



LAKERS' Captain Gord Simpson fends off a strangling check by Revelstoke defenceman Cal Ecklund and manages to feed a pass to Rob Kossan (5), while Terry Heddle (9), of the Rockets tries to break up the play. Vernon strengthened its hold on first place with a 3-0 victory. (Daily News Photo)

Lakers increase lead by blanking Revelstoke

By JIM JUDD

In most any sport, the best offence is a good defence. Vernon Lakers practice this philosophy and the dividend is a first-place standing in the BCJHL Interior Division.

Sunday night, at the Civic Arena, Lakers' Rex Grant had an easy time turning aside just 24 shots as the local club blanked Revelstoke Rockets 3-0.

"The wingers were picking up their men, guys were finishing their checks ... it wasn't a difficult shutout at all," said the lanky goaltender of his team's performance.

The shutout was the Lakers' second in the past six games. The club has now outscored their opposition 31-13 in those six outings, including a 6-5 loss to the Penticton Knights. Lakers currently lead both Penticton and Kelowna Buckaroos by three points.

Lakers' Coach Murray Lawrence paralleled Grant's praise for the Vernon skaters.

"It was a great all-round performance," he said. "We lost four forwards in the game and still kept up the pace."

PENALTIES HURT

As usual, it was penalties that hurt the Rockets as much as anything. Lakers struck for two power-play goals as the Revelstoke club picked up 11 minors to the Lakers' four.

Vernon captain Gord Simpson opened the scoring with the game-winning goal at 11:02 of the second frame, following a scoreless first period.

Simpson's hard slap-shot from the marks on the face-off circle caught the top of the net after glancing off goaltender Roy Drohobycki's stick.

Drohobycki, one of the standout players on the Rockets lineup, faced a barrage of 58 Vernon drives throughout the contest.

Nursing a 1-0 lead after 40 minutes of play, a pair of third period tallies put the icing on the cake for the Vernon club.

Ken Fenton kept up his recent scoring pace with an insurance marker at 4:43. Taking a pass from Kelly Kozak, Fenton used some fancy moves in the slot area to gain enough open space for a shot. His high, back-hand drive beat Drohobycki over his right shoulder for a 2-0 lead.

FINAL GOAL

Greg Kowal closed out the scoring at 12:07 when he redirected Gavin Shuya's drive from the

point while standing directly in front of the Revelstoke net.

For the first time in 24 games, Stacey Wakabayashi didn't get on the scoresheet. It warranted nothing more than a shrug from the speedy Lakers' forward.

"All that matters to me is that we won the game," said Wakabayashi.

The standard fireworks when the Lakers meet Rockets were present with numerous incidents of intimidation and fracas.

"We can beat those guys any day of the week but the trick is to just keep from getting hurt," said Lawrence. "Playing hockey is the furthest thing from their minds."

With 14 games remaining in the Lakers' schedule, the local club will face the Rockets once more before the season concludes.

"We play them (Revelstoke) one more time and that's in their barn ... I'm not looking forward to that," said Lawrence.

LAKER LINES

Centre R O N BEREZOWSKI suffered a serious knee injury and



REX GRANT
... first shutout

will have it x-rayed today to determine the extent of the injury. KEN FENTON received a deep cut on his lower lip and took a couple of stitches. BOB WENSLEY suffered a hip-pointer (bad bruise) but will return before the next game, as will GLEN DOUCETTE, who got a badly bruised ankle after blocking a shot in the game

against Kelowna, Friday night.

In other BCJHL action Sunday night, Abbotsford Flyers defeated New Westminster Royals 5-2 and Esquimalt Buccaneers bounced Shuswap Totems 8-3.

On Saturday, Penticton defeated Kelowna 5-4, Cowichan Capitals beat Shuswap 5-3, Abbotsford downed Esquimalt 7-3 and Merritt Centennials edged Revelstoke 4-3.

FLYERS 5 ROYALS 2

Dwight Mathiasen scored two goals for the winners, who broke loose with four goals in the final period. It was the seventh consecutive win for the Coast Division-leading Flyers.

BUCCANEERS 8 TOTEMS 3

Gary Matson and Dale Brisco each scored three goals and assisted on three others for Esquimalt, which won decisively despite being outshot 37-27 by the Totems.

BUCKAROOS 5 KNIGHTS 4

Simon Wheeldon's goal at 15:04 of the final period proved to be the winner for Kelowna, which had not won in Penticton in two years.



TROPHY WINNERS in Snowarama '83 included from left, back row: Frank Martina, Rhoda Van Ness of the Lions

Club, Miss Lions Debbie Kolodychuk, Don Kendall, and Lee participate in event. Front row: Laurie Feniuk, Clint Hardie, and Kelly