

# Bucks Alone In First; Just Thank The Blades

## Homesters Slip Farther Back With Double Weekend Losses

KELOWNA 5, 4; VERNON 3, 2

Kelowna Buckaroos are all alone in first place in the Okanagan Junior "A" Hockey League and for this they cordially thank the Vernon Blades.

Because the Blades helped the Buckaroos to usurp this exalted position from Kamloops Rockets when they bowed twice to the Orchard City Cowboys in back-to-back games on the weekend.

Friday night they effected a Buckaroo tie with the Rockets when they fell 5-3 in Kelowna and Saturday night they lay down 4-2 here at the Civic Arena, a convenient carpet on which the Bucks waltzed into first.

All very sporting and Samaritan but hardly contributing to their own cause which, with every loss they suffer, gets more hopeless as the season progresses.

### Unenviable Record

The Blades now have the unenviable record of 3 wins and 13 losses for six points. Somewhere up in the clouds are second place Kamloops Rockets with a 9 and 4 mark and 18 points and just above them the Buckaroos with 10 wins, 5 losses and 20 league-leading points.

It looked, when the week started, as if the Blades were at last going to awake and sing when they upset the Rockets 6-3 here last Tuesday night.

But the song soon turned into a croak the following Wednesday night when the Rockets returned the favor with a vengeance, 12-2 up at Kamloops. And then came the double defeats to Kelowna on the weekend.

One step forward, three steps back. The same, old, dreary dance with the Rockets and Buckaroos calling the tune.

The Blades now get a weeks' holiday in which to recuperate and recoup what resources they have at their disposal. They next play on Saturday, Nov. 30 at Kamloops and the following Tuesday back here at Civic Arena with the Rockets as visitors.

Those Friday and Saturday games with the Buckaroos pointed out one glaring paradox in the Blades: they play better hockey in Kelowna than they do on home ice.

### World-Beaters

Friday night they looked like world-beaters and they almost emerged as Buckaroo-beaters. They outplayed Kelowna, they outthrust Kelowna and they outshot Kelowna 34-20.

But the Buckaroos, thanks to a few breaks and some Vernon defensive lapses, ended up after 60 minutes with a superior number of goals, that most important of all winning ingredients.

Back here at the Civic Arena Saturday the situation was just the opposite with the Buckaroos rarely being pushed (until the late stages of the third period) by a listless and loose corps of Blades.

The only consistently good player for Vernon over the weekend was goaltender Brian Woodward. The young Salmon Arm rookie made some big stops in both games and the scores could have been much higher but for his aplomb in the nets.

As they have done on a number of occasions already this season the Blades took the initial lead in Friday's game in Kelowna, only to

blow it in the stretch drive. In the first period they jumped to a 2-0 lead, the Buckaroos pared it to 2-1 by the end of frame and had a 4-3 edge going into the third period when they added another goal for insurance.

John Strong, the Buckaroos' leading scorer, continued to fatten his point total Friday, firing in two goals with brother Terry assisting both times. Other Kelowna goal-getters were Gordie Schnepf, Ken Kivisto and Harvey Stolz who potted the winner midway through the second period.

### Scoring Debut

Howie McNeil made his scoring debut in the OJHL this season with Vernon's second goal in the first period on a slick play from Ralph Litzenberger. Defence man Jim Stephen blasted in the opener with a slapshot and Bobby Stein gave the Blades a short-term tie in the second period, Gordie Kineshanko and Dale Sorochnik making the initial play.

Twelve penalties were called by referee Johnny Culos, seven going to Kelowna. Sorochnik and John Strong scuffed a bit to open the third period and drew roughing minors.

It was Kelowna who took a 2-0 lead the following night and the Blades never mustered enough momentum to make the comeback although they came close in the dying seconds of the third period with the score 3-2.

However it was not to be. With six attacking and Woodward on the bench Marcello Verna suddenly got a break-away for Kelowna and fired the "killer" into an open net.

John Strong also scored for the Buckaroos as did Doug Chisholm and Harvey Stolz. Terry Kasubuchi assisted twice.

Bobby Stein blazed in a beauty in the second period to put the Blades behind 2-1 and was threatening to add more when injury struck. Coursing down the right side on an attack sortie he was checked

heavily into the boards and was carried off the ice with a badly bruised hip and bruised back muscles which could put him out of action for a week or more. He is presently in hospital.

With the score 3-1 Buck Sherk gave the Blues some last gasp life with about five minutes to full time when he tipped in a drive from Corky Agar from close range.

Referee Art Davison called nine penalties, five to Vernon. Verna and Jim Stephen drew five minutes apiece for a fracas in the second period.

### Friday Game Summary

First Period: 1. Vernon, Stephen (unassisted) 7:53. 2. Vernon, McNeil (Litzenberger) 10:10. 3. Kelowna, Schnepf (R. Bulach) 13:24. Penalties — Chisholm (cross-checking) 6:31; Verna (elbowing) 15:23; Stephen (tripping) 17:50.

Second Period: 4. Kelowna, J. Strong (T. Strong, Kasubuchi) 2:04. 5. Kelowna, J. Strong (T. Strong) 7:00. 6. Vernon, Stein (Kineshanko, Sorochnik) 8:52. 7. Kelowna, Stolz (unassisted) 10:37. Penalties — MacKay (tripping) 0:47; Ueda (hooking) 9:34; McNeil (roughing) 12:25; Kineshanko (hooking) 17:27; Schnepf (elbowing) 19:49.

Third Period: 8. Kelowna, Kivisto (Chisholm, Kasubuchi) 15:27. Penalties — Sorochnik, J. Strong (roughing) 1:44; J. Strong (elbowing) 7:55; T. Strong (tripping) 18:40.

### Shots:

Robinson	14	5	15—34
Woodward	7	9	4—20

### Saturday Game Summary

First Period: 1. Kelowna, Chisholm (Stolz, Kasubuchi) 6:35. Penalties — Wutzke (broken stick) 4:29; MacKay (tripping) 5:56.

Second Period: 2. Kelowna, J. Strong (Chisholm) 2:27. 3. Vernon, Stein (Sorochnik) 13:59. 4. Kelowna, Stolz (Kasubuchi) 14:11. Penalties — D. Bulach (tripping) 6:48; Litzenberger (charging) 11:39; T. Strong (kneeing) 13:07; Verna, Stephen (fighting) 17:38.

Third Period: 5. Vernon, Sherk (Agar) 14:34. 6. Kelowna, Verna (unassisted) 19:49. Penalties — Nuyens (tripping) 5:37; Kivisto (tripping) 12:44.

### Shots:

Woodward	10	11	11—32
Robinson	9	9	11—29

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