

Season ends for Lakers

The 1981-82 B.C. Junior Hockey League season ended mercifully last weekend for Vernon Lakers when they were hammered 5-1 by Kelowna Buckaroos, in Kelowna.

After an encouraging start, Lakers finished the season with a 25-game winless streak, extending back to mid-December.

Early in the season, Vernon was challenging Kelowna for second place. As late as mid-January, Lakers were within striking distance of third-place Revelstoke Rockets. And until two losses last week to Merritt Centennials were in contention for the fourth, and final, playoff berth.

What happened? "A combination of things killed us," said Lakers' Coach Gord MacBeth. "It wasn't any one or two things."

MacBeth hit the nail on the head: The team's problems ranged from lack of intensity on the ice to confusion at the executive level.

NO LEADERSHIP

Veterans who were expected to provide leadership for younger players, were a disappointment. None of the nine players with previous junior 'A' experience, emerged as team leaders.

A forward line, with captain Dean Hascari between Richie Odomie and Jeff Armitage, was expected to produce three, 30 or 40 goal scorers. None of them hit the 30 plateau.

On defence, Darcy Lepine was named to the interior Division all-star squad for the second consecutive year. But, like most of his teammates, Lepine was inconsistent.

Best of the rookies were centre Rob Kossan and goalie Shawn Oswald. Kossan was team scorer on the club and the team's other all-star.

Oswald, who handled the bulk of Lakers' remaining duties until Dale Woods arrived in December, has the potential to be an outstanding junior 'A' netminder.

SOME RESENTMENT

MacBeth often justified his team's losses by saying he didn't have enough talented players. That criticism caused resentment and dissent among some players.

It also opened the door for critics, including General Manager Vern Dye, who said, "MacBeth picked the team... he had complete say who made the club."

Rumors circulated for two months that MacBeth was going to be fired, or resign. There were meetings between players and executive members, the 12 directors became divided into two groups, and director Brent Nolan resigned.

MacBeth lasted the season, but Dye didn't. The directors voted last month, to abolish the post of general manager because it had no authority. Dye remained as a director.

FUTURE UNCERTAIN

Dye's future with the club is uncertain. MacBeth admits he probably won't be back, at least three directors are reportedly ready to resign, and the team lost a considerable amount of money.

Most of the internal problems could have been avoided if Lakers had lost a winner. But, there was little nucleus to build around, and the parent Kamloops Oilers, who are in little assistance.

Oilers have promised more help next season and Lakers did have some promising youngsters. But, like so many times in the past, the BCHL season has ended with Vernon's franchise in tatters.

Lakers' President Al Thomas promised the team will be back next year, but they have a lot of work to do before training camp opens in September.

The executive, general manager, and coaching positions must be stabilized or immediately so player recruitment can start and Oilers' faith in its affiliate can be restored.

B.C. HIGH SCHOOL wrestling champion, Greg Edgelow demonstrates a few of his

wrestling moves on team-mate Ram Randhawa. Edgelow won his provincial

championship in the 74 kilogram weight division in Kamloops, last Saturday. He

will attempt to make the B.C. wrestling team at the qualifying rounds, March 13, at Regina.

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HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLING

Edgelow is champion

By GORD SMILEY

Daily News Sports

Vernon finished fifth in B.C. as a team in last weekend's B.C. High School Wrestling Championships in Kamloops.

Of the 11 Vernon wrestlers competing, nine of them came back with placings, however, one wrestler came home a B.C. champion.

Greg Edgelow, 18, wrestling in the 74 kg weight class, defeated

Twinder Dillon of British Columbia to become the first B.C. high school champion from Vernon.

Other Vernon wrestlers were Kevin Banks who placed third in B.C. in the 45 kg weight division, which was the highest placing by a junior high student from Vernon.

Barry Dennis lost a heart-breaker, by one point, to place fourth in B.C. at 54 kg weight class. Grayson Moran also

finished fourth in the 51 kg weight division.

Steve Diniwili, Randy Merritt, Norm Tyler and other wrestlers kept his undefeated record alive and become the first B.C. high school champion from Vernon.

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Dillon, he was behind on points, in the early going.

POSITIVE ATTITUDE

"I just said to myself that I have to win this, I'm not going to lose," said Edgelow. "You have to go into a match with the feeling that you know you're going to win, not that you think you're going to win or want to win, but that you know you're going to win."

Ritchie said Edgelow is the type of wrestler that doesn't have that many moves, but the ones he executes are among the best in the business.

"I know I haven't learned that many moves, but the ones I have, I've learned well," said Edgelow. "I'm also learning not to get myself into situations that I can't correct."

Not only has Edgelow satisfied Ritchie he has impressed the people at Simon Fraser who have offered Edgelow a scholarship.

Simon Fraser has talked about money, but haven't said how much," said Edgelow. "I'm also thinking of visiting at a university in the U.S."

Ritchie said four workouts per week, for two hours at a time, really isn't enough for Edgelow.

"He really is in his infancy as far as wrestling is concerned. At university he'll be able to wrestle every day plus he'll get some of the best coaching in Canada," said Ritchie. "I've been talking to some of the coaches at Simon Fraser and they just want to make sure he doesn't pick up any bad habits; so they're able to work with him a little better."

SETHS GOAL

There is university. Edgelow said his next goal is to make the Olympic team.

"In university that is your goal, to wrestle in the Olympics. I'll still wrestle for B.C. team and from there I'd like to make the Canadian Junior Team."

Edgelow has only been wrestling for three full years, but in that time has learned to be a winner.

"For three years he's worked very hard, not just at practice but on his own too," said Ritchie. "He's really dedicated to the sport and certainly his mental outlook on things helps out. He just won't put up with loss."

It was last year at a Simon Fraser University tournament that Edgelow found out he didn't like to lose.

"He didn't do as well as he wanted to," said Ritchie. "But from our team he had very few losses, but he (Edgelow) wasn't satisfied with that," said Ritchie. "Some people might be satisfied with a fourth, but he wasn't. He wanted to be the best."

In Edgelow's final match with

wrestles for the team which he said has made a lot of improvement since the beginning of the year.

"As a team, we're doing a lot better than the start of the year, we're progressing and it's nice to see," he said.

Ritchie said 50-60 boys tried out for the team at the beginning

of the year. That number has been reduced to the present 10 wrestlers.

"It's come down to the guys that are successful. The juvenile championships are scheduled March 19-21, in Kelowna."

Going to the B.C. Winter Games in Trail, March 4-7, will be Drew Perry, Moran, Banks, Dmytrie, Dennis, Meier, and Randhawa.

Also with an opportunity to make the B.C. team are Banks,

Dmytrie and Dennis. Qualifying begins March 13, at Simon Fraser. The juvenile championships are scheduled March 19-21, in Kelowna.

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