Chuck Novakovich

Ex-Evelethian Sparks Shakopee Puck Program

SHAKOPEE — Hockey has become a popular winter sport here, thanks to the efforts of Chuck Novakovich, a native of Eveleth and a fine ambassador for the "Hockey Capital of the United States."

The birth of hockey can be directly attributed to Novakovich's arrival here five years ago. Shortly after his family took up residence Novakovich noticed the inactivity, hockey-wise, at the Huber Park rink. He quickly resumed the role as a coach for the recreation board and worked with 28 boys and introduced the sport the first winter.

Once he enticed the boys to trade in their figure skates for hockey skates, the program really started to move. Each season since the program has grown and is now neatly organized and run by the Shakopee Amateur Hockey Assn.

Novakovich not only got the boys of the community interested but also those of older generations who have volunteered their time and talents to the program.

Novakovich's background shows participation in hockey at nearly every age level. He started playing as a youngster (4-years-old), participated in various divisions in the Eveleth Rec program, moved on to the high school team and played semi-pro for the Eveleth Rangers and out East with the New Haven Blades while on a service hitch.

Novakovich is a printer by trade and is married to the former Tina Alexander of Virginia. They are the parents of two sons and a daughter.

SAO PAULO, Brazil (AP) — The Soviet Union easily defeated Japan 94-96 before 13,000 in the Women World Basektball Championships Thursday night. Brazil beat France 55-51 in the other game scheduled in the final round-robin.