

Wensley wants crack at professional hockey

SPORTS BRIEFS

Keski-Salmi places fourth

Reino Keski-Salmi, of Salmon Arm, placed fourth in the 15 kilometre race, Tuesday, at the Canadian Senior Cross-country Ski Championships at Mont-St-Anne, Que. For Keski-Salmi, 27, it was his second consecutive fourth place performance at the championships. He was timed in 39 minutes, 25.2 seconds. First place Pierre Harvey, of Stoneyham, Que., was clocked in 37:22.9.

Slowpitch league meets

Kokanee Men's Slowpitch League will hold a general meeting Thursday, at 7:30 p.m., in the offices of Thorne-Riddell on 32nd Street. All team representatives are urged to attend.

Licence deadline extended

The expiry date for all 1984-1985 hunting and angling licences has been extended for one month — licences due to expire on March 31, will not expire until April 30, 1985. Peter Kirby, Licence and Permits Officer with the Ministry of Environment, said that a major revision of the province's sport licensing system was completed late in the year with the result that the new licence forms may not be forwarded to all licence issuers by March 31. To ensure that all licence forms are available to all hunters and fishermen at the same time and to ensure that all current licence holders have a valid permit during any interim period when new licences are unavailable, the present 1984-1985 licences have been validated for one more month. The licence changes will reduce the number of licence forms from 38 to 16, mainly by combining several features on a single form. Cost savings from this move are projected to amount to \$10,000.

Skating sessions end

The final public skating session of the season, at the Priest Valley Arena, was scheduled today. The last adult skating session is Thursday, from 9:30 to 11 a.m., and the final shiny hockey game will be played Friday, from 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

Pitching clinic planned

A slowpitch pitching clinic, being organized by the Greater Vernon Softball Association, will be held April 27, not April 20 as originally announced. The clinic will run from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Kin Race Track Park. Cost is \$5 per person. Entries are now being accepted at the North Okanagan Regional District Office, on 35th Avenue.

Public swimming

Public swimming is scheduled April 1-4, from 1:30 to 4 p.m., in the Vernon Recreation Complex pool. Free swim lessons, up to the Maroon level, will also be available April 1-4. For further information phone 545-6035.

Leafs named to team

TORONTO (CP) — Right winger Rick Vaive and left wingers John Anderson and Greg Terrier of Toronto Maple Leafs have been named to Team Canada for the world hockey championships next month in Prague. Hockey Canada chairman Alan Eagleson announced Tuesday.

The addition of the Leaf trio brings to eight the number of players who have been invited to try out for Team Canada from clubs that have been eliminated from post-season play in the National Hockey League.

On Monday, Eagleson announced that five members of Vancouver Canucks — defencemen Doug Lidster and Doug Halward and forwards Stan Smyl, Tony Tanti and Cam Neely — had been chosen for the club.

Blazers stop Lakers

At times it was more like a wrestling match than a basketball game but the result had Portland Trail Blazers pinning the first loss on Los Angeles Lakers in 11 National Basketball Association games.

The Blazers unleashed a tough defence to win 116-113 at home in overtime and record their first win against the Lakers all season. Portland, second place in the Pacific Division, trails the Lakers by 17 games.

In other games, it was: Milwaukee Bucks 107, Washington Bullets 96; Cleveland Cavaliers 112, New York Knicks 96; Dallas Mavericks 134, Golden State Warriors 107; Chicago Bulls 120, Indiana Pacers 119; Houston Rockets 115, Kansas City Kings 93; New Jersey Nets 109, Atlanta Hawks 108 in overtime; Denver Nuggets 104, Utah Jazz 89; and Detroit Pistons 119, Phoenix Suns 93.

Chiefs lead series

NELSON, B.C. (CP) — Dan Gerarden scored at 43:22 of the final period Tuesday to lift Spokane to a 4-3 win over Nelson. Maple Leafs and give the Chiefs a 2-1 lead in their best-of-seven Western International Hockey League final series.

Rozier is top player

NEW YORK (AP) — Jacksonville running back Mike Rozier, who rushed a league-record 38 times for 199 yards in the Bulls' 36-31 overtime victory over Orlando last Thursday night, was named Tuesday as the United States Football League's player of the week.

Rozier's rushing total was a personal high for the second-year pro from Nebraska and is the third-highest total in the brief history of the league. Rozier also scored four touchdowns — three rushing and one receiving — to tie another USFL record.

Dodgers thump Blue Jays

VEDO BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Pedro Guerrero tripled and doubled and Ken Landreaux doubled and singled to lead Los Angeles Dodgers' 16-hit attack in an 11-5 rout of Toronto Blue Jays in an exhibition baseball game Tuesday.

Pats win opener

REGINA (CP) — Doug Trapp's second goal of the night at 1:15 of overtime gave Regina Pats a 5-4 victory over Saskatoon Blades Tuesday and a 1-0 lead in their best-of-five Western Hockey League Eastern Division playoff series.

Ronning honored

CALGARY (CP) — Cliff Ronning of New Westminster Bruins, a 1984 draft choice by the National Hockey League St. Louis Blues, has been selected by a media panel as player of the year in the Western Hockey League's West Division.

Ronning, a five-foot-nine centre, led the league with 89 goals in the regular season and finished second in assists with 108. He will compete with an East Division player to be named later in voting by coaches for WHL player of the year.

Lettieri will play

VANCOUVER (CP) — Goalkeeper Tino Lettieri will play for Canada's national team April 2 against the United States in an exhibition game at B.C. Place Stadium. It was announced Tuesday.

Lettieri will be available because of a break in the schedule for Minnesota Strikers of the Major Indoor Soccer League.

By JIM JUDD
Daily News Sports

It has been a lengthy learning process... four years of junior hockey in Western Canada and then a recently-completed year of semi-professional hockey in Finland.

His education is now complete and Vernon native Bob Wensley, 21, is ready to go to work for a living. That only means one thing for Wensley — playing in the National Hockey League and thus fulfilling a life-long ambition.

Wensley has a lot to offer the NHL club interested in offering him a tryout. In Finland, toiling for Karhu-Kissat (Bear-Cats) of Helsinki in the Finnish First Division, Wensley worked on his passing and skating techniques, honing them to professional calibre. Coupled with a bullet-like wrist and slapshot, toughness, and size, the former junior star should be a marketable product in the hockey field.

Unlike his junior hockey days, including almost two full seasons with Vernon Lakers, Wensley carries nearly 200 pounds on his six foot frame, the result of a concentrated body-building effort over last winter in Helsinki. He's also kicked the smoking habit... a former two-pack-a-day slave.

But much more than these obvious qualities make Wensley desirable

for professional hockey. He's also matured, much like fine wine stored in an oak keg, and in this maturing process Wensley has lost the chip on his shoulder that hampered his junior career and almost cost him his opportunity to play in Finland.

"I learned to control my temper and take a lot of the slicking and so on that is part of their (Finns) game," explained Wensley. "I always knew my aggression was a weak part of my game."

However, it took a 10-game suspension levied by the Finnish hockey directors against Wensley to finally convince the burly right-winger that the Neaderthal North American hockey style was best left by the wayside if any advancement in his career was to take place.

With only 43 regular season games in their schedule, the 10 game penalty was a blow to his floundering career. "After the first few weeks my style was right out the door... I got all the penalty minutes in the first few games," he said.

Despite the inhospitable welcome to the Finnish Hockey League and the compounding difficulties of dealing with a new language, customs, and way of life, Wensley stuck it out, skating over the rough start to forge a new beginning for himself.

"I sort of took it one step at a time after that,"

he added. "I worked hard on everything I learned. I was struggling at first because I was trying too hard to play just like they did."

"I eventually got my confidence and that was the big thing... I did well after that."

Despite the heavy suspension and period of adjustment, Wensley managed to score 25 goals and added 12 assists for 27 points in just 33 games. He prefers not to think about the 120 penalty minutes he also picked up.

"That short season (33 games) is nothing compared to what we're used to over here," he explained. "I was really just getting going when the season ended."

Karhu-Kissat, one of the 12 teams in the Finnish First Division, failed to make the playoffs though with Wensley's help they finished in sixth place overall... their first as a hockey club.

The sixth place finish, though remarkable by some standards for a first-year team, didn't rest too well with Wensley who played each game with intensity and desire, but couldn't save the same for his Finnish teammates.

"I was really disappointed in their attitude," he said. "They seem afraid to better themselves by working a little harder or digging a little deeper when they need it. It was hard for



BOB WENSLEY
... good season

me to accept... for instance we'd get down by a goal and they would lose their drive to win. There was little in the way of team spirit and so I helped to keep them up from the bench and on the ice when I was playing."

Though he did learn much in the way of finessing the puck around the ice, Wensley scored the majority of his goals on sheer raw power... his drives from just over the blue line found their mark on many occasions in spite of excellent goaltending.

"The goaltending was really quite good, especially in close... it was a real plus for me to be able to cross the blue line and let one fly because they don't expect that sort of thing and it

often caught them off guard," Wensley explained. "However, that sort of thing was radically different than the Finns were used to because they like to pass the puck as much as possible to catch the goaltender out of position before they put it in the net."

But the learning process did eventually take place for Wensley and his new-found skills will aid him in his next step toward becoming a professional hockey player.

"I worked on my skating until I could keep up with the best of them," he said. "I worked on handling the puck, when to pass and when to skate with it."

"I was a real Canadian-style hockey player when I arrived. Their style is very technical, they stay out of the corners and use the pass more... they also have an extensive off-ice training program so I was a little behind them for the first while."

However, Wensley took up with an off-ice program of his own after a chance meeting with a California body-builder in Helsinki.

"It was great because he knew the language and customs and he also taught me a lot about weight training," he said.

With the help of that weight training as well as an improved diet and exercise program, Wensley went from 175 to nearly 200 pounds with hardly an inch of excess weight.

Of little concern, luckily enough, was the money Wensley played for although he did receive excellent fringe benefits such as free board and an apartment for himself. According to his own reports, he lived very well and was treated well, but didn't take home much money. However, as he also explained, he didn't go to Finland with the intention of getting financially wealthy. It was a wealth of a different sort he was after.

"I didn't go for the money I went for the experience," Wensley said. "Now I feel I'm mentally and physically ready for the NHL."

With the help of his father, Hand, and a few others, Wensley hopes to get a walk-on tryout with Vancouver Canucks next fall.

In the final analysis, Wensley also learned a great deal about things most of us tend to take for granted in this part of the world. He's glad he has the choice of being able to live where he desires and there's no doubt in his mind anymore just where that is.

"I took this country for granted when I left but I really appreciate it now," Wensley said. "I think I've really grown up a lot."

JUDD'S JOURNAL

Dark ages in Chicago

By JIM JUDD
Daily News Sports

The 19th Century is alive and well and still exists in the city of Chicago although baseball people and especially Chicago Cubs, would dearly like to usher in the 20th Century before another major league season comes and goes.

Cubs' home, Wrigley Field, is the last remaining major league ball park which doesn't have lights. Lights, of course, would make night baseball a reality at Wrigley and would also solve a lot of financial troubles for the Cubs' organization.

However, as was the case with previous appeals to the state judicial system, the latest appeal by Cubs' management was met with the same negative verdict. There will be neither lighting nor night baseball at Chicago's Wrigley Field... at least for now.

However, Judge Richard Curry in handing down the veto on Wrigley Field lighting system, may end up being the last circuit judge to do so.

APPEAL PLANNED

Cubs' lawyers are planning an appeal which will be filed with the Illinois appellate court on behalf of the organization.

There are a number of reasons why lighting and night baseball make sense to every major league franchise, but the big bucks of television coverage tops the list.

When night baseball was first ushered into the major leagues back in the early 1930's, it was a boon to the sport and a blessing to the average working stiff. After all, a guy who toiled throughout the day had an opportunity to take himself, and perhaps his family, out to a ball game at night.

Doubleheaders heading into extra innings didn't have to be postponed because of failing light.

With the advent of television and major television contracts, night baseball became the only game in town. Television people know that afternoon television appeals basically to the soap opera crowd and as a result, they couldn't attract major sponsorship, especially among the breweries.

Daytime television watchers were almost certain to switch to their favorite daytime tear-jerker instead.

Naturally all the games in the major leagues don't have to take place under lights. There still is, and always will be, room for the daytime game although attempts are made to schedule those on weekends when attendance will be optimum.

However, at World Series time, there is only one time for baseball and that's in the evening and under the lights. Sponsors make mega-bucks and major league baseball thrives like few other sports because of this marriage of sport and the visual media.

PRESSURE ON

In the Cubs' case, there is more pressure on them to attain night ball than ever before. In fact, there are even indications that Cubs' franchise may be revoked if lighting isn't installed in Wrigley Field.

A letter from baseball commissioner Peter Ueberroth to Cubs in December stated that major league baseball would take "drastic action" unless the team resolved the problem of lighting in Wrigley Field.

With Cubs now making moves toward becoming serious contenders for the National League title, things could take on an even more serious tone in the battle for night baseball in Chicago.

Upholding the letter of state laws passed in the last century may seem like a clever idea to Illinois circuit judges, but someone had better shed some light on their archaic attitude.

Otherwise Chicago baseball fans may be left in the dark.

Good start for ruggers

Traditionally, Vernon Panthers have been slow starters in the Okanagan-Mainline High School Rugby League but following a 10-4 victory over hometown Brocklehurst, of Kamloops, Tuesday night, Co-coach Marty Stein feels the club is off on the right foot.

"The last few years we've always lost our first game so this is a big break for us," suggested Stein, who along with Roger Scales, coaches the VSS rugby squad.

Considering the absence of veteran players on Panthers' roster, Tuesday's victory is especially encouraging for the local club.

"Our team is really young," explained Stein. "We only have three grade 12's... the bulk of the squad is made up of guys who transferred to VSS from Seaton School."

Panthers led 3-0 at half-time against Brocklehurst, but broke things open in the second half by playing a tight, defensive contest.

"It was more or less a scrum game," said Stein. "Our forwards had most of the game and we kept the ball away from their backs... they had a lot of penalties too, that helped us."

Kevin Grant accounted for all Panthers' scoring, hitting a pair of field goals and carrying the ball across the line for a try in the second half.

Panthers next game is April 1 in Kamloops, against North Kamloops Saints, B.C. High School champs in 1983. Vernon's first home game is April 16 when it entertains Kamloops Red Devils.

LOOK BACK FIVE YEARS

MARCH, 1980 For the fourth year in a row the Vernon Pup rep team has won the Okanagan Mainline Minor Hockey League championship. The winners this year, Consumers Glaxo, steamrolled over Merritt 12-3 and trounced Kamloops 11-3 in the championship tilt.

Ernie Gare tallied twice for Pumpers while Fred Manson, Fred Johnston, and Doug Stewart added singles.

Tom Williamson, with three goals, Randy Rose, Lou Joly, and Ralph Litzberger countered for Carlings.

The teams were deadlocked 2-2 at the end of the first period and 5-5 after 40 minutes.

Pumpers' goalie Mike Bailey made 44 saves while Hugh Mori kicked out 20 shots for Carlings. In the 'B' final, played Monday night, Parkside Pontiacs downed RCMP 5-2.

Dennis Beaton and Kevin Bahris handled the scoring for Pontiacs with three and two goals, respectively.

Dan Gregorash and Chuck Schaaf replied for RCMP.



VERNON NATIVE Bob Wensley

displayed his usual intensity both during practice and while playing for Karhu-Kissat of Helsinki in the Finnish First Division last season. Wensley, who starred

with Vernon Lakers for two seasons, turned in an excellent year with the European team and refined his skating and playing skills. With his skills honed and an additional 20 pounds on his

frame, Wensley is now looking for an opportunity to play in the NHL, hoping for a tryout with Vancouver Canucks next fall.

(Daily News Photo)

HACKNER UNDEFEATED

Canadian rink shares lead

GLASGOW (CP) — Al Hackner of Canada held onto a share of the lead at the world men's curling championship Tuesday after surviving an afternoon scare from Switzerland.

Hackner's foursome from Thunder Bay, Ont., trimmed Bob Martin of England 10-2 in the evening's fourth-round draw at the Air Canada Silver Broom, continuing the form he appeared to have found earlier in the day against much-stronger opposition.

The 1982 world champion reached down into his bag of tricks in the afternoon to claim an 8-7 victory over Swiss skip Marcus Kaenzig. Rebounding from a 6-2 deficit, Hackner scored three in the seventh and

stole two in the eighth to take the lead in the game for the first time.

After the Swiss scored a single in the ninth to tie, Kaenzig presented the Canadians with their win in the 10th when his attempt to draw behind a Canadian stone at the front of the house bumped it in to score.

TIE AT TOP The results left Canada and Norwegian veteran Kristian Soerum tied at the top of the 10-rink round-robin tournament with 4-0 marks.

Tim Wright of the United States was alone in third at 3-1, followed at 2-2 by Andrea Pavan of Italy, West German Keith Wendorf and Billy Howat of Scotland.

Frants Gufer of Denmark,

Swedish veteran Stefan Hasselborg and Switzerland were 1-3, while England stood at 0-4.

Norway kept pace in the evening draw with an extra-end 5-4 win over Denmark. Gufer missed an opportunity to end the contest in the 10th when his attempt to split out the Norwegian shot rock tapped it back onto one of his own, allowing the Danes to count only one.

In other evening matches, Italy defeated Sweden 4-3, West Germany beat Switzerland 8-2, and the U.S. downed Scotland 8-4.

In the afternoon draw, the other scores were: Norway 10, West Germany 4; U.S. 8, Italy 3; Sweden 6, Denmark 5; and Scotland 10, England 3.

Hackner, while still questioning his own confidence on the ice here, has been more than happy with his new front end this year.

IMPROVED PLAY Lead Pat Perroud and second Ian Telley have more than held their own in games here while both Hackner and third Rick Lang have had sub-standard performances.

However, the fashion in which they downed the Swiss and easily handled the English — making their first start in the world championship — may have turned their game around.

"We finished off the game against Switzerland quite well and this game had only one miss," Hackner said following the England game.

"I took this country for granted when I left but I really appreciate it now," Wensley said. "I think I've really grown up a lot."



PUMPERS defeated Coldstream Carlings, Tuesday night, to win the Pleasant Valley Hockey League championship. Back row, left to right: Doug

Stewart, Terry Sammartino, Bernie Smithson, Fred Johnston, Fred Manson, and John Donnelly. Front row: Ernie Gare, Wayne Little, Les Salo, Mike

Bailey, Tim Stewart, and George Fargher. Also with team are Jim Bailey, Brian Postill, and Duane Ferguson.

(Daily News Photo)

Pumpers win title

George Fargher scored three goals to lead Pumpers to an 8-6 win over Coldstream Hotel Carlings in the Pleasant Valley Hockey League championship game, Tuesday, at the Vernon Civic Arena.

Ernie Gare tallied twice for Pumpers while Fred Manson, Fred Johnston, and Doug Stewart added singles.

Tom Williamson, with three goals, Randy Rose, Lou Joly, and Ralph Litzberger countered for Carlings.

The teams were deadlocked 2-2 at the end of the first period and 5-5 after 40 minutes.

Pumpers' goalie Mike Bailey made 44 saves while Hugh Mori kicked out 20 shots for Carlings. In the 'B' final, played Monday night, Parkside Pontiacs downed RCMP 5-2.

Dennis Beaton and Kevin Bahris handled the scoring for Pontiacs with three and two goals, respectively.

Dan Gregorash and Chuck Schaaf replied for RCMP.

Burnaby dumps Penticton

RICHMOND, B.C. (CP) — Burnaby Bluehawks moved back into contention in the B.C. Junior Hockey League's final series Tuesday with a 7-3 victory over Penticton Knights in a game marred by a pre-game brawl.

Penticton, which lost for the first time in nine playoff games, now leads the best-of-seven series 2-1 with the fourth game scheduled for tonight.

Eight players — four from each team — were ejected and 150 minutes in penalties handed out when the clubs clashed during the pre-game skate. Derrick Ruppel of Burnaby and Tim Peller of Penticton each received match penalties for spearing and likely will miss tonight's game.

Another 152 minutes in penalties were handed out during the game as Burnaby grabbed period leads of 2-0 and 6-1.

Roy El Caswell and Mike O'Brien led the Burnaby attack with two goals each. Ken Jorgensen, Paul Bifano and Peter McCormick added singles for the Bluehawks.

Tim Comeau, Dave Shields and Todd Brost scored for Penticton.

Mike Maisonneuve made 34 saves in goal for Burnaby, while Derek Pizzey stopped 31 shots for Penticton.