

Lakers down Sockeyes 7-4

The see-saw battle for first place in the BCJHL Interior Division swung in Vernon Lakers favor again Thursday night as the local club moved into sole possession of the coveted position with a convincing 7-4 victory over the hometown Richmond Sockeyes.

The win gives Lakers 65 points, one better than second place Penticton Knights and three better than Kelowna Buckaroos who hold down third place. Lakers have four games remaining, playing tonight in Burnaby, against the Bluehawks, then home on Saturday to entertain Langley Eagles while New Westminster Royals and Kelowna Buckaroos will travel to Civic arena next weekend to close out the season.

Despite the score, Lakers' goaltender Rex Grant had to be particularly sharp as the Sockeyes outshot the local squad by a margin of 37-25, and also scored the first two goals of the game.

Lakers came back with seven straight goals before the hometown Sockeyes rallied with a pair of goals late in the third period.

Lakers led by period scores of 3-2 and 6-2.

Laker captain Gord Simpson shook off his injured hand nicely and was able to score one of the Laker goals while the others came off the sticks of defenceman Ken McKenzie, Rob Kossan, Kevin Thorlakson, Bob Wensley, and brothers Glen and Brent Doucette.

Eric Catchpole, Jeff James, David Street, and Brooke Odenvald scored for Richmond.

CENTENNIALS WIN

In other BCJHL action Thursday night, Merritt Centennials blasted the hapless Revelstoke Rockets 9-2 in the only other game.

Pat Ryan and Brent Demerais each scored three goals for Merritt as the Centennials skated to a 3-0 first period lead and were ahead 7-0 at the end of the second.

Rob Pfoh, Mark Bogoslawski and Allan Wall rounded out the Merritt scoring.

Bruce Baker and Louis Gagne replied for Revelstoke which had only 10 players including the two goaltenders because the player suspensions and injuries.