

## Undisputed leaders

# Vikings set the pace in Junior hockey action

By DOUG BULWER

Vernon Vikings remain undefeated today after six starts in the B.C. Junior A hockey league and have begun to make many so called experts both in and out of this tier two level of hockey in this province turn their collective heads toward Vernon to see what is going to happen next.

Wednesday night here at Vernon, the supposed battle of the giants was to unfold but when the smoke in the arena had cleared, the Vernon boys let it be known they are the undisputed leaders in this league so far this season.

Outscoring the visiting Broncos 3-2 after one period of play, Vernon came back much stronger in the middle frame with three unanswered goals then added two more to a single answer by Penticton in the final stanza to take the game by a wide 8-3 margin.

At no time in the game were the Vikings really pressed although they did slack off for the first two minutes of period number three to let in a soft goal with the defensive corps in cloud 13 for the moment.

Many questions are now running in the minds of the league followers and stems from how the Vikings will do when they finally take to the road for out of town games.

All six of their starts have been played on home ice but by the way they have been playing as a unit, barring a few mental let downs, they should do just as well on the other fellows ice.

Big test will come tomorrow night when they move into Kelowna, but indications and rumors coming out of that city show the Kelowna Buckaroo management and coaching staff really worried.

Good example of this came Wednesday night when it was noted the Vernon arena was swarming with Kelowna officials who to a man were busy making and comparing notes continuously throughout the game.

These scouting reports are sure to bring the Bucks heads together in close consultation as to how to stop the rampaging Viking squad.

Even the Kelowna players have been attending the Vernon games and there is no doubt they are trying to get themselves psyched up to meet this threat to their second place standing they now enjoy based on four wins in five starts.

Tremendous team effort, with some bad moments of listless hockey hardly holding them back, has given the new edition of the Vernon junior hockey club something really good to go on all the way to the B.C. championship title this year.

As far as can be noted, in all games they have played so far, having played six of the other seven teams in the league, except Kelowna, they have left no doubt they are much the better team-work style of squad than what has been seen in this league or area for a long while.

All that remains for them to do now is to improve their already high quality of ability with some additional improvement towards the mental letdowns they sometimes absorb particularly on defence.

Play by play action Wednesday night saw fast skating throughout with almost all the Vernon goals coming in spectacular fashion. One example of this style came at the three-quarter mark of the final period when Bob Burgoyne picked up a centre ice pass from Ken Price and swooped in almost unmolested to score from a sharp angle with the Vikings playing a man short at the time.

This goal probably epitomizes the whole Viking playing picture so far this season as they give it their everything even against tough odds.

Leading the scoring and point parade Wednesday was Dave Caldwell with a pair of goals plus a hard earned assist when he got the puck away to Barry Dye at the goal mouth even though he had been bodily dumped to

the ice a fraction of a second before.

Others coming in for scoring laurels were Gerry Munroe, Dave Dubbin, Martin Stein, Jeff Boychuk and as has been stated, Bob Burgoyne and Barry Dye, all with single markers.

Best man for the Broncos was Doug Lawton who came up with a pair of goals with the single coming from off the stick of Mark Patterson.

Penalties again play a shadowing effect on the B.C. junior hockey scene as two major fighting penalties were assessed Wednesday plus a total of 13 minors, and two game misconducts, with Penticton going off on 12 individual calls and Vernon getting the nod eight times.

Friday the Vikings are in Kelowna and then Saturday night return to their home confine to host White Rock for the second time this season. Game time here is 8 p.m.

## BCJHL roundup

Both British Columbia Junior Hockey League games Wednesday saw home town teams emerge victorious as Vernon Vikings led all the way, beating Penticton Broncos 8-3 and the Nanaimo Clippers beat Chilliwack Bruins 6-4.

It was the sixth straight win for Vernon and the first loss in five starts for Penticton.

Vernon led 3-2 after the first period, added three unanswered goals in the second and then outscored Penticton in the third.

Dave Caldwell led Vernon with two goals while Gerry Munro, Dave Dubbin, Barry Dye, Martin Stein, Bob Burgoyne and Jeff Boychuk added singles.

Doug Lawton had two goals for Penticton and Mark Patterson had one.

In Nanaimo, Dale Iwasiuk, Al Hill, Al Dreger, Morley Anderson, Clint Eccles and Jeff Frketch scored for the Clippers.

