

**SPORTS**  
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# Junior team in jeopardy



## TOUGH DAY FOR GOALIE

Boston Pizza goalie Steve Connaught employed several different styles to

stop the puck Saturday during an exhibition pee wee house league game at the

Priest Valley Arena. Connaught made some great stops, but his club was

trounced by Generics TV. (Daily News Photos)



By DON KENDALL  
Daily News Sports Editor  
The future of Vernon's entry in the B.C. Junior Hockey League is in jeopardy.

Lakers' General Manager Hank Aarsen said today, "We're in trouble."

Aarsen told the Daily News team owners will be meeting with the next two days to discuss the future of the club.

"I like to say we'll finish the season," he said, "but right now, I don't know."

Vernon rejoined the BCJHL this season after a one-year leave of absence. The club withdrew after the 1978-79 season citing high expenses and lack of fan support as the main reasons. Same problems face the current owners.

**NO SUPPORT**  
Lakers have many other hockey fans. We're losing money every game. It costs us \$30 per game for ice time, and there are many other expenses.

Lakers have won only seven of 33 games and are deep in the cellar of the five-team Interior Division.

Aarsen said, "We achieved our two main objectives, to play clean hockey and use local players. Majority of our players are from the Vernon area and I think we're probably the least penalized team in the division."

However, the GM and part-owner admits he is not pleased with the team's record. "We've been up and down like a yo-yo. I'm disappointed with the performance of many of our players."

Aarsen said the owners have guaranteed their own money to fulfill the team's financial obligations.

**COMMON PROBLEM**  
BCJHL President Vern Dye, of Vernon, said many junior clubs in B.C., and the rest of Canada, are experiencing difficulties similar to Lakers.

**Midgets post easy victory**  
Vernon blasted New Westminster 7-1 Sunday during opening round play at an international midget hockey tournament on the coast.

Vernon, said many junior clubs in B.C., and the rest of Canada, are experiencing difficulties similar to Lakers.

The local squad was scheduled to face Richmond in its first game today.

Tillicum's snowmakers can be employed when the temperature drops below freezing. "We don't need a lot of snow," Ferris said. "If the temperature drops for a couple nights, or we get a good dump of snow, we'll have perfect conditions."

But the Nets came back, and with Birdsong on the bench, outscored the Kings 21-2 to take an 83-80 lead in the fourth period. Birdsong was put back on the court and, with Scott Wedman, regained control.

In Los Angeles, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar scored 34 points and Jaumil Wilkies added 32 as the Lakers downed the '76ers.

**LOOK BACK FIVE YEARS**  
DECEMBER, 1975  
Vernon was one of four teams remaining in contention going into play today in the annual Kamloops Christmas Pee-wee Hockey Tournament. Vernon scored its third straight victory Sunday with a 6-4 decision over Prince George.



HANK AARSEN  
... no support

VERN DYE  
... common problem

"Three of the interior teams are in financial trouble," Dye said. "The only two that appear secure are Kelowna and Penticton. Kelowna is drawing well

and Penticton's owner (auto dealer Chris Parker) backs his club."

non, due to financial trouble. Revelstoke Rockets, with 18 imported players and small crowds, are also reported to be having money problems.

**ON COAST**  
Dye said, "On the coast, there are a few teams doing well, but I'd say there are at least three clubs that are drawing poorly... and are in trouble."

"The situation is the same across Canada. Expenses keep rising and there doesn't seem to be any fan interest in junior hockey."

Dye, also a director of the Lakers, feels there is no easy solution. "We've tried just about everything. Most of the teams have cut costs to the bare minimum and still can't make ends meet."

"The only way I see junior hockey can survive is to get some development money from the pros. The NHL will have to pay more money to the tier one clubs, and they in turn will have to pass some on to the tier two teams."

## Dual slalom series scheduled at Tillicum

The Molson's Dual Slalom Challenge Series gets underway Jan. 7 at Tillicum Valley Ski Area.

The event is open to any team of three skiers (novice to expert) that would like to represent its business, organization, or neighborhood.

about the same speed. Seeds will be based on a handicap. Registration is \$2 per race. Tillicum is offering pre-race clinics Jan. 5 and 12. The clinics will get under way at 7:30 p.m.

The series will run Wednesday nights, for six consecutive weeks.

Skiers will race against someone in the other course of

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## Vernon's ski areas remain in good shape

Warn: weather has forced the closure of many Western Canada ski areas. However, Silver Star and Tillicum Valley are in good shape.

Silver Star spokesman Mike Duggan said the Star's conditions are as good as any ski area in Western Canada. "We do not have ideal conditions," he said, "but all lifts are operating and we've had powder makers out on many

of the runs." The Star is reporting a 75 centimetre base and it was snowing lightly this morning.

"With everything considered, we have to be happy with our crowds," Duggan said. "I'm sure we've had more skiers over the past three days than any other area in the West."

There were between 1,500 and 2,000 skiers at the Star on Sunday. That figure is down considerably over the same day last year.

"We've only got one or two bad spots," said Tillicum Manager Tom Ferris. "On most parts of the hill, we've got lots of snow."

Tillicum Valley, with the help of man-made snow, is holding up well under the warm weather.

"We don't need a lot of snow," Ferris said. "If the temperature drops for a couple nights, or we get a good dump of snow, we'll have perfect conditions."

**LOCAL SWIMMER GOES TO UCLA**  
Vernon native Bruce Berger has been awarded a swimming scholarship at the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA), at Berkeley.

**Coach resigns after argument**  
By The Canadian Press  
Kansas City Kings have beaten New Jersey Nets only twice in two years on the Nets' Rutgers Athletic Centre home court and Kevin Loughery was not around for either game.

Berger, a member of Canada's 1980 Olympic team, will enroll at UCLA on Jan. 1.

The Kings' previous victory came two years ago today when Loughery, then head coach of the Nets, was thrown out for arguing with officials. Loughery missed the King's 102-99 National Basketball Association victory over the Nets in Piscataway, N.J., on Sunday night because he quit the club after 7½ years in a dispute with owner Joe Taub.

Berger started his swimming career with Vernon Kokanee. He left the Kokanee in 1977 to further his development with Westminister Hawks.

What Loughery left behind for replacement coach Bob MacKinnan was a team with six rookies, now on a five-game losing streak, with one victory in 11 games.

He has represented Canada at several international meets during the past two years.

In the only other NBA game Sunday, Los Angeles Kings defeated Philadelphia 76ers 122-116.

His team mates at UCLA will include Canadian record holder Peter Szmidt; Graham Smith, who won four gold medals for Canada at the 1978 Commonwealth Games, at UCLA, until this year when he transferred to university in Alberta.

**SPORTS BRIEFS**

**Broomball games scheduled tonight**  
The games scheduled tonight in the Vernon Women's Broomball League will be played at Centennial Outdoor Rink. The rink was closed Saturday due to the warm weather. However, it was re-opened today, on a limited basis.

**UMPIRE RETIRES**  
KARACHI (AP) — A Pakistani cricket test umpire has retired because he felt he was compelled to make dishonest decisions in the matches against the West Indies cricket team currently touring Pakistan.

**FLANKER NURSES JAW**  
CHESTER, Pa. (AP) — Injured Philadelphia Eagles flanker Charlie Smith will be treated with kid gloves this week while the team practices in Tampa, Fla. for the NFL's semifinal game against Dallas.

**PLAYERS PROTEST**  
ROME (AP) — A number of Italian soccer players and team officials have signed a statement on the eve of a soccer tournament in Uruguay condemning alleged human rights violations by the junta in that South American country.

**PEDAL POWER PAYS**  
TOKYO (APF) — Cyclist Koichi Nakano, winner of four consecutive world pro scratch titles, won the Nara memorial race, won the Nara memorial race, won the Nara memorial race, won the Nara memorial race, won the Nara memorial race.

**STORM STOPS TEST**  
MELBOURNE (AP) — Gale force winds, torrential rain and lightning just after players had left the field because of bad light, forced play to be abandoned Sunday on the third day of the third cricket Test between Australia and New Zealand.

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