

Ringette league hoping to grow

by PAUL SMITH

Sports reporter

The Northern B.C. Ringette League, in its first season of operation, is already setting its sights on attracting more teams.

The league is made up of associations in Prince George, Fraser Lake and Vanderhoof, but organizers here say interest is being shown in Burns Lake and Houston.

As part of National Ringette Week, which runs until Saturday, the Prince George association staged weekend exhibition games involving Burns Lake and Houston.

Burns Lake and Houston sent combined petite (10 and younger) and junior belle (13 and 14) teams to "get their feet wet", says Marilyn Colbert, spokesman for the Prince George association.

Colbert says the exhibitions were a success and that the Burns Lake and Houston groups have shown an interest in participating in the league next year.

"They were really pleased," says Colbert. "When they got here they were excited about playing in an exhibition game — about 99.9 per cent of them had never played before.

"It was a good experience for them."

Colbert says the three associations are also trying to attract teams from Mackenzie, Quesnel and Williams Lake.

"We're trying to get more community involvement in the north so we can have more varied competition."

The league, which was formed in the fall and played its first games Nov. 16, will get a boost this weekend when the president and vice-president of the B.C. Ringette Association travel to Vanderhoof to take in the Northern B.C. 'B' invitational tournament.

Colbert says the BCRA officials will be here to review the scene in this area.

The tournament features teams from the Prince George, Vanderhoof and Fraser Lake associations.

Ringette is similar to floor hockey, but played on ice. Developed for girls, it is a team sport in which players use a straight stick to pass, carry and shoot a rubber ring.

Six players are on the ice at a time — a goalkeeper, two defence, two forwards and a centre.