

JUNE 27/80

PEPP-JALK

with
Harry
Pepper

Big weekend coming up! The Rossland Annual Slo-Pitch tournament will be held this weekend and we shall also have a big lacrosse game, the Redmen against Edmonton. The regular beer garden held in conjunction with the Slo-Pitch tourney will probably be moved over to the curling rink if satisfactory arrangements can be made.

Talking to recreation director Jackie Richardson Tuesday, I found out that there have been no details worked out as yet in this regard. He tells me that John Allen of the Redmen is trying to get the Edmonton game moved up to Monday night and if he is successful in this move it will take a lot of the confusion out of the situation.

The Slo-Pitch people have always had their bash in the rink and it is just unfortunate that two worthy causes have to book dates that clash; however let's hope that a solution is reached which will be satisfactory to both sides.

The Slo-Pitch tourney will be played in all parks in town as usual, will feature teams from all around the country. You can bet that it will be just as much fun as it has been in past years. The games are played come hell or high water and we've seen them played under pretty trying conditions in years past. If you come to Rossland to visit while the tourney is on you'll know that our hospitality is just as good, no matter what the weather is like.

As previously reported in The Times, the Redmen took it on the chin on Sunday at the hands of a fired-up group of Calgary Shamrocks. The Saturday night game was a comparatively easy win for our Redmen but on Sunday it was a different story. The Shamrocks came out of the dressing room a very determined group of athletes and proceeded to put on the pressure and it paid off.

They had a three-goal lead before Rossland dented the

twine behind young Mike Keating in the Calgary net, then they rammed home five more before the Redmen got untracked and started to get some goals on the board.

From that point on the Redmen outscored the Shamrocks 9-4 but the damage had been done and the clock ran out before the Redmen could pull even and our boys had to eat crow for the first time before the home fans this season.

Pursuing that fan point further, it does seem a shame that the people of our town can't see fit to give the team a little more support. In two games on the weekend you could have counted the people in the stands without any mechanical aid.

Talking to some of the players in a bull session after the game, I gathered that they are quite disappointed in what Rossland teams have had to take as a matter of course over the years, the apparent lack of interest in the fortunes of our struggling young athletes.

Going back over the years, we have seen some mighty fine young teams come and go. We've had champions in baseball, hockey, lacrosse and soccer and they've had so-so support from the people who are supposed to pick up the tab for enjoying the efforts of these young people and paying the freight by their attendance at the games.

It seems that our sporting events are suffering on the altar of the commercialism of TV. Surely it's not too much to ask for a little support for our local athletes even if it means that you are going to have to pass up a regular program once in a while. Your favorite program will be there when you haven't something better to do.

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Maybe my pursuit of this question can rub some people the wrong way. That's a chance I have to take. I listen to quite a number of stories from people who do attend sports events in our town religiously and they wonder why more people don't turn out to give our local athletes the support they so richly deserve.

I understand that this problem is pretty much a universal one, especially in small centres. Sports events, on TV, rate pretty highly among people of all ages and maybe that's our trouble. We'd much sooner stay in the easy chair in front of the TV than exert ourselves to take a walk to wherever a local sporting event is taking place. Think about it some time. Walking is good for your health and a rousing athletic contest is bound to keep the red blood moving around in one's body better than sitting in a soft easy chair, putting a lot of stress on your eyes. I don't care if you agree or not the argument makes a lot of sense to me.

Boy, here I've been carrying on for some time and I almost forgot that this morning I had a very enjoyable round of golf with some good buddies, in beautiful surroundings under sunny skies. After the golf was over, there was some good conversation in the Upper Course clubhouse, plus a few bottles of suds. When you spend this sort of a morning in the company of three likeable guys like Richie Watkinson, Cleve Cowland and Doug Cavill you really know what an enjoyable round of golf can be like. It's sure a good way to forget anything that might be bothering you.

I highly recommend it for anyone who finds time heavy on their hands; forget you're retired, how old you are in years and live life the way it's supposed to be lived — to the fullest.