

Wensley finds 'a place to play'

On a junior hockey team that boasts an average age of just 17 years, veteran players are few and far between. Vernon Lakers have a handful of players with junior experience prior to this season and one of those, 19-year old Bob Wensley, heads the list with his string of credentials.

Living out of suitcases more than anything else in the past two years, Wensley has worn the uniforms of five different junior hockey clubs both, in the major junior and tier two ranks.

Wensley, who played all his minor hockey in Vernon, first donned the uniform of the Kamloops Rockets when he was 16 (now Revelstoke Rockets) and by the time he was past his 17th year he had spent a further season toiling between Regina Pats, of the Western Hockey League, and their tier two affiliate, the Pat-Blues, of the SJHL.

Last season Wensley was a regular in the Kamloops Oilers' lineup, also of the WHL, but this season found himself pondering his junior hockey career while skating with Richmond Sockeyes, in the BCJHL.

FOUND A TEAM

By the time he had returned to Vernon and

played under Murray Lawrence's Lakers for a week, Wensley was no longer pondering on his junior career ... he'd finally found a team to which he belonged and felt satisfied playing for.

There's no doubt in the minds of local hockey fans whether Wensley has been an aid to the club, it's just a matter of how much more he can add to what he's already accomplished.

Although he's scored at a steady pace and at times in bunches of two and three, the veteran winger looks forward to the day when he's really going to start clicking.

"I think I've played well, but I've missed a lot of chances around the net. It's going to come one of these days though ... I don't know whether it is timing or what."

In general, Wensley has been satisfied with the play of the team as a whole.

"For a young team we play really well ... especially since the team was formed so quickly. Just the way we've all reacted to each others style of hockey has been just great."

A LEADER

Although he doesn't herald himself as a team leader, Wensley has made his presence known and

felt on the team and no doubt he has added inspiration and a steadying factor to his youthful counterparts.

"I've just been really open, you know, lots of talking ... like if one of the guys comes to me for advice or something I'm happy to give what I can. I'll say my piece in the dressing room too, but I'm not one to try to take over."

Wensley feels the Lakers have Penticton Knights on the run at this point and looks ahead to the team competing in the Interior division final and beyond. Even with the threat of having Knights come down hard on the club, Wensley doesn't see anything to be worried about.

"Myself I think he (Penticton Coach Rick Kozubuck) is just trying to use the media to intimidate us. None of us have looked at it seriously."

"This is the playoffs," he added in closing. "If you have to take a few black eyes to get what's at stake, well that's just we'll have to do."

Lakers travel to Penticton tonight for game six of the best-of-seven series. A win tonight would give Vernon the series and advance it to the division final against Kelowna Buckaroos.

JUDD'S JOURNAL

True colors show through



By JIM JUDD Daily News Sports

There are two sides to every coin and there are two sides to everyone's personality. The first I discovered some years ago, the latter I discovered Sunday night following Vernon Lakers' victory over Penticton Knights.

While Knights have achieved a moderate amount of success in recent years, nothing to crow about ... but moderate success, they've certainly gained a reputation around the BCJHL for their abrasive tactics as much as anything else.

Having no reason to believe Knights were doing anything other than working hard with a sparse amount of talent this season, I assumed Coach Rick Kozubuck to have put their goonish antics on ice in favor of a more basic style of play.

GOONISH

I'll say this much though, when the chips are down, a person's true colors show through. When the going gets tough, the tough get going. Lakers are showing they're tough while Kozubuck and his Knights proved Sunday night that they are silly, immature, and goonish.

"If we lose Tuesday we're going to go down swinging," said Kozubuck, insisting upon being quoted, no doubt for shock purposes. "They'll be in no shape to play Kelowna," he added.

Previously I had spoken with Kozubuck after each game of the series and nothing he had said would have indicated he was headed in this direction. Of course, that was when

Knights were on the winning end of the series. As I said, the true colors show through.

On the other hand, Lakers are demonstrating the fact that might is not always right. After being humiliated 9-2 in two consecutive outings and trailing 4-1 on Penticton's own pond Friday night, Lakers gave an outstanding account of what being tough is all about. They sunk their teeth into the end of the rope, and fought their way back tooth and nail to turn a seemingly futile attempt into brilliant victory.

BRUTALITY

And they never raised a fist to do it. I just wonder at what point Kozubuck will see fit to unleash the goons ... at what point he'll decide there's nothing left but brutality. Would Knights have to be down three goals, four goals or maybe just one?

"What's new?" was Lawrence's reply to Kozubuck's statement Sunday night. "It's a typical Kozubuck statement."

"We'll just go at them like we have been. Our game is skating, shooting and checking ... hockey!"

This is the bottom line here and Kozubuck can chew on sour grapes all he wants. If his Knights get rough they just take penalties and with Lakers' power-play back in the awesome category, it only means they'll have more goals scored on them.

In hockey there will always be a place reserved for cement-heads last!

BCJHL

VANCOUVER (CP) — B.C. Junior Hockey League playoff standings released Monday.

Coastal Division

	W	L
Abbotsford	3	0
Burnaby	0	3
New Westminster	3	2
Nanaimo	2	3

Interior Division

Kelowna	4	0
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Shuswap	0	4
Vernon	3	2
Penticton	2	3

Scoring

	G	A	Pts
Mathiasen A	2	11	13
Shibicky A	6	6	12
Ronning NW	2	10	12
Myer NW	8	3	11
Verigen p	6	5	11
Hull P	6	5	11
Orpen NW	6	4	10
Matson N	3	7	10
Schulter K	3	6	9
Ruppel P	7	1	8

Goaltenders

	Avg.
Buker A	$\frac{1}{4}$??
Kirby K	2.81
Roach NW	4.20
Foster P	4.20
Loring N	4.50
Beckner NW	4.50
Taylor K	$\frac{5}{8}$??
Bradley A	5.00