KENDALL'S KORNER

# A letter tells story



At a recent junior hockey game in Vernon, a qualified referee made two important judgment calls which were both against the hometown Vikings.

For his efforts, the official was called, "A puke, an idiot, a lame-brain, a dummy, and several other things which can't be printed here."

It wasn't only young people who voiced their opinion of the referee, it was also responsible adults.

Following is a letter, on this subject, written by a baseball umpire in Terre Haute, Indiana.

Donald Jensen was struck in the head by a thrown bat while umpiring a little league game. He continued to work the game, but later that evening he was placed in the hospital by a doctor. While being kept overnight, he wrote this letter.

It was first published by Denny Warwick, a sports editor in South Dakota. It read:

Dear parent of a little leaguer:

I am an umpire. I don't do it for a living, but only on Saturdays and Sundays for fun.

I've played the game, coached it, and watched it. But somehow, nothing takes the place of umpiring. Maybe it's because I feel that deep down I'm providing a fair chance for all the kids to play the game without disagreements or arguments.

With all the fun I've had, there is still something that bothers me about my job . . . some of you folks don't understand why I'm there. Some of you feel I'm there to exert authority over your son. For that reason you often yell at me when I make a mistake, or encourage your son to say things that hurt my feelings.

How many of you really understand that I try to be perfect. I try not to make a mistake. I don't want your son to feel he got a bad deal from an umpire. Yet no matter how hard I try, I can't be perfect. I counted the number of calls I made in a six-inning game today. The total number of decisions, whether on balls, or strikes, or safes and outs, was 146.

## TRIED HIS BEST

I tried my best to get them all right, but I'm sure I missed some. Well, I figured out my percentage on paper. I could have missed eight calls today and still get about 95 per cent of the calls right . . . in most occupations that percentage would be considered excellent. If I were in school that grade would receive an "A" for sure.

But your demands are higher than that. Let me tell you more about my game today.

There was one real close call that ended the game . . . a runner from the home team was trying to steal home . . . he ran on a passed ball. The catcher chased the ball down and threw to the pitcher covering the plate. The pitcher made the tag and I called the runner out.

As I was getting my equipment to leave I overheard one of the parents' comments: "It's too bad the kids have to lose games because of rotten umpires. That was one of the loudest calls I've ever seen." Later, at the concession stand, a couple of the kids were telling their friends, "Boy the umpires were lousy today. They lost the game for us."

I felt just terrible when I got home. Here was a group of kids who had made a lot of mistakes which had cost them a number of runs.

The purpose of Little League is to teach baseball skills to young men. Obviously, a team which does not play well in a given game, yet is given the opportunity to blame that loss on an umpire for one call or two, is being given the chance to take all responsibility for the loss from their shoulders.

A parent or adult leader who permits the younger player to blame his failures on an umpire, regardless of the quality of that umpire, is doing the worst kind of injustice to that youngster. Rather than learning responsibility, such an attitude is fostering an improper outlook toward the ideals of the game itself. This irresponsibility is bound to carry over to future years.

As I sit here writing this letter I am no longer as upset as I was this afternoon. I wanted to quit umpiring. But, fortunately, my wife reminded me of another situation that occurred last week.

## PLAYER APOLOGIZES

I was umpiring behind the plate for a pitcher who pantomimed his displeasure at any call on a borderline pitch that was not in his team's favor. One could sense that he wanted the crowd to realize that he was a fine, talented player who was doing his best to get along, but that I was a black-hearted villain who was working against him.

This kid continued for two innings while at the same time yelling at his own players who dared to make a mistake. For two innings, the manager watched this. When the kid returned to the dugout to bat in the top of the third, the manager called him aside.

In a loud enough voice that I was able to overhear, the lecture went like this: "Listen, son, it is time you make a decision. You can be an umpire, an actor, or a pitcher. But you can only be one at a time when you are playing for me. Right now it is your job to pitch. And, you are basically doing a lousy job." "Leave the acting to the actors, the umpiring to the umpires, or you won't do any pitching here. Now what is it going to be?"

Needless to say, the kid chose the pitching route and went onto win the game. When the game was over the kid followed me to my car. Fighting his hardest to keep back the tears, he apologized for his actions and thanked me for umpiring the game. He said he had learned a lesson that he would never forget.

I can't help but wonder . . . how many more fine young men are missing their chance to develop into outstanding ball players because their parents encourage them to spend time umpiring, rather than working harder to play the game as it should be played?"

The following morning Donald Jensen died of a brain concussion.

If that letter doesn't mean anything to you, go ahead and keep making a fool of yourself by abusing officials.

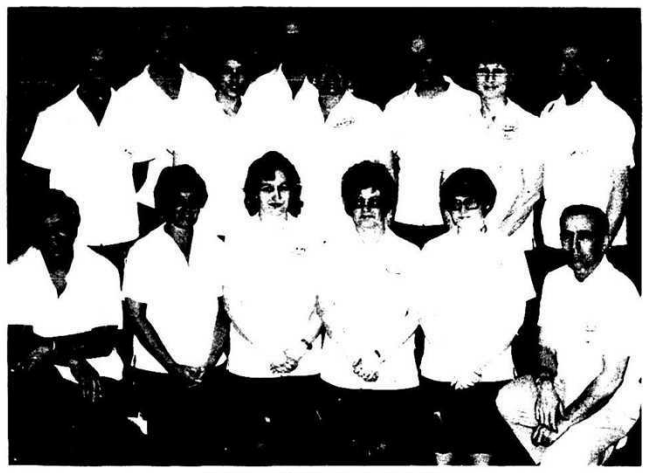
# Eastern skiers take 4 downhill medals

ROSSLAND, B.C. (CP) — Skiers from Ontario and Quebec captured four of the six medals awarded in the downhill events Thursday at the opening day of competition in the Canadian Juvenile Alpine Ski Championships.

Kathy Thurley of Ottawa completed the fast course in 43.94 seconds, four-tenths of a second ahead of second-place Diana Haight of Fruitvale, B.C. Andrea Baker of Collingwood, Ont. was third among the 41 entrants with a time of 44.54 seconds.

Louise Knight of Jasper, Alta. was fourth with a time of 44.62 seconds.

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## CHAMPIONSHIP HOPES

The Vernon Senior Bowling team will be travelling to Kamloops on March 17 to 18 to take part in the Interior team bowling championships. There are 24 centres involved in the championships and Vernon was fourth last year. In the front row, from left, are Val Andretta, Dee Budd, Mary Viala, May Turek, Joan Allen and coach Art Block. In the middle row, are Merv Budd, Sharon Reddick, Shirley Glahoit and manager Lori Kupryk. In the back row are Marv Zwaryan, Garry Monk, Ron Trask and Archie Turek.

(Daily News Photo)

# Armstrong Saints drop first game in tournament

Armstrong Saints lost their first game of the British Columbia senior boys' "A" basketball championships to defending tournament winner Vanderhoof by a 72-67 score in tournament action Thursday.

The game, played at Pleasant Valley School in Armstrong, saw the Vanderhoof team take the lead early and never look back. At half time, the host Armstrong team were down 40-26 but started gaining ground in the second half of play.

**END TO END**

The game during the second half was all end to end action with Armstrong sustaining constant pressure, but the clock ran out on them and Vanderhoof emerged the victors.

Three Armstrong attackers, Duncan MacDonald and Rick and Doug Galeka had 16 points each for the home team.

Leading netgetter for the Vanderhoof team was Greg Van Dolah with a 22 point night, followed by Dave Fehr with 15 and Wayne Wood with 14.

**WIN AND LOSS**

Armstrong now have a one win and one loss record and are scheduled to play their next game this afternoon at 3:15 p.m.

Winfield, the other local team, also sports a one win-one loss record after a 92-59 bouncing by the Saanich team.

Winfield lead the game all the way through until the third quarter when Saanich came alive and started to score heavily in the final minutes. The third quarter score was 52-47 in favor of the Winfield team.

Top scorers for the Winfield effort were Mario Russo, who netted 23 points and Gary Gatzke, who dropped 22.

The big star of the game was Bruce Mede of the Saanich team who managed 31 points throughout the contest. Second highest scorer for Saanich was Greg Bell, getting 12 during the game.

**SEMI-FINAL**

As a result of Thursday's games, the undefeated Saanich, Vanderhoof, Revelstoke and Hope teams will advance to semi-final play on Friday, while the other 8 teams in the contest will compete for second place honors in the double knockout tournament.

Other Thursday games included Hazelton beating Lytton 83-76, Howe Sound over Boundary Central 70-63, Hope winning over Creston 76-64 and Revelstoke past University Hill 77-70.

Tournament play will continue until Saturday at 8:45 p.m. at the Pleasant Valley School when the winner of the tournament will be decided. Tournament games will be played at 3:15 p.m., 5 p.m., 7 p.m. and 8:45 p.m. tonight.

## DAILY NEWS SPORTS ALERT

**HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL**

B.C. senior boys' "A" basketball championship at Pleasant Valley School in Armstrong. Games tonight at 3:15, 5, 7 and 8:45 p.m. First game Saturday at 3:15 p.m.

**JUVENILE PLAYOFFS**

Vernon Juvenile Reps at Nakusp for the first game in the best-of-three B.C. quarter-finals. Game time is 8 p.m.

**JUNIOR HOC. EY**

8:30 p.m., Civic Arena, Vernon Vikings vs. Abbotsford Flyers

**SATURDAY**

**MINOR SOCCER**

10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Recreation Complex, second and final registration.

**MINOR BASEBALL**

12 noon to 4 p.m., Village Green Mall, second and final registration.

# VOLLEYBALL SCOREBOARD

**HONEYMOONERS**

Coasters trounced Marvels 15-4, 15-4, and 15-0; Desperados downed Jam Tarts 15-12, 5-15, and 15-12; Super Six beat Up-n-atoms 15-1, 15-8, and 3-15; Lightning defeated Rockets 15-5, 15-9, and 11-15; and Tempests blew by Sumtimers 15-8, 4-15, and 15-10.

**MAJOR MEN**

Wallbangers 2, Lagers 0; Wallbangers 2, Nads 0; Vercom 2, Nads 0; Village Green, 2, Nads 0; 57 Selects 1, Lagers 1; Selects 2, Vercom 0; Village Green 2, Lagers 0; Village Green 1, Selects 1; and Village Green 1, Vercom 1.

**MEN'S COMMERCIAL**

Hammers 21, Stingers 11; Stingers 21, Pacesetters 19; Stingers 21, B.C. Hydro 9; Hammers 21, Hydro 8; Pacesetters 21, Hydro 7; and Hammers 21, Pacesetters 0.

**MEN'S COMBINATION**

Rooh Barbz dumped Trinity Thunder 5-15, 15-4, and 15-12; Royal Rebels edged Sun Auto Parts 16-14, 15-7, and 16-14; and Church of God rolled over Kal Tire 15-2, 15-12, and 15-8.

**MAJOR WOMEN**

Woodstocks 1, Bumpers 1; Woodstocks 2, Bib and Tucker 0; Woodstocks 2, Justice 0; Hotshots 1, Magnificent Seven 1; Coldstream 2, Mags 0; Coldstream 2, Hotshots 0; Village Green 2, Mags 0; Green 2, Hotshots 0; Green 2, Coldstream 0; Bumpers 2, Bib 0; Bumpers 2, Justice 0; and Bib 2, Justice 0.

**WOMEN'S COMMERCIAL**

At Seaton: Six-o-lets downed Copy-Cats 14-16, 15-6, and 15-3; Stompers hammered Mission Impossible 15-11, 15-1, and 15-7; Heroes dumped Toros 15-11 and 15-13; Almada whipped OK Welders 15-7, 15-9, and 15-8; Fonzie's Girls beat Howlers 14-16, 15-8, and 15-6; and Super Six trounced Kootenay Six 15-12, 15-13, and 15-4.

At Silver Star: Guatos sat on Fatawith 15-9, 15-8, and 17-15; Dollies tripped Kal Tire 16-14, 15-8, and 15-10; and TNTs bombed Setters 15-11, 15-1, and 15-9.

At OK Landing: Sneakers stepped on Dyna-Mates 15-4, 10-15, and 15-13; Jokers clobbered Guzzlers 15-6, 15-7, and 15-4; and Medi-Cats downed Bridge All-stars 16-14, 5-15, and 15-11.

## *MacDonald puts in 4 for Blazers*

BELLINGHAM, Wash. (CP) — Steve MacDonald scored four goals, including one on a power play, as his Bellingham Blazers beat Kamloops Chiefs 7-4 Thursday night in British Columbia Junior Hockey League action before 500 fans.

The victory moved the Blazers closer to the Coastal Division pennant.

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# Salmon Arm girls make it to quarter final

CHILLIWACK, B.C. (CP) — Defending champion Salmon Arm won its only game Thursday and was one of eight schools to advance to the quarter-finals of the British Columbia high school girls' AA basketball championships in this Fraser Valley community.

Salmon Arm, the only undefeated team in the tournament, defeated Centennial of Coquitlam 56-38 behind 12 points by Nona Gurkee.

Also advancing to the quarter-finals were Cranbrook, Kamloops, Victoria, Nelson, KLO of Kelowna, Reynolds of Saanich and New Westminster.

Janie Makie paced Cranbrook to two wins Thursday. She scored 26 points in a 51-48 victory over Centennial, and tallied 20 in a 54-38 triumph over Templeton.

Kamloops defeated Prince Rupert 45-35 as Jane Savali tossed in 21 points. Victoria defeated Prince Rupert 55-48 and lost a close game to Carson Graham of Vancouver 38-37.

Elynn Underhill led Nelson to two wins, scoring 29 points in a 58-41 victory over Semiahmoo of White Rock and 21 in a hardfought 46-44 win over KLO. KLO had earlier defeated Vancouver Killarney 56-43 behind 30 points by Joanne Ritchie.

Reynolds defeated Duchess Park of Prince George 60-29.



A Military Career Counsellor will be in Vernon on Tues. Mar. 14th at the Vernon Lodge Hotel from 12:00 to 6:00 p.m.
THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES.

