

Cents bomb Lakers following brawl

By The Canadian Press

A pre-game brawl prompted by one team's loss Wednesday night set the stage Thursday night as Merritt Centennials thumped Vernon Lakers 12-1 in one of three B.C. Junior Hockey League games.

In the others, Bob Ginnetti broke a 10-year-old league record as Burnaby BlueHawks beat Langley Eagles 12-7 and Revelstoke Rangers downed Salmon Arm Totems 8-3.

In Merritt, a verbal exchange between Vernon coach Don Moores and one of the Centennials during the pre-game warm-up quickly escalated to a physical confrontation as Moores went onto the ice brandishing a hockey stick.

Three players from each team were given game misconducts for that altercation. By the close of the game, Merritt had been given 113 of 224 penalty minutes, and each team had six game misconducts and five fighting majors.

Merritt coach Chuck Tapp said the tone of the game was set by Vernon's 4-3 loss Wednesday night to third-place Summerland Buckaroos.

In the upcoming Interior Division playoffs, the third-place team will meet

second-place Vernon, while the fourth-place team will meet Penticton Knights, solidly in first place with a 44-5-0 record.

Summerland now has 46 points with a 23-26-0 record, while Merritt is fourth with 43 points on a 21-27-1 record. Both teams have two games remaining before the regular season ends Sunday.

"The game didn't surprise me," Tapp said. "The boys were upset. They think Vernon threw the game against Summerland and so do I.

"I don't think they (Lakers) have the guts to go against us in the playoffs."

Tapp said he isn't worried about meeting Penticton in the playoffs.

After the loss Wednesday night, Moores was so disgusted with his team he had them take off their skates, then run stairs in the arena still dressed in their hockey uniforms.

After a delay in the start of the game, Merritt led 4-1 at the end of the first period and 8-1 at the end of the second.

Mark Bogoslawski and linemate Pat Ryan scored three goals each, while Neil Eisenhut and Brad Smiley had two each.

Merritt outshot Vernon 52-21.