming



There were a lot of skeptics back in May when Vernon Vikings' Coach Joe Tennant announced he was going to run a hockey school in Enderby this August.

The feeling was kids in this area weren't interested in hockey schools because they would rather spend time on the beach or camping. And those who were interested, liked getting away from home and going to the camps in Penticton or Kamloops.

For the most part, Tennant has proved the skeptics wrong. The first annual Enderby Hockey School gets under way Aug. 2 and about 300 boys have signed up to date.

Third week, from Aug. 16 to 21, is filled to capacity with 110 players. First week, from Aug. 2 to 7, and second week, from Aug. 9 to 14, have room for about 25 more boys.

Tennant said, "I am very pleased with the response we have received. Naturally, we didn't know what to expect because it is the first school in the area. But, things are going very well."

While a great number of local boys have registered, players are coming from places such as Castlegar, Fort St. James, Houston, New Denver, Smithers, Spirit River in Alberta, and Fairlight and Moosomin in Saskatchewan, to name a few.

Tennant has put together a pretty impressive group of instructors. Local product Eddie Johnstone, now a member of New York Rangers, will be joined by net-minder Kenny Holland, property of Toronto Maple Leafs, throughout the three weeks.

First week, Maple Leafs' Don Ashby will also be on hand. During the second session, Joe Watson of Philadelphia Flyers and goalie John Davidson of New York Rangers will be making appearances.

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The pros will be joined by a good group of junior A players led by Gary Gilchrist, Owen Lloyd, Calvin Halasz, and Ron Areshnekoff.

WHO IS LEAVING?

It is now about 99 per cent sure that Vernon Vikings are going to be undergoing another ownership change this year.

Too bad the hockey team isn't running as smoothly as the school. The way it looks now, if Joe Tennant stays, Vern Dye and Les York are gone. If Dye and York stay, it is good-bye Joe.

Main grievance is the team's budget. Tennant feels the club must run a first-class operation with a budget around \$100,000. Dye wants the budget cut down to about \$70,000.

Tennant says Vikings can operate with a large budget if the revenue is increased. Dye says it is unrealistic to hope to break even with costs that high and the budget must be trimmed. So, there it is.

Tennant says he wants to settle down somewhere, he likes Vernon, and would like to stay here. He said, "I want to see this team prosper, and I want to be part of it."

But, whatever happens, it has to happen soon. Another league meeting is scheduled next Saturday to draw up the BCJHL's 1976-77 schedule. And training camp is scheduled to open in less than two months.

No matter who stays and who goes, they say it will be for the betterment of the team. If that is true, they better make up their minds pronto, because time is running out.

It is unfortunate Dye and Tennant could not work out their differences because both are good hockey men. But, it appears too late for that now, and its time to stop playing cat and mouse.