

Essos regain second spot

Wayne Dye moved into top spot in the Essos scoring race Saturday night — alongside teammate Lawrence Quechuck as he scored two goals to lead Vernon to a 5-3 victory over the New Westminster Royals.

The goals also moved the pair into a two-way tie for third place in the league individual scoring standings.

From the opening face-off the win-hungry Royals applied the pressure and kept the Essos bottled in their own zone until the 10 mark of the first frame.

At that point, Dye broke loose and scored on L'Heureaux with assists going to Bob Mayer and Lawrence Quechuck.

Just one minute and twenty-five seconds later, Rick Munk broke away to almost beat L'Heureaux who just managed to turn aside the attempt. However Jack Marsh was in position to smash home the rebound to give the Essos a 2-0 lead.

New Westminster's first tally came off the stick of captain Terry Thomson at 18:03 to round out the period.

In the second frame, the scene of the action shifted to the Royals zone as the Essos bottled up the visitors behind their own blue-line. At 1:55 Wayne Dye scored his big encounter of the night as he beat the Royals netminder on a pass from Gerry Vachon. The goal was the prettiest of the evening as Dye saw his opportunity and boomed one home from six feet outside the blue line.

After missing several wide-open opportunities earlier in the game, Bob Blanchette gave the Essos a 4-1 lead at 3:02 of the second as he scored on a pass play from Bob Mayer and Barry Bleakley.

Rookie Gord Merritt picked up the fifth and final Essos goal at 14:40 of the second after a scramble in front of the Royals net. Assists were awarded to Jack Marsh and Rick Munk.

At 18:28, Bruce McGill made it 5-2 as he scored for the Royals to finish off the period.

As the Royals came out for the final frame, they had only one obvious thought in mind . . . to catch up. They fired 14 shots at Alexander and were only able to beat him on the trickiest one of all. Al Reid shot the puck high in the air in an attempt to clear it into the Vernon end. Alexander came out of the net to block the shot which should have landed at his feet and take a small hop towards the goal. In

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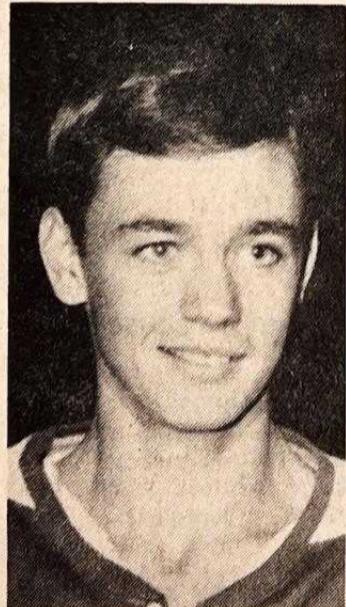
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stead, the puck landed on edge and rebounded high over Alexander's shoulders to settle once again inside the goal.

Alexander blocked 30 Royals attempts during the



LAWRENCE QUECHUCK



WAYNE DYE
... share scoring lead

game, while L'Heureaux was called upon to block 33.

The Essos called up and dressed Rick Munk of the Junior B Legionnaires for the contest, and he more than justified his existence as he picked up two assists and was instrumental in holding off numerous Royals attacks on the Vernon zone. In doing so, he practically assured himself of a spot in the 1969-70 lineup.

First Period Scoring: Ver. 10:30 Dye from Mayer and Quechuck; Ver. 11:55 J. Marsh from Merritt and Munk; N.W. 18:03 Thomson from Prior.

Penalties: 2:15 Blanchette Ver.; 8:40 Thomson NW; 9:28 Blanchette

Ver.; 18:27 D. Marsh Ver.; 17:00 Quechuck Ver.

Second Period Scoring: Ver. 1:55 Dye from Vachon; Ver. 3:02 Blanchette from Mayer and Bleakley; Ver. 14:40 Merritt from J. Marsh and Munk; NW 18:28 McGill from Wilson and Knights.

Penalties: 1:40 Reid NW; 10:08 Quechuck Ver.; 11:28 Wilson NW; 11:28 Dorohoy NW (10 min. misconduct); 19:28 Munk Ver.

Third Period Scoring: NW Reid from Thomson.

Penalties: 6:30 Dye Ver.; 14:35 Quechuck Ver.

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Playoff hopes fading fast

The New Westminster Royals gave up all hope of a playoff spot Sunday night after a 5-3 defeat at the hands of the Vernon Essos. The Royals hopes of such a berth were actually crushed by the Kelowna Buckaroos on Friday night as they defeated the Victoria Cougars in Kelowna.

The win put Kelowna practically out of reach of the resurging Royals who also scored a win Friday night in Penticton.

Said Coach Bob Love after Saturday's game in Vernon, "I guess that pretty well does it for us . . . this year. However, I only have to give up three good players because of age at the end of the season, so we'll be right back in there next season."

Love's Royals have been plagued by financial as well as games losses during the current season. Attendance at the New Westminster home games rarely passes the 100 mark which makes it extremely difficult to set any money aside for travelling expenses.

When asked what he plans to do about the crowd situation next year, Love replied, "The ideal situation would be for us to get into Chilliwack where we could draw a better crowd, however since that would call for 60 miles of travel even to practice, I've been eyeing the Haney rink." Haney's rink is quite small,

but a small rink filled to capacity is one heck of a lot better than a big rink with no one in it."

The Royals took to the ice Saturday night still fired up from their 5-3 win the night previous over the Penticton Broncos.

The Royals were only able to score one goal in each period against the tenacious goal-tending of Vernon's Al Alexander and seemed to lose their drive during the second period as Vernon moved into a 5-2 lead. However, the Vernon defensive unit found themselves hard pressed in the final frame to hold to the attacking Royals who wanted desperately to repeat their performance of the night before and score a come-back victory.

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