

The SPORTS

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ROD DYCK
... in Africa



TAD CAMPBELL
... Sweden next

Two ex-Vikings in South Africa

Two former Vernon Vikings had a hockey experience this year they are not likely to ever forget.

Tad Campbell and Rod Dyck have the distinction of being able to say they played hockey in South Africa.

Campbell and Dyck, after playing with Vikings in the 1973-74 season, went their separate ways. Campbell had a stint with Burns Lake of the Pacific Northwest Hockey League and then spent one season with Trail Junior Smoke Eaters.

Dyck played hockey with Nakusp Falcons for a while and spent some time at home, in the Cariboo.

JUNGLE JETS

However, they both decided they wanted to try something different before their hockey careers ended, and wound up in South Africa. The duo played for Johannesburg Jungle Jets of the South African Hockey League. The team is sponsored by the Jungle Oats Company.

Most of the players in the league are Canadians, Swedes, or Americans, not quite good enough to make a living playing pro in North America. However, they make a good living in the South African loop.

The calibre is comparable to intermediate or senior hockey in Canada.

Campbell's first few experiences in the African

league had him believing he had landed in a hacker's paradise. On the first few shifts, both he and Dyck were greeted by elbows and butt-ends.

Campbell said, "I finally had to drop the gloves. They weren't so tough once the gloves were dropped."

After proving B.C. players aren't patsies, they were allowed to concentrate on hockey.

BAD EXPERIENCE

There were other unpleasant happenings for the duo while in South Africa. As everyone knows, the color of your skin greatly dictates how you live in that country, and Campbell and Dyck found out first hand.

One evening as they slept, the screams of a woman woke them up. They rushed to her aid and found themselves in a tussle with five large men.

Campbell regained consciousness in the hospital, with an 18-inch stitch wound across his head for his efforts.

Hockey season recently ended in Johannesburg and next stop for Campbell will be Sweden, where he hopes to stick with a semi-pro team.

Last word from Dyck was he plans to return to Canada, and perhaps play in B.C. this winter. However, he may too continue his world travels and end up in Sweden.