

Lakers finally defeat Knights

By JIM JUDD
Daily News Sports



MURRAY WINNICKI (12), centre for Pentiction Knights, got behind Vernon Lakers' goaltender Frank Romeo, Saturday night, but the puck didn't.

Romeo was incredible as he backstopped the local junior team to their first victory of the season over league-leading Knights. The loss was only the

fifth of the season for the Knights and the victory sparked a near riot in the stands between the Pentiction bench and spectators. (Daily News Photo)

ASSISTANT COACH NAMED

Caldow helps defensively

The high level of success Vernon Lakers have achieved lately would seem to indicate the team has taken a turn for the better under head coach Don Moores. But, it's not just a coincidence that the team has played their best hockey of the season since Dave Caldow was signed as assistant coach.

Caldow, of Vernon, has no experience coaching at the junior level, but has spent several years in the minor hockey ranks as a coach. In addition, Caldow has a wealth of hockey knowledge.

Though Caldow insists he has added nothing of his own to the club, his presence

behind the Lakers' bench has obviously helped to make a major difference.

"It's all Don's system, it's just starting to work for them," offered Caldow, a former junior and intermediate hockey star in Vernon. "It kind of broke down Sunday night, in Salmon Arm, but it's going to work just fine."

Caldow, is a long-time friend of Moores, who is a native of Kamloops. The two played with and against each other at various points in their careers.

"Don and Vern (Dye) got together and asked me if I'd accept the job (assistant coach) and I thought it would be a lot of

fun," Caldow said. "I'm sort of looking after the defensive aspect of the team and looking at the other teams for Don... it's hard for one guy to keep track of everything."

Caldow was partly responsible for implementing the defensive strategy that finally broke the spell with Pentiction Knights, Saturday, when Lakers earned a 6-2 decision over the high-flying league leaders.

"We've been working on the defencemen standing up at the blue line," explained Caldow. "We have one forechecker and the two wingers come back while the defence stands at the blue line."

Vernon Lakers completed one of their biggest and most successful weekends of the B.C. Junior Hockey League season. They earned three victories, in three successive nights, including their first win of the season over league-leading Pentiction Knights, Saturday night.

Lakers posted a 10-7 victory over the hometown Salmon Arm Totems, Sunday night, after downing Pentiction 6-2 and Revelstoke 6-1, Friday night.

The string of victories leaves Lakers' position unchanged in the BCJHL Interior Division as they continue to hold down second place, 26 points behind Pentiction.

"They (Lakers) were so high after winning the game Saturday that it took a while to wake them up," explained Lakers' assistant coach Dave Caldow. Caldow signed as assistant coach with the club last week.

Saturday night, Lakers turned in their best all-round performance of the year as they bested the front-running Knights.

"We played our hearts out, all 18 players," said coach Don Moores following the victory Saturday. "We're playing tight, defensive hockey and we're really coming together as a team."

Gord Simpson and Greg Kowal scored twice each for Lakers against Knights while Wes Gentles and Jason Phillips added one goal apiece. Greg Guidinger and Joe Murphy scored for Pentiction, which trailed 3-0 and 5-1 by periods.

Frank Romeo turned in another highly impressive performance in net for Lakers.

In addition to the fight and penalty-filled affair Saturday night, fans also got into the act, causing a near-riot at the game's conclusion when spectators behind the Pentiction bench threw something on Knights' Coach Rick Kozuback and both the coaching staff and players reciprocated. The action eventually spilled into the stands before order was restored.

Sunday, Scott Young scored four times for Lakers who had to fight back from a 4-0 first period deficit to earn their victory in Salmon Arm.

Nick Kapicki added three goals while Shannon Pohl, Gentles, and Phillips notched singles.

Rob Clark scored three for the last-place Totems with singles by Kevin Taillefer, Darren Servatius, Troy and Trevor Pohl.

In other BCJHL action Sunday, Merritt Centennials completed a successful road trip to Vancouver Island with an easy 9-5 win over Sidney Capitals while Burnaby Bluehawks edged Nanaimo Clippers 9-8.

Pat Ryan, Tony Galpin, Kevin Shevelde, and Brad Smiley had two goals each for Centennials while Allan Wall had a single.

David Bortolotto scored twice for the Capitals with singles by Rene Command, Graham Bewley and Gord Hahn.

Burnaby needed three unanswered goals to beat Nanaimo. Paul Bifano scored three for the winners with Bob Ginnetti netting two and singles from Ken Jorgenson, Bruce Kenward, Richard Sloan and Ron Popoff.

For Nanaimo, Jamie Cayford scored three and assisted on one. Rob Schmidt had a pair and one apiece went to Carey Coroy, Al Chatlain and Jay Barner.

Kruger leads Panthers