



Ferner leads Vikings to victory over Cents

Vernon Vikings defeated Merritt Centennials 6-2 before 427 fans in B.C. Junior Hockey League action Wednesday in Vernon.

TEAM	GP	W	L	T	P
Vernon	43	32	10	1	65
Nanaimo	45	26	14	5	57
Langley	44	23	18	3	49
Kelowna	41	23	17	1	47
Pent	44	18	22	4	40
Merritt	48	19	28	1	39
Maple Ridge	45	16	27	2	34
Chill	42	10	31	1	21

The win keeps first-place Vernon eight points ahead of Nanaimo Clippers, who beat Chilliwack Bruins 3-1. In another game on the coast, Langley Lords thumped Maple Ridge Blazers 9-3.

The effect of playing six games in eight days started showing on the Vikings, in the third period. However, when Merritt got through the defence, they couldn't beat Keith Ferner.

Ferner, who boasts the lowest goals against average in the league, had another sensational game blocking 33 shots. Centennial's goalie Brad Earp had a busy night with 46 saves, including 21 in the first period.

GOOD CHANCE
Merritt had an excellent opportunity to draw first blood when Vikings found themselves two-men short early in the opening period. But, captain Peter Poeschek did a magnificent job killing the penalties.

Vernon's most improved player in recent weeks, Rick Simpson, opened the scoring at 15:46 of the first period.

In the opening minute of the second period, Drew Tumbach had a goal disallowed on one of the rarest calls in hockey. After he scored, Merritt asked for a measurement of the curve in his stick. The curve was too big so referee Chuck Meadows disallowed the goal and Tumbach was handed a two-minute penalty.

Pat Dupuis, best player on the ice for the Cents, tied the game with a blast from the point on a powerplay, at 4:10. But, midway through the middle frame, Brian Maser, Jim Miesener, and Tumbach stretched the gap to 4-1, with goals within four minutes.

SCORED SECOND
Simpson, with his second of the night, and Steve Danshin made the score 6-1 in the third period before Merritt captain Darrell Zelinski beat Ferner in a scramble.

With 24 seconds remaining in the game, Ferner put on a little show of his own when he

went to the left of his net to faceoff against Zelinski. Luckily for defenceman Terry Anaka, who was covering the goal, the puck was cleared outside the blue line and Ferner had a chance to get back in the net.

Miesener, playing his first game for Vernon, replaced injured Calvin Halasz on the club's top line with Danshin and Ken Stroud. Halasz has been plagued with a bruised elbow and sore ribs so Vikings' Coach Joe Tennant decided to rest him.

Miesener played his minor

hockey in Vernon and started this year playing junior A in Taber, Alta.

LATE GOAL
In Chilliwack, Bob Dietler's goal at 19:47 of the third period ruined Steve Amis's shutout bid for the Clippers.

Gary Lupul, Geordie Robertson, and Mickey Willgress scored for Nanaimo. In Langley, Lords dominated the game firing 63 shots at Maple Ridge goals Larry Lozinski.

Vikings are back in action Saturday night when they host Chilliwack.

Brancato gets \$5,000 as coach of the year

EDMONTON (CP) — George Brancato earned \$5,000 Wednesday night as he continued Ottawa Rough Riders' domination of the Canadian Football League coach-of-the-year award.

Brancato was selected by the Football Reporters of Canada as the top CFL coach in 1975 to mark the fifth time an Ottawa head coach has taken the award in its 15-year history. He won the Amis Sticks trophy, named after a former Edmonton Eskimo coach, and a \$5,000 cheque.

Despite injuries that sidelined seven key players, Brancato directed Ottawa to a 10-5-1 record and a first-place finish in the Eastern Conference during the regular season. The Rough Riders, who allowed only 280 points to lead the CFL in that department, lost to Montreal Alouettes in the EPC playoff final.

Brancato, who specializes in overseeing the defence, paid

tribute to his injured players. "With all the walking wounded . . . we didn't have the same roster for two weeks in a row," he told a dinner crowd of about 400.

Brancato played seven seasons with Ottawa after graduating from Louisiana State University and playing in the National Football League. He was named defensive coach at

Ottawa under Jack Gotta in 1970 and took over the head coaching position in 1974, directing the team to a 7-9 record.

WENT WITH ROOKIES
He surprised many observers by casting his fate with two rookie quarterbacks in 1975. But his confidence in the youngsters paid off as Condredge Holloway put on a good early-season showing and Tom Clements finished strong to lead the EPC in passing and take CFL rookie-of-the-year honors.

Previous Ottawa winners were Frank Clair in 1966 and 1969 and Gotta in 1972 and 1973. Hamilton and Saskatchewan each have had two award-winning coaches, while British Columbia, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto and Montreal each have had one.

The award dinner, attended by all CFL coaches and many league executives, capped two days of CFL activity.

Rally planned this Sunday

Traction Masters Car Club is holding a Fill-in Rally Sunday, leaving from Polson Place Mall at 12:30 p.m.

Only two people per car, the driver and navigator, are allowed. A pen and paper are the only equipment needed. Entry fee is \$1 per person.

The course covers about 80 miles on good roads.

For further information phone Rick at 542-3927 (days), or 542-6148.

Still some doubt in San Francisco

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — President Chub Feeney of baseball's National League said Wednesday that Mayor George Moscone of San Francisco still "has a long way to go" to help the club this month for the club's sale to the Canadian group. "We'll be presenting the entire picture of the club's losing money six of the last seven

Sports
DON KENDALL, Sports Editor

Checkpoint
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