Rangers eliminated from playoff picture

By GLENN COLE
The Canadian Press

Just last Wednesday, New York Rangers were enthusiastic about their chances of making the third and final playoff spot in the Patrick Division of the National Hockey League.

NHL

Campbell Conference					
Patrick Division					
	W	L	T	F	A	P
Phila	46	16	14	310	205	106
Islanders	46	19	12	279	183	104
Atlanta	33	33	11	252	254	77
Rangers	28	35	14	265	298	70
Smythe Division						
St Louis	30	37	9	219	261	69
Chicago	26	40	11	233	284	63
Vancouver	24	41	12	222	282	60
Minnesota	20	37	18	223	290	58
Colorado	19	44	14	211	291	52
Prince of Wales Conference						
Adams Division						
Buffalo	47	23	7	290	212	101
Boston	46	23	8	296	220	100
Toronto	33	31	13	293	274	79
Cleveland	24	40	12	229	274	60
Norris Division						
Montreal	58	8	11	371	167	127
Pittsburgh	32	32	13	229	242	77
Los Angeles	31	31	14	248	227	76
Washington	22	40	14	210	290	58
Detroit	16	51	9	178	299	41

The Rangers were only three points behind Atlanta Flames and had two games against a pair of NHL weaksisters—Washington Capitals on Friday and Chicago Black Hawks Sunday night.

Against the Capitals, the Rangers lost 7-2.

And New York Sunday, the Rangers' high-priced shooters fired blanks for the most part, lost 5-3 to the Black Hawks and found themselves out of the playoff hunt for the second consecutive season.

In other games Sunday, New York Islanders topped Cleveland Barons 6-3, Montreal Canadiens shut out Detroit Red Wings 6-0, Boston Bruins blanked Pittsburgh Penguins 3-0 and Washington Capitals outscored Toronto Maple Leafs 7-4.

SHUT OUT DETROIT

Saturday night, the Canadiens scored four times in the last 10 minutes to defeat Detroit 4-0. Boston came from behind to defeat the Leafs 7-5, Atlanta Flames eliminated Colorado from the playoffs with a 2-1 triumph over the Rockies, Chicago blasted Minnesota 7-2, Philadelphia Flyers smashed Vancouver Canucks 9-3, the Islanders outscored St. Louis Blues 5-2 and Los Angeles Kings defeated Buffalo Sabres 6-4.

Bob Murray scored twice in a 17-second span in the first minute of the second period to start the Hawks on their way.

Goaltender Mike Veisor kicked out 43 shots as the Hawks strengthened their grip on second place in the Smythe Division, three points more than Vancouver and five more than Minnesota. The North Stars have five games to play while the Hawks and Canucks have three each.

The Islanders, meanwhile, are two points behind the Flyers in a battle for first in the Patrick Division. The Flyers have four games to play in the league's final week and the Islanders have three.

They had their problems with the Barons Sunday and were outshot 34-19, but still managed to get six by Gilles Meloche.

The Red Wings had a total of 39 shots against Montreal in two weekend games—22 against Ken Dryden, who recorded his ninth shutout Saturday in Montreal and 17 against Michel Larocque, who posted his fourth shutout Sunday.

The Wings held Montreal for 2¼ periods Saturday, but fell apart in the second period Sunday as the Canadiens, led by Doug Risebrough's three goals, pumped five goals by Jim Rutherford.

Montreal's Guy Lafleur ran his consecutive game points scoring streak record to 25 games with two assists Sunday after getting a goal and an assist Saturday night.

The Penguins, clinging to a one-point lead over the Kings in a battle for second in the Norris Division, mustered only 11 shots at Boston goaltender Gilles Gilbert.

The Bruins are a point behind the Sabres for top spot in the Adams Division and they meet Wednesday night in Buffalo. Both teams have played 77 games.

The Leafs' defence fell apart against the Capitals in Landover, Md., just as it did in Toronto Saturday night against the Bruins.

Gerry Meehan scored two goals and two assists as the Capitals won their 22nd of the season.



BOBBY HULL
. . . big game



PAULIN BORDELEAU
. . . one for Quebec

Jets conquer Houston Summit

By ROSS HOPKINS
The Canadian Press

Houston's Summit was beginning to appear as difficult to conquer as Mount Everest.

WHA

East Division	W	L	T	F	A	P
Quebec	45	30	2	338	279	92
Cincinnati	38	35	3	336	283	79
Indiana	35	35	7	299	287	77
New Eng	32	39	6	259	275	70
Birming	31	43	3	274	289	65
x-Minn	19	18	5	136	129	43
West Division						
Houston	46	22	6	299	216	98
Winnipeg	43	29	2	341	263	88
San Diego	37	34	4	259	264	78
Edmonton	31	42	3	218	291	65
Calgary	29	41	5	224	270	63
Phoenix	27	45	4	262	359	58

However, Winnipeg Jets overcame the arena's forebidding presence Sunday with a 5-3 win over Houston and in the process snapped the Aeros' string of 21 consecutive games at home without a loss—a World Hockey Association record.

The Jets scored on four of 12 power-play attempts and Aeros coach Bill Dineen said that was the key to the Winnipeg victory.

"We outscored them 3-1 while we were at even strength. You can't take all those penalties against a team like that and not pay the price."

Bobby Hull got three of the power-play goals for the Jets— only the second visting team to win in Houston all season. The Aeros dropped a 4-3 decision to Birmingham Bulls on Dec. 17.

In other games Sunday, Quebec Nordiques blanked Cincinnati Stingers 4-0 to clinch the East Division title, Birmingham blasted Indianapolis Racers 7-3, Calgary Cowboys edged Phoenix Roadrunners 5-4 and New England Whalers downed Edmonton Oilers 5-2.

On Saturday, Indianapolis defeated New England 4-2, Cincinnati outscored Quebec 6-4, and San Diego Mariners got past Calgary 4-2.

HEDBERG SCORES

Anders Hedberg scored an additional power-play goal for Winnipeg with Peter Sullivan getting the other Jets goal.

Larry Lund scored twice and John Tonelli added a single goal for Houston.

The victory kept Winnipeg's hopes of finishing first in the West Division alive. The Jets trail Heg with 10 points with each club having six games left to play.

Quebec goaltender Richard Brodeau blocked 21 shots to record the home-ice shutout as the Nordiques got goals from Paulin Bordeleau, Real Cloutier, Serge Bernier and Normand Dube.

At Birmingham, the Bulls got two goals from Dave Gorman and one-shot the Racers 38-25. Indianapolis defenceman Kim Clackson was assessed a game misconduct at 14:23 of the second period.

Lynn Powis scored two goals, the second with 2" seconds remaining, to give Calgary the home-ice victory and snap the Cowboys' losing streak at 10 games.

Phoenix took a 4-3 lead on Lauri Mononen's second goal of the night at 15:25 of the final period, but Warren Miller tied it for Calgary at 18:08, setting the stage for Powis's game winner.

At startford Tom Webster collected his 400th WHA career point on a first-period powerplay goal and added another goal at 5:25 of the third. The Whalers, who built up a 3-0 lead, also got goals from Mike Antonovich, Rick Ley and Mike Rogers.

Quebec foursome has awesome task

KARLSTAD, Sweden (CP) — Canada's grip on the world curling championship used to be as strong as its stranglehold on the world amateur hockey title, but in recent years it has slipped almost as badly.

While it has been 16 years since a Canadian team won the world hockey crown, only five have passed since Orest Meleschuk's rink took world curling honors at Garmisch-Partenkirchen, West Germany.

Some believe Jim Ursel's Montreal representatives have less than an outstanding chance of taking the trophy home in the 10-country roundrobin competition starting here tonight.

Defending champion Bruce Roberts of the United States is back with two of the three other Hibbing, Minn., curlers who won last year at Duluth, Minn., for the second U.S. victory in three years.

Sweden, playing host to the championship this year for the first time, won in 1973 and Switzerland surprised with a victory in 1975.

Before 1973, Canada had won 12 of 14 official or unofficial world championships dating to 1959 when Canada and Scotland first met for the Scotch Cup, retired for the 1968 inaugural of the Air Canada Silver Broom at Pointe Claire, Que.

DRAW A CROWD

Jack MacDuff's Canadian champions from St. John's Nfld., posted a 2-7 mark last year for Canada's worst performance ever. But the reverence shown Ursel and his crew indicates that Canadian curlers don't have to be defending a title to draw an appreciative crowd.

Ursel, third Art Lobel, second Don Aitken and lead Brian Ross took time out from testing the ice at the Farjestads Arena on Sunday to sign autographs and shake hands with well-wishers.

Lobel, whose sweeping duties at the Canadian championship in Montreal earlier this month were curtailed because of muscle spasms in his back, said things appeared to be improved.

Apart from the U.S. and Canada, other countries which could be seen as title threats are Scotland and Sweden—both represented by young rinks. Scottish ship Ken Horton is 20, as is his lead, while the other two members of the foursome are 19. Swedish skip Ragnar Kamp is 23, and a pair of 22-year-olds and a 20-year-old round out the roster.

DENMARK YOUNGEST

Even at that, Denmark is the youngest entry, with all four members 19.

Other countries competing are Norway, France, Switzerland, Italy and West Germany.

Roberts, a 34-year-old bachelor, has lead Jerry Scott, 24, and second Gary Kleffman, 24, back to defend the title, while Paul Pustovar, 25, has taken over at third for Joe Roberts.

Ursel is 40 and the third-oldest skip in the competition after France's Pierre Boan, 51, who is making his seventh appearance, and Giuseppe Dal Molin, 48, of Italy.

In the opening round tonight, Canada goes against West Germany, while the U.S. meets France, Scotland plays Denmark, Italy faces Sweden and Norway tangles with Switzerland.

Round-robin action continues Tuesday through Friday with two rounds each day. In semifinals Saturday, the first-and fourth-place teams and the second-and third-place countries tangle for berths in the final at 1:30 p.m. EST Sunday.

Pickell shatters 50-metre record



STEVE PICKELL
. . . quite a feat

MONTREAL (CP) — Steve Pickell left some friends in Cleveland at 4 a.m. Sunday to catch a plane, arrived here and set a world swim record in a qualifying heat, rested two hours, then broke the record again in the final.

Pickell's achievements—he also won the 50-metre freestyle—provided a spectacular finale to the four-day Short Course Winter Nationals meet here.

The Vancouver native won the men's 100-metre butterfly event in 54.25 seconds, improving on the short course world record of 54.71 he set earlier in the day. Before Sunday, East Germany's Roger Pyttel held the record at 55.08.

Pickell, 18, who swims for the University of Southern California, missed the first three days of the meet to compete in the U.S. collegiate championships in Cleveland which wound up Saturday.

Travelling with several other Canadian swimmers who competed in the Cleveland meet, Pickell arrived mentally and physically exhausted from the collegiate championships.

"My only goal here was to swim four lengths of the butterfly," he admitted.

OUTCLASSED FIELD

Nevertheless, Pickell outclassed a field of international-class swimmers which included USC teammate George Nagy of Toronto, Bill Sawchuk of Thunder Bay, Ont., and Stephen Badger of Winnipeg.

Pickell was less spectacular in the 50-yard sprint as he covered the two lengths of the 25-metre short-course pool in 23.26, short of the Canadian record of 23.11

A's trade Washington for players and cash

By ASSOCIATED PRESS

With the start of the regular major league baseball season less than 10 days off, several clubs shuffled personnel during the weekend.

In a major deal, Oakland A's swapped outfielder Claudell Washington to Texas Rangers for pitcher Jim Umbarger, infielder Rodney Scott and an undisclosed amount of cash.

Several veterans, including Rico Petrocelli of Boston Red Sox and Earl Williams of Montreal Expos, were dropped as teams pared their rosters in preparation for opening day.

Washington, 22, hit .285 in his rookie season with Oakland in 1974 while helping the A's to their third consecutive World Series title. He batted .308 the following season but was injured last year and slumped to .257.

Umbarger, a 24-year-old lefthander, had a 10-12 record with Texas last season with a 3.15 earned-run average. Scott, 23, spent most of the 1976 season with Denver of the American Association where he hit .307. finished the season with Montreal.

RELEASE PETROCELLI

Petrocelli, a 33-year-old third baseman, was released by the Red Sox after being with the team 12 seasons.

His lifetime average is .261 and he has hit 210 homers in his career. Petrocelli's average fell to .213 in 85 games last season as he lost his starting job to Butch Hobson.

Williams, 28, a catcher-first baseman, was placed on waivers by Montreal to give him his unconditional release. The National League rookie of the year in 1971 with Atlanta Braves, he has also seen service with Baltimore Orioles.

He hit .212 for the Braves and .287 for Montreal last season with 17 home runs. His lifetime battting average is .248 and he has hit 126 career homers.

Oakland also placed pitcher Dick Bosman on waivers "for the purpose of giving him his unconditional release and sent pitcher John (Blue Moon) Odom to its San Jose farm club in the Pacific Coast League.

COMPLETE TRADE

Houston Astros sent second baseman Rob Andrews and a player to be named later to San Francisco Giants for outfielder Willie Crawford and infielder Bob Sperring.

New York Yankees dealt outfielder Kerry Dineen from their Syracuse farm in the International League to Philadelphia for infielder Sergio Ferrer of the Phils' Oklahoma City farm in the American Association.

Detroit Tigers trimmed three players from their roster, sending second baseman Jerry Manuel, outfielder Marvin Lane and rookie pitcher Bruce Taylor to their minor league base for reassignment.

Royals and Leafs in serious trouble

By THE CANADIAN PRESS

Cranbrook Royals and Nelson Maple Leafs face elimination from the Western International Hockey League playoffs this week.

Spokane Flyers can end the Royals' season tonight in Cranbrook after they beat them 4-2 before 4,705 fans in Spokane— the largest crowd in the league this season—to take a 3-1 lead in their best-of-seven semi-final.

In the other semi-final, Kimberley Dynamiters burned Nelson Maple Leafs 9-2 in Kimberley to give the league champions a 3-2 lead. What may be the final game of that series is scheduled for Wednesday night at Nelson.

On Friday night, the Royals got their first win against Spokane as Joe Mutch scored at 1:42 of sudden-death overtime for a 4-3 victory, while Nelson beat Kimberley 7-4.

In Spokane Saturday night, Steve McKnight, forward converted to defence scored the winning goal at 5:34 of the third period on a rink-length dash.

Nels Venerus scored twice to lead the Flyers, which also got a goal from Ernie Gare as Spokane unleashed a 59-shot barrage at Royals' goalie Lee Karchie.

TURNBULL SHARP

Billy Martin and Brian Dickie scored for Cranbrook, which managed 31 shots on Spokane goalie Frank Turnbull.

The Flyers took six of 11 minor penalties and Gare and Randy Gates were assessed majors for a fight late in the game.

In Cranbrook, the Royals battled back from a 3-2 second-period deficit to tie the score at 10:43 of the third period on a goal by Jim Miller. Other Royals goals came from Hugh Christiaens and Chris Becker.

Scoring for the Flyers were Don Borgeson, Bob Stokyko and Gare.

Spokane general manager, Tom Hodges, who was dressed for the game but didn't play, received a match penalty in the second period when he threatened the Cranbrook time keeper with his stick.

PROTESTS SIREN

Hodges argued the siren was late in blowing at the end of the period, giving the Royals extra time on a power play.

Glen Watson led Kimberley to victory Saturday night with two goals while singles went to Murray Fiegel, Ken Ireland, Jim Cruise, Len Useloc and Brian Macklin.

Mike Laughton and Gary Gilchrist scored for Nelson.

Barry McKay made 32 saves in the Kimberley goal while Danny Sullivan stopped 28 shots for Nelson.

Collapse in the stretch costs Watson a tourney

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, S.C. (AP) — Graham Marsh was almost apologetic, and he had a w.. of sympathy for distraught Tom Watson.

"It's happened to me, I know how it feels," the 33-year-old Australian said after Watson collapsed in the run down the stretch and let Marsh escape with the title in the Sea Pines Heritage golf tournament.

Watson, who has failed to secure a victory after leading two tournaments in as many weeks, fled the Harbour Town Golf Links immediately after his disappointing finish Sunday and wasn't available for comment.

Comment wasn't necessary. The look of anguish that crossed Watson's face immediately after his shot on the 14th hole caught the the water told it all.

Watson started the final 18 holes with a four-stroke lead, blew that advantage in four holes and then made a double-bogey five and trailed by two shots.

The former British Open champ had done much the same thing the week before, blowing a two-stroke lead over the last nine holes.

SINGLE SHOT BACK

This time he shot three-overpar 74 in the final round and lost to Marsh by a single shot. Marsh had a two-under-par 69 over the testing, 6,655-yard layout and finished with a 273 total.

Marsh, who has collected more than two dozen titles in Britain, Europe, Australia and the Far East, won more than $188,000 in non-American events last season and is making his first try at the U.S. tour.

Clippers tie final series

NANAIMO, B.C. (CP) — Nanaimo Clippers defeated Penticton Vees 7-3 Saturday night in their best-of-seven British Columbia Junior Hockey League at one game apiece.

Mike Shields led the Clippers with three goals, Mickey Wilgress added two and Arron Rucks and Darcy Lesthage each scored one goal.

Rob Feenie, Shawn Dineen and Bob Ditterle replied for the Vees which will have the homeice edge when the series resumes tonight.

Nanaimo took 11 of 19 minor penalties and outshot Penticton 45-32.

Chiefs hold off third period rally

By THE CANADIAN PRESS

Kamloops Chiefs held off a determined rally in the third period Sunday to complete a successful Western Canada Hockey League weekend with a 4-3 triumph over New Westminster Bruins.

The victory, coupled with an 8-6 deadlock with Victoria Cougars Saturday night, enabled Kamloops to clinch second place in the Western Division.

All other positions are settled except a race between Winnipeg Monarchs and Lethbridge Broncos in the Central Division. The Monarchs lead by one point with a game in hand and the rivals meet tonight at Lethbridge.

Lethbridge stayed within reach of second place by defeating Medicine Hat Tigers 8-3 Sunday after Winnipeg was downed 10-7 by Calgary Centennials in an afternoon game.

Brandon Wheat Kings whipped Regina Pats 12-4 and Saskatoon Blades trampled Flin Flon Bombers 8-1 in the other weekend games.

Anthony Thomas, Dave Robinson, Ryan Walter and Jamie Gallimore scored for Kamloops Sunday night while Brad Maxwell, Mark Lofthouse and Stan Smyl tallied for New Westminster.

Clint Eccles and Al Young paced the Chiefs Saturday night at Victoria with two goals each. Robinson, Dwayne Lowdermilk, Dan Clark and Reg Kerr fired singles.

JOKSON TOPS

Bill Jokson was tops for Victoria with four goals and two assists. Larry Gloeckner, Glen Cochrane, Archie Henderson and John Gordon completed scoring.

Rod Guimont, Mike Panteluk, Doug Morrison, Grant Eakin and Dean Solheim tallied for Lethbridge while Dave Snopek, Ron Areshnekoff and Tom Bast struck for the Tigers. Medicine Hat lost starting goaltender Pete Peeters in the second period when a shot hit him in the nose and injured him although he was wearing a mask.

Doug Robb, Gary Risslingand Mike Toal scored two goals each as Calgary completed its regular season. Roy Sommer, Glen Wylie, Scott Kolewaski and Alvin Scott also connected.

Defenceman Kevin McCarthy paced Winnipeg with four assists, giving him a record 101 for the season, far above his 1975-76 record of 88. Dave Stelter scored two Monarchs goals and Guy Lash, Eugene O'Sullivan, Dave Morrison, Gord Blumenschein and Tom Rouiston contributed singles.

Rookie Bill Derlago, league scoring champion, produced four goals in Brandon's victory, giving him 96.

Kelowna wins juvenile title

COQUITLAM, B.C. (CP) — Bruce Naka scored two goals and added two assists Saturday night as Kelowna defeated Coquitlam 5-3 to win the British Columbia Juvenile Hockey title.

The Interior club took the best-of-three series in consecutive games after winning the opener Friday night 8-0.

COLLISION WORK • GLASS • PAINTING



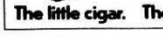
You too — could have a body people admire!

Star AUTOBODY

2814 - 37th Avenue, Vernon Phone 545-2291

Lease A Honda CIVIC see Bill Shillam 545-0531 2910 - 32nd Ave. dl No 01138-A

COLTS COMES 2 WAYS.



The little cigar. The milder little cigar.

BOYARSKI TOURS
• DISNEYLAND
762-3435

REPORTERS WANTED

The Vernon Daily News needs district writers to report on the events of the following communities:

ENDERBY, LAVINGTON, FALKLAND, MABEL LAKE, ASHTON CREEK, GRINDROD, MARA, SICAMOUS, SALMON RIVER VALLEY

Ability to write clearly is required.

Please contact News Editor John Clarke, afternoons, between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.

GOODYEAR

Fiberglass Belted Whitewall Tires on Sale

SALE ENDS March 31, 1977

29.95 each, installed E78-14 whitewall

Save from $8.80 to $11.80 per pair

GOODYEAR DELUXE ALL-WEATHER BELTED

E78-14	F78-14	G78-14	H78-14
32.95	33.75	33.75	35.95

- Fiberglass belts reduce tread weaving squirm
- Nylon body plies provide extra strength to absorb shocks
- Seven rib tread design for steering stability and traction
- Goodyear's special tread rubber compound gives long tire life



Wheel Alignment

Here's what we do!

- Adjust camber, caster and toe-in to manufacturer's specifications
- Adjust torsion bars
- Inspect front end suspension, springs, shocks and steering assembly
- Guaranteed work performed by qualified mechanics using latest equipment

Special! One week only 12.95 (parts extra— only if needed)

Pick-ups and vans extra

TIRES ARE OUR BUSINESS

The TIRE CENTRE
3325-31st Ave., Vernon
545-5361

Budget Terms Available or Use These Cards