Vernon Daily News

sports

Editor—DON KENDALL

Lakers host Merritt tonight

Vernon Lakers host Merritt Warriors in their B.C. Junior Hockey League season opener tonight, at 8 p.m., in the Civic Arena.

Warriors kicked off their season Thursday night with a 4-3 loss, at home, to Langley Eagles.

There is little known about Merritt. Warriors have only three players that were with the team last year and they didn't play any exhibition games.

However, Vernon Head Coach Ernie Gare expects Merritt to ice a strong team. "They gave Eagles all they could handle and Langley is supposed to be the best team on the Coast," Gare said. "I'm expecting a tough game."

Lakers, who are loaded with BCJHL veterans, won two of three pre-season encounters. And Gare doesn't think his club will have difficulty scoring goals.

"We have two lines who can play with anyone," he said. "They should generate a lot of offence for us."

One trio has Kevin Scott, who came to Lakers from Shuswap Totems, between Summerland refugees Ed Tuckwood and Craig Bedard. The second line features three returning Lakers: Doug Spooner between Wes Gentles and Stacy Hartnell.

Vernon is back on the ice Saturday night when it hosts Portland Winter Hawks, of the Western Hockey League. Former Vernon players Dennis Holland, Jay Stark, Troy Mick, Troy and Trevor Pohl will be in the Portland line-up. Another local player on the Winter Hawks' roster, Jeff Finley, is currently at New York Islanders' training camp.

Eagles hang on to edge Warriors

By The Canadian Press

The Langley Eagles held on for a 4-3 win over the Merritt Warriors in one of two games that opened the B.C. Junior Hockey League Thursday night.

In Victoria, the Nanaimo Clippers defeated the Juan de Fuca Whalers 6-4.

In Merritt, Rob Clarke scored twice for Langley with Bryan Moller and Bob Brown adding singles.

Stuart Jackson, Steve Manuel and Allen Suzuki picked up a goal each for Merritt.

Suzuki scored half-way through the third period to bring Merritt within one, but the Warriors weren't able to tie the game with the goalie on the bench for an extra attacker in the late going.

Merritt dressed only three players that were with the team last year.

Langley outshot the Warriors 33-29.

In Victoria, Nanaimo led 1-0 after the first period and 5-3 after 40 minutes.

Lawrence Amy paced the Clipper attack with two goals and singles came from Brett Mayar, Mike Napton, Pat Hodgins and Todd Demchuck.

Randy Zulinick scored twice for the Whalers and Mike Barkley and Rob Coultish rounded out scoring.

Goalie Dean Nazuruk made 41 saves in the Juan de Fuca net, while Drew Smith turned aside 27 shots for Nanaimo.

Aerobic