

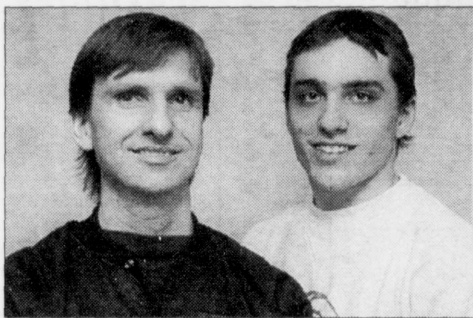
He gets it from his dad

Chris Ballantyne, whose father Neil was the first one to put a racquet in his hand, made his dad proud last weekend by winning the under-18 junior title at the B.C. racquetball championships.

The tournament in Burnaby was the first provincial competition for Chris, 17, who's been playing five or six years. It was easier than he expected, he says, because the pre-tournament junior favourite entered as an adult.

"I wish I had a little more competition down there. I kind of cakewalked through the juniors."

Ballantyne, who says only one of his five matches was competitive, feels he had the element of surprise because he was a newcomer to the provincial scene. In fact, he sensed the only player who gave him a good match took him lightly



Neil, left, and Chris Ballantyne

because Ballantyne came from Prince George.

Since it was his first time at this level even Ballantyne didn't know what to expect. "I was proud of the way I played."

The Kelly Road student loves the speed and power of racquetball.

That's why he picks racquetball over its long-handled cousin squash - he figures the latter is too slow.

"You need good hand-eye co-ordination (in racquetball). You need good reflexes."

It's too late for him to think about the Canadian junior championships this year, but he wants to be there next year in his final season as a junior.

But first it's the Kill Shot tournament this weekend to end the local season in a style that is sure to make his dad proud - as dad is Neil's doubles partner.

Roller hockey keeps on rockin'

The Northern B.C. Minor Roller Hockey Association is ready to roll again after overcoming organizational problems. The league, whose future was in doubt a couple of months ago, is back for a

fifth season with 300 players, about the same as last year.

"Our numbers are right back up to where they were last year. I think we're right on course," says new president Warren Woods.

The league has affiliated with Canadian Hockey Inline. It plays games at Kin II and the Coliseum from April 24 until the last week of June with players aged seven to 18 on 24 teams in five divisions.

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