Lakers on Coast for three games

Vernon Lakers are on a crucial road trip to the Coast this weekend.

Lakers take on Langley Eagles, tonight; Cowichan Valley Capitals, Saturday; and Esquimalt Buccaneers, Sunday afternoon.

Vernon is currently third in the B.C. Junior Hockey League's Interior Division with 20 points, two back of Penticton Knights and one behind Kelowna Buckaroos. However, Lakers have five games-in-hand on the Bucks.

Vernon Coach Murray Lawrence said his club needs three victories to keep pace with the Knights.

"We can't afford to fall too far behind them (Penticton)," Lawrence said. "I'd like to win three on the Coast, but I'd be satisfied with two."

Lawrence took 21 players on the trip, including three goalies. Matt Sekela and Rex Grant will start games, but Shawn Oswald may be relegated to a back-up role. Oswald joined the Lakers last weekend, from Kamloops Oilers, after being sidelined with an injury for six weeks.

"I don't know if Shawn is ready to play yet," Lawrence said. "There is a good chance we'll use him in one game."

Buckaroos moved ahead of Lakers, Thursday night, when they batteled to a 3-3 overtime tie with Richmond Sockeyes.

In the only other game, Abbotsford Flyers handed Esquimalt its first home-ice loss this season, 7-3.

On Wednesday, New Westminster Royals hammered Buccanneers 13-0 and Abbotsford downed Cowichan 13-5.

Richmond goalie Randy Beres stopped 42 shots and Kelowna's Scott Brower made 35 saves in the overtime tie in Richmond.

The tying goal came on a Kelowna breakaway at 15:51 of the third period when Enzo Caccavo beat Beres.