

DECISION EXPECTED SOON

Two candidates for coach

By GORD SMILEY

Daily News Sports
Ray (Dick) Willmet has narrowed the field down to two candidates for coach of this year's version of the Vernon Lakers, the B.C. Junior Hockey League.

Willmet has been without a coach since he purchased the team two months ago from the 12 directors, which owned the club.

Willmet had earlier said he would make an announcement concerning the hiring of a coach by the end of May, then moved the date to June 1 and now said he'd hold a press conference on June 2 or Tuesday where he will announce his coach and general manager. Former Vernon Lakers GM, Vern Dye, is expected to be named Willmet's general manager.

"I still have to interview one or two possible coaches. I want to make sure the right decision is made, so we're taking our time," said Willmet.

Also hoping the right decision is made is Kamloops Oilers' General

Manager Harvey Roy. Kamloops is the

ner affiliate to the Lakers.

"The number one priority right now is getting a hockey man into the community of Vernon," said Roy. "Not only does he have to coach, but he has to be able to market the team as well."

Roy said he didn't like last year's situation where 12 directors owned the club.

"You can't run a junior hockey team with 12 guys making decisions all the time. I'm sure all 12 of them meant well, but there were too many fingers in the soup and not enough was accomplished. With Ray the sole owner now, the situation has been rectified."

GOOD PROSPECTS
Willmet has been reluctant to say anything about Lakers scouting other than "we've got some good prospects," but Roy was able to expand.

"We hope that being affiliated with the Lakers this year, we'll be able to send them 12 quality hockey players in the 16-17 age bracket," said Roy. "Hopefully the balance of the lineup

can be made up of 18-19-year-olds."

As well as the Oilers sending players to Vernon, Roy said Kamloops is looking for a few of the Lakers from last year to make the jump to tier one. Roy expressed interest in re-signing Darcy Lepine, forward Heimo Brandstetter and goaltender Shawn Oswald, who played with Kamloops towards the end of last season.

"We feel we'll have pretty good depth all the way around, but we could be pretty weak on the right side, that's our only problem," said Roy.

The B.C.J.H.L. was thrown into turmoil last month when Chris Parker, owner of defending B.C.J.H.L. champion Pentiction Knights wanted to tie a tier one franchise into Kelowna.

Because of Parker's action, the Pentiction franchise has been suspended from the B.C.J.H.L. and Parker has resigned as league vice-president. The future of Pentiction is expected to be on the agenda at the B.C.J.H.L. league meeting Saturday, but Roy said he doesn't think the WHL franchise can make it in Kelowna.

"The last thing I heard was North (Wayne, owner of Kelowna Buckaroos of B.C.J.H.L.) was going to operate whether there was a WHL team in Kelowna or not," said Roy. "The whole thing has sort of died down and I don't think Parker will be able to make a go of it."

LAST PLACE
If Pentiction was not in the league, it would make things easier for the Lakers who finished with nine wins last season, ended the year riding a 22-game winless streak, and was last in the Interior Division.

"There's no question it's a big job to rebuild the team, but getting the right coach is a step in the right direction," said Roy.

Because of Lakers dismal season, the fans stayed away in droves, but Roy is optimistic for the upcoming year.

"If the team can sell a minimum of 300 season tickets, with one third of the home games promoted with special events, then they will really improve the situation," said Roy.

Sports

Editor—DON KENDALL

SPORTS BRIEFS

OK Corral Routs Roosters

OK Corral's A's dumped Roosters 10-2 in North Okanagan Sloppish League play Wednesday night. The loss snapped Roosters' win streak at seven games.

In other action, Armadillos dumped Sun Valley Astros 11-4, Carling Hit-Test edged Lake Country Sports 13-12, and Arrowhead Breakers trounced Labatt's Budweisers 17-7.

Hall of Fame

Official opening of the Okanagan Sports Hall of Fame, located in Vernon's Centennial Park, will be Aug. 1, at 2 p.m.

The selection committee has made 15 initial selections of athletes, teams and outsiders to the hall. Many of the inductees, along with special guests, will be on hand for the opening. Following this year, up to five inductees will be added annually. It will be the only outdoor facility of its kind in Western Canada.

Women's slownotch

In Women's Slownotch League action Wednesday, Rowdie Royals whipped Women's Goal-tion 11-1. Oak Pillars Masters trounced Park Drive 29-3, Lake Country Sports bombed Corbett's Crew 3-4. Kall Tire demolished Village Green Hit-Testers 13-10. M.L. and M.L. won Sweet Talkers 10-7, Golden Crown dumped Prejudices 14-2. Chimes blasted Canadians 24-2, and Sidersiders crushed Wind-ward 10-13.

Track meet

At the Okanagan, from 17 schools, are competing in the District 12 Elementary Track and Field Meet today, in Polson Park.

Close game

Club 2529 played Medi Cats 12-11 in Women's Intermediate 'B' Fastpitch League action Tuesday night.

Hosts Kelowna

Coastal team Hotel hosts Kelowna Zahrakis in Okanagan Women's Fastpitch League action Tuesday night.

Wins race

HASTINGS Mieh. (AP) — Frances Johnson, the mother of Indianapolis 500 winner Gordon Johncock, slipped into a coma and died without knowing her son would win Sunday's automobile race. Mrs. Johnson, 77, died Monday.

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Trophy presentations take place at 2:30 p.m.

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