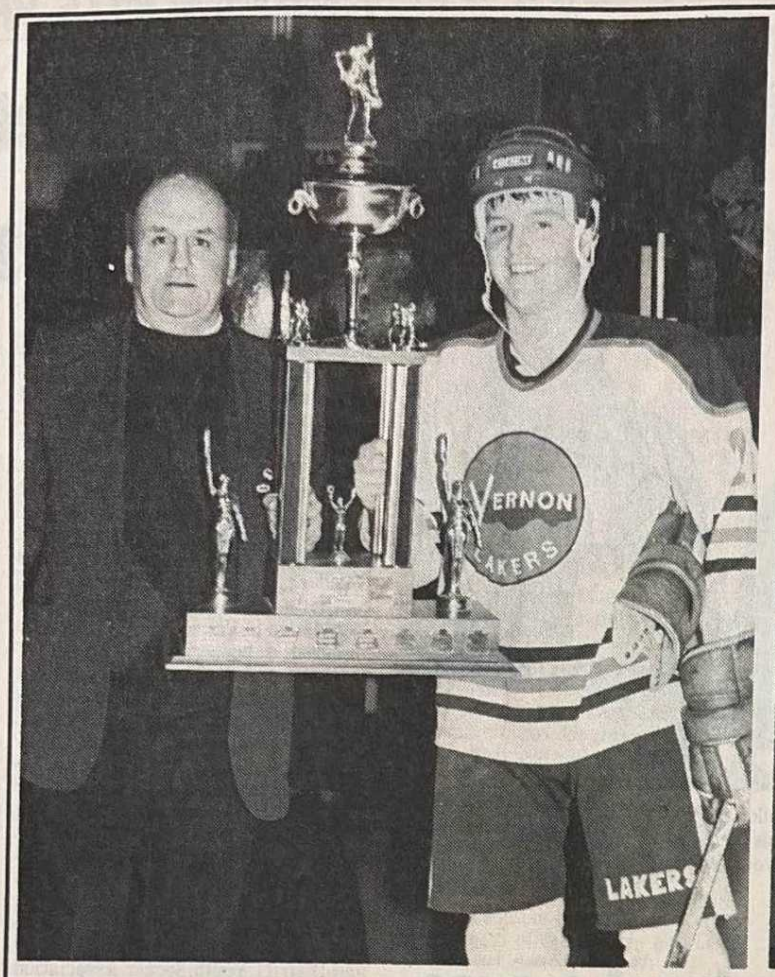
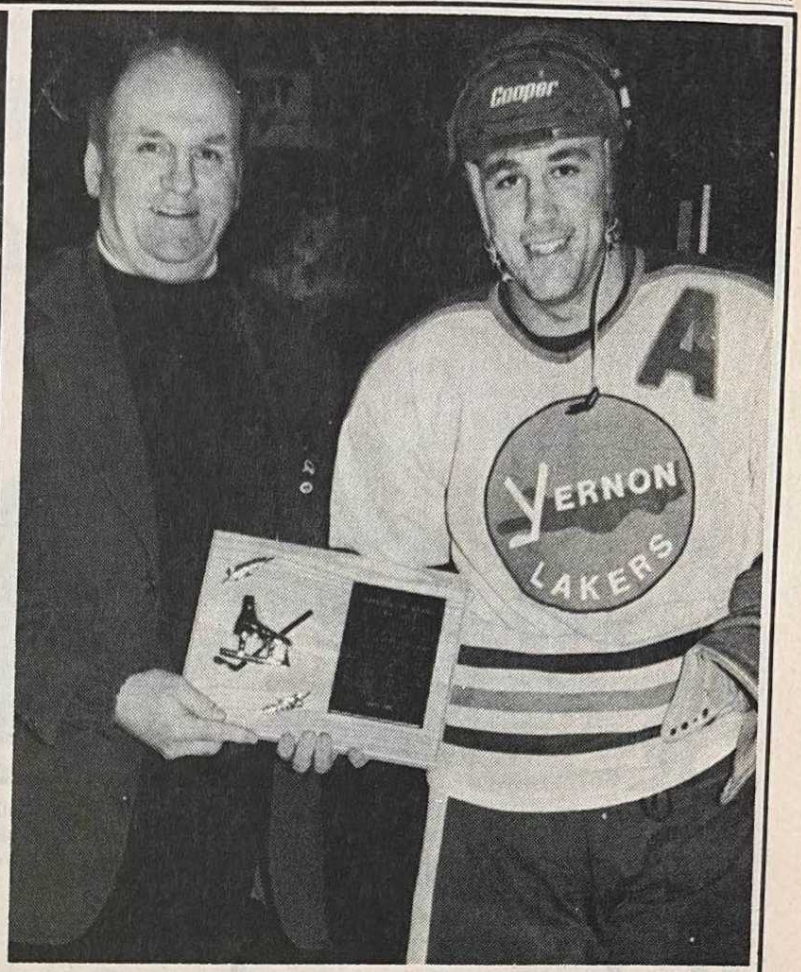




LAKERS HONORED

B.C. Junior Hockey League President John Johnson recently presented the Interior Division scoring championship trophy to Kevin Scott, left, and an award of special recognition to Lakers' high-scoring defenceman Campbell Blair. Scott was tops in the league with 126 points while Blair set four league records with his 110 points.

(Daily News photos)

DREAMS SHATTERED

Young player paralysed

REGINA (CP) — Brad Hornung's dream of playing in the National Hockey League with the New York Islanders has been shattered.

The 18-year-old centre with the Regina Pats of the Western Hockey League is in a hospital bed with a crushed spine, paralysed from the neck down and unable to breathe without a respirator.

Doctors said Tuesday his condition is permanent.

Meanwhile, Troy Edwards of the Moose Jaw Warriors, whose check sent Hornung crashing head-first into the boards in a game Sunday night, is at his home in Raymore, Sask., pondering his future.

Dr. Chris Ekong, a neurosurgeon at Regina General Hospital, told a news conference Hornung suffered a crushed spinal cord.

Hornung lay motionless on the ice for about 40 minutes while doctors and a team trainer performed heart massage and punctured his throat to help him breathe. He had swallowed his tongue and was unconscious.

"Brad has no feeling in his arms and legs," Ekong said. "He is completely paralysed from the neck down. Every function below the spinal cord is intercepted. Brad is conscious, but he will never breathe on his own."

Ekong could offer little more than hope for recovery, saying such severe spinal damage is almost always permanent.

He said Hornung "could reach the wheelchair stage, but he would have to operate it with his mouth."

Edwards wanted to continue playing hockey but his coach, Greg Kvisle, sent him home because he was too upset about Sunday's game.

'GET AWAY'

"I wanted him to get away from it all, be with his family and be sure of what he wants to do next," Kvisle said after a game Tuesday night against the Swift Current Broncos, another WHL team haunted by tragedy.

Four Swift Current players were killed and 19 injured a few days after Christmas when a team bus crashed into a ditch along a slippery highway.

Regina's head coach, Doug Sauter, speaking on behalf of the Hornung family, said it is understandable Edwards is doing some soul-searching.

But the family doesn't hold anyone responsible, he said.

"It was an act of God, an accident. I talked to the boy (Edwards) last night and told him we didn't claim him responsible. I told him not to worry.

"We hope that Brad can find the strength and courage to cope with what has happened to him. But it's a nightmare to think of what happened."

Regina team physican Dr. Gil White said: "Brad appreciates what is going on and what's happening."

The check Sunday night was a clean one by WHL or NHL standards, although it would have drawn a penalty in leagues for younger players.

Hornung, a native of Fort Erie, Ont., is the son of former NHL player Larry Hornung. At five-foot-10 and 175 pounds he was considered small for the NHL. Scouts questioned his skating, but praised his other skills and ability to drive for the net.

He was Regina's third-leading scorer.

White foursome victorious

Lori White (Coldstream Hotel) picked up four points, in the final two ends, to edge Muriel Wynn (Western Concrete) 9-8 in Parkside Pontiac Women's Curling League action, Monday night.

White trailed 8-5 before picking up a deuce in the ninth end. In the tenth

JUDDS JOURNAL

Coaching makes a difference



by Jim Judd

Daily News Sports Writer

I have to tell you I'm left speechless in the wake of Lakers' four-game sweep of Penticton Knights in the B.C. Junior Hockey League Interior Division semi-final series. Superlatives seem hardly adequate at this point. It really requires a great deal more serious thinking to uncover the reasons for the sudden and dramatic surge of the local junior club into a finely-tuned machine of destruction.

The biggest mystery, it would seem, if Head Coach Ernie Gare himself. This guy was about as quiet and understated throughout the course of the regular season as any hockey coach could possibly be. There were many times when we local media-types questioned the logic of his strategies and the apparent lack of discipline within the ranks of his team. We weren't the only ones taken by surprise at the change.

In Penticton, Saturday night, the general concensus was that Knights were simply being outcoached and anybody who suggested such a theory wasn't being challenged by anyone else who was present. Truth is, I totally agreed . . . Knights were outcoached in that game and in the three previous games.

True enough, Lakers have a considerable amount of talent in their midst, but that only goes so far. Talented teams still bite the dust if the talent isn't utilized properly and if the players aren't properly motivated. Witness the destruction of our own Vernon Lakers in the 1984 playoffs against Summerland Buckaroos. Lakers were head and shoulders above Bucks talent-wise, but with a rookie head coach at the helm they floundered and sank in the rough seas that so often characterize playoff hockey. In fact, in that particular instance, Lakers had humbled Bucks 15-0 in the last regular season meeting of the two clubs.

Similarly, Knights had enjoyed a degree of success over Lakers in regular season that was somewhat similar to that enjoyed by the 83-84 version of Lakers over Bucks — not quite to the same degree, mind you, but they did manage to paste Lakers 11-4 in their last regular season outing in Penticton. At that point, who would have put odds on Lakers to sweep Knights four straight in the first playoff round?

Lakers put together a very solid game plan based on fundamental principles of hockey and they stuck to the plan throughout the four games, riding the success it brought them to the Interior Division final as it turns out.

Saturday night, following the destruction of Knights, Dwayne Pentland, their head coach, suggested that he was outcoached, tough as it might have been to admit it, to Lakers' hometown media. Pentland offered another reason for Lakers' success. He mentioned that Vernon had a great deal of experience in their players whereas Knights were basically an inexperienced club.

When these sort of things happen, you always hear those kind of comments, but in this case it does carry a lot of weight. Lakers have a solid lineup of experienced junior hockey players, including a number of four-year veterans. In fact, only four of the team members could be considered junior hockey rookies. Both goaltenders have several years of experience behind them and that, too, paid handsome dividends in the crunch during the club's first playoff round.

But, when you have a close look at some of these veterans, a different pattern starts to emerge.

Campbell Blair, Ed Tuckwood and Craig Bedard were all members of Summerland Buckaroos in 1984 when they upset Lakers in the Interior Division semi-final round. Doing well in playoffs is nothing new to any of them. Upsetting the applecart is sort of a part-time hobby for them it seems.

Keith Chase and Mark Greyeyes played for Merritt Warriors in the 1985 Interior Division semi-final round when they upset Lakers in seven games.

Kevin Scott has never had an opportunity to show what he can do in playoffs since Salmon Arm Totems, whom he played for last season, failed to make the post-season play.

One of the key players in the last series was centre Allan Young, the only member of the team who was playing on the 1984 team that lost to the Buckaroos. He was just a 17-year-old rookie back then. Since that time he's been with the club through first round defeats at the hands of Merritt and Kelowna as well. This being Young's last kick at the cat, he wasn't about to let another season slip through his fingers and he proved that with the calibre of his play as he scored three goals and added four assists for seven points in those four games. It gave the club a lot of additional muscle and scoring punch with Young's line scoring so well and it also took a lot of the heat off Scott and his linemates.

But in order for a team to be really successful it has to have strength up the middle which means all three centres have to be strong skaters, good with the puck, and add some scoring touch. The late addition of Shawn Howard seems to have been just what the doctor ordered in this department. Howard is as strong as a bull and has soft hands when it comes to handling the puck. He also possesses good speed and great mobility for such a big guy. With his presence, the club has three good strong centres and in my books that makes any club tough to stay with, let alone beat.

And that brings us back to the subject of Ernie Gare who put the three lines together through the course of the season.

Jinxes, by the way, don't seem to carry much weight with Gare as you might have guessed by now. First off, he walked out of Penticton early in the season with a victory, breaking a string of luckless trips into the Knights' den that stretched back more than four years. So what did a string of five unsuccessful seasons in the playoffs mean to a guy who dealt with the first jinx in such a lighthearted manner?