

CENTS HOST LAKERS

Doucette finds success in Vernon

By GORD SMILEY
Daily News Sports

Last year at this time Glen Doucette didn't even know Vernon had a junior A hockey team.

He was playing junior B hockey in Invermere after having left the camp of the Calgary Wranglers, of the Western Hockey League. Again this year, Doucette tried out for the Wranglers, but the cowpoke city and Doucette didn't get along, so via word of mouth he ended up in Vernon.

By the time Doucette got to Vernon, his brother Brent had already been here for two weeks, trying out for the Lakers, of the B.C. Junior Hockey League.

FASTLINE

Since then, Glen, 18, and Brent, 19, along with Gord Simpson on the right side have made up one of the fastest skating lines in the BCJHL.

Doucette, a fluid skating centreman handles the puck as if it's tied to his stick, except when he's passing to his teammates.

Doucette has eight goals this year and is one of the main reasons why Lakers are enjoying their finest season in several years. Lakers are 7-5 and will try to improve that mark when they travel to Merritt, tonight, to take on the Centennials.

Lakers are home Friday for an 8 p.m. start with Shuswap Totems, from Salmon Arm, then travel to Penticton the following day to take on the Knights. Finally, Sunday, the team is back home for a return visit from Knights.

WON THREE

Lakers are coming off a successful four-game weekend, when they won three games. Doucette said he's hoping for the same kind of weekend this time around.

"We've got something to get back at them (Merritt) for," said Doucette. "When they were here we practically gave the game to them, it'll be a different story this time around."

However, Doucette said he doesn't take any team lightly, even the last place Centennials.

"They're not as bad as everybody figures they are," said Doucette. "They actually have not a bad club."

Next on the list is Shuswap and then comes



GLEN DOUCETTE
... eight goals

the big test, back-to-back games with Penticton, defending BCJHL champions.

The last time the two clubs met, Penticton won 8-5, but Doucette said Lakers have improved since then and have the players to beat Penticton.

A TEST

"It's quite the test, we'd really like to get by Penticton," he said. "They're one of the biggest teams in the league and a lot of clubs get intimidated by that. We can handle just about anything, we can be pretty rugged ourselves."

However, looking ahead to Penticton is two games away, too far away for

Doucette to be worried about it.

"I always look at it as a game at a time," he said. "Then once the game is on, I start looking at it at a period at a time and then finally at a shift at a time."

The 5'9", 175-pound centre began skating later than most hockey players, at 11-years-old. Through hard work he has become one of the finest skaters to ever wear a Vernon Lakers' uniform.

SMALL TOWN

"We were in a small town and didn't have artificial ice until I was 11," he said. "I didn't really practice more than anyone, but I've always tried to do my best at anything I do."

Should Doucette and the rest of the Lakers continue to do their best, a BCJHL title might not be that far away.

"I think we can give it a good shot, come playoff time we'll be a real contender," said Doucette. "I think we have the capability, we definitely have a lot of talent on the team, it's just a matter of getting ourselves mentally prepared."

Doucette still hasn't given up on the idea of playing tier one and said he's tossed around the idea of playing university hockey. However, he still has to finish half of his grade 12, something he's already started by taking correspondence courses.

"I get to play hockey and go to school at the same time, it's great."

Simpson leads curling league

Dave Simpson (Sun Valley Sports) skips the only undefeated rink in the Pacific Western Airlines Super Curling League.

Simpson stretched his winning streak to four games, Wednesday, with a 7-4 win over Jason Paul (Sutherland Bakery), at the Vernon Curling Club. Simpson earned \$6,000 for his second place finish in the Labatts Crown of Curling, which ended Monday, in Kamloops.

LAFACE WINS

In other games Wednesday, Wayne Laface edged Randy Brown (M and K Ready Mix) 8-7, Herb Van Grootel (National Hotel) nipped Barry Amies (Baron Insurance) 7-6, and Ron Houston (Hong Kong Village) defeated Larry Wynn (RJ's Chicken and Ribs) 8-5.

At Kelowna, Barry Smith (Okanagan Reinforcing) edged Terry Vanisloo (Kelowna Toyota) 6-5, Bert Gretzinger (Labatts) edged Doug Hannan (Cenoka Disposal) 6-5 in an extra end, Brian Scott (Dairy Queen) doubled Bob Harris 8-4, and Dave Lovdahl dumped Rick Pushor (MW Office Supplies) 9-4.