

Local midget squad hit hard by juniors

When you talk to losing coaches two of their most popular words are 'if we.'

Only on rare occasions does a coach admit his club was beaten by a group of superior athletes. One coach who can justifiably use 'if we' is Vernon Midget Rep Coach Mike Enemark. Enemark, who doubled as coach of Vernon Lakers for the last month of the B.C. Junior Hockey League season, can only dream about the team he could have on the ice for the provincial midget championships.

Vernon qualified for the B.C. finals at the host team and was not expected to win more than one or two games. But, 'if we' had some of the nine players who are missing, it would be a different story.

By the time players get to the midget division (16 and 17 years old), the cream of the crop has been skimmed by junior 'A' teams. Junior clubs have been particularly unkind to the Vernon midgets.

Three players, who are still eligi-



by
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ble to play for midgets, are now toiling with Portland Winter Hawks, of the Western Hockey League. Defenceman Jay Stark joined Portland in mid-season from Spokane Chiefs, also of the WHL. Stark, now 17, spent the 1984-85 season with Revelstoke, of the BC-JHL.

Dennis Holland and Troy Mick recently joined Winter Hawks after their BCJHL teams were eliminated from playoffs. Holland led Vernon Lakers in scoring while Mick was the top goal scorer for Merritt Warriors.

In their first game together in the WHL, last Saturday, they combined for 10 points.

Four other midget-aged Vernon players spent all, or part, of the 1985-86 campaign in the tier two junior ranks.

Defenceman Wes Elliott split the season between Merritt and Abbotsford; forward Derek Webb started the season with Quesnel Millionaires, but quit and returned home after the signing deadline; hard-working Doug McIntyre played with Hobbema, of the Alberta Junior League; and goalie Blu Smith spent four months with Lakers before being cut and deciding to sit out the remainder of the season.

To compound Enemark's problems, two of his key performers, Scott Cameron and Rich Yull, are sidelined by knee injuries.

Every team in the B.C. finals has been hit by player defections, but it is doubtful any have lost as much talent as Vernon. 'If we' had Mick, Holland, Stark, Webb... dream on.

B.C. Junior

Richmond 3 Penticton 0

**(Penticton leads best-of-seven
final 2-1)**

TRANSACTIONS