

Daily News

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SPORTS PAGE

KENDALL'S KORNER

Ex-coach speaks out



Gary Criss resigned last weekend as coach of Vernon Lakers of the B.C. Junior Hockey League. He took over the club Nov. 1, after Russ Newton resigned the post. Criss has some playing background in both junior 'A' and senior 'A' hockey. He accepted the coaching position on a volunteer basis because, "The team was in a hole and needed some help."

HIS OPINIONS

Now, after his resignation, Criss has some opinions about what went wrong with the Lakers this season. "I don't like to wash my laundry in public," he said, "but there are some things I have to say."

He admits many of the players on the roster this season are not junior 'A' calibre. But, he does not blame the players for the team's dismal showing. "I blame the management," he said. "Some good players were cut in training camp... and some were kept who should have spent another season in midjet or juvenile."

In his own case, Criss doesn't feel he was treated fairly by the management, and in particular General Manager Hank Aarsen.

"I agreed to coach on a volunteer basis. I received a total of \$500 to cover my expenses for the next four months."

"I thought the least I could expect would be the support of management, but I didn't get it. They were making player changes without consulting me. At times, I did nothing more than open and close the gate."

PLAYERS QUIT

Criss also feels management has not been fair to the players. More than a dozen players have quit the club, and Criss attributes that mass exodus to a lack of communication between the executive and team.

"The players got tired of begging for sticks and tape," he said. "There were times that we'd board the bus for a trip and we didn't have any tape and not enough sticks. So, I'd have to run down to the store and get some stuff at the last minute."

After the team decided not to go to a game last Saturday in Revelstoke, due to a lack of players, a meeting was called Sunday. It was after that meeting Criss resigned.

TIRED OF LOSING

"We had 13 players, including two goalies, for the trip to Revelstoke," he said. "The kids just didn't want to go up there and get thumped. For the last two months I've heard a variety of phony excuses why guys can't make it to road games. They're just tired of getting beat by 10 goals."

Criss shoulders some of the blame for Vernon's record. "The team just wasn't improving so I have to assume I wasn't getting through to the players."

However, it is tough to mold a group of young men into a cohesive unit when their spirits are down. From game to game, Criss didn't know how many, or which, players he would have available.

Hats off to the players who have stuck with the team... it has been a long season.

LOOK BACK FIVE YEARS

FEBRUARY, 1976
Howard Cuning and Mike Woodcock, in a Honda Civic, won the second annual Winter Carnival Rally at the weekend. Cuning, driving the car, and Woodcock, navigating, collected only 20 demerit points during the 50-mile rally sponsored by the Vernon Autosport Club.

FEBRUARY, 1976
More than 100 swimmers took part in the Valentine Swim Meet held last weekend at the Vernon Recreation Centre Pool. Prince George Barracudas took first-place in the three team meet followed by Kelowna Aqua Jets and Vernon Rokanews.



WILLIE STARGELL, most valuable player in the 1979 World Series, was a special guest of Vernon Winter Carnival events and riding in the parade. Stargell also flew,

by helicopter, to Silver Star Ski Area. His comment after viewing the Star, was, "It was just fantastic." (Don Weixl Photo)

'Over-the-Hill' race scheduled

The snow is up for the Labatt's Over-the-Hill Downhill Race this weekend at Silver Star Ski Area.

According to race organizer Mike Duggan, pre-race preparations are complete and the weatherman has been co-operative. "We've had 15 centimetres of new snow this week, with drifts to more than 30 centimetres on some parts of the mountain," Duggan said. About 30 teams have registered and up to 45 are expected to compete in the two-day meet which gets underway Saturday.

another meet be more than 35 years old. Duggan said, "The race is designed to provide fun for both recreation skiers and spectators."

The course will be set up on "Far Out," an isolated run off the Yellow Chair. Spectator access, via skis, is over intermediate terrain. There will be a practice run Saturday, at 1 p.m., with racing scheduled to get under way Sunday at 10:30 a.m. Duggan said, "Several other ski areas have expressed interest in hosting over-the-hill races next season. If this weekend's race goes well, there could be a series next year, throughout the B.C. Interior, with the finals at Silver Star."



Paul Birzins of Salmon Arm, left, won the open event at the recent Cross-country Ski Fest, at Tilkium Valley. The race was sponsored by Labatt's, Cedar Springs Hot



Tubs, and Vernon Country Society. Michael Melland, right, captured the junior event. A team called 'Monks' won the relay competition. The 'Monks' were Joan, Brian, and Henri Moncion. (Bob Platt Photos)

CROSS-COUNTRY SKI FEST

Tubs, and Vernon Country Society. Michael Melland, right, captured the junior event. A team called 'Monks' won the relay competition. The 'Monks' were Joan, Brian, and Henri Moncion. (Bob Platt Photos)

RAIDERS STILL NEED ONE WIN

National Hotel Raiders will have to wait at least one more game before clinching the White Valley Hockey League regular season title.

Labatt's Sabres dumped Raiders 6-3 in WJHL action Wednesday at the Lumby Arena. No details of a game involving Lotus Gardens and Lakeside Walters were available at press time.

Sabres took 11 of 21 minor penalties and one of two misconducts. Daryl Slizak, with two goals, and Rolf Stauchhammer, registered for National Hotel.

Sabres led 2-0 at the end of the first period and stretched that margin to 5-1 after 40 minutes.

Raiders need only one victory in their remaining four games to clinch the title. League play resumes Saturday, at 8 p.m., when Lumby Flying Frenchmen host Walters.

ROYALS GAIN REVENGE

League-leading Saints whip slumping Panthers

North Kamloops Saints (5-2) strengthened their hold on first-place in the Okanagan High School Basketball League with a 92-72 win over Vernon Panthers (2-3) Wednesday night at Vernon Senior Secondary School.

For the second time this season, 6'7" forward Tony Mostyk was Vernon's nemesis. Mostyk scored 31 points and Mostyk's outside shooting opened up the inside for 6'7" centre Bruce Schinkelwitz, who scored 15 points.

Lance Page was the leading sniper for Panthers with 18 points. Dale Olson added 17 for Vernon while Dale Dafeo dropped in 16 and Pat Paul collected 12.

Saints held quarter leads of 24-14, 46-22, and 50-20.

Vernon Coach Jack Yamaoka was upset with his club's lacklustre defensive effort. "We were standing ar- and on defence," he said. "Go... after game, we tell our players they have to concentrate on playing better defence. We're not doing a good job in our end of the court."

Mostyk really hurt us. Even with a man right on him, he was putting in his outside shots." Panthers hope to end their

three-game losing streak Saturday when they battle the Golds in Salmon Arm. Vernon's next home game is Wednesday, against Kamloops Red Devils.

ROYALS WIN

Meanwhile in girls' action, Vernon Royals edged North Kamloops 34-27, just two days ago, Royals (2-3) were hammered 86-42 by Norquam.

Lori Elliott led the Royals with 18 points while Chris St. Pierre scored 12 and Gerry Haak added nine.

Vernon Coach Ray Kimoto was elated with his club's turnaround. "We played a controlled game on offence and aggressively on defence," he said. "To hold Norquam to 42 points is really something to be proud of."

Royals are scheduled to battle Pentlicon Lakettes on Friday.



DALE DAFEO... 16 points

SPORTS BRIEFS

BCJHL game gets postponed

A B.C. Junior Hockey League game scheduled Wednesday, at the Vernon Civic Arena, was postponed when Merritt Centennials' apparently forgot they were slated to meet Vernon Lakers. BCJHL President Vern Dye, of Vernon, said the game will be rescheduled some time within the next few weeks. Lakers return to the ice Saturday, in Kelowna, against the Barkers.

FULLT LOSS Professionals defeated Vernon Academics 49-0 in Men's Intermediate Basketball League action this week at the Priest Valley Gymnasium. was Fulton's first setback, after nine consecutive victories. In other games, Cougars thumped Silver Streaks 89-52, and National Hotel edged Lumby Ranchers 52-48. Playoffs get under way next Tuesday with Professionals facing Silver Streaks while Nationals battle Lumby.

Pee wee tourney under way

Vernon Mavor Neil Davidson, NHL Hall-of-Famer Babe Pratt, and Queen Silver Star Eileen Podanowski will be on hand for the opening ceremonies at the 10th annual Winter Carnival Pee Wee Hockey Tournament tonight, at 6 p.m. at the Civic Arena.

Eight teams, from throughout Western Canada, are entered in the four-day event.

Following the ceremony, games will be played at 6:15 and 8:30 p.m. Action resumes Friday at 8 a.m.

Hoop tourney

Eight teams are entered in the Winter Carnival Senior 'B' Men's Basketball Tournament this weekend at the Priest Valley Gymnasium. Play gets under way Friday, at 5:30 p.m. with Vernon Selecs facing Armstrong. Other first round games have Kelowna meeting Salmon Arm, Vernon Turbos hosting Revelstoke, and Vancouver battling Kamloops.

MAYS COLLAPSES HAMILTON TOWNSHIP, N.J. (AP) — Willie Mays collapsed while addressing 425 students at a junior high school on Wednesday, but the former baseball great was released from hospital within two hours of the collapse. Mays, 43, who does public relations for Bally's Park Casino hotel in nearby Atlantic City, collapsed from fatigue, said casino spokesman Rita Shade.

DEPENDS TITLE ATLANTIC CITY (Reuters) — Matthew Saad Muhammad will defend his World Boxing Council light-heavyweight championship against Vonzell Johnson on Feb. 28.

Moffatt leaves centre — new managers named

Bob Moffatt is no longer manager of the Village Green Tennis Centre.

Moffatt's final day as manager was Feb. 9, the day ownership of the centre changed hands. However, he is working at the centre, for the remainder of this week, to assist during the transition period.

Vernon businessman Roman Kozak purchased the centre, from an undisclosed sum, from a group with representatives in Vernon, Calgary, and Vancouver.

Moffatt became manager when the centre opened in 1978. He had previously worked at the Western Indoor Tennis Centre in Vancouver.

Moffatt said, "I like the Okanagan so much that I plan to

stay here. I'm starting a general interest magazine, that will be based in Vernon. I feel there is a real need for this type of publication in the valley."

Assistant Manager David Wu is also left the centre. He will remain in Vernon, in another profession.

NEW MANAGERS

Rose-Anne Burna and Kevin Scolling, both of Vernon, will co-manage the centre.

Moffatt said, "The centre has about 275 members, but there are some problems. One thing that really hurt was the floating interest rate. Paying 20 per cent on a loan is tough."

"I feel the centre has a solid membership and the potential to be a viable operation."



BOB MOFFATT... starts magazine

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