

Stroud leads Vikings to win

Ken Stroud scored three goals to lead Vernon Vikings to a 6-2 win over Pentiction Vees in B.C. Junior Hockey League action Saturday before 850 fans in Vernon.

Gary Gassoff tied the game at 2:17 of the second period when he intercepted a pass in the Vees' zone and drilled a shot past goaltender Pat Murphy, from 20 feet out. Then Stroud took over.



KEN STROUD
... big night

Billsten rounded out the scoring, in the final minute, when he combined with Stroud on a beautiful passing play.



DARRELL BILLSTEN
... most improved

Murphy blocked 41 shots for Pentiction while Ferner was called on to make only 24 saves for Vikings.

Vernon was assessed four of seven minor penalties.

SIDNICK RETURNS

Grant Sidnick, who quit Vikings a month ago to attend college, returned to the line-up and seemed to spark the club with his aggressive play.

However, Vernon lost rookie defenceman Dean Pratico. Pratico returned home to Revelstoke, prior to the game, apparently because his school marks were dropping. Vikings' Coach Joe Tennant doesn't expect him back this season.

Tennant said he was pleased with his club's effort, particularly Stroud and Billsten.

He said, "Our whole team played much better than in recent games. They worked hard both ways.

"Maybe our slump is over.

It looks like they want to win again."

Prior to Saturday's game, Vikings had lost two in-a-row and four of their last eight. However, for the first time in several weeks, Vernon looked like a first-place club.

Billsten's goals give him six in the last four games, after a mediocre start.

Tennant said, "I knew Billsten would come around sooner or later. He's too good a hockey player not to score 30 goals."

In other weekend games, Merritt Centenials surprised Kelowna Buckaroos 3-1, and Langley Lords exchanged a pair of 5-4 decisions with Chilliwack Bruins.

Vikings are back in action Tuesday when they travel to Kelowna to take on the Buckaroos.

BCJHL STANDINGS

TEAM	GP	W	L	T	Pts
Vernon	47	34	12	1	69
Nanaimo	48	29	14	5	63
Langley	50	26	21	3	55
Kelowna	45	26	18	1	53
Merritt	51	22	28	1	45
Pentiction	49	20	25	4	44
Maple Ridge	49	16	31	2	34
Chilliwack	47	11	35	1	23

The hat trick gives Stroud 21 goals this season, and the win was Vernon's 18th consecutive on home ice.

Pentiction took the lead early in the first period when Gord McKay raced down right wing and beat goalie Keith Ferner with one of his patented slapshots.

TIE-IN

The big right winger did most of the work himself on the first two goals, then tipped in Brian Maser's shot from the point for his third marker.

The second period ended 4-1. Darrell Billsten, Vikings' most improved player in recent games, made it 5-2 early in the final period.

Rod Zavaduk got Vees back on the track at 6:35 when he drilled a wrist shot, into the top corner, after some sloppy clearing by Vikings while killing a penalty.

Golden suffers weekend losses

First-place Salmon Arm Aces strengthened their hold on first-place in the Monashee Hockey League by recording back-to-back weekend victories in Golden.

Aces beat the Rockets 10-5 and 9-6, moving them six points ahead of second-place Grindrod Elks and Lumby Flying Frenchmen.

Dave Caldwell enjoyed a great weekend for Salmon Arm, scoring five goals in the first game, and three in the second.

In the 9-6 game, besides Caldwell's hat trick, Jeff Todd scored three while Bob Cameron added a pair. Wayne Dye collected a single for the winners.

Ron Penno and Jim Nelson scored two goals each for the Rockets while Brett Soles and Roy Patrick notched singles.

ELKS WIN

Saturday in Enderby, Grindrod Elks edged Revelstoke Selkirks 4-3 in a thriller.

Guy Davidson, with two, Wayne Clauson, and Rick Reilly scored for Elks. Mike Storey, Bob Sirianni and Ken Munroe countered for Selkirks.



DAVE CALDOW
... eight goals

Also Saturday, in Nakusp, Flying Frenchmen dumped the Falcons 8-4.

Graydon Brown and Willy Bevan scored three goals each for Lumby while Wally Bevan and Pete Turin added singles.

Rick Beingasser, Rod McGuinness, Greg Larsen, and Brian Roberts replied for Falcons.