

Up 3-2 in series

Home ice helps Vernon take lead

By DOUG BULWER
Victoria 5 Vernon 2
Vernon 3, Victoria 1

After watching a weary looking Vernon Esso team drop their fourth game against Victoria Cougars in the Capital city Monday night by a wide 5-2 score, expectations that the local boys would come back with a convincing win to go ahead once more in the B.C. Junior A finals series Wednesday night is surprising to say the least.

Wednesday night, Essos looked like the Essos of old as they did almost everything right and with superb goal tending on the part of Gary Osborne came up with a really convincing win over the fast skating Victoria club.

In the Monday night encounter, it was nearly all Victoria as the host club came on strong in the first period to register two goals, one each by John Kwasney and Chris Riddell.

Gordie Osinchuk came back with a Vernon Marker at 15:32 of the middle frame only to have Victoria come back with a goal one minute later, followed by less than a minute by Jack Marsh scoring unassisted to keep pace for the moment with the fast skating Cougars.

In the final period, it was all Victoria as Vernon succumbed to superior pressure and allowing Cougars to come through with a pair of insurance markers and register the equalizer in games played.

Lon Miles and Ted Plowe were the scorers in this period for the victors.

Back home again for the fifth game of the series, Vernon made no mistake as they came on strong to out skate the Cougars in the first period with Lawrence Quechuk picking up the only marker at 14:55 when he banged in a pass-out play after Jack Marsh and John Price swarmed all over the Cougar net, nearly scoring themselves as they tried to beat Ed Forslund in the Victoria nets.

Quechuk was standing about 15 out in the slot and merely banged in the pass as it came back to him.

In the second frame, Wayne Dye took advantage of a power-play situation to score with Jack Marsh and John Price again doing the hard work.

Ted Plowe of the Cougars had been sent off at 13:46 and with the extra man advantage, Essos really worked around the Cougar nets, with Dye scoring at the 15:00 minute mark.

Holding the 2-0 lead going into the final frame it looked like the Essos might just white-wash the visitors as Wayne Dye came through with his second marker of the game at the 7:31 mark with Bob Craig and Barry Bleakley setting him up.

It looked for a moment however that Dye had stolen the puck off the stick of a Cougar player in the centre ice area and swooped in on a defenceless Ed Forslund who hardly made a move when Dye drove a hard slap shot past him.

The well deserved shutout Gary Osborne was working for was spoiled at the 12:04 mark of the period when Alex Shibicky scored from a three-way play with Ted Plowe and Bruce Cowick in on the assists.

This goal came after Jack Marsh had missed an open corner at the other end of the rink when he and his team mate John Price had worked the puck deep into Cougar territory.

Marsh was standing in front of Forslund when Price worked around a couple of Cougar

defenders and managed to put the puck on Marsh's stick who banged at it only to have the puck slip by the wide open right corner.

Tonight both teams head for the Victoria arena to play out game number six in the series and if the Essos can stay hot as

Wednesday nights game was indicated, they will have earned the right to the B.C. championship title, if not, the seventh and deciding game comes back to Vernon Friday night with the winner taking on Weyburn Saskatchewan Sunday night at the home of the B.C. winner.

Crowd cheers Alexander

Intermediates drop two straight at P.G.

By DOUG MARTIN
PRINCE GEORGE — Prince George Mohawks overpowered Vernon Luckies 9-3 and 11-2 during the weekend — their ninth and 10th consecutive victories — to advance one step deeper into Coy Cup playoffs.

Mohawks now travel to Powell River to meet the coast champion Regals in a best-of-three British Columbia intermediate hockey semi-final.

Regals, coached by former Prince George defenceman Bob Crawford, won a best-of-three playoff from Shmyr Flyers of Couquitlam during the weekend.

Games will be played Friday, Saturday and, if necessary, Sunday.

Vernon was simply no match for the bigger, better-conditioned Prince George team.

Luckies played only 13 previous games, eight of them exhibitions.

Mohawks were sharpened and toughened by a half-season in the Cariboo Hockey League, the CHL playoffs and two playoff games against northern champion Fort St. John.

Larry Vander Graff, the big centre whose precision passing helped spark the winning streak when he was placed on a line with Trent Beatty and Bill Bell 10 games ago, turned gunner himself in the weekend games.

Tie and win registered in playoffs

In midget house league hockey semi-final playoff series, the opening games last weekend saw Totems and Eagles battle out to a 4-4 tie in the B section and Eagles come through with a surprising 3-2 win over the high flying Bantam Rep team.

The semi-finals have been set for a best of three series with the second games planned for this weekend.

Lyle Brewer scored twice for the Totems while single came from Tony Sparrow and Rick Garbutt.

For the Flyers it was all single efforts as Walter Jaster, Lawrence Louis, Henry Wilson and John Taylor came through with markers.

In the Eagles-Bantam game, Eagles started off well with Doug Morrison opening the scoring only to have the Bantams come back with a pair of goals to take a short lived lead. Pat Masnuk and Fernie Marchand did the scoring.

Ed Johnstone proved to be the downfall for the hard working Bantams as his two unanswered markers late in the game was enough to give the Eagles the win.

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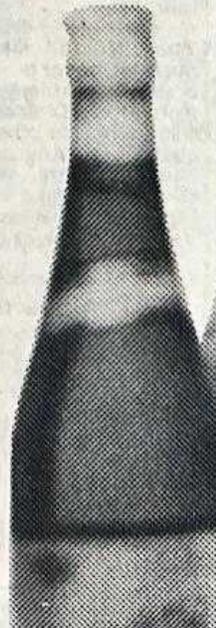
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