

KENDALL'S KORNER

Hockey struggling



Hockey in most British Columbia cities, including Vernon, is in serious trouble!

There is no simple solution to the sport's dilemma. Expenses are rising far faster than revenue. Transportation, food, lodging, ice time and equipment costs have escalated far beyond the budgets of most amateur clubs.

As a result, teams are dropping like flies and several leagues are on shaky ground.

The tier two, B.C. Junior League has experienced more than its share of trouble during the 1980-81 season. First, Chilliwack Cuties withdrew from the Coast Division, in November.

Then, Merritt Centennials threatened to pull out of the Interior Division and did not renege. At VSSS, a handful of the league's remaining 11 franchises are in financial trouble.

After a one-year leave of absence, Vernon returned to the B.C.H.L. this season. The result has been poor crowds, a dismal performance on the ice, and an expensive winter for the team owners.

OLDEST LEAGUE

Western Canada's longest continually operating loop, the North Okanagan Hockey League, has suffered through a controversial season.

Salmon Arm Aces threatened to fold. Revelstoke Selkirks did fold, and Kelowna Packers were suspended for unsuitable players.

With the second-place Pacers and third-place Selkirks out of the picture, Vernon Cougars cawekawed to their second consecutive regular season title. The three other remaining teams have little, or no, chance of beating Cougars in playoffs.

For the NOHL to survive another season, all teams will have to improve to the level of Cougars or, the league will have to return to a recreational format.

TEAMS WITHDRAW

The province's two senior leagues are in danger of collapse.

Prince George Mohawks and Delta Hurry Kings have withdrawn from the B.C. Senior League, leaving only Kamloops Cowboys and Quesnel Kangaroos to complete the season.

Cowboys have lost a bundle of money and appear to have only two alternatives, fold or join a league with Okanagan teams.

The Western International League, which operates in the Kootenays, lost its premier franchise this year when Spokane Flyers withdrew to make way for a tier one junior club in Walla Walling State city.

Three of the remaining five clubs, Nelson Maple Leafs, Trail Smoke Eaters, and Elk Valley Blazers are stumbling and may not be back for the 1982 campaign.

The tier one Western Canada (Junior 'A') League is experiencing one of its most troublesome years, particularly west of the Rockies.

New Westminster Bruins are expected to lose about \$200,000 this season and are reported to be ready to move, perhaps to Kamloops. Bruins' owner Nelson Skalbania does not make a habit of operating money-losing ventures.

Seattle Breakers will also lose about \$100,000 and Spokane has not been as successful at the gate as has been forecast.

PRO LEAGUE

Another league may be doomed before it gets started.

A proposed professional loop in the Interior, which would act as a farm system for National Hockey League clubs, has hit a snag. Vancouver Canucks, Edmonton Oilers, and Winnipeg Jets would like to locate teams in the Interior. However, no other NHL clubs have expressed an interest. Therefore, the league will probably be shelved for at least one year.

There is in most B.C. cities won't know what hockey, if any, they'll be watching next season until training camps open in September.

Lang rejoins Vernon juniors

Vernon Lakers will have a familiar face between the pipes tonight as they battle Merritt Centennials in a rescheduled B.C. Junior Hockey League game.

Logan Lang, who quit the team in January, will complete the season with Lakers.

Vernon General Manager Hank Aarsen said, "We're glad to have Mark back. He played some great games for us this year."

Since the departure of Lang and Darren Zupp, who also quit, Vernon's netminding has been handled by Jerry Wilson, on loan from an Edmonton juvenile club, and Hank Aarsen

Jr., who plays in the Vernon midget house league. Wilson has returned to Edmonton.

The game had been scheduled Jan. 8, but was postponed when Vernon's team bus was involved in an accident near Kamloops.

Lakers are slated to play the Kings in Penticton, Friday, and host Revelstoke Rockets on Sunday, at 7 p.m.

CAP VIN

Meanwhile, on the Coast, Norves' Cans got two goals from Todd Semeniuk and solid goalkeeping from Colin Ramsden on the way to a 7-3 victory over Vancouver Blue Hawks Wednesday night.

Devils in second-place after beating Panthers

Kamloops Red Devils moved into second-place in the Okanagan High School Basketball League with an 89-81 win over Vernon Panthers, Wednesday at VSSS.

Devils have eight points, two back of league-leading North Kamloops Saints. Panthers have six points.

SCORED 36
Mike Gordon led the Devils with 36 points while Kyle Wood dropped in 12.

Page and Dale Olson were the offensive leaders for Panthers with 23 points apiece. Pat Paul scored 12 points for the home team while Dale Datoe and Larry Ivus sunk 10 each.

Olson and Page were the best men on the boards with 13 and 10 rebounds respectively.

Devils held a 25-23 edge after the first-quarter, the teams were tied 49-49 at half-time, and Kamloops built a 76-63 lead after three quarters.

SHOT POORLY

In the third-quarter, Devils



JAN GUENTHER ... 14 points

employed an effective zone defence. Vernon's outside shooting was poor, allowing Devils to sag on defence and dominate the boards.

Panthers' Coach Jack Yamaoka said the third-quarter killed his club. "If we'd been shooting well from the outside, the zone wouldn't have worked against us," he said. "Also, we weren't getting much movement under their hoop."

Panthers host Salmon Arm Gulls on Friday, at 8:30 p.m. Meanwhile, Vernon Royals improved their won-lost record to 2-6 with a 64-43 win over Kamloops Red Angels.

EVERY ONE SCORED
All nine Vernon players figured in the scoring. Jan Guenther led Royals with 14 points while Lori Elliott scored 10 and Diane Scheil added nine.

"We played a tremendous two-way game," said Royals Coach Ray Kimoto. "I'm particularly pleased with our

defence. Holding Angels below 45 points was quite a feat."

Royals host Salmon Arm Jewels on Friday, at 7 p.m.

NOVELTY GAME

In a novelty game, Vernon Pumas take on California Cuties tonight, at 7:30 p.m., at VSSS.

Cuties are six men, who play dressed as women. In 1980, the touring team won 115 games and lost 10.

Pumas, Vernon's 'B' team, will face the likes of 6'4" Dottie Drabble.

Admission is \$3 per person.

CALIFORNIA CUTIES BASKETBALL TEAM



SPORTS BRIEFS

Local skiers enter cup race

Four Vernon Ski Club members will compete in a B.C. Cup giant slalom race this weekend. Scott Woodman, Rob Boyd, Mitch Ferguson, and Mike Rorster are entered in the meet at Blackcomb Ski Area, Woodward.

Woodman on a slalom race last weekend at Whitewater Ski Area, near Nelson.

HAWKS WIN

Hawks strengthened their hold on first-place in the Vernon Men's Indoor Soccer League with a 3-1 win over Eagles on Wednesday night at Kall Jr. Secondary School. In other games, Blackcaps tied Rangers 1-1 and Roadrunners edged Wanderers 4-3. Hawks held a four-point lead over second-place Rangers and Roadrunners.

GAMES CHANGED

Vernon Major Women's Basketball League games scheduled tonight, at VSSS, have been postponed to next Tuesday. The VSSS gym is being used tonight for a novelty basketball game involving California Cuties.

WINTER GAMES

Statistics released this week show 2,375 athletes are expected to take part in the B.C. Winter Games, from March 5-8, in Prince George. About 300 competitors from the Thompson-Okanagan zone are entered. To date, 54 Vernon-area athletes have qualified for the Games.

SPIEL STARTS

The 27th annual Plumbers' Bonselpiel gets under way tonight, at 5 p.m., when Crest Mechanicals of Vancouver

meets Botling and Associates of Prince George for the Hytec Manufacturing Challenge Trophy. First full draw is scheduled Friday, at 3 a.m. Opening ceremonies will take place following that draw, at 8:5 a.m.

INJURES HIS EYE

NEW YORK (AP) - Centre Walter Tkaczuk of New York Rangers, who is suffering retinitis of the right eye, may have played his last National Hockey League game. The 33-year-old veteran has partially lost his sight in the eye after being hit by a deflected puck shot by Larry Murphy in a game Feb. 2 against Los Angeles Kings.

LEAFSGE; SEDLBAUER

TORONTO (CP) - Toronto Maple Leafs acquired left winger Ron Sedlbauer from Chicago Black Hawks for an undisclosed amount of cash. Purch Inlatch, general manager of the Leafs, said Wednesday, Sedlbauer, No. 1 National Hockey League draft choice of Vancouver in 1974, scored 40 goals for the Canucks in the 1978-79 season. The following season he was traded to Chicago. In 39 games with the Hawks this season, he has 12 goals and three assists.

WILL TRADE HOLLOWAY

OTTAWA (CP) - Condredge Holloway, Ottawa Rough Riders' No. 1 quarterback, is on the trading block, says coach George Brancato. Holloway, a seven-year veteran, is reported to have said he would rather play for another team.

LOOK BACK FIVE YEARS

FEBRUARY, 1976
Six Vernon bowling teams will be competing in Youth Bowling Congress zone playoffs this month. Zone champions will advance to the provincial finals March 13, with the national final in Repr-I april 23 to 25.

FEBRUARY, 1976
Kelowna Buckaroos appear to have Vernon Vikings' number. Third-place Kelowna handed league-leading Vikings a 2-1 loss Tuesday in Kelowna. It was the Bucks' fourth consecutive win over Vernon.

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The canopies will be selling for \$800.00 and \$850.00. With these proceeds you will enable these children to attend the CJ '81 Jamboree in Alberta. The Ventures will also be selling 60, 1/2 ton truck loads of firewood, (Fur, Spruce and Pine) cut and split at \$40.00 per truck load.

The Ventures would like to extend their sincere thanks to Kenkraft Sales Ltd., Crown Zellerbach, and Windsor Plywood for making this project possible.

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