SPORTS BRIEFS

Lakers schedule windup banquet

The Vernon Lakers Junior A Hockey Club will hold its annual awards night and windup banquet May 7 at the Village Green Inn. Cocktails are served at 5:30 p.m. while dinner gets under way at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are available by contacting either Bonnie at 545-7763 or Marj at 549-1816. There will be no tickets available at the door.

KENDALLS KORNER

Lakers start rebuilding



by Don Kendall

Daily News Sports Editor

Only hours after the most successful season in the history of the Vernon Lakers had ended, Head Coach Ernie Gare and his staff started putting together the pieces that will form next year's club.

With no more than five members of the 1987-88 squad expected to return in September, the Lakers have a massive rebuilding job to complete in four months.

The Lakers have developed a working relationship with U.S. universities that is the envy of all other junior 'A' teams. Five Lakers obtained college scholarships last year and at least eight members of this year's squad have accepted offers from American colleges.

Dangling the possibility of acquiring a university scholarship helps the Lakers lure top prospects to Vernon. But, at the same time, it means most players spend only one season here and the Lakers are faced with a complete rebuilding job every summer.

The only players who are expected to return next season are Duane Dennis, Greg Olson, and Shawn Hendry. Darcy Martini and Adrian Markin are considered question marks at this time.

Markin has spoken with several colleges, but has not yet been offered a scholarship. And Martini is undecided about accepting a partial scholarship from either Michigan Tech or Northern Michigan.

"We knew most of our players would be gone next season so we started our recruiting a couple months ago," Gare said.

Goalie Glen Fry, Keith Chase, Kevin Harder, Ian Alger, and captain Mike Paller are overage.

Phil Soukoroff and Dallas Drake, Northern Michigan; Greg Parnell and Jamie Steeer, Michigan Tech; Mark Greyeyes, Alaska-Anchorage; Mike Barkley, Maine; Dane Jackson, North Dakota; and Chad Biafore, Chicago- Illinois have accepted scholarships.

Wes Elliott is negotiating with Plattsburgh, New York and is expected to reach an agreement later this month.

Gare said, "We have a lot of holes to fill, but we've got some great prospects lined up."

Vernon's junior 'B' affiliate, the Columbia Valley Rockies, is expected to supply three or four players to the parent club next season. Among the top prospects are Vernon minor hockey graduate Ian Young and defenceman Jason Marshall, who played the final two games against the Calgary Canucks.

"Ian had a great year with the Rockies," Gare said. "They are very high on him.

"And we feel Marshall will be a key player for us next season . . . he's just 16 years old."

The Lakers will also take a serious look at several players from the Vernon Midget Rep Team, which won the Okanagan-Mainline League's regular season title. Gare lists Tom Arkell, Jason Kemila, Jim Anderson, and Scott Kowalski among the promising midgets.

"We've talked to kids all over B.C. and Alberta, but I don't want to mention names right now," Gare said. "I can say that we have some good ones lined up."

The recruiting program last year brought Jackson, Drake, Martini, Steer, Parnell and others to Vernon. If Gare and his assistants can enjoy the same type of success this summer, the Lakers will have a good chance to finish the job they started this season on the Centennial Cup trail.