

Blues Give Life To Fading Bucks

Lose 3-2 To Kelownians In Unimpressive Puck Tilt

KELOWNA 3, VERNON 2

Vernon Blades could have been executioners Tuesday night but turned out to be life-savers instead.

Kelowna Buckaroos, faced with early elimination from the Okanagan Junior "A" Hockey League playoffs, kept their slim championship hopes flickering by turning back Vernon's would-be death-dealers 3-2 before a Civic Arena assembly of about 1,000.

The win pulled the Bucks into a tie with the Blades in the current round robin series, each club having two wins to their credit. However, by edging out the Blades, they were at the same time increasing the Rockets' chances of taking the whole playoff bundle Wednesday night when they hosted the surprising Vernon Juniors in their final home stand of the season.

Golden Opportunity

The Blues, on their side of the ledger, had a golden opportunity of slipping to within a game of Kenny Stewart's classy crew Tuesday as a follow-up to their glorious 7-3 rout over the Rockets here Sunday.

But they just didn't have the oomph to get by the Buckaroos and as a result saw their own playoff aspirations cloud over.

The game Tuesday had little to recommend it as exciting playoff entertainment. Both Vernon and Kelowna came up with less than satisfying performances, particularly in the first period.

Vernon, with a few breaks, could well have taken the contest because the Buckaroos were definitely unimpressive in winning. Countless Blade scoring chances went by the wayside—shots hitting posts, goalmouth passes mis-connecting by inches, loose pucks skidding harmlessly away from Vernon sticks.

Although the Blades show-

ed plenty of spirit they were sorely hampered by player ailments. Defenceman Gordie Nuyens operated with a racked-up shoulder, frozen for the game; Ike Coulter played the first two periods then had to make an exit, 'flu the cause; Buck Sherk, one of the Blades' driving spirits in the playoffs, hurt his shoulder in the first period and could only run at three-quarter speed for the remainder of the game; Wilf Tantrum, reserve defenceman, never showed up at all.

Poor Odds

This left eight healthy souls versus 15 sound, solid Buckaroos. Not the kind of odds calculated to make a coach kick his heels in jubilation.

Defensive errors didn't help the cause much—in fact blueline boners led to the Blades' downfall.

Midway through third period, with the score 2-2, Buckaroos' stick-handling sharpie John Strong got around the usually rock-hard bastion of Dave MacKay and let loose a low sizzler under Brian Woodward for the Kelowna clincher.

The Cowboys' first two goals came via the same route, loosely cleared pucks ending up behind Woodward instead of on the sticks of Vernon forwards.

Gordie Schnepf, a tall, loose-limbed lunk built to lumberjack specifications, rattled in the first one 54 seconds into the middle period to break a scoreless deadlock and Marcello Verna, his fiery centremate, clicked less than a minute later.

Blades Aroused

This two-goal surge succeeded in rousing the Blades from slumber and before the period was half-way through

they had tied it up on goals by Dale Sorochnik and Corky Agar.

Sorochnik's shot came 44 seconds after Verna had ceased fire. A slapshot by defenceman Jim Stephen went wide and rebounded off the back boards to Sorochnik opposite an open corner. Zing!

Agar's goal at the eight-minute mark was a real dazzler. Nuyens rushed up the ice from behind his own net, stick-handled down to the Kelowna blueline where he shoveled the puck to Agar into the clear on the left wing. Agar thence picked a corner to Richard Robinson's left and it was 2-2.

The Blades came close to taking the lead before the period ended but no damage was done although they had the Bucks well bottled in their own zone.

They slacked off in the third frame and at 10:22 Strong showed them the error of their ways with his break-away effort.

As the clock ran out the Blues mounted a frenzied offensive but sharp Kelowna fore-checking kept them off balance. In the final minute coach Jim Moro yanked Woodward for an extra attacker but to no avail.

Referee Dale Cassell of Kamloops levied 13 penalties in the rough but cleanly played clash. The Buckaroos received eight. Shots on goal were an equal 19-19.

Summary

First Period: No. scoring. Penalties—Chisholm (tripping) 2:05; McClelland (high sticking) 5:11; Sorochnik (interference) 10:43; Kasubuchi (hooking) 11:20; Chisholm (elbowing), Sherk (roughing) 16:51.

Second Period: 1. Kelowna, Schnepf (Verna) 0:54. 2. Kelowna, Verna (Ueda, Schnepf) 1:43. 3. Vernon, Sorochnik (Stephen) 2:27. 4. Vernon, Agar (Nuyens) 8:00. Penalties—T. Strong (elbowing) 2:18; Kivisto (tripping) 5:53; Coulter (holding) 9:39; Schnepf (holding) 15:06; Stein (boarding) 19:15.

Third Period: 5. Kelowna, J. Strong (T. Strong, Stolz) 10:22. Penalties—Wildemann (tripping) 6:43; MacKay (holding) 14:30.

Shots: Woodward 5, 4, 10—19; Robinson 6, 5, 8—19.

10 BIG SPECIALS

Gordon Skinner

SHOP! SAVE!

Rockets Take Jr. Title; Obliterate Blades 15-1

KAMLOOPS 15, VERNON 1

Kamloops Rockets gobbled up Vernon Blades and their third successive Okanagan Junior "A" Hockey League championship Wednesday night.

The Rockets utterly obliterated the Blades 15-1, the worst beating of the season, to win their sixth game of the OJHL round robin playoff series and pull out of reach of either the Blades or Kelowna Buckaroos, presently tied for runner-up spot with two wins apiece with only two games left to play.

Kenny Stewart's starry pucksters now advance against the winner of the Kootenay zone championship in a best of five semi-final series leading to the B.C. finals.

First game is scheduled for February 28 with Kamloops the hosting club. The other semi-final sees New Westminster, the Lower Mainland champ, versus the Cariboo winner.

Begg Led Attack

Eddie Begg led the overwhelming Rocket attack Wednesday night, scoring four goals and setting up three more.

The most the Blades could muster was a single goal by Buck Sherk early in the first period which gave them a temporary 1-0 lead.

The Rockets led 4-1 after the opening period, upped the count to 8-1 in the second

stanza and rattled in seven more goals in the final 20 minutes just for laughs.

If the Blades had a star in the game it had to be valiant little goalie Brian Woodward who was outstanding in utter defeat, stopping more than 50 Kamloops shots, many of them fired at point blank range.

Defence Lacking

The Vernon defence was sadly lacking with the absence of all-star nominee Gordie Nuyens who had his shoulder in a sling due to an injury suffered late in Sunday's game.

He will likely be out for the rest of the season which ends next Tuesday. The Blades play two "practice" playoff games, versus Kamloops Saturday night here in Vernon and against the Buckaroos in Kelowna Tuesday. The Bucks host the Rockets Friday night in the third, now meaningless, contest.

Selection of the OJHL all-star team for the 1963-64 season is expected to be made shortly. An exhibition game between the all-stars and possibly Vernon's old senior Canadians may also be in the offing.

Gravellers Finish First In Volleyball

Hall's Gravel finished first in the Commercial Volleyball League at the conclusion of regular play last Thursday.

The Gravelboys beat out Teachers for the coveted spot by two points, collecting 26 to the latter's 24.

Schedule for the round robin playoffs set to get underway tonight is as follows:

7:30 p.m.: Halls Gravel vs Telephones; Teachers vs Galbraiths.

8:45 p.m.: Art's BA vs Royalite; Sickly Six vs Kiwanis.

There is no charge for spectators. Come and cheer for your favorite team.

Final Standings: Halls Gravel 26, Teachers 24, Art's BA 18, Sickly Six 16, Kiwanis 12, Royalites 6, Galbraiths 6, Telephones 4.

January Milk Total Tops 1963

Total production of qualifying milk in the Kamloops-Okanagan area of production during January, 1964 was