

Lakers take series lead

By JIM JUDD
Daily News Sports

Vernon Lakers edged Merritt Centennials 7-6 in dramatic fashion Tuesday night at Civic arena, scoring three unanswered third period goals to overcome a 6-4 deficit and earn a victory which moves them to within one game of advancing to the BCJHL semi-finals.

The win gives Lakers a 3-2 lead in their best-of-seven quarter-final series with Merritt. Winners of the series meet Penticton Knights who defeated Summerland Buckaroos in four straight games in their quarter final series.

Defenceman Tony Christie who turned in a mediocre performance during the course of the evening, ended up as the hero Tuesday night, scoring the game-winner at 15:58 of the third period. The goal, which made up for one he kicked into his own net in the second period, capped a third-period come-back by Vernon which began with a five-minute high-sticking penalty to Centennials' Ron Sparks.

The penalty to Sparks, however, came as a result of his deleting centre Nick Kapicki from the game. The Vernon star lay on the ice for 10-minutes before being removed on a stretcher. Kapicki, however, was only shaken up but is a doubtful starter for tonight's game.

Later in the game Vernon lost the services of star defenceman Shawn Lofroth who will be sidelined for a week or more with a leg injury.

Nevertheless, Lakers tied the game 6-6 in the third period on power-play goals by Greg Kowal, who had three for the night as well as a pair of assists, and centre Frank Dutoff.

The come-back set the stage for Christie's winning goal. The Vernon defenceman picked up a loose puck at the blueline and fired a wrist-shot through a maze of players. Somehow the puck found its mark and the goal stood through the final four minutes of play.

"It was all scrubby in front (of the net)," explained Christie. "I thought I'd just fire into the mess and hope for the best."

Kapicki scored on a man-advantage situation in the first period to account for the other Vernon goal. Allan Wall, with three, Pat Ryan, Kevin Cheveldave, and John Tent replied for Merritt who held period leads of 3-2 and 6-4.

Jim Young made 32 saves in Lakers' net while Mike Doyle turned aside 33 for Centennials.

Game six of the series takes place tonight in Merritt and Lakers' coach Don Moores is anticipating more of the same rough style of play that has been the rule rather than the exception to date.

"The series isn't over yet," Moores suggested. "It's going to be more of the same thing . . . we'll just have to make our own breaks."

Naturally Moores will expect a bit better performance in the early going from his squad tonight. Centennials, who managed to intimidate Lakers from the opening face-off Tuesday night, also had the run of the rink until the latter half of the third period.

"We've been taking a lot of crap from them (Centennials) but tonight we panicked," Moores explained. "The first two periods it was total panic. I think the big difference was that we agreed to play hockey in the third period and let the cards fall where they may . . . certainly that five-minute penalty helped us a lot though."

In other BCJHL playoff action Tuesday night, Richmond Sockeyes defeated Abbotsford Flyers 5-3 to stay alive in their quarter-final series. They trail Flyers 3-2 in the best-of-seven affair. Sockeyes, however, lost the services of Vernon native Bruce Major who will be sidelined for the remainder of the season with a broken wrist.

Major suffered the injury in the first period after he was checked from behind into the corner boards.

Sockeyes got two goals from Keith Street as well as singles from Mike Scardina, Brian Silversen, and Don Rintala. Flyers' goals came from Sean Harder, Chris Anderson, and Darren Matias.

Sutter leads Isles' attack

By The Canadian Press



Lakers' captain Greg Kowal, one of the few bright spots for Vernon in the early going of Tuesday's game, slides the puck across the Merritt goal crease during third period action Tuesday

night at Civic arena. Lakers, who trailed 3-2 and 6-4 by periods, overcame their deficit in the third period to earn a 7-6 victory and take a 3-2 series lead. Game six takes place tonight in Merritt

and coach Don Moores is expecting more of the same rough play that has been typical of the series.

(Daily News Photo)

FIRST GAME TODAY

Okanagan team could emerge as provincial champions

For the first time in many years the Okanagan could emerge as the victor in the B.C. Boys High School "AA" Basketball Championship in Burnaby and there's at least a 50/50 chance that team could be Vernon Panthers.

Panthers, who lock horns with North Surrey this morning in the first game of the provincial basketball classic championship, enter the event ranked second, overall in the province while Penticton Lakers are ranked number one.

If everything goes according to the rankings the end result could be the two rival Okanagan teams facing one another for the "AA" championship.

The third most powerful team entered in the



BRIAN KRUGER
... power man

championship are the Richmond Colts who are presently ranked third.

Penticton meets Trail in their opener today

while Richmond faces Prince Rupert. Other first round matchups include: Abbotsford versus John Oliver; Windsor against Belmont; Vancouver College versus Oak Bay; Correlieu versus Centennial; Killarney against D. W. Poppy.

Rounding out the top five seeds in the province are Killarney and Centennial, ranked four and five, respectively.

Each of the top teams has at least one top player and Panthers are no exception to this rule. Richmond boasts centre Steve Taylor but also has a lot of scoring depth in the likes of 6'6" Jim Lamond, and guard Ray Doyle. Taylor is 6'8".

Penticton, of course, has Geoff McKay who has led the Okanagan Mainline Basketball



ROB ZIMMERMAN
... outside shooter

League in individual scoring for the past three seasons.

Panthers have perhaps the most depth of any of

the contending teams though they lack somewhat in size aside from 6'8" centre Brian Kruger. Panthers starting five includes Rod Charleton, J.D. Jackson, Rob Zimmerman and Bruce Babluk as well as Kruger. However, bet that Panthers will look to Kruger for both leadership and scoring power when the going gets tough. Zimmerman, the speedy guard with the Vernon team, is also an excellent outside shooter and quarterbacks the Panthers' offense when they are on the prowl.

The action is split between the Simon Fraser University gym and the PNE AgriDome. The championship game, slated for Saturday at 8:45 p.m., will take place in the AgriDome.