

BCJHL ALL-STARS IN VERNON

Coast favored in tonight's game

By JIM JUDD
Daily News Sports

From first reports the Interior Division All-star squad will enter tonight's game against Coastal Division All-stars as the underdogs, but if statistics are a reliable source, quite the opposite will be true.

Based on past records which indicate a considerable edge in favor of the Coastal Division teams, and a number of predictions from knowledgeable people in the Interior, the Coast is definitely favored for the classic matchup.

The game gets under way at 8 p.m. at Vernon Civic Arena with Gordie Howe in attendance as the guest of honor.

None of the people polled for their opinions on tonight's game indicated a defensive battle, which means fans can expect a wide-open and highly entertaining contest.

"We haven't had too many defensive struggles yet so I don't know why it would change overnight," said Muzz McPherson, coach of Coastal Division leading Burnaby Bluehawks and the mentor for the Coastal squad tonight.

McPherson has had a lengthy and colorful career in junior hockey having been affiliated with clubs in a half dozen different junior leagues across the country.

McPherson has seven of the Coastal Division's top 12 scorers at his disposal including league-leading Bob Ginetti, who has

101 points, Mitch Poulin and Dale Brisco of Nanaimo Clippers, Derrick Ruppel of Langley, Mike O'Brien, of Burnaby, Bruce Major of Richmond, and Paul Bifano of Burnaby.

Defensively, the Interior should be a bit stronger than the Coast with their overall goals against record being better while personal goaltending records are slightly better for both Penticton's Derrick Pizzey and Summerland's Dean Garnett.

However, the Interior Division team will boast 10 of its top 12 scorers in the line-up tonight. The combined goal-scoring of these 10 players gives Interior a 60-goal edge over the Coast.

However, in addition to the top scorers, the Interior also has Nick Kapicki and Greg Kowal who have more than 50 goals scored between them but who also are perhaps the top two checking forwards in the league. Kapicki is also a top playmaker and the appearance of the two Vernon natives could be the deciding edge in tonight's game.

Meanwhile, others don't see the statistical advantages of the Interior in the same light of day.

"The Coastal Division will probably win by at least two goals," predicted former lakers' coach Mike Enemark, who will also serve as color man on the broadcast of tonight's game.

"It's going to be a high scoring game and it's going to be close," suggested Murray Lawrence, coach of Revelstoke

Rangers and another former Vernon coach. "I think the Interior will win because they'll be the best checking team."

"I'll predict a close game," offered Chuck Tapp, also a former Vernon coach and now head coach for Merritt Centennials. "Looking over the roster for the Coast indicates that they might be quicker, but then it's a small rink too."

"I think the Coast has a little more strength right through but I'd say it's going to be a pretty tight hockey game," said Nick Iannone, assistant coach of Interior Division leading Penticton Knights. "Probably the Coast will win by a couple of goals . . . I really think they have a little more depth but then we (Interior) could win it if we play well."

Coaches for the Interior squad will include Rick Kozuback, of Penticton Knights, and Vernon's Don Moores.

Kozuback's record is 29 wins and four losses with his club this season while Moore's record is an equally impressive 10 wins, one loss and one tie since taking over Lakers in late-November.

However, coaches will only make marginal differences at this level of play, or so thinks McPherson.

"With what we have at our disposal, it doesn't take much of a genius to coach," quipped McPherson. "There's no question we have a lot of talent . . . you'll be seeing two fine hockey clubs."