

# Smokin' Hot Blades Say 'Nix' To Four-Year Jinx

## Rout Rockets On Home Pad To Sweep Two-Game Series

VERNON 7, 5; KAMLOOPS 4, 3

A four-year jinx ended for Vernon Blades Sunday and Kamloops Rockets will never be quite the same again.

The Blades, currently the hottest team in the Okanagan Junior "A" Hockey League, did the wild, the wacky and the wonderful by beating the Rockets on their home ice. The score: a too-good-to-be-true 5-3.

The exhilarating victory represents a major milestone in the history of the Blades. Until Sunday they had never ever defeated the Rockets in Kamloops Memorial Arena—not in four years of trying, which by coincidence, is the life span of the OJHL.

Now they've done it and the last thin veneer of invincibility surrounding the perennial league champions has been irreparably cracked asunder.

But that stunning upset is just half the happy story.

Friday night herein Vernon the Blades dazzled a smallish but enthusiastic hometown crowd by whipping the Rockets 7-4 in one of the finest junior hockey games ever seen at the Civic Arena.

The double weekend sweep boosted the torrid Blades four points closer to the front-running Rockets and within hailing distance of the second place Kelowna Buckaroos. They have now gone seven games unbeaten.

The two jolting losses were the third and fourth in a row for the Rockets, the longest losing streak they have ever suffered since the league began.

"It was a terrific game, said a deliriously happy coach Hap Schaefer of Sunday's spectacular coup. "The boys were really flying out there, especially in the first and third periods."

It was in the third period, traditionally the period when the Rockets go into orbit, that the Blades lowered the boom.

Tied 2-2 going into the final stanza the Blades grabbed a 3-2 edge at the nine-minute mark, acknowledged a quick Kamloops reply two minutes later, then broke for the finish with a pair of rapid goals within a 60-second span. George Watson, a starry

centre brought up from juvenile ranks, delivered the killing blow at 14:52 of the third period, tipping in a slick pass-out from Allan Rogan and Marvin Maier.

It was left to the Old Campaigner, Buck Sherk, to fire in the insurance marker at 15:43 with, appropriately enough, his closest comrade-in-arms, Bobby Stein, supplying the assist.

Although the Rockets tried to get a rally going, three fast penalties kept them short-handed for the duration of the game. Not that it would have made much difference. The Blades had an upset victory within their grasp and they weren't going to give it up, come hell or the whole NHL.

Watson, Sherk & Co. deservedly rate neon-lit words of praise for their efforts Sunday but by far the most outstanding individual performance was that of Maier, the Blades' most recent acquisition.

The fast-skating native of Moose Jaw, released two weeks ago by Penticton-Summerland, scored two goals for the Blades and helped engineer the winning counter, feats which won him first mention in the post-game three star selection.

Maier sniped his first goal early in the opening period with Watson on the assisting end and teamed up with Ralph Litzenberger on the only marker of the middle frame to tie the score after the Rockets had gone up 2-1 on back-to-back counters by Eddie Begg and Dale Sandyke.

Rogan deked his way in with a relay from defence-man Gary Koski for Vernon's go-ahead goal in the third period.

League scoring leader Eric Shishido accounted for Kamloops' third and last tally on a play from Beggs and Sandyke.

Total shots on goal indicate the Blades' edge in play. Vernon goalie Norm Schiman was called upon to block 21 while his

counterpart Harvey Budarick stopped 25.

There were only six penalties in the fast paced contest, three to each club. One Vernon penalty figured in scoring.

The Blades appeared for Sunday's game in spanking, new, white road uniforms. Whether this had something to do with their victory is questionable but it's worth mentioning.

Friday night the Blades were liveried in their battered old blue jerseys and they were good enough to beat the Rockets in. And oh, how they beat them!

Before Kenny Stewart's vaunted Missilemen knew quite what was about the dear ol' Boys in Blue had a 4-0 lead on them and, though this margin was cut down by varying degrees, the Rockets saw dust the whole route.

Dale Sorochnik was the individual hero in this one. The lanky winger, who appears headed for the best season of his junior hockey career, blazed in three goals and set up a fourth to show his mates the way.

Stein added a pair with singletons going to Sherk and Maier. Maier also collected three assists, giving him four points for the night.

The Blades took a 2-0 lead in the first period on goals by Stein and Sorochnik and Sherk made it 4-0 mid-

way through the second before Kamloops hit the scoreboard. And when they did it was Sorochnik who inadvertently tipped the puck in while attempting to dig it out from the corner of the crease.

Shishido got credit for this one as well as a later goal in the third period. Sandyke took care of the other two.

The Blades outshot the Rockets 36-23 in this game. There were only four penalties, three to Vernon.

In OJHL action elsewhere the Buckaroos pounced on Penticton-Summerland twice, 4-3 in Kelowna Friday and 5-3 down in Summerland Saturday.



**BE WISE!**

**TRACTIONIZE**

Your Tires NOW and SAVE!

Only **\$1.95**

—At—

**DUNLOP**

TIRE SALES & SERVICE  
2800 32nd St. 542-7862

## WANTED TO BUY

Entire Store Inventories - Machine Shops  
Logging Operations - Const. Equipment Spreads  
Sawmills - Entire Household Estates - Bankruptcies  
Liquidations

"Everything from Wall to Wall"

## IMMEDIATELY CASH

Phone or Write:

**RITCHIE BROS. AUCTIONEERS & APPRAISERS**  
332 Leon Avenue Kelowna, B.C.

Phone 762-2825

See  
**Al Kaulback!**

*Be Insurance Rich  
Without  
Being Insurance Poor!*

Example: At 25 years of age have a total \$15,000 protection in whole life and reducing term for only

**— \$6.00 a Month —**

(cash it in for nearly \$1,000 at 45 if you wish!)