

LAKERS AXE COACH

By JIM JUDD

Daily News Sports

Chuck Tapp has been relieved of his duties as head coach of Vernon lakers, effective immediately, according to Carl Enemark, general manager of the club.

According to Enemark, there were a number of reasons for Tapp's dismissal.

"I was very unhappy with the team's progress," said Enemark this morning. "We've picked up 85 penalties in the first three games and we felt that we needed more discipline from the coach."

"We also felt that a coach living in Kelowna and coaching a team in Vernon wasn't able to keep in direct touch with the players. That could have possibly led to the trouble."

"I'm not knocking the man's coaching ability but you can imagine travelling 35 miles back and forth for a game and practices. We had to discuss important things and often couldn't get him on the phone... they're little things but they're important to a hockey club."

Tapp had been with Lakers until early November in their 1982-83 campaign, filling a position as assistant coach to Murray Lawrence before accepting a position as assistant coach with Kelowna Wings, of the Western Hockey League. He had coached Lakers through just three regular season games before the decision was made.

"I know he (Tapp) felt it was a little premature but we felt the sooner a decision like this was made, the better off we'd be," Enemark said. "We've made the decision now and we'll have to live with it."

"I felt bad about letting him (Tapp) go but it was just a decision for the club. I wish him well, but it just didn't work out for us."

Management does not plan to make a hasty decision about a replacement for Tapp,



CARL ENEMARK
... tough decision



MIKE ENEMARK
... behind bench

however, Lakers have a game this Friday.

"As you're aware, even if we got a new coach tomorrow he'd have to be familiar with the boys and the methods we've previously used before he could properly coach the team," said Enemark.

Until a replacement is signed, Lakers will go with what they have at their disposal according to Enemark. What this means is that Enemark will fill an active position as assistant coach while son Mike will take over as interim head coach.

"Mike will handle practices, like he's already done, and will be behind the bench during games," Enemark said.

TAPP UPSET ABOUT FIRING

By DON KENDALL

Daily News
Sports Editor

Chuck Tapp was surprised and disappointed when he was fired, Monday, as coach of the Vernon Lakers.

"We're only three games into the season," Tapp said. "I would have liked longer to prove myself and the team."

Tapp came to Lakers last season, as an assistant coach, under Murray Lawrence. He left Vernon in November to take an assistant's post with Kelowna Wings, of the WHL. He returned to Lakers as head coach in July when the team was sold and Lawrence went to Revelstoke Rangers as coach and general manager.

Tapp said, "I don't feel the firing was justified. We weren't even down to our final 19 players yet."

Lakers have won two of their first three league games, how-



CHUCK TAPP
... surprised

mark for Tapp's dismissal.

"The 85 penalties in three games isn't entirely our players' fault," Tapp said. The league is using rookie referees and they are really clamping down."

Tapp feels one of the reasons for his firing was that Enemark wants his son, Mike, behind the bench. Mike took over as an assistant coach this season after starring with lakers during the 1982-83 campaign.

"If Carl thinks he is going to get discipline from Mike, who played with these guys last year, he is wrong," Tapp said. "I know I'm not the only one who is shocked. (Defenceman Gavin) Shuya phoned me Monday night and said he couldn't believe it."

As yet, Tapp has no plans, but said he would like to remain involved with hockey, in some capacity.

ever, they have been assessed 85 penalties in those outings. The high penalty total and lack of discipline were two reasons cited by co-owner and General manager Carl Ene-

KENDALL'S KORNER

Local boys playing junior



Vernon Minor Hockey Association teams have won their share of hardware.

In addition to numerous Okanagan titles, Vernon Pee Wee Reps captured the B.C. championship and Vernon Juvenile Reps won the Western Canada title in 1980.

However, only a minority of local minor hockey graduates have gone on to play tier two junior A hockey ... and even less have reached tier one junior. Just a couple, Eddie Johnstone and Ken Holland, have gone on to make their living in pro hockey.

Other than Bob Wensley, who spent the 1981-82 season with Kamloops Oilers, of the WHL, it has been almost a decade since a local player performed regularly in tier one. Wensley was released by Oilers last year and wound up with Vernon lakers, of the B.C. Junior Hockey League.

Johnstone (1972), Holland (1974), and Gary Gilchrist (1975) went to Medicine Hat Tigers; Wayne Dye (1973) starred with New Westminster Bruins; and Dean Solheim (1975) played two seasons with Lethbridge Broncos.

COLLEGE ROUTE

A few others took the college route. After helping Vernon juveniles win the Western Canada title, Glen Fester spent one season with Merritt Centennials, of the BCJHL, and landed a scholarship at university of North Dakota.

Kevin Poirier, also a member of the championship juvenile team, played with Abbotsford Flyers, of the BCJHL, who went to the Canadian finals last year. Poirier is now attending college in San Diego, on a scholarship.

Others, including Marty Stein and Tom Ouchi, played for UBC Thunderbirds.

So, while minor hockey has thrived in Vernon, only a handful of local players have been able to further their careers.

Vernon's strong development system starts paying dividends for junior teams.

WITH LAKERS

Four Vernon products are back for their second season with the Lakers: Bob Wensley, Nick Kapicki, Kevin Thorlakson, and Greg Kowal. Wensley's younger brother, Dave, joined Vernon this year after playing with Richmond Sockeyes, of the BCJHL, in 1982-83.

Eight other local players have earned spots with various junior teams ... and several others just missed.

Among the top prospects is 16-year-old Brent Gilchrist, who is with Kelowna Wings, of the WHL. Gilchrist enhanced his chances of sticking with the Wings by scoring a goal last Saturday during an exhibition loss to Portland Winter Hawks.

Speaking of Portland, another 16-year-old, Jeff Finley, has caught the eye of General manager Brian Shaw. Winter Hawks are expected to assign Finley to Summerland Buckaroos, of the BCJHL, for further seasoning before giving him a prolonged tryout in the WHL.

IN KAMLOOPS

Rudy Poeschek, who started playing minor hockey in Vernon before moving to Northern B.C., is with Kamloops Oilers, of the WHL. The 17-year-old defenceman is getting a good look with the Wings, but if he doesn't stick, he is certain to find a place in the BCJHL, probably with Lakers.

Vernon has two juvenile graduates, Rob Hocken and Kelly Rosehill; and two midget graduates, Chris Saunders and Bruce Major; on the roster. Major has been particularly impressive with three goals, in three games.

Another 16-year-old who has found a spot in the BCJHL is forward Henry Reimer, who is with Shuswap Totems. Reimer who missed the entire 1982-83 campaign with a back injury has been hit by the injury bug again and is currently sidelined with a groin injury.

At least another 10 local players were given long looks at junior training camps and are expected to move up next season.