

NEW COACH APPOINTED

Totems fire Shykora

By JIM JUDD Daily News Sports

Salmon Arm Shuswap Totems announced the outright release of head coach Terry Shykora and the appointment of assistant coach Alvin Backus as replacement for the coaching position.

The news came Wednesday from Gord Mackintosh, general manager of the Totems.

Mackintosh said, "We thought we needed to make a change for the betterment of the team. We've played at the same level since about November now, having about a .500 record or less at times. We think we have the talent to go farther that what we've done so far and therefore we felt a coaching change was necessary to achieve the results we wanted."

Shykora was less certain about the club's potential saying, "I think they (management) are setting their expectations too high . . . we only have two or three experienced players on the team.

"I'll admit that in the last while we haven't played up to our potential, beating Penticton then losing to Merritt, but what they don't realize is that being a new franchise and having to pick up players nobody else wanted, we don't have the depth that the other clubs have."

Mackintosh, meanwhile, felt that Backus would make a better coach because of his closer ties with the



TERRY SHYKORA
... loses job

players.

"He (Backus) has an excellent rapport with the players and he's a good disciplinarian."

Backus was not available for comment at press time. Shykora thought perhaps the players would not be so quick to switch their allegiance.

"What happens will depend on how the players take it (coaching change). If they're happy maybe they will play better.

Totems currently holding down fourth spot in the BC-JHL Interior Division with a record of 24 wins, 26 losses and one tie. They trail Vernon Lakers, Kelowna Buckaroos, and Penticton Knights. They have records of three wins five losses against Vernon and Kelowna, but have five wins and two losses against the Knights this season.

Mackintosh said, "We feel we can pull it together in the next seven games and make a good show for ourselves in the playoffs."

Vernon travels to Revelstoke, tonight, for its final meeting of the season with Rockets. Lakers lead the Interior Division with 59 points, one more than Kelowna and Penticton.

In Wednesday's lone BCJHL game, New Westminster Royals hammered visiting Cowichan Capitals 19-2.