

THRASH MERRITT 11-3

Lakers move into first place tie with a little help from some friends

By JIM JUDD
Daily News Sports
Vernon Lakers moved into a first-place tie in the BCJHL Interior Division Friday night on the strength of an 11-3 victory over visiting Merritt Centennials... and a little help from some unlikely friends.

Revelstoke Rangers played comrades to Lakers as the Rangers stunned hometown Penticton Knights with a 4-3 win to move into sole possession of second place in the division.

The loss was rather a humbling debut in Vernon for former Lakers' coach Chuck Tapp who took over the reigns of Merritt Centennials last month but hasn't been able to earn a victory as yet.

"We'll have some more



NICK KAPICKI
... scoring spree

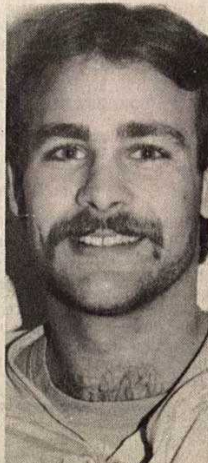
bodies after Christmas," said Tapp following Friday night's loss. "We're going to make some changes.

"We're looking at working hard this season and building for next year," added Tapp.

Meanwhile, Lakers' assistant coach Terry Lowe navigated the local squad to victory from behind the bench as head coach Mike Enemark took a brief one-game respite in the comfort of the broadcast booth.

"We just played our same game... forechecking hard and making them cough up the puck," said Lowe who went on to praise the outstanding work of goaltender Jim Young.

"Jim (Young) really played well," offered



BOB WENSLEY
... on form

Lowe. "He didn't have to make a lot of saves but he had to be sharp on them all."

TOP SPOT

Young, who moves into top spot in the goaltending department in the Interior Division, made 24 saves while Vernon bombarded Merritt's Geoff Wiltshire with 75 shots during the night.

Lakers were paced by the three-goal performance of veteran Bob Wensley who is back on track after a brief period of non-production.

Meanwhile, Shannon Pohl, the newest player in a Lakers' uniform, made an auspicious debut with a pair of goals and Al Young added two of his own.

Nick Kapicki continued his point-scoring spree

with a goal and three assists while other Lakers' goals came off the sticks of Greg Kowal, Rob Kossan and Dave Wensley.

Kossan's tally was a gift from the Merritt defence as Randy Koyanagi inadvertently fired the puck into his own net and Kossan, the last Laker to have touched the puck, was awarded the goal.

Brent Demerais scored twice for Merritt while Conn Raessler added the third in the dying minutes of the game.

In Penticton, Knight's coach Rick Kozuback wasn't happy with the outcome of the game.

"We were outclassed," said Kozuback. "Vernon will probably win Saturday (tonight) and we're not going to catch them after that... not the way we play."

Rangers got goals from Keith Maybin, Ron Bonora, Mike Dickerman, and Ritchie Dusevic while Mark Fitzpatrick was outstanding in goal blocking 32 shots.

Brett Hull scored a pair for Penticton with Rod Schluter notching the other single.

In a pair of games on the Coast, Langley defeated Richmond 6-4

and Burnaby Bluehawks downed Cowichan 9-5.

Lakers have a lot of work still in the next four days, having to play Revelstoke tonight, Merritt again on Monday and travel to Penticton Tuesday.

MAKE-UP

The Merritt game is a make-up contest from earlier in the season and having it re-scheduled at the last minute to Monday is not sitting too well with Enemark.

Tonight Lakers will be employing the services of defenceman Jeff Doer who was recently released from Revelstoke. Enemark is happy to have the former Rangers' captain in his ranks and is looking forward to a good game with the Rangers tonight.

"We're going to come out after them," said Enemark. "We've got to come out hitting and skating and using heads. We also want to force the play... if you get behind them (Revelstoke) they're real tough."

LAKER LINES

GREG KOWAL celebrated his 19th birthday Friday. Forward SCOTT YOUNG will likely sit out about two weeks or less with a stretched ligament in his shoulder.

