

Lakers double Flyers despite decimated ranks

By JIM JUDD

Daily News Sports

Plagued by injuries and smitten by the flu bug, Vernon Lakers nevertheless turned in one of their best defensive performances of the season Friday night doubling visiting Abbotsford Flyers 4-2 at Civic arena.

The win, stretching Lakers' unbeaten streak to 10 games and giving them five consecutive wins, leaves the local club solidly in second place in the BCJHL Interior Division, eight points ahead of third place Summerland Buckaroos.

Lakers started the game minus forwards Jason Phillips and Stacey Hartnell as well as defenceman Jim Scott. Meanwhile a number of other players were feeling the symptoms of a flu bug and Gord Simpson was eventually forced out of the game later on in the second period due to illness.

However, Shannon Pohl scored twice in the first period to give Lakers an early lead. Nick Kapicki's goal, sandwiched by



SHANNON POHL

... two goals

Flyers' goals in the second frame by Doug McFaul and Rob Steele, proved to be the winner.

Brian Burlingame's goal was the only tally of the third period and gave Vernon an insurance marker.

Flyers' coach Larry

Romanchych, a former pro with Atlanta Flames, expressed some concern that his players had trouble adjusting to the smaller ice surface of the Vernon arena.

"We weren't moving the puck well," said Romanchych. "You have to move the puck quickly on the small ice and that's what we didn't do."

"I thought we had the upper hand when we killed that six minutes in the second period," he added. "They (Lakers) worked their butts off and had great goaltending."

Lakers did, in fact, work their tails off, getting outstanding checking games from the likes of Wes Gentles, Pohl, Kapicki and Greg Kowal as well as stallward hockey from all others. Jim Young, in net for Vernon, stopped 35 shots while Al Loring, Coastal Division all-star goaltender, blocked 41 shots for Flyers.

Pohl, an opportunist, picked up his first goal off a breaking pass from Shawn Hartnell, lifting a hard backhand shot over

Loring's shoulder. His second was a perfect one-timer from the top of the circle.

Kapicki's winner was the result of a fine power-play effort by Pohl who had three points on the night while Burlingame's goal, a deflection off a shot by Gentles, was the result of some fantastic stick work by Dennis Holland. Holland was called up from the local midget squad to fill in for missing players.

Lakers were stung in the third period when Al Young who suffered a gash to the mouth in the first period, was fingered for spearing, his second such offense this season. He'll be lost for a minimum of three games owing to suspension.

Lakers travel to Merritt tonight to take on the improving Centennials. Sunday night the local club entertains Summerland Buckaroos at Civic arena.

In other BCJHL action Friday night, Penticton Knights clobbered visiting Langley Eagles 11-7, and Salmon Arm surprised Revelstoke 6-4.



TERRY LOWE

... back at centre

UBC meets Cougars

Vernon Cougars will see action tonight and Sunday afternoon when University of British Columbia Braves, the UBC Junior Varsity hockey squad, is in town to take on the local Intermediate club.

Cougars, who struggled through the first half of the season with very little in the way of positive reinforcement, are a much-improved hockey club of late with the addition of a number of new players to their roster.

Among these is standup goaltender Todd Beck, who hasn't lost a game since joining Cougars several weeks ago. Beck formerly played with Sabres, of the White Valley Hockey League, before the league collapsed in December.

Another welcome addition has been high-scoring centre Terry Lowe, who split his time between Cougars and Oliver Bighorns in the first half of the season, is now a regular member of Cougars again. Lowe accompanied Bighorns to Finland, in November.

Another outstanding performer for the local intermediate squad has been Les Creelman who along with Lowe and Oliver's Doug Bennest, comprise Cougars' most prolific scoring line and have generated enough offensive power to give the local club renewed hope for Coy Cup playoffs.

The recent loss of Tom Ouchi will hurt the club but the acquisition of other players has still made for an improved club overall.

Game time Saturday night is 8 p.m., while Sunday's game begins at 1:30 p.m.

JUDD'S JOURNAL

Scouts visible at all-star game

By JIM JUDD

Daily News Sports

Dressed rather pretentiously in elongated duffle and trench-coats, clutching programs, rosters and curious looking scouting reports in their hands, dozens of NHL scouts were in attendance at Thursday night's BCJHL all-star game, played at Vernon Civic Arena.

Looking more like spies on some clandestine mission for the CIA than surveyors of hockey flesh, the NHL scouts, along with dozens of others scouts from colleges across the United States and Canada, were on hand to scrutinize the players most of which have already gone through preliminary scouting procedures.

FROM N.Y.

The idea, according to Bert Marshall who was representing New York Islanders, was to follow up early scouting reports of players and assess their abilities under conditions similar to those they'd encounter in higher calibre leagues.

"We've scouted most kids born since 1967 but when you get most of the good players together in one game, it's worthwhile to see if they're playing up to their potential against stiff competition," said Marshall.

"There's probably three or four kids out there who are going to be drafted," added Marshall, who explained that Vernon's Bruce Major has been the subject of a number of scouting reports and that indicates that Major will probably be picked up in the third or fourth round of this year's draft.

Major, 17, is in his second full season in the BCJHL, having broken in with Vernon Lakers during the 1983-84 campaign before moving to Richmond Sockeyes, of the Coastal Division, for the 1984-85 season. Major was one of the first choices for the Coastal Division all-star lineup this season and has already obtained a four-year athletic scholarship with University of Maine.

As Marshall explained, the NHL clubs have no intention of

interfering with the scholarship programs but, instead, relish the opportunity to have their players further developed by their use.

"A lot of them (players) will have the benefit of another year or two to develop which is good," he said.

ON MISSION

Although he filled the bill as guest of honor at this year's all-star contest, Gordie Howe let the players know during the the all-star banquet that he was on a scouting mission for Hartford Whalers. Although Howe was reluctant to get the hopes of the young players up too much, he did offer a lot of encouragement through his address.

"Emile Francis told me that if I see anything worthwhile here that I should mark it, package it and send it down there," said Howe in an odd-handed manner. "And if you know what we've got in Hartford, you'll realize we have a lot of room for new talent."

