Vernon Daily News

sports

Editor — DON KENDALL

Rally stalled by illegal sticks

Everything went against Vernon Lakers, but their goaltending, Sunday night in Rutland as the Vernon squad dropped an 8-6 decision to Kelowna Packers in B.C. Junior Hockey League action.

Lakers, forced to kill penalties most of the night, were pressing Packers late in the third period with a two-man advantage when Kelowna Coach Bill Hogaboam called for a stick measurement. The sticks of Stacy Hartnell and Campbell Blair were both ruled illegal, Lakers lost the two-man edge, and Packers went on to win the game.

The teams were tied 1-1 after one period and 4-4 at the end of two, but Packers surged ahead 8-4 early in the third frame. Lakers rebounded with two quick goals to narrow the deficit but it was as close as they would come.

The score might have been lopsided had it not been for the goaltending performance of newcomer Jason Palmer.

Palmer, who was obtained from Langley Eagles in exchange for Wes Gentles before the weekend, was chosen the game's third star despite allowing seven of eight Kelowna goals.

"He (Palmer) really sparked the guys with some of his saves," suggested Lakers' coach Ernie Gare. "He really kept us in the game . . . if he keeps playing like that he'll be around a while."

Gare wasn't too happy with the quality of officiating during the game, nor was he thrilled about the quantity of penalties his club received.

"We got a five-minute match penalty that I thought was totally uncalled for," he said.

Gare wasn't too thrilled about the illegal sticks either and vowed there would be changes made directly.

"That (stick measure) hurt us," he said. "We're going to get the stick measure out today and make sure they're all legal."

Kerry Russell had three goals to pace Packers while singles came from Stan Marple, Kevin Taillefer, Terrence Head, Brent Mowery and Jay Luknowsky.

Blair scored three times for Lakers while captain Doug Spooner added a pair and Mark Greyeyes rounded out the scoring with a single.

Kelowna outshot Vernon 46-41.

Meanwhile, in other BCJHL action Sunday night, Richmond Sockeyes edged Nanaimo Clippers 6-5.

Brian Kozak and Dave Tomlinson scored two goals each to lead Richmond while Jason Phillips and Jim Gunn added singles for the winners.

Nanaimo led 1-0 at the end of the first period but the teams were tied 3-3 after 40 minutes.

Mike Knapton, Laurence Amy, Pat Hodgins, Grant McDonald and Todd Finner replied for Nanaimo.

Richmond netminder Jeff Clark made 35 saves while Chris Fairlie turned aside 29 shots at the Nanaimo net.

Lakers next action will be Friday night at the Civic Arena when the club hosts Delta Flyers, of the Coastal Division.

SPORTS BRIEFS