

BCJHL expands for 76-77 season

British Columbia Junior Hockey League has expanded to 10 times for the 1976-77 season.

The league voted Saturday to accept applications from Bellingham Blazers and Abbotsford Flyers.

Bellingham left the BCJHL after the 1974-75 season when its arena was closed due to financial difficulties. This year Blazers plan on using 12 Finish players who are attending college in the U.S. city.

NEW TEAM

Abbotsford has never had a junior A team before, but has operated a highly-successful intermediate A franchise for several years. Flyers are expected to get player help from Victoria Cougars and New Westminster Bruins, of the Western Canada Hockey League.

Vern Dye, who represented Vernon Vikings at the league meeting in Vancouver, told



VERN DYE
... more games

the Daily News the league is going back to the two division

system.

Dye said, "We will continue to play interlocking games, but instead of one large division, there will now be Coast and Interior groupings."

Joining Abbotsford and Bellingham on the coast are Haney Bruins, Langley Lords, and Nanaimo Clippers. With Vikings in the interior are Kamloops Braves, Kelowna Buckaroos, Penticton Vees, and Merritt Centennials.

SCHEDULE CHANGE

One change Dye disagreed with was an increase in the league schedule from 66 to 68 games.

He said, "I voted to have it decreased to 60 games. By playing 68 we have to start about Sept. 25. We don't usually get our ice in the arena until that time."

Included in the 68 games will be two three-game road trips to the coast and one four-game jaunt.