

HELPING OUT THE HAMPER FUND

The Vernon Lakers intend to beat the Penticton Knights Saturday but Vernon's needy will also be winners. Lakers, from left, Shawn Hendry, Ian Alger and Phil Soukoroff traded hats with Salvation Army Capt. George Evans to symbolize the hockey club's gift to the Army's Christmas Hamper fund. Donations will be collected from fans at Saturday's game and the club will match them. Game time is 8 p.m. at the Civic Arena.

(Daily News Photo)

JUDDS JOURNAL

My money is on the line



by
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Christmas is a comin' and the goose is gettin' fat and it's time once again for your faithful scribe to unleash his own brand of special Yuletide humor, fun, and festivities upon his unsuspecting public and especially upon the Vernon Lakers.

The Lakers, I might venture a guess, are chomping at the bit these days to gain a certain measure of revenge on yours truly for some recent suggestions I made in this column about their home-ice loyalty — or their lack of it as the case may be.

The club, meanwhile, out to prove that I know not of what I dribble out of my mouth, has gone a long way towards disproving these allegations recently. In fact, they've won every home-ice game in such convincing style since that time that it does make one wonder if I actually knew what I was talking about, or if I was just running off at the mouth.

Okay, here's an opportunity to prove me wrong once and for all and to make some needy people a lot more happy this Christmas by way of my big mouth and the good old Salvation Army's Christmas Food Bank Fund which provides holiday season fare to less fortunate folks in this community.

By now you must have glanced at the picture on page one of today's Daily News that shows members of the local hockey club pledging their support for the Salvation Army. The team will match any donations accumulated from the adhoring public at the team's game against Penticton Knights on Saturday night.

Of course, rendering a few extra bucks out of a local sportswriter, just to sweeten the pot, wouldn't be so bad either. So, I've devised a plan whereby the club can extract money from this scribe during their encounter with the Knights, Saturday.

How much they manage to extract will depend entirely on how well they play, how disciplined they are, and how willing they will be to make some sacrifices of their own for the worthy cause in which they've committed themselves to.

For every goal difference in the score between the Lakers and the Knights, I'll throw two extra bucks into their donation pot. I'll throw five bucks for every goal difference if they happen to shutout the visiting team.

Mind you, they get nothing if they tie or lose to Penticton — only fair the way I see it.

Of course by now you've all figured out that I suggested in another column on this page earlier this week, that the club has a lot of trouble killing penalties so this will be sort of an ultimate test of their mettle in that regard. Can they keep the visiting hockey club from scoring so much as a single goal?

And, to make things more difficult, the entire club has to be in on the deal. So, this means that both goaltenders — Barry Rysz and Glen Fry, must share the goaltending duties. They each must play about 30 minutes (give or take a few minutes depending on whether the interruption of play cooperates with the plan) of the game and they must each keep all pucks out of the Vernon nets.

Hey, am I a fair guy or what? A bit of a jerk perhaps, but fair for sure.

So, depending on how much each member of the team is willing to give of himself for their team, for their fans, for needy people, for their commitment, and for the chance to make me eat crow and empty my pockets, this is that opportunity they've waited for weeks to pounce upon.

If they win 10-0, for instance, it will cost me $50. If they win by say a 6-2 margin, my commitment is substantially reduced to just $8.

Bear in mind, of course, that the club hasn't produced a shutout performance yet this season though they've come close. In two cases, it was a single power-play goal by the opposing team that spoiled their shutout bid. They can help things immensely in this regard by being disciplined enough to stay out of the penalty box as much as possible.

Of course they must also be disciplined enough to switch immediately to a defensive style of play as soon as the other club picks up the puck.

Then again, I've got a few aces up my sleeve as well. With the acquisition of Lance Momotami into the Penticton lineup, it will be doubly hard for the Lakers to earn a shutout. Momotami scored more than 60 goals in the BCJHL last season while leading the Coastal Division scoring.

This could really be one interesting night in the old Civic Arena.