Blades Scorched By Rocket Flame

OJHL Leaders Extend Hot Streak With Lopsided Win

KAMLOOPS 7, VERNON 1

Coach Bill Brown tried correcting last weekend's disastrous mistakes on the blackboard Monday night but his Blades flunked another test.

Hardhearted examiners were the classy Kamloops Rockets who can hand out some punishing lessons themselves.

Tuesday night before a thimbleful of Civic Arena fans they outplayed and outskated the hapless Vernon juniors to win their 13th game of the Okanagan Junior Hockey League season 7 to 1 and extend their unbeaten streak to 15.

Their convincing victory also thrust them ever farther into the league lead as they picked up two more points over second-place Kelowna. They now have 28 points to the Buckaroos' 22.

Tried Hard

The Blades tried hard to improve their play Tuesday —in fact they tried too hard. It only caused over-excitement which in turn created unbalance in their attack and holes in their defence.

But, taking the game as a whole, they played much better hockey than in Friday's nightmare with Kelowna — better than the score indicated. This proved they must have taken some of Coach Brown's exasperated advice to task.

Monday night instead of holding a regular ice workout and practice Brown collected his blue and white brood together for a "hard talk." The blackboard was dusted off and some of the team's glaring boo-boos were aired and discussed.

"There wasn't a single player absent from that meeting except Nuyens who was injured," Brown said later. "I'm sure they wanted the opportunity to find out why they were playing so poorly."

In the game with Kamloops they were able at times to control the play— but never the puck. This killed them. Rookies goaltender Dave Groenhausen continued to work shakily in the nets. This killed them. Penalties kept their ice strength fluctuating at a low level. This, too, killed them.

Outshot Rockets

Consider this fact: Vernon outshot the Rockets 36 to 29 yet they wound up on the skinny end of a 7 to 1 score.

It reveals they visited the enemy zone fairly frequently but with poor attack formations and feeble shooting power. And it shows the Rockets were fast on the uptake, using the breaks and their own playmaking prowess to make scoring bids count.

The Rockets let the rookies and second stringers have their way Tuesday and they made a big night of it. Winger Bill Cochran, no potent scoring threat, blasted three pucks past the pipes to lead the way, followed by freshman Eddie Begg with a brace, both unassisted efforts.

Rick McShane, another rookie, collected three points on a goal and two assists and the OJHL scoring leader Glen Madsen notched the remaining marker.

Stein Lone Scorer

For the Blades it was Bobby Stein who did the honors midway through the third period to botch up Roy Hart's shutout bid.

John Macko, the blueline ace from Revelstoke, got the assist to top off another solid performance.

To the small but thoroughly enraged crowd Tuesday night it looked for a while as if Alex Kashuba was trying to disprove the "rotten refereeing" charges recently levelled his way by Rocket manager Don Brown.

Out of the 13 penalties given during the night Alex aimed his thumb at Vernon players eight times—four in a row in the second period. Buck Sherk sat the longest in the box with a fighting major, a kneeing and a roughing penalty.

The highflying Rockets pounded in four goals in the first period, one in the second and two in the final to get their easy win.

,Cochran opened it with a beauty after five minutes had ticked by, streaking in on the left side with a McShane pass that Groenhausen had no chance on.

But the Vernon goalie had chances on the next three and came off badly. Begg got his first unassisted marker at the nine-minute mark on a close-in shot closely followed by McShane's tally from Lloyd Wright and Bill Steinke. Begg again collected with 12 seconds remaining in the period to make it 4 to 0.

The Rockets scored their fifth while Sherk and Kineshanko were in the penalty box, a fact that raised angry hackles on the necks of the crowd.

Madsen scored it, sweeping in a loose puck deposited by Larry Bedard in front of the net. Cochran added another early in the third and it was 6 to 0 for Kamloops.

Both sides were shorthanded with Sherk and Ron Recchi off for tussling when Stein scored his surprise goal, taking a deft Macko pass on the right side.

Then Cochran ended the lopsided struggle at 14:48 with McShane again helping.

The Blades travel to the Hub City Saturday night for a return contest with the Rockets. Then the following Friday they meet the Penticton Junior Vees.

TURKEY SHOOT

Commonage Club House

SUNDAY