Where are the hunters?

By NONIE FRISBY

The opening subject for this week's column may draw a bit of an argument from some of the local sportsmen, but my esteemed spouse says that is what I'm best at.

The deer count locally is down a little, but so are the hunters and why? There was no way, when a man should have been buying his hunting licence, that he would know the deer count was going to be down. So, that isn't the reason for licence sales to be down.

Is it that old hunters are getting older and not so many young peole are hunting? Could it be hunters don't buy their licences until the snow moves the deer down? Could be many hunters road hunt and the price of gas makes you think twice before driving a couple of hundred miles a day to hunt? Don't tell me you don't road hunt, the man that tells me he has driven 250 miles on a Sunday and hasn't seen a deer is road hunting. When the high country is green and plentiful of deer brouse you aren't going to find the deer or moose standing on the side of the road waiting for some lucky Sportsman. It takes snow and bad weather to drive them out onto the open roads and hillsides.

THERE IS DEER

Winter and spring deer counts will tell if the deer are in trouble or just the hunters. There must be deer left in the country, though it is hard to convince some of my hunting friends, you will note on page 21 of the game regs that there is a special white-tailed deer season in the District Municipality of Summerland, from Dec. 1 to Jan. 31, either sex, bag limit one. You can write for your permit to the municipal office, Box 159, Summerland. Along with your application send your licence no. and your species tag no. If interested I'd suggest you do so immediately.

I'm not too good at figures, but at the close of the Cache Creek checking station Nov. 15, the tally sheets showed the moose take to be down 1007, but they also showed the resident hunters to be down 3,168. As far as I can see, it is a case of less moose being taken by less hunters, which doesn't really change the picture from other years.

POOR WEATHER

What the weather has done for our hunting season, it also did for our fishing in the summer. Poor weather conditions kept many fishermen off the local lakes during the summer, fishing is often a family sport, and all that rain didn't induce families to spend their days off each week sitting in the pouring rain. Cheer up, winter is fast approaching, and with it ice fishing, grey trout fishing on Kal, and there is always a show of hardy fishermen looking for the big ones on Okanagan.

Remember, no ice fishing on Pillar Lake this winter. It was poisoned this fall and will not be in production again until sometime in the late spring.

The wood ducks are doing beautifully, thanks to various donations from local game clubs and private individuals.

NICE BUCK

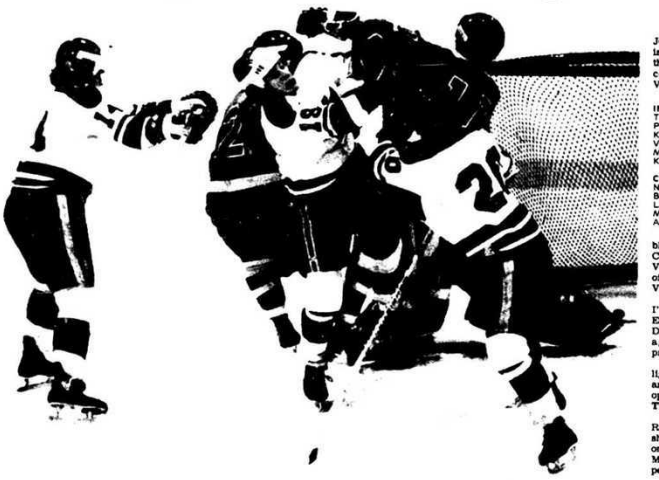
Ev Smith got a nice buck on the Silver Hills. I think she got one there last year too. Did I hear some man say women weren't good hunters?

I hear Bob Prentice is supplying the goose, or is that geese, for the Vernon Game banquet. I hear they were all head shots. Are you doing the plucking too Bob?

While on the subject of the banquet, have you got a donation you'd like to make in the line of meat or fish?

Clean up your rifles, don't put them away dirty.

Earp turns in great effort



By DON KENDALL
Daily News Sports Editor

Merritt Centennials' Coach Joe Tennant says Kelly Dube is probably a better goalie than Brad Earp. But, you couldn't convince Vernon Vikings of that today.

BCJHL STANDINGS

INTERIOR DIVISION

TEAM	GP	W	L	T	Pts
Penticton	31	22	7	2	46
Kelowna	31	21	9	1	43
Vernon	30	14	15	1	29
Merritt	29	9	20	0	18
Kamloops	29	8	21	0	16

COAST DIVISION

Nanaimo	31	21	10	0	42
Bellingham	28	15	12	1	31
Langley	30	14	16	0	28
Maple Ridge	31	13	17	1	27
Abbotsford	25	8	17	0	16

The diminutive Earp blocked 49 of 50 shots to lead Cents to a 3-1 victory over Vikings before a dismal crowd of about 225 Wednesday in Vernon.

Tennant said, "Right now I'm alternating Dube and Earp to see who is better. Dube has a better goals against average, and is probably steadier."

Gary Huth blinked the red light for Vikings for the first, and last time at 4:09 of the opening period.

TIED GAME

Merritt Captain Neil Robinson tied the game with a shot from the point, at 6:21, only five seconds after Jim Misener had been sent to the penalty box.

Robinson got credit for Cents' second goal when a rebound off the end boards was directed into his own net by Vernon goalie Keith Ferner.

As in the opening period, Vikings came out flying in the second, and prevented Merritt from getting a shot on goal for more than four minutes. But, on Cents' first shot of the period, Lori Nordstrom made the score 3-1 after a perfect pass from Robinson.

From that point on, Merritt left the work to Earp. He made tremendous saves off Huth, Barry Lang, and Brian Maser.

GREAT CHANCES

In the third period, Jack Lefley had two glorious scoring opportunities, but missed net on both chances. On the first, he flipped the shot only inches wide, and on the second, Earp was lying on the ice and Lefley raised the puck over the net.

Merritt's best scoring chances in the final period came with about two minutes remaining when Dale Ames and Doug Listhaeghe rattled shots off the post 10 seconds apart.

Ferner finished the night with 29 stops.

Merritt was assessed four of seven minor penalties and one of two fighting majors.

Vikings now have the second-worst, goals-for average in the BCJHL. Merritt scores an average of 3.38 goals per game, while Vikings have dropped to 3.40. Even Kamloops, with the worst record in the league, averages 3.58.

The lack of goals has Vernon General Manager Vern Dye concerned, but what has him even more worried is the lack of fans.

Dye said, "It is pretty tough for the kids to get up for a game when the hometown stands are almost empty. Anyone who has played sports knows it is great to play at home with a good crowd behind you."

On Wednesday night, you could have heard a pin drop in the Civic Arena.

In the only other game, Nanaimo Clippers edged Abbotsford Flyers 6-5.

In games tonight, Penticton is at Merritt, Kamloops visits Abbotsford, and Bellingham hosts Maple Ridge.

Former Vernon coach says Polars are tough

The man who built Vernon Senior Secondary School into a provincial volleyball power predicts Prince George Polars will win the B.C. championship this weekend.

Dick Chambers, now teaching and coaching in Winfield, told the Daily News, Polars seem to have it all together this year.

Chambers said, "I expect Vernon to do very well, and possibly win everything. However, Prince George has a strong team and is the club to beat. In the B.C. tourney, anything can happen."

WAS STRONGER

Chambers left VSSS this year after guiding Vernon to the provincial title in 1975. Overall, he feels his club last season was a little stronger than the 1976 edition.

Chambers said, "I think our starting six was probably a little stronger. They have good starters, but I think our players were a bit better all-round performers.

"I guess we also had a bit more height last year. But, as far as experience goes, this team has just as much."

Chambers, considered by many to be the best high school volleyball coach in B.C., stad Fernon's rookie coach Barrie Reid had a tough job this season.

He said, "It is always tough to come in to coach a defending champion. Especially when everyone expects you to win again."

Chambers had an up-and-down year with his club in Winfield.

PLACED SECOND

He said, "We started out great and I was really enthusiastic. But, midway through the season, no one wanted to work and I almost quit. Then, they came on again at the end of the year."

Winfield placed second, behind Ashcroft, in the B.C. 'A' championships. The 'A' tournament is for small schools.

VSSS is slated to play only one game today, against Golden, at 3:30 p.m. However, on Friday Vernon has a busy day with three matches on the schedule.

Panthers left with no depth

Everyone is glad to see Vernon Senior Secondary School in the B.C. High School Volleyball championships, everyone that is except Vernon Panthers Coach Rick Inrig.

Four of Inrig's regulars are in Prince George with the volleyball team and he has the task of putting together a squad to take part in the tough Salmon Arm Golds Basketball Tournament this weekend.

NO DEPTH

Inrig said, "We have most of our first string intact, but if we get in foul trouble, we've had it. All our bench strength is with the volleyball team."

Inrig will start Tom Davison at centre with Brent Zimmer and Brent Krusel in the forward positions. Ed Walterhouse and Steve King will play guard. Glen Sirges, with a broken finger, and Dean Steinley, supply the bench support.

Missing are Mike Kormos, Dave Turner, Jim Tilton, and Kirk Christman.

MEETS CALGARY

VSSS plays its first game in Salmon Arm on Friday, at 3:30 p.m., against Calgary. Other teams entered are Princess Margaret of Surrey, Notre Dame of Vancouver, Castlegar, Maple Ridge, South Okanagan of Oliver, and the host Golds.

Ingrid said, "Salmon Arm will be tough, but the team to beat is Princess Margaret. P.M. is very highly-ranked."

In an effort to get some bodies on the bench, Inrig has searched the school and picked up Andy Anderson and Dale Schwening to play this weekend. Both saw limited duty with Panthers last year.

KEEPS ON WINNING

Tennessee has taken the Southeastern Conference track championship for the last 13 seasons.

UNDERNEATH all the pushing and shoving is Merritt Centennials' goalie Brad Earp, with the puck. Vikings came close to scoring on this play as Cam Torgeson (19), Darcy Wilkinson (20), and Stacy Smeader (14), all keep Merritt busy. But, Earp made the save, as he did 49 times Wednesday, and Centennials posted a 3-1 win.

(Daily News Photo by Jack Nittel).

Nelson dumps Smokies

NELSON, B.C. (CP) — Nelson Maple Leafs moved into sole possession of fourth place in the Western International Hockey League on Wednesday with a 6-5 win over Trail Smoke Eaters before 724 fans.

Nelson scoring was shared by six players as Gary Gilchrist, Brad Carefoot, Chris McMasters, Tim O'Donnell, Kim Hilkewich and Ed Halcrow found the range.

Brian DeBiasio led the losers with two goals. The other Trail snipers were Doug Bentley, John Horcoff and Maurice Regnier.

Nelson led 3-2 after the first period and 5-4 after the second and Hatoum's marker early in the third period stood up for the winner.

The SPORTS Page
DON KENDALL—Sports Editor
PHONE 545-0671

BLAZERS FIRE FINNISH COACH

Matti Keinonen has been fired as coach of Bellingham Blazers of the B.C. Junior Hockey League.

Keinonen, a former Finnish national team star, will be replaced by Jack Durstan. Durstan has coached two BCJHL teams in the past, Vancouver Nats and Nanaimo Clippers.

Following Keinonen's dismissal, General Manager John Uttendale and President Joe Abbott both tendered their resignations.

Owners of the Blazers felt they could no longer afford to operate with Keinonen as coach, and called the firing an austerity move.

The team's trouble may not be over. Keinonen was instrumental in recruiting 12 Finnish players for Blazers this year. Reportedly, the players are not happy about the change. Included in the 12 Finns are three of the BCJHL's top 10 scorers.

However, the owners do not feel the players will pack up and go home.

Durstan assumes control of the club immediately and will be behind the bench tonight when Bellingham hosts Maple Ridge.

WAYNE DYE
. . . will help

CHARLIE BRISKHAM
. . . in goal

Ex-junior stars to play in NOHL

Price and Markle, of the North Okanagan Hockey League, announced the signing of two players this week.

The two recruits are former Vernon Viking stars Wayne Dye and Charlie Brisham.

P and M Coach Bob Powell told the Daily News with Brisham and Dye, his club is ready to take a run at first place in the five-team league.

Dye was one of the greatest scorers in B.C. Junior Hockey League history. For the last two seasons he has starred with Salmon Arm Aces of the Monashee Hockey League.

TOP GOALIE

Brisham was one of the top goalies in the BCJHL for three seasons.

Vernon Sport Cougars, unbeaten in seven games lead the league with 11 points. Winfield Raiders have nine followed by P and M with six, Screaming Eagles four, and Lumby Flying Frenchmen two.

Cougars' Coach King Cam has protested last Sunday's game, against Screaming Eagles, which ended in a 7-7 tie. Cam maintains Gord Lyons, Dave Caldow, and Jeff Todd were ineligible to play for Eagles because of their commitment to Salmon Arm Aces.

NOHL has a by-law which allows players to compete in only one league.

PRACTICE SET

Meanwhile, Cougars are scheduled to practice tonight from 11:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.

League play resumes Saturday when Cougars visit Lumby for an 8:30 p.m. game. On Sunday at 6 p.m., P and M hosts Winfield at the Civic Arena.

Three games in volleyball

Three matches were played this week in Men's Volleyball League action at Kal School.

Sun Auto beat Trinity United Church 15-11, 15-11, and 16-12; Audballs dumped Alliance Church 15-10, 15-11, and 10-15; and Phantoms trounced Pleasant Valley Church of God 15-5, 15-9, and 15-10.

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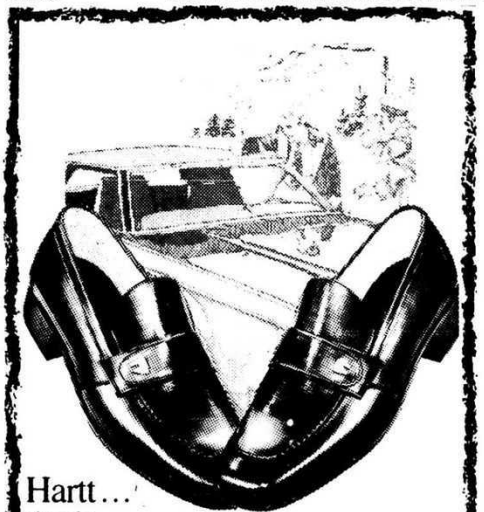

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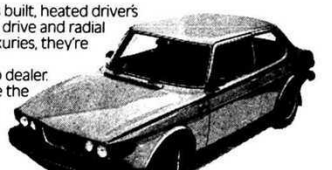

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