



Kossan leads Lakers to win over Rockets

By GORD SMILEY
Daily News Sports

Vernon Lakers picked up their first win of the young B.C. Junior Hockey League season as they doubled Revelstoke Rockets, 6-3, before 500 fans, Friday night at the Civic Arena.

The win, breaks a 25 game winless streak the team had which dated back to last December.

In other BCJHL action, Burnaby Bluehawks defeated Merritt Centennials 7-1, Richmond Sockeyes edged Langley Eagles 4-3 and Penticton Knights defeated Kelowna Buckaroos 7-6.

It was a big win for Lakers in that it ended the long winless streak, but it also got the team off to a good start for a three-game weekend. Tonight, Lakers pay a return trip to Revelstoke while Sunday, Vernon plays host to Kelowna Buckaroos, for a 7 p.m. start.

Lakers were paced by

the three point performance of centre Rob Kossan. Kossan scored the team's second and fifth goals en route to the win.

Also scoring for Lakers were Gavin Shuya, Mike Enemark, Larry Wiberg and Brian Heller. Rockets marksmen were Terry Heddle with two and Bryan Sweeney with a single.

Lakers record now sits at 1-2 and Coach Murray Lawrence said his troops will finish the weekend with a 3-2 record.

"That was a big win for us, it's the first of three this weekend," said Lawrence.

The teams traded first period goals then at the end of two periods Lakers were ahead 5-2 and never looked back. Vernon goaltender Bob Moll was outstanding blocking 30 shots while Rockets tandem of Randy Kirby and Frank Romeo turned away 42.

Rockets intimidating style of play did nothing to

deter the fast skating Lakers who kept Revelstoke penned in its own end for most of the night.

"I thought they (Revelstoke) could have played better than what they did, but then again our guys didn't let them get started," said Lawrence. "We're starting to check much better, pass much better and shoot much better, overall we looked pretty good."

Lawrence said Revelstoke did nothing to surprise his team while Lakers were an improved club from their previous two starts.

"We concentrated on coming out of our own end and working on our power play," said Lawrence. "I think the boys really did well, we have a great bunch of guys here, Vernon will never be ashamed of these kids."

The game was on the verge of getting out of hand in the second period when

Rockets defenceman Barry Lacasse slugged Lakers Nick Kapicki at centre ice in an obvious sign of frustration and was later ejected from the game for fighting. In total Lakers took 10 minor penalties, three-five minutes majors and three game misconducts. Rockets also took 10 minors, three-five minute majors and three game misconducts.

It was only the discipline of Lakers players which kept the game respectable.

"Our boys had instructions not to start a fight," said Lawrence. "We didn't want this game turning into a donnybrook like it did the last time we played."

Lawrence will make one change in his lineup tonight, starting Rob Imbeau in the nets.

In other games tonight, Penticton plays at Kelowna, Abbotsford Flyers play host to Langley and Merritt is at Duncan to face the Cowichan Capitals.

VERNON LAKERS' Rob Kossan, No. 5, slides the puck across the crease of Revelstoke Rockets' goaltender Frank

Romeo. Kossan was unsuccessful on this attempt to score, however, he later connected twice to lead Lakers to a 6-3 win

over Rockets, Friday, at the Civic Arena. Lakers pay a return visit to Revelstoke tonight. (Daily News Photo)