KENDALL'S KORNER

This could be the year

Vernon Panthers hit the basketball court for their first exhibition game of the season Wednesday night when they host Summerland – considered one of the top 'A' teams in the province.

Panthers' Coach Rick Inrig is excited about the upcoming season and you can hardly blame him. He has been waiting for a team like this for six long years.

Inrig said, "In past years, we've had some extremely talented ball players. But, we never had a complete team. If we had the height, we lacked guards, if we had good ball handlers, we didn't have the rebounders. This season we seem to have everything."

TALL TEAM

Main forman. Panthers will have one of the tallest teams in the Interior with only two of 13 players under six-feet.

Centre Kelly Olsen, who stands 6'4", is expected to lead the offence this year. Olsen topped the Okanagan in scoring last season – while still in grade 11.

Inrig said, "Kelly is so strong he could be a real dominant force for us."

A KEY

Panthers certainly don't have all their eggs in one basket. The player who could turn Vernon into a provincial contender is 6'3" guard Wilf Haak. Haak enjoyed a good 1978-79 season, but lacked experience. This year, to go with his height, dribbling, and playmaking ability, Haak has one season of senior ball under his belt.

Inrig said, "We're counting on Wilf to handle the ball a lot on offence. He has a good outside shot, and because of his height, is also a danger inside."

ANKLE INJURY

Haak's starting backcourt partner is expected to be returnee Glen Collingridge. Collingridge has been sidelined with an ankle injury, but is expected back in the line-up in about 10 days.

Rookie Lance Page may get the starting nod until Collingridge is 100 per cent. Page, who attended Clarence Fulton Junior Secondary last season, has looked good in training camp.

RICK INRIG
... balanced

Other guards on the roster include hustling Jamie Reichelt, second-year man Bruce Weitzel, 6'1" Mike dePfyffer, and veteran Lorne Hanson.

TOUGH COMPETITION

Inrig is counting on 6'5" Ken Arkell and 6'2" Greg DeLeenheer to nail down the starting forward positions. However, those two have plenty of competition.

Hanson and dePfyffer are both excellent forwards. And rookies Jeff Baerg, Al Gee, and Pat Paul all top the six-foot mark.

Inrig said, "It is going to be tough to keep Hanson off the floor. Lorne has been working extremely hard. I wouldn't hesitate to use him at guard or forward. And dePfyffer has all the potential in the world. Once he gets used to senior ball, he'll be a good one."

The Vernon coach feels his only question mark is the second guard position. "It is crucial that we have a man back there who can complement Haak. From all indications, I think Collingridge can do the job. But, you never know until you get in a game situation."

NO PREDICTIONS

Inrig isn't making any predictions about how far his club could go this season. Making it to the valley playoffs, next February at VSSS, should not be a problem. Kamloops Reg Devils and KLO Cougars will probably give Vernon the most trouble in the battle for the two valley berths to the provincial tournament.

Although he is reluctant to admit it, this is the year he has been waiting for since he saw guys like Olsen, DeLeenheer, and Haak performing in grades 8 and 9.

The talent is there, the attitude is good, and the desire to win appears to be in the hearts of the players. All they need in the next few months is a few good bounces.

Needed enjoying a great season

By KEVIN MITCHELL
Daily News Writer

John Needd claims the Western Canada Hockey League is no rougher than the B.C. Junior League, but he does admit the pace is much faster.

The former Vernon Canadians star's statement that the WCHL is no rougher than the BCJHL was somewhat of a surprise since it came last weekend, just moments after he was given a tremendous check courtesy of New Westminster defencemen Larry Melnyk and Daryl Stanley.

Needd was slow in getting up after being sandwiched and skated to the bench, wondering which arena he was playing in.

The arena happened to be Queen's Park in New Westminster where Needd was selected the player of the game as Seattle Breakers downed the Bruins 7-5 in a bruising affair.

HARVEST WORKER

Needd, who showed no ill effects of the hard check following the game proved to many of the 1,600 fans in New Westminster why he has been labelled by the Vancouver area press as, "The hardest working member of the Seattle Breakers."

While sitting on the bench after being shaken up, a fan behind the Breaker bench yelled, "Hey Needd, didn't your mother tell you the big boys play it rough."

Next shift, Needd took a pass from ex-Kamloops Rocket Tim Hunter, beat a Bruin defender, deked goaltender Lawrence Dyck, and completed a picture goal.

The smooth-skating centreman also set up Seattle's first goal by Breaker captain Tom Marsh to add to his ever-increasing points total.

TOP SCORER

"I've got 30 points," replied Needd, when asked how he was playing.

"How many," quickly asked Breaker veteran Joe Ward, who is challenging Needd for the team scoring lead.

Needd of course obliged to Ward's request by saying "30" once again.

Needd's 30 points have come in just 20 games, a clip which if continued could see the Vancouver native get selected in the National Hockey League's 1980 amateur draft.

What has been the big difference in Needd's play this season as compared to last year in Vernon?

MORE ICE-TIME

"I'm getting more ice-time, a lot more than I did last year," said Needd. Against the Bruins he saw regular duty on the number one line, served on the Breaker power-play, killed penalties and was quite often asked by coach Monte Miron to take a double-shift at centre.

"We're playing well," noted Needd. "We beat the Winter Hawks in Portland which is tough to do."

Needd fired 58 goals for Vernon last season after unsuccessfully trying for a berth with two Ontario Major Junior League clubs.

The son of one of the most controversial hockey mothers in B.C., Jean Needd, John and his brother Rob (who has since quit hockey) were not given a fair chance to prove themselves in the WCHL.

The feeling among some hockey people was that if you signed one of the Needds, you also signed their mother, who recently filed a suit against a hockey broadcaster for some critical comments made about her.

But, the Breakers are giving Needd a fair chance this season and he has responded with a super effort.

FROM BCJHL

Needd shouldn't feel like an outcast with the Breakers since five players who spent last season in the BCJHL are now team-mates.

They include Alan Graves, Peter Gerlinger and Mike Mesic of the Kamloops Rockets, Tom Stanger of Kelowna Buckaroos and Chuck Buker of Penticton Vees.

The Breakers are in high spirits as they are currently challenging Portland for second spot in the West division, so high that some of the more optomistic players were chanting Memorial Cup in the dressing room.

The Memorial Cup is of course emblamatic of major junior hockey supremacy, a tough cup to capture, but not an impossible dream as far as John Needd and the Seattle Breakers are concerned.

JOHN NEELD
... 30 points

TROPHY GALLERY'S Bill Haworth goes up for two points during basketball action Monday night at the Recreation Complex. Attempting to block the shot is Greg Wood, of Coldstream Hotel. Haworth scored 14 points to help his club to a 76-71 victory.

Vardabasso leads Lo-Cost

Morris Vardabasso scored 30 points to lead Lo-Cost Lumber to an 84-62 victory over Paddington Station in Carling O'Keefe Basketball League action Monday night at the Recreation Complex.

Glen Wheelhouse dropped in 21 points for Lo-Cost while Brian Craig added 14.

Tom Ferguson was the top sniper for Paddington with 19 points while Bill Pitcher sunk 15.

Lo-Cost led the game right from the first basket. At half-time, the Lumbermen were on top 43-27.

In Monday's other game, Trophy Gallery beat Coldstream Motor Hotel 76-71.

Gary Pruden was the offensive leader for Trophy Gallery with 19 points, including 15 in the second-half. Ian Houchin scored 15 points for the Trophymen while Bill Haworth added 14.

Rick Inrig, with 18 points, and John Henson, with 14, led the Coldstream attack.

The Hoteimen led 34-31 at half-time.

FRANCE BEATS MONACO

MONTE CARLO (Reuter) – France won the Monaco junior soccer tournament for the second time Monday, defeating Italy 3-2 in the final.

PIN POINTS

NOV. 8
Thurs. Mixed 7-9

Womens high single: Heather Robb, 351, womens high triple: Heather Robb, 778, womens high average: May Turek, 229, Mens highsingle: Bruce Ellis, 355, mens high triple: Frank Gration, 847, mens high average: Frank Gration, 250. Team high single: Sticky Fingers, 1451, team high triple: Sticky Fingers, 3892, "300 Club": Bruce Ellis, 355, Heather Robb, 351, Frank Gration, 342, John Wiebe, 310, Ron Potts, 307, Gerry Monk, 306. "700 Club": Heather Robb, 778, Lena Herbst, 737, Coby Fuhr, 732. "800 Club": Frank Gration, 847.

7 Strikes in a Row: Bruce Ellis, Heather Robb.

TEAM STANDINGS

Village Green Datsun	279½
Toro's	254
Sticky Fingers	241
South Paws	223½

Daily News
SPORTS Page
DON KENDALL—Sports Editor
PHONE 545-0671
6 VERNON DAILY NEWS, TUESDAY, NOV. 20, 1979

Cougars win shortened game

North Okanagan Hockey League President Chris Nelson has pondered the fate of several players and the outcome of two games over the past 48 hours.

Nelson has ruled that Vernon Cougars won a game played last Friday, at the Civic Arena, against Winfield Raiders. Cougars were leading 7-2 at the end of the second period when a brawl erupted on the ice and the game was called.

As a result of that incident, three players have been handed one-game suspensions. Terry Lowe and Grant Sidnick, of Vernon, and Winfield's Mark Watt will sit out a game.

Also, Kelowna Packers have protested a 6-5 overtime loss last Friday to Salmon Arm Aces. Packers claim Aces used an ineligible player because goaltender Gord McIntosh dressed as a forward.

Nelson is expected to make a ruling on that game Wednesday.

GRANT SIDNICK
... suspended

Deer hunters enjoy success

The number of deer harvested in the British Columbia Interior during the fall hunting season was up more than 100 per cent over 1978.

In the final report of the year, the Fish and Wildlife Branch's checking station at Cache Creek reports 1,137 deer were killed up to Nov. 12. For the same period last year, 557 deer were reported.

Other species showing an increase were: moose 2,893 to 3,069, sheet 19 to 24, black bear 78 to 104, elk 37 to 49, and rabbit 154 to 424.

Decreases were shown for: goats 56 to 32, grizzly bear 24 to 15, caribou 59 to 39, ducks 2,804 to 2,181, geese 268 to 188, and grouse 22,806 to 20,622.

The number of resident and non-resident hunters rose about 18 per cent to 14,809.

LOOK BACK FIVE YEARS

NOVEMBER, 1974

Despite little cooperation from the weatherman, Silver Star Ski area is scheduled to open Nov. 23. Total snowfall at the lodge stands at 18 inches and 25 inches has fallen on the peak. Unless some of the current snow is lost, the poma and wee tee lifts will be in operation for the opening.

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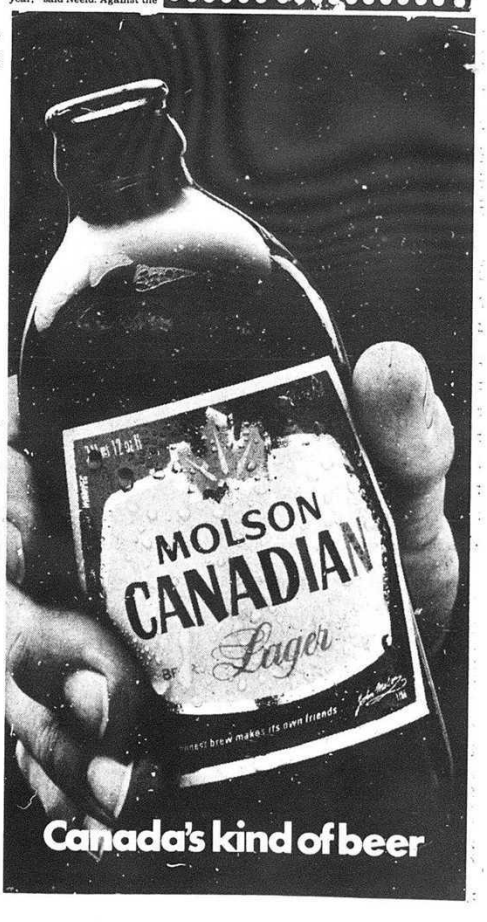

Berger first in two events

Vernon native Bruce Berger won two blue ribbons at the Western Canada Senior Invitational Long Course Swim Meet last weekend in Edmonton.

Berger, who now swims for the New Westminster Hyacks, won both the 100m and 200m backstroke.

Berger was also second in the 200m, 400m, and 1500m freestyle events.

He is scheduled to attend a national team training camp next week in Toronto. The following week, Berger will compete in the Canada Cup Swim Meet, in Toronto.

Barring a serious injury, it appears certain the 17-year-old swimmer will land a berth on the Canadian team for the 1980 Moscow Olympics.