

League Leading Kamloopsians Here Saturday

Vernon Blades confront Kamloops Rockets for the second straight time in a week Saturday night when they host the Okanagan Junior "A" Hockey League leaders at the Civic Arena.

Game time for the clash is 9 p.m. and if it is anything like the previous meetings here between these two clubs, fans should get their money's worth.

In three out of five visits to Vernon this season the Rockets have been skunked, the last time in a thrilling, overtime affair that the Blades took 9-7.

However, the word out of Kamloops has it that coach Kenny Stewart is fixing to have his club sweep their road trip and take a commanding lead in the OJHL. So the Blades can expect trouble, especially if they're in the same sparse state, player-wise, that they were in Kamloops.

The Rockets presently lead Kelowna Buckaroos by four points but this could change overnight if the Bucks should suddenly get hot again.

Fans should note there will be no game here next Tuesday, Christmas Eve, as originally scheduled. The game will be set ahead to January 7.

Dominate Top Ten

Rocket Scorers Just One Big Happy Family

The Okanagan Junior "A" Hockey League scoring race has developed into strictly an all-Kamloops show with Rocket marksmen solidly holding down the first four positions.

According to statistics released this week Kamloops' all-everything centre Eric Shishido still leads the way with 41 points on 15 goals and 26 assists.

Teammate Brian Fourt remains right behind with 39 points on a league-leading 24 goals and 15 assists. And breathing down his neck are two more Rockets, both of which work on the same line as he does: Centre Glen Richards and winger Larry Roberge, each with 38 points.

Next comes Kelowna Buckaroos' John Strong to finally break the Rocket monopoly. Strong, to date, has 36 points on 19 goals and 17 assists.

Another Buckaroo, Richard Bulach, thanks to a four-goal splurge on the weekend, has pushed his way into the Top Ten with 30 points on 11 goals and 19 helpers.

Murray Owen of Kamloops has also come up suddenly of late, collecting nine points in his last three games to amass at total of 20 on 10 goals and 10 assists. So has Rick McShane, also of the Rockets, who now boasts 19 after a slow beginning.

Harvey Budarick is once again tops in the goaltending department after a short reign by his standin Lee Simpson.

In league standings the Rockets hold a four-point lead over second place Kelowna. They have the best goals-for-and-against record, 144 to their credit and 82 on the debit side of the ledger.

Vernon Blades, mired in the league basement, manage to lead in two dubious departments, most goals against and most penalties in minutes.

League Standings

	W	L	T	P	P
Kamloops	15	6	0	285	30
Kelowna	13	8	0	327	26
Vernon	4	18	0	357	8

League Scoring

(more than 15 points)

	G	A	PIM	P
Shishido (K)	15	26	2	41
Fourt (K)	24	15	28	39
Roberge (K)	17	21	23	38
Richards (K)	11	27	48	38
Strong (K)	19	17	45	36
Sandyke (K)	19	15	13	34
Agar (V)	17	15	10	32
Bulach (Kel)	11	19	22	30
Stolz (Kel)	18	11	29	29
Stein (V)	17	11	4	28
Steinke (K)	7	18	55	25
Rinaldi (K)	4	21	53	25
Strong (Kel)	7	17	14	24
Verna (Kel)	14	8	21	22
Begg (K)	6	16	2	22
Owen (K)	10	10	0	20
Schnepf (K)	13	6	30	19
McShane (K)	9	10	4	19
Sherk (V)	8	11	54	19
Kasubuchi (K)	7	10	20	17
Sorochuk (V)	6	11	37	17

Goalkeepers Averages

Budarick (K)	10	36	3.60
Simpson (K)	12	45	3.75
Robinson (Kel)	19	92	4.84
Woodward (V)	19	118	6.21
Taylor (V)	4	30	7.50

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**BOYS' SHOPS**

Rocketeers Pad OJHL Lead With Blade Pelts

Blues Face Kamloops Barrage With One Defenceman, Plus 9

KAMLOOPS 11, VERNON 1

The rich got richer and the poor inevitably got poorer when Vernon Blades paid their sixth visit of the season to Rocketville Wednesday night.

The Rockets, currently sitting fat and happy atop the Okanagan Junior "A" Hockey League, added a little more padding to their plush pulpit by stomping on the powerless and pauperish Blades, 11-1.

The victory, their eleventh straight on home ice, boosted them four points ahead of second running Kelowna Buckaroos who they caught and left behind last weekend by sweeping a home-and-away series, 6-3 and 7-4.

The Rockets now have 30 points on 15 wins, the Cowboys trail with 26 on 13 victories.

Where Are They?

And the Blades? Well, if you possess a powerful set of peepers and you squint hard enough you might make out a vague shape down the cellar steps at about the eight-point level. Yeah, Charlie, that's them!

As the score blatantly advertises, Wednesday night's game wasn't what you'd call a "could-have-gone-either-way" affair. It was an even Steven match for 49 seconds to be exact, the time it took for the Rockets to rifle in the first of their 11 goals after the initial faceoff formalities.

The Blades, it should be admitted, did their best or tried to but it just wasn't sufficient to muffle the incessant roar of Kenny Stewart's Missilemen.

And anyway what, if I may be so free to ask, can you possibly do with one defence-man?

Because that's all the Blades had Wednesday, a tireless gent by the name of Jim Stephen and nine forwards. Two of Vernon's rearguards, Gordie Nuyens and Wilf Tanntrum, have quit and a third, Dave MacKay, was hitting the books for Christmas exams.

So it meant that Stephen had to go the full sixty minutes with members of the forward brigade doing double-time to fill in the other rear-guard slot. Actually, Stephen played 58 minutes as he earned an enforced but much welcome rest in the sin bin when he tripped a Rocketeer in the second period.

On Defensive

Such a situation automatically put the Blades on the defensive from the opening whistle and, except for occasional sorties into the Rocket zone, that's the way they had to play it.

The Rockets, as expected, had a field day in point-collecting, and all three of their forward lines, not just one.

Stewart's first line, centred by Murray Owen and flanked by Rick McShane and Robbie Jamieson, was the most prolific. Owen, whose skating, passing and shooting prowess improves as his bad knee improves, scored a goal and set up four more, McShane tallied twice and assisted on

another pair and Jamieson countered once. Jim Harrison, who also saw action on this platoon, notched a singleton as well.

Glen "Cowboy" Richards' line did pretty fair too. The shifty centreman scored two goals and assisted once, right winger Brian Fourn banged in another and set up Richards once and Larry Roberge contributed two assists.

On the third line it was centre Eric Shishido with

two goals and an assist, wingman Eddie Begg with a goal and opposite flanker Dale Sandyke with two assists.

Bobby Stein prevented it from being a complete whitewash when he tallied unassisted for the Blades early in the third period.

The Rockets scored four times in the first period, McShane, Fourn, Shishido, and Begg in that order; added another four in the middle frame thanks to Richards (twice), McShane and Harrison; and iced the cake on goals by Jamieson, Shishido and Owen in the third.

Only four penalties were called, two each way. The Rockets outshot their victims 43-31.



MICKEY McDOWELL



BILL STURN

Two Vernon Boys To Play Key Roles For Olympics

Vernon will have a personal stake in the fortunes of Father Bauer's Canadian Olympic hockey team when it competes in the Winter Olympics next February.

Because two former Vernon boys will be involved with the club: Mickey McDowell, as a player and Bill Sturn, as business manager.

For Mickey, this is his second year with Father Bauer's dream team and he is expected to play an integral role in helping Canada try for another world championship.

Born and raised in Vernon, Mickey got his early hockey training in local minor hockey ranks, playing up through to Junior B. He also played for the Vernon Senior Canadians, and had a year of hockey on the prairies as well.

Mickey suffered a shoulder separation just recently but according to reports received by his father, Charlie McDowell, it isn't too serious and he will probably see action when the Olympics play the Czech national team in Vancouver Sunday.

Bill Sturn, also born in Vernon, doesn't play but he has just as important a job to do as the Olympic team's business manager.

There is a great amount of paper work concerning the team's affairs and Bill handles much of it, taking charge of such things as publicity, public relations and

road trip arrangements. He is also general manager of the UBC Thunderbirds hockey club.

Bill, 22, is taking graduate studies in education at UBC. He already holds a BSc degree from the same university.

Panthers Hop Across To Tonasket

Vernon Panthers hop across the line tonight for a return bout with Tonasket Tigers.

For Jim Webster's basketball squad this will be the first time they have ever played outside the province and the Panther coach hopes his boys will give a good account of themselves.

Last Friday the Tigers invaded the Vernon Senior High School gymnasium and whupped the tar out of the Panthers by a 57-29 score. Tonasket's "B" team did just as well against the local Jaycee Spartans, pounding them 50-31.

Webster is planning tonight to try and upset Tonasket's strategy which worked so well up here, namely, a full court press with no holds barred.

The Tonasket game is the Panthers' last of the fall season.