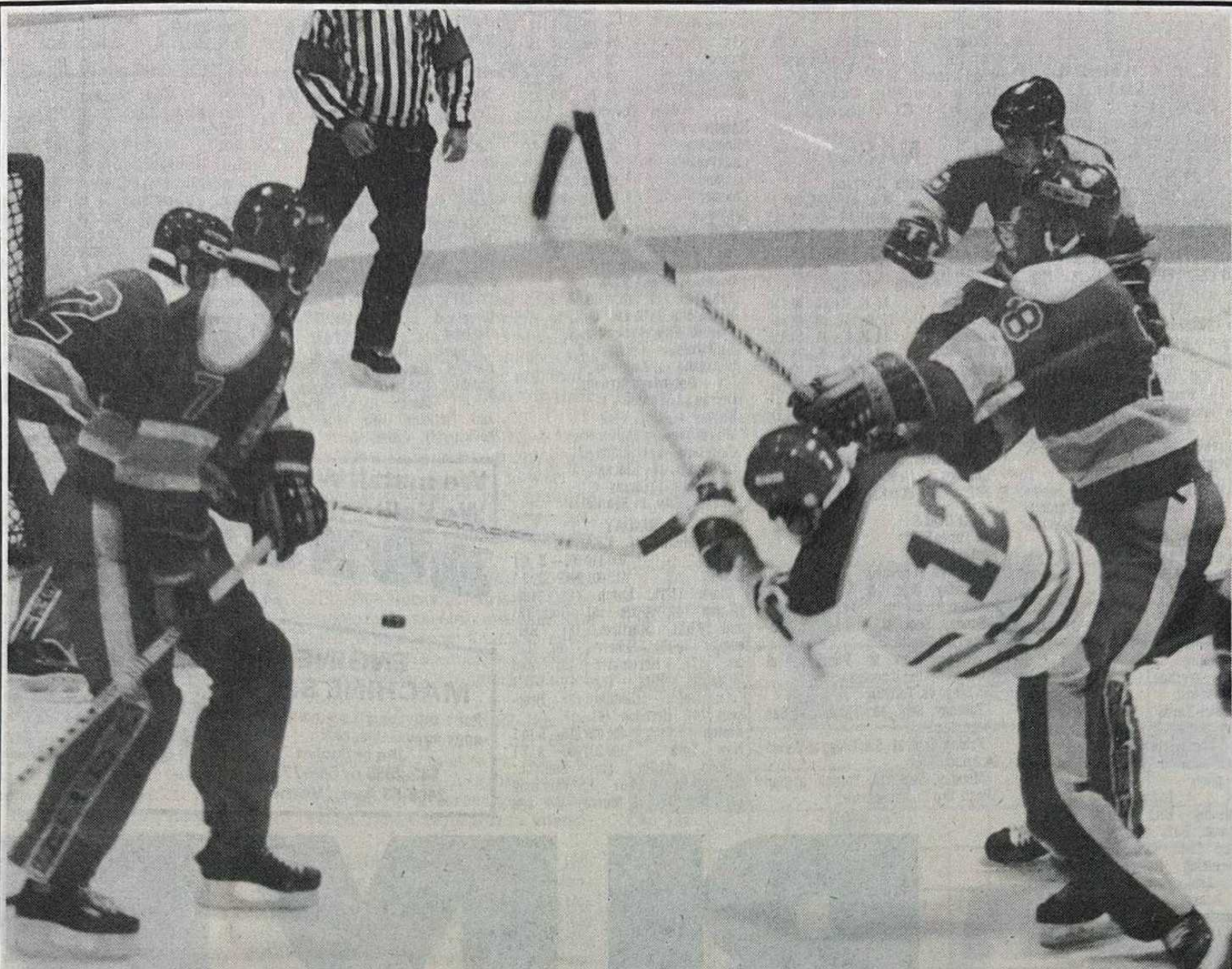




VERNON LAKERS' sensational 15-year-old rookie Dennis Holland, 12, gets an unfriendly reception from Penticton Knights' Aaron Scott during one of the

many occasions when he broke over the Penticton blue line. Despite this incident, Holand proved to local fans that he doesn't mind the rough going of

junior hockey. He set up a power-play goal in the first period and provided a lot of spark and entertainment for fans. Lakers lost 6-5 to visiting Knights.

(Daily News Photo)

VERNON WINLESS

Knights edge Lakers

By JIM JUDD
Daily News Sports

Vernon Lakers squandered an early 3-0 lead while visiting Penticton Knights scored four consecutive goals in the third period to etch out a 6-5 win over Vernon, Sunday night, at the Civic Arena.

Saturday night, in Summerland, Lakers dropped a 9-4 decision to the hometown Buckaroos leaving the local squad still looking for its first exhibition win, with only one game remaining. That game will see the local juniors host Salmon Arm Totems, Tuesday night.

Three consecutive goals in the first period, including a pair of power-play tallies, enabled Vernon to jump to a 3-0 lead.

Veteran Greg Kowal, wearing the captaincy for Vernon, hit the scoreboard just 40 seconds into the game while Brad Bolton notched a second power-play goal at the 13:14 mark. Both were set up by defenceman Tony Christie. Greg Guest, with his first of three for the night, scored an even-strength marker at 7:15.

However, Knights got on the board with just 10 seconds remaining in the first period, while veteran Murray Winnicki's tally with less than a minute remaining in the second stanza, closed the gap to 3-2 going into the third.

Lakers regained a two-goal lead at 6:52 when Kowal set up Guest for a booming slapshot from the blueline, but Knights took

over from that point on.

Penticton pounced on giveaways by the young Vernon defensive corps and scored four straight goals. Peter Stenaschuck scored at 3:03, McFarlane at 8:32, and veterans Mike Barzal and Ed Christofoli scored just 24 seconds apart at 13:13 and 13:37 to give the visitors the lead.

With just one second remaining on the clock, Guest notched his third of the night but the goal only narrowed the loss to a margin of one.

The turning point in the game may have been in the second period when the fast-skating Lakers outshot Knights 18-8, but were outscored 1-0.

However, Lakers' coach Mike Enemark saw the loss in a different light.

"They took advantage of their opportunities and we didn't," Enemark offered. "We deserved to win tonight, we didn't. When we were tied they took the lead because they have a lot of experience."

Despite the loss, a pair of local youngsters continued to impress Vernon hockey fans with their stylish play. Dennis Holland and his long-time winger Troy Mick, both 15 years of age, provided much of the spark and generated enthusiasm with Holland's puck wizardry and Mick's scoring chances. Unfortunately the two couldn't find the net despite the fact that they controlled the play each time they were on the ice. Mick and Knights'

goaltender Grant McPhail at his mercy on at least three occasions, but missed the net each time. Holland, however, hit the scoresheet in the first period when he helped to set up Bolton's man-advantage marker.

Meanwhile, Knights' coach Rick Kozuback wasn't overly impressed with the style of the game, despite the close score.

"Our guys didn't play that well," he said. "We took a lot of things for granted but they really did play a lot better."

Friday night, Penticton blasted Lakers 12-0, in Penticton.

Enemark isn't overly discouraged by his club's dismal record in the exhibition season but, rather, welcomed the fact that the team is getting its bad breaks now and not in regular season.

"It's exhibition and you're looking at a lot of different things," Enemark explained. "We had breakdowns in discipline ... especially our positional play and our back-checking."

The game offered Enemark the opportunity to assess the worth of at least two players since he cut a pair of hopefuls from the roster following Sunday's contest. He will trim as many as four more today.

Enemark is also expecting the arrival, from Quesnel of the PCJHL, of another defensive prospect. The Lakers' coach is also expecting defenseman Camille Savard, acquired in a trade with Salmon Arm, to arrive in the near future.