

PEPP-TALK

with
Harry
Pepper

The junior playoffs are now well under way and there have been surprises in the outcome already. The pairings in the Western division finals will really be nothing new, pitting as they will the new-look Junior Smoke Eaters against the Castlegar Rebels. These two teams have battled in this final series before; last year the Smokies won out and went on, but that was last year and the team was really strong.

This year, everyone thought that with a practically new team the Junior Smokies would have their troubles, on the other hand the Rebels are essentially the same team, but the Trail team has gradually improved all season to the point where they went into their round against the highly-touted Border Bruins with all the cards stacked against them after the Bruins' fine season.

However, the Smokies won that series in six games and go on against the Rebels while the Bruins are left to assess what has happened to a season in which they looked as though they were unbeatable, only to have their dream house collapse just when they were on the threshold of capping a

great season by winning the playoffs.

We have heard various stories out of the Bruin camp. One has it that some of the top Bruin players pulled out at the start of the playoffs because of dissension which ended in brawls among the players at practice and the Bruins suffered the consequences. A team with internal troubles is in no shape to contest a team which is building towards the big game.

The Smokies must have gained a lot of confidence from that series and will now be ready for the Rebels. Just so they don't blow their chances with over-confidence they could pull out a West championship and lengthen their season.

The Olympics are over and the results are all in with some surprises on the way. I guess the one which caused the most commotion was the surprisingly strong showing by the U.S. team in the hockey tournament.

At a time of political unrest, with the two most powerful nations on earth at loggerheads, the game between their representative teams on the ice was naturally a very emotional show and the young U.S. team was definitely up for that one.

They did very little wrong as they checked the vaunted Soviet powerhouse in its tracks and much to the delight of their fans, continued their masterful play in their next game as they topped off their tournament with a tough win over the pesky Finnish team to assure themselves of the gold medal.

In this country a lot of us cannot help but compare the U.S. effort with that of the young Canadian team. Both teams are from the same mold, being composed of the young college players, these

young men have not come far from the rah-rah days of their college careers.

I think this is where the U.S. has that something extra as their colleges have a history of fanaticism unrivalled anywhere in the world. When it comes to their athletic teams, Canadian colleges haven't reached that peak yet.

I do think though that if these two countries could find a way to keep a nucleus of these teams together and add to them as the years go by this is the best way to represent our countries in world competition.

Canada still has a way to go to develop a winner but I do believe the road we are travelling now is the right one. I think our country should be willing to spend a lot of money in the development of this type of team since it might tend to keep these young players from succumbing to the lures of professionalism.

One annual event held in Rossland each winter is the Orwell Derby Banquet and Dance which was held this year in the Rossland High School. Combined with the other entertainment there is the presentation of prizes for the various fish and deer categories of the year.

The evening starts off with a very nice meal and the introduction of the head table at which sit all the people responsible for the operating of the annual derby held at Sheep Creek and lining up the rules that govern the awards for the biggest fish and best set of deer horns, etc.

Graham Jones was this year's president and his helpers on the executive were Ken Dixon, Bob Glover, George Eastcott, Dave Tweed jr., Dan Tweed, Connie Kruchen, Ken "Moose" Parisotto, Dave Mitchell, Jim Brown and Bernie Fourn. There will be a meeting at the arena March 14 to decide on

an executive for the coming year and lay any new ground rules for the competitions.

The list of winners is headed by the biggest fish caught at the Sheep Creek one-day derby, caught by Paddy Orr. The fish weighed 1 lb. 3 ozs. and at the other end of the scale was one caught by Joe Zanussi which won the hidden weight. This giant specimen, which it took Joe some time to land, weighed in at 1 1/4 ozs. After thinking it over, Joe decided it should be allowed to grow some more so he released it.

The big rainbow which won for George Eastcott weighed 21 lbs. 4 ozs. and was taken on Kootenay Lake above Riondel. Caught on the Arrow Lake at Sunshine Bay was a 13-lb. Dolly which took a trophy for Len Scott. Marc Schiavon of Revelstoke, a five-year member of the club, came all the way to Rossland to pick up his trophy for the biggest Kokanee, caught at the mouth of Coffee Creek. It weighed 8 lbs. 8 ozs.

Former lake resident, Henry Matthews, took three trophies, a pretty good night's work. One was for the biggest Eastern Brook trout. Tipping the scales at 4 lbs. 13 ozs., it topped the fish of Alfie Albo Sr. by 1 lb. 3 ozs. and the third prize winner, Whiz Topliff by 1 lb. 4 1/2 ozs. Henry also took home the retirees' trophy and the Campbell Shield, the latter named for late sportsman Arnie Campbell. George Eastcott won the Fred Barry trophy, another award for all-round excellence in the outdoor sports.

In the deer category, Bob Todd took the typical Whitetail, Al Lavorato had the Non-Typical, Rob Simm the best Mule deer with John Yuris the runner-up. All in all it was a great evening's entertainment which is what it always seems to be.