

PEPP-ALK

with
Harry
Pepper

As I write this column on a cloudy, damp Wednesday morning in Rossland, some of the old joints are kicking up a bit of a fuss, reminding me that we all reach a point in life when those past indiscretions must come home to roost.

That's the long way around to tell you that I have had an attack of bursitis in my hip and it's not funny. It means, among other things, that I won't be out on the golf course until it subsides and that is not at all to my liking, but, as Stephan Yan would say, "Wok the hell". It could have been worse, I guess.

Anyway, now that's off my chest, or wherever, I wonder how many Canuck fans stayed until the decision was reached in the opening game of the Campbell Conference playoff in the noisy Chicago Arena.

Talk about goaltending duels, that was a real gem. Tony O was really something and what can you say about that little guy at the other end. The thought keeps coming back every time I see him, "What would the Canucks do without him?"

You can't take anything away from guys like Snepsts, Gradin, Williams, Rota and Boldirev and the youngsters like Nill, Belland and Halward, they are all doing a fantastic job, but that Brodeur.

Talking about hockey, that WHL playoff between Regina and Portland Tuesday must have really been some kind of a shake-up. Regina led 3-0 and 6-2 only to have Portland come back and win 7-6 in overtime and take the lead in the series, the winner of which go into the playoffs for the Memorial Cup. If Regina goes down the drain, the Canucks can add another young defenceman to their ranks for the remainder of the playoffs.

Still with hockey, this is the kind of thing I like to tell

people about. Up in Kamloops there is a youngster named Willy Andersen who plays for the Kamloops Bantam Reps. Recently, Willy, who incidentally is a grandson of one of our most revered senior citizens in Rossland, Ralph Berry, was playing in a provincial Bantam tournament which was being closely monitored by NHL scouts from all over. When it was over Willy was invited to next year's training camp of the Edmonton Oilers.

Ralph says, "Why, in the next year or so he'll be probably playing on a line with Wayne Gretzky".

Anyway, Ralph, we are all happy for you and Willy. We hope all the dreams are answered.

The team that Willy plays for will be touring in Europe later this year, playing games in Finland and elsewhere.

Turning to some summer sport, Rossland's entry in Trail Commercial softball circles used to known as the Uplander Hotel last year, the team's first venture into the Trail league. This year, John Stanton tells me that Rossland's newest hotel and watering place has withdrawn its support for the franchise which has now been taken up by Branch No. 14 of the Canadian Legion.

I don't think the team has played yet, but when they do get started, their games will be played out at Centennial Park at Black Bear as was the case last year, more on this when we get some more input regarding any lineup changes, etc.

Rossland's slow pitch league is still all right. This popular league will be in action before too long and providing the fans with their exciting brand of entertainment. More on this as time goes by.

Soccer in Rossland means

Labatts, if you are thinking in adult terms, however we do have a very healthy minor league operation and the kids will be trotting out their wares soon. Last year's success for the kids will be up there to challenge and ensure our youngsters will give it all they've got.

Back to the Labatts. Armando DeMedeiros, the team's PR man, reported they played two games in Spokane last weekend, in the first game against Pacific Western, a team which holds top spot in their second division, Rob Martin scored the only goal in a 1-0 win for Rossland.

On Sunday, they played a team holding first place in their first division and came up with a 2-2 tie. Rossland led 2-0 on goals by Keith Chapman and Gerry Gallo, until about 15 minutes from the end of the game when Essport scored the tying goal with less than a minute to go in the game.

I'm told that new coach Grant Lenarduzzi was somewhat less than enchanted by the team's performance in Spokane. They start regular league play against Castlegar on Sunday in a league which looks as though it could be a lot tougher than last year.

Meanwhile, there is a new league on the move in the Trail district, I don't know its name yet but it has two entries from this area, they are Trail Alpine and Trail Scottish. John Habicht plays for the Alpine and he tells me they won a close one last weekend, getting the only goal from the boot of Mike Murray, another former Labatt.

The status of this group is not known at this writing but I would hazard a guess that if would fall into the fun category, more power to you guys, I hope you have just that.