

July 10/87
PEPPER-TALK with Harry Pepper

The Retirees Day at the upper course was once again blessed with what turned out to be a grand day. When the boys took to the course it didn't look good but as it turned out, it was a pretty nice day — although our numbers were slightly trimmed down to 50 competitors.

Tom Dobie and Bill Woodburn were in charge and the program was low gross, low net, hidden hole, high and low and the most and least putts for the round. In low gross Russ Broughton came in with a 41 while low net went to Chuck Wyatt with a 29. Hole one was the hidden hole with Bob Glover winning with a 5 while Roly Gariepy had a 10 for high. In the least putts Roger McKeown won with 11 while Jim Putsey had 22. Next week Sam Martin and Bill Dobbs will be on the desk.

I shall see the doc today and I should get a clean bill to get back on the course again next week and see how it works out. A slight swelling of the lower legs prompted me to take a couple of weeks rest. Oh, by the way, I ran into an old friend yesterday down at the course. Bob Eyre, now living in North Van, paid us a visit. Bob looks good and asked how his little paper-boy was getting along. He seemed quite happy to hear that Rick and the other kids are doing fine.

Every once in a while Cleve Cowland will come over and hand me a clipping from the Regina Leader-Post, which he receives regularly from back home. Cleve grew up on the Prairies and played his minor hockey in Kerrobert before coming to Rossland in 1937 to play for the old Rossland Miners team. Some of his teammates on that team were Rusty Wynn, Al Laface, Norm Lacre, John Hughes, Stan Smith, Gerry Wanless and Len Wade. Cleve went to Trail in 1938-39 to play for the Blazers when the Smokies were away piling up their impressive records — including the world championship — and wound up his career playing for them after their return. He played hockey in the Air Force when he joined up and had "Porky" Dumart as his coach. Among his teammates there were later to become Boston Bruin stars were Milt Schmidt and Bobby Bauer. Cleve was a leftwinger, or as his wife Selma calls it, "the wrong wing".

Anyway, to get back to Cleve's clippings, which prompted all this history, was one that I feel hits right at the heart of hockey as it is being played in the big-time today. Bob Hughes came down on the upper class of hockey for allowing our national game to get out of hand. I'm not going to attempt to analyze what arguments Hughes has raised. Suffice to say that in the years I have been reading and watching our local teams in action, I must say, while we haven't seen the sort of things that are happening in the upper levels of the game, one can detect a certain loosening of the grip officials are supposed to have on the play. Where do these kids learn it? Coaches don't teach them to play that way. But when it is shown on TV and one can see what happens in some cases. What do the youngsters feel about it? They feel if those stars can do it what's wrong with them trying to follow suit.

In the years Cleve has been handing these to me this last batch certainly hits a very responsive chord. This is because I've sat before the TV and seen this — almost mayhem — being perpetuated by all. It's just not funny anymore and it's going to get worse if it isn't stopped soon. I think it calls for some real soul-searching on the part of the people who are responsible for the conduct of the game before something worse happens out there on the ice.

Before I wind down today I would like to thank Rob Holmwood for passing along the standings in the Rossland Slo-Pitch League. They show the Royals on top, now 13-1, the Uplander Hotel next at

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And now, until another week rolls by, I'll say 'Til next time, then!