

Vernon defenceman awarded scholarship

By JIM JUDD
Daily News Sports

Ken MacKenzie, high-scoring defenceman with Vernon Lakers of the BCJHL for the past two seasons, has become the first product of the Vernon junior hockey system to accept a scholarship with an American university.

MacKenzie recently accepted an offer from University of Wisconsin whose Badgers have been national champions for three of the past seven seasons.

The scholarship came about as a result of Wisconsin scouts' reports over the past season in which Lakers finished a

close second during regular season play but bowed out in six games to Summerland Buckaroos during the league quarter-final series. Considering Badgers can only get three instead of four years service out of the local blueliner, those reports must have been very favorable.

"Once you play past your 20th birthday, you lose one year of eligibility," MacKenzie said. "That's why Rod Schluter (Penticton Knights) never played in the Langley series last spring."

Although MacKenzie's fourth year will not be spent with the University of Wisconsin club, the scholarship plan is still full term.

"It's a four-year deal but in my fourth year I've got the option of coming back to UBC or going to dental school in Milwaukee," said the former BCJHL star who set a single-season assist mark for defencemen in the league when he collected 79 assists and 102 points.

MacKenzie is enrolled in

the pre-dental program at Wisconsin.

Although the Kelowna resident's future seems secure, there is the added possibility of a professional career since Badgers have been responsible for placing a dozen or more players in NHL ranks during recent years. Some of those players include Pat Flatley of New York Islanders and the Canadian Olympic Team fame; Chris Chelios, defenceman with Montreal; Mike Eaves, of Calgary Flames; and Brian Engblom, of Los Angeles Kings.

For the most part, MacKenzie is delighted to have the opportunity of studying at a top-ranked university.

"I'm really looking forward, it's got a good academic record," MacKenzie said.

Meanwhile, Vernon Lakers coaching staff and management are equally delighted with the good fortunes of MacKenzie since it speaks well of their system and can add



KEN MacKENZIE
... to Wisconsin

new dimensions to the club.

"We're pleased for Ken, it's a start for us," said Lakers' Coach Mike Enemark. "One of our goals is establishing contacts with U.S. colleges and it will help us recruit players who want to further their educations."

At least one other Vernon player, Dave Wensley, has a possibility of obtaining a scholarship.

Herzig defeats favorite

A new generation of Vernon racquetball players dominated the Grand Re-opening Tournament last weekend at