

PEPP-TALK

with
Harry
Pepper

The dearth of sports news around our town these days is made all the more pronounced by the fact that we have no representative team in the local hockey playoffs.

The Warriors falling by the wayside early this season is a fact of life which some of us find hard to cope with.

So what do we do to fill up the void they have left us with? It's too early for soccer and ball and the ice is still in the arena so there will be no lacrosse for awhile yet; our retirees' curling is about to end — we are just one game away from the end of our final competition and we have only a visit from the Trail club to look forward to an then our wind up which will put the season behind us for another year.

With two teams tied at the top of this last competition, Phil Bateman and George Dyson have each 6-1 records. Phil lost his game to George in the regular schedule and George bowed to Arnie Vanness yesterday for the only blemish on his record.

There will probably be a playoff if they finally wind up in the position they find themselves in now.

I imagine the men's and the women's clubs find themselves in a like position. There are a couple of events which will pretty well put paid to my bown curling for the season; one is the ever-popular Legion one-day 'spiel which will take place March 30 with a pretty full day of curling, etc.; the other is a two-day affair slated for March 22-23, a mixed toss-up 'spiel in which they pull the names from a hat with the

would have wrecked had the sweeping not been on such high calibre.

The Hackner rink gave an excellent account of themselves but I think in the end it was the experience of Rick Folk and his mates which made the difference. Once could appreciate the ever-colorful Gowsell's irritation when his mates failed to put the brooms to his attempted double-takeout and left it to hang on in the twelve-foot circle.

We shall be seeing a lot more of this calibre of curling in the coming weeks. It makes for some dandy watching but I do wish they would dispense with those individual stats; for me they are a very unimportant part of the show.

+++

With the absence of the Warriors from the play off picture I went down to the Cominco Arena to watch the Junior playoff final opener between the Junior Smokies and the Kimberley Knights on Tuesday night. They are two very evenly-matched teams and this contest could go right down to the wire before a winner is declared.

The Trail team has certainly come a long way since the early part of the season when I saw them against the Warriors, and the Knights seemed to have gained considerable stature since they last visited Rossland. I thought both goalies were excellent, particularly Steve Handley, as he came up with some terrific saves. The overall team play on both sides was above the calibre of that

get out of the province this season. North Delta Hurry-Kings look like the class of the other league. Being composed of a number of ex-Canucks they will really test the mettle of the winner of the WIHL if they do represent the other senior league in the province.

+++

I was figuring on a report on the local lacrosse scene for this week but it will have to wait. Roy Grant contacted me to attend a practice in the Cominco Gym but this week I am scheduled for a Lions' meeting on their practice night so I will have to wait until Wednesday night of next week.

Apparently they have a number of new acquisitions from out of town for the coming season which they would like us to see in action. A lot of groundwork has been done along this line during the past winter with the idea of improving the Redmen's image in their league. We would like to see it pay off in some pretty good lacrosse games this summer — the league is one of the best of its class in the country and it is hoped that the Redmen can become a viable factor in it.

So, as the Two Ronnies would say, it's "Goodnight from me and it's goodnight from him" until next week.

run day or curling, etc.; the other is a two-day affair slated for March 22-23, a mixed toss-up 'spiel in which they pull the names from a hat with the idea of getting two men and two women in each team.

While I'm on the subject of curling, I'd like to pass along a thought which struck me while I was watching the Brier playoffs on the tube. The ideas that kind of bugged me was why they need to note statistics of the separate players on the screen.

From my way of looking at it, I think it is absolutely pointless. Curling is one game in which playing as a team is an absolute must, and why suggest that one player is letting his team down by not curling up to par? There are so many facets of the game that depend upon team work; weight and delivery are, of course, up to the individual, but the sweeping and how it is controlled by the non-sweepers has to be an absolute factor in the outcome of the games which are played under the terrific amount of pressure which builds up in games of this calibre.

In both the Hackner-Gowsell semi-final and the ultimate final between Hackner and Folk, there was some excellent curling. They seemed to make almost impossible shots become common-place by their execution, and we got a prime chance to compare the two different types of sweeping, the long straw brooms and the short European type of scrubbing broom. Both seem adequate to do the job but I certainly like the latter for the fact that they are on the ice continually and I believe they are less liable to shredding as the straw type gets with age.

The sweeping on both championship teams was as good as anyone could expect, no doubt resulting in a number

Handley, as he came up with some terrific saves. The overall team play on both sides was above the calibre of that generally seen in 'B' class hockey.

When this is over of course the team which wins in the north will visit here for the provincial playoff. Seems to me I heard the Northern final has Kitimat and Quesnel in it. This matchup, whoever wins, should provide us with some pretty good hockey to watch. We'll be looking forward to Trail winning this one so that the games will be played here.

+++
Over in the Seniors the Spokane Flyers are into the final having beaten Kimberley while the Smoke Eaters are at present in a tie with the Cranbrook Royals for the other playoff spot. I'm told the Smokies had a pretty rough trip to the East Kootenay, took them six and a half hours as they had to face the long trip via the ferry as the Salmo-Creston is closed because of slide troubles. That could have had something to do with their loss in Cranbrook.

There again, the Seniors will have to do battle before they