

PEPP-JALK

with
Harry
Pepper

at the hands of the northern or the Coast champions.

This year, however, playing on their home turf with their faithful fans and league VP Herbie Castle, to urge them on they pulled it off. Now perhaps the KIJHL will get a little more notice from TV announcers and the other news media at the Coast.

So, to Murray Luker, Gerry Goyer and Bill Steenson and their black-clad warriors, we over here in the West Kootenay salute you for a job well done.

Junior "B" hockey in B.C., especially in our area, provides the hockey fan with a helluva lot of top-notch entertainment, compared, as it has to be, with what they see in the Okanagan, where the BCJHL holds sway, and at the coast where they have the choice of NHL, Junior A, tiers one and two and Junior B, plus some senior. We could be said to be getting second best but I think if you asked the average fan around the East and West Kootenay rinks if they are happy with what they've got, your answer would be a resounding "Yeah".

I have heard talk that Beaver Valley is on the brink of applying for membership in the KIJHL. They have some pretty good potential out there, if the showing of their minor teams can be construed as a true picture.

For some years now they

have been supplying some pretty good material to the Trail Juniors as well as the Rossland Warriors, as in the pre-Warrior days when Rossland sent some pretty good players to Trail, whose teams went on to win provincial championships in various categories.

If a team from the Valley is accepted into the league, it would be very much like the old days when local leagues were composed of teams who could travel between the various centres in a very short time.

You would also get the fans from these nearby centres making the trip to root their favorites on, which would make for some terrific local competition and once again the fans would be the winners.

Just think, the Rebels versus the Smokies and BV versus the Warriors on the same night. That sort of competition should really bring the fans out at any one of the four centres.

While on the subject of hockey we cannot ignore the feat of the Canucks in squeezing into that mammoth NHL playoff picture. While this corner does not go overboard in support of their chances against Scotty Bowman and his flashing Sabres, the fact that they are in there must be quite a boost for their fans, who have once again suffered a very mediocre season of so-so hockey by their favorite team.

Just for fun, what do you think of these prognostications for round

one of the playoffs? Philadelphia will pull themselves together after a rather ragged finish to get past Edmonton, despite the fact that Wayne Gretzky has to be the best hockey player in the NHL today; the Buffalo-Vancouver matchup will match two winning streaks, one of which has to be broken. Look for the Canucks to battle but lose to a coach who has won a lot of Stanley Cups and could very well win another.

The Canadiens seem to have put their act together pretty well in the closing weeks of the schedule and should win the tough series they will no doubt get from Hartford's battling oldtimers.

I think it is safe to say that Boston will get by the Penguins. Since Harry Sinden came on to do the coaching, the Bruins have had a new lease on life; I can't see the Los Angeles Kings causing the Islanders too much trouble, those two losses to the Canucks can't have increased their confidence. Marcel Dionne will have to be content with his scoring championship, I don't see a Stanley Cup ring in his immediate future.

The next one will go right down to the wire. There's not much to choose between the Leafs and the North Stars. The Leafs have Sittler and Palmateer, their so-called bad-boys, but they will probably spell the difference if their performances are up to the usual, so the Leafs in five.

Chicago should take St. Louis if home ice and their relative positions in their own division are any criterion, and again in the Rangers-Flames matchup, either team on a given night can upset almost anybody. I'll take the

Rangers because of the home ice advantage.

Turning from hockey to soccer for a moment, the Whitecaps certainly don't look like the team which won the NASL championship on their showing in the first two games of the current season. Saturday night they saw a 2-0 lead turn sour as the Sockers' Cuellar scored on well-placed penalty and free kicks and then placed a perfect corner-kick for the winner in the closing seconds of the first overtime period.

I do think, though, that the Caps should have had a penalty of their own in the second half which could have turned the tide in their favor. However, when you start second-guessing a referee on the strength of what you see on TV, you are on pretty shaky ground. I still think the new Vancouver goalie could have handled either of Cuellar's shots which scored, although he didn't have a prayer on the winner.

Still on soccer, don't forget, all you Rossland youngsters who want to play this season, your last chance to sign will be tomorrow morning at the City Hall from 9:30 till noon. If you didn't make it Thursday evening, better be sure you get there tomorrow, otherwise you'll be watching instead of playing.

I have word that the team I was telling you about which John Stanton was looking to get into the Trail Commercial Fastball League, has made it. I will give you some details on players, etc. next week.

In closing, I can say that the Redmen should be home to train next week as the arena floor is now dry.

Till next week, then.