LEAD PLAYOFF SERIES 1-0

# Lakers prove too tough for Knights



Vernon Lakers' forward Ian Alger (16) forces Knights' Jackson Penny off the puck in Lakers' zone Tuesday night during game one of their best-of-seven playoff series. Serious checking such as this helped Lakers earn a 6-2 victory. Game two takes place tonight in Penticton. (Daily News photo)

By JIM JUDD
Daily News Sports

An early lead and strong, disciplined team play helped Vernon Lakers to a relatively easy 6-2 victory over Penticton Knights in the opening game of their best-of-seven B.C. Junior Hockey League Interior Division semi-final matchup Tuesday at Civic Arena.

Lakers combined a potent offensive attack with a solid defensive game from the goaltender outward to hand the visitors the loss and take an all-important 1-0 lead in the series which features home-ice advantage for the local club.

Elsewhere in Interior Division playoff action Tuesday night, Kelowna Packers whipped Merritt Warriors 11-1 to take a 1-0 lead in that best-of-seven series.

"Getting that early lead is important — that was the key tonight (Tuesday)," said Lakers' Head Coach Ernie Gare. "We got ahead and we didn't let up."

Lakers, in fact, put their first goal on the board just 26 seconds into the contest when Doug Spooner cleaned up a loose puck during a goalmouth scramble in front of Knights' Jamie Loewen. Kevin Scott and Mark Greyeyes, who along with Spooner proved to be an unstoppable combination against Penticton, drew assists on Spooner's opening goal and it was just a hint of what was to come from the productive trio on the night.

The three combined for four goals and 11 points with Greyeyes picking up two goals and a pair of assists while Scott had a goal and three helpers. Spooner added a pair of assists to his early goal for a three-point night.

Though the Lakers' top line carried the bulk of the scoring they weren't the only productive unit on the ice Tuesday night. Veteran centre Al Young scored a pair of goals to round out the scoring. His first goal was a short-handed effort at 4:04 of the opening frame, giving Lakers two-goal lead. Young, who turned in one of the most sparkling performances of his four-year career with the club, and certainly his best playoff performance, stole the puck at Knights blueline and undressed Loewen before putting the puck high into the net.

The score stood at 2-0 after one period of play but Knights got on the board early in the second frame with a power-play marker just 39 seconds into the stanza. Jackson Penny gave Knights their first goal while another power-play marker by John Depoureq late in the period sandwiched a pair of goals by Lakers. Greyeyes, with his first of the night, and Scott scored the second period tallies for Vernon. Both second period Vernon goals were during man-advantage situations while the two unanswered third period goals by Vernon were also power-play goals giving the local club four on the night.

Greyeyes added his second goal just one minute into the third frame giving Vernon a 5-2 lead and Young's second goal just 34 seconds later put the icing on the cake. Both goals came while Knights' badman Cliff Furnsetth was sitting out a double minor.

Lakers forechecking and backchecking helped take the pressure off the Vernon defensive unit which turned in the most defensive performance of the season to boot. To top it all off, goaltender Jason Palmer, who made 25 saves on the night, made a number of outstanding and key saves to keep Knights at bay.

"They (Knights) weren't getting good clean shots," suggested Gare. "Our defence kept them to the perimeter and anything that got through Jason handled."

Meanwhile, Gare was equally impressed with the performance of his top line, sighting Scott's play as the key to their success.

"It's pretty hard to defend against them," he said. "Scott just seems to intimidate them with his speed — he's got such good acceleration."

At the other end of the rink, Knights' Head Coach Duane Pentland was unimpressed with the play of his Knights but he gave Lakers full credit for their win.

"They (Lakers) came out and played hockey and we got away from our game plan," he explained. "I think they (Lakers) keyed on our style — they seemed to know how we come out of our end . . . all that will change by the next game."

The next game is tonight in Penticton but Gare is confident his club will meet with equal success there since they have been successful in Penticton Memorial Arena this season.

"I'm positive about tomorrow night because we've played well in their building this season," Gare said Tuesday.

In Kelowna, linemates Kevin Taillefer, Kerry Russell and Brent Mowery accounted for six goals and 15 points for the Packers. Taillefer had four goals and one assist, Russell scored once and had six assists and Mowery had one goal and two assists. Other Kelowna scorers were Jason Ruff, Jay Luknowsky, Pat Mangold, Jamie Kurki and Rob Steele.

The Merritt marksman was Steve Manuel. Packer goaltender Lucien Carignan stopped 14 shots for Kelowna which held period leads of 3-0 and 6-1. Warriors netminder Randy Beekhuizen made 35 saves.

In other BCJHL playoff action Tuesday night, Richmond Sockeyes registered a 7-4 overtime win over Nanaimo Clippers.

In action tonight, both Interior Division series resume in Merritt and Penticton while on the Coast Richmond is at Delta while Nanaimo is in Richmond.

Vernon Daily News | **sports** | Editor — DON KENDALL

JUDDS JOURNAL

## Vernon defencemen a pleasant surprise



by Jim Judd
Daily News Sports Writer

To watch Vernon Lakers defensive unit Tuesday night one would never have thought that heading into the B.C. Junior Hockey League playoffs this season the Vernon rearguard corps was one of the most suspect among the league's top clubs.

Though the team had shown sporadic efforts to reduce their goals-against deficit over the course of the regular season, local hockey fans usually came away from home games shaking their heads and wondering what was going to become of a club that simply couldn't hold onto a healthy lead against a team of equal capabilities. There were choice occassions when four and five goal leads dwindled to nothing and sometimes Lakers even came out on the short end of the stick after enjoying healthy leads earlier in the contest.

The addition of goaltender Jason Palmer, whom the club acquired in mid-season, more or less turned the fortunes of the team around, but in spite of a winning record, Palmer couldn't keep his goals-against average anywhere near a respectable figure.

If the first game of the Lakers-Nights series is any indication, however, the regular season performance of the Vernon blueline corps means absolutely nothing. Lakers' defencemen did exactly what they were supposed to do — they played defensively. Instead of allowing the opposition players to back them deep into their own zone, the Vernon defenders kept them to the outside of the defensive zone consistently over the course of the evening. The result was that Knights enjoyed very few high quality scoring opportunities and even fewer in the area immediately surrounding Jason Palmer's goal.

Few of them were caught out of position and none of them committed themselves to an offensive rush if it meant leaving their defensive position.

A sparkling example of good defensive hockey, rearguard Campbell Blair was one of the major surprises in the opening game. Blair played his position to the letter, breaking up Knights' plays outside the blueline, forcing the Penticton forwards to shoot from well out and handing out a good number of punishing body-check. His steady play and cool, level-headed approach to his position set an example for the others who also stuck to their posts throughout the night.

It was hockey even Howie Meeker would have been happy with.

Blair was one of the players most often named when the calibre of Lakers' defensive game came into question this season. However, Blair usually eluded the flack he was getting for his defensive game because of his offensive prowess. He doggedly persued a number of personal offensive goals during the season and when the smoke had cleared Blair had written his name into the BCJHL record books on four occassions.

At the same time he finished behind only super-star centre Kevin Scott in team scoring with a record-setting 110 points — the most any BCJHL defenceman has acquired in the course of a single season.

However, Blair's defensive game became less and less important to him as his list of achievements grew. One can only assume that Blair was being honest and straightforward last week when he said he felt "fulfilled" and that his season was "complete" after he picked up two goals and two assists in the last regular season game to erase two previous records for goals in a season and points in a season by a defenceman. True to his word, the Vernon rearguard has now channelled his undivided attention to the task of playing defence.

Naturally, with his passing and shooting skills, Blair will still give the club an additional scoring threat from the blueline in the offensive zone even if he sticks mainly to a defensive game.

However, there was another key to the victory Tuesday night. They say the mark of a good club is what they do when they haven't got the puck and in the case of Vernon Lakers in their opening game Tuesday, they checked Knights into the ice when they didn't have the puck. Every forward became an effective forechecker and backchecker — so much so, in fact, that Knights would have run the white flag up the mast midway through the game had they one to fly.

In order to win against any team, but most especially in playoff hockey, players have to be willing to skate hard in both directions and be willing to hand out hard checks in order to nullify their opponents' offensive capabilities. It worked to perfectionin game one of this series and there is nothing to say it won't work to perfection in every other game for so long as Lakers are willing to supply the amount of effort and discipline it takes to keep it going.

There were a few other, less flattering observations that came out of game one. The most obvious of these was the fact that Ernie Gare was having a difficult time deciding what combinations of players to use in any given situation. However, once he decided to go with his standard line combinations, things very quickly went in Lakers' favor. Why he decided to change his line combinations at all is beyond my comprehension especially since the club is basically just two lines deep.

Mind you, any combination of players he chooses to use as third line can do an adequate job of checking the opposition into the ice. Players such as Todd Demchuk may not have the most hockey skills in the world but if guts and desire were transformed into skills, a guy like Demchuk would be a super-star.

The only disappointment to date is the play of Shawn Howard. This guy has the potential to be one of the greats in the league but he pulls up well short of a 100 percent effort. Maybe a little of the team's attitude will eventually rub off on Howard too as the playoffs progress.

## Morris sparks Nor Kor

Morris Vardabasso scored 40 points to lead Nor Kor Contracting to a 76-67 win over Waddy's Restaurant in Vernon Major Men's Basketball League playoff action, Monday night.

In other games, Scenic Valley Garden Centre dumped Silver Bullets 87-71 and Apple Lane Restaurant crushed Fingard Shooting Stars 110-80.

Semi-finals are scheduled next Monday with first place Shuswap Lakers meeting Nor Kor and Scenic Valley tangling with Apple Lane.

Vardabasso collected 28 of his 40 points in the second half. He was five-for-five from the foul line and three-for-five on three-point attempts.

Lorne Babiuk added 16 points for Nor Kor.

Dale Olson led Waddy's Restaurant with 26 points, including 22 in the second half. Owen Schoenberger added 20 in a losing cause.

Nor Kor held a 31-30 edge at half-time and the teams were deadlocked 60-60 late in the second half.

Meanwhile, Silver Bullets couldn't get within six points of Scenic Valley after falling behind 19-9 in the opening minutes.

Rene Dolcetti led the Gardeners with 28 points while Tony Wolcott added 20 and Otis Haley sunk 19, before fouling out.

Duncan McDonald, with 25 points, and Rod Schneider, with 14, were the top snipers for Silver Bullets.

Apple Lane broke open a close game by scoring 13 consecutive points at the start of the second half.

Wilf Haak led the Apple Lane onslaught with 31 points while Ted Kornelson sunk 23 and Jack Knight added 22.

Dave Collingridge and Stacey Smith were the top scorers for Fingard with 22 and 21 points, respectively.

**A JOGGING HOG**

Researchers at the University of California monitored the heartbeats of pigs running on a treadmill, and reported that one pig ran a mile (1.6 kilometres) in less than eight minutes.

## Jackson and Kruger meet in college final

By DON KENDALL
Daily News Sports Editor

VANCOUVER (Special)—Two former Vernon Panthers will face each other in the Canada West University Athletic Association championship series, this weekend, at the University of B.C.

Guard J.D. Jackson will lineup for UBC Thunderbirds and forward Brian Kruger is a member of the University of Victoria Vikings.

Jackson led the Thunderbirds to a 95-75 win over the University of Saskatchewan Huskies in semi-final action, Saturday night. UBC swept the best-of-three series in two games.

Jackson, a rookie, led all scorers with 20 points. He connected on five of seven shots from the field, including a three-pointer, and seven of nine free throws.

"It's just great to be a part of it because everybody was so down on UBC," Jackson said.

UBC's appearance in post-season play is its first since 1975-76. And Jackson's contribution is one of the reasons the team has regained respectability.

T-Birds' Coach Bruce Enns said Jackson is playing better every game. "In the past three weeks he has been great," Enns said. "He has really started to explode in the past few games."

Enns often finds himself with four freshmen on the court. Al Lalonde and Mike Clarke, of Kelowna, John Carlson, from Maple Ridge, and Jackson give UBC the best crop of rookies in the country.

"Our freshmen have adjusted to college ball very quickly," Enns said. "Lalonde was a standout fight from the start. It took J.D. a while longer, but he has certainly adjusted now."

The bestof-three final series starts Friday, at UBC.

Enns admits his team's 21-9 record and the berth in the Western final has exceeded his wildest expectations. "I don't think anyone, including myself, expected us to do this well," he said.

Meanwhile, Oliver's Spencer McKay scored 19 points to lead UVic to an 81-79 win over Alberta Golden Bears, Sunday. Victoria, the defending national champions, won the best-of-three series 2-1.

Kruger, in his second season with Vikings, saw limited duty during the semi-finals.

## LOOK BACK FIVE YEARS

**FEBRUARY 1982**

Penticton overcame a 3-0 deficit to defeat Vernon Coca Cola Juvenile Reps 8-4 in the opening game of the Okanagan-Mainline League finals, in Penticton. The best of three series was to resume in Vernon. Norm Day, Lamont Martel, Rob York and Mel Reimer scored by the Vernon squad.

**FEBRUARY 1982**

Lumby Carlin O'Keefe scored five unanswered goals in the third period to go on to a 7-1 win over Royce Rowdies, of Lumby, in the final of the annual Lumby Invitational Sportsmen's Hockey tournament. Tom Williamson scored three goals for the winners, while Woody Kuroaka also tallied three.

**BEGAN TO CURL**

Curling was probably first played in Canada in 1760 on the frozen St. Lawrence River by British soldiers at Quebec City.



**BIATHLON ON THE STAR**

Cadet Chris Foster of Vancouver takes aim during the B.C. Cadet Biathlon, last weekend, on Silver Star Mountain. Seventy-six cadets, from throughout the province, tested their marksmanship and cross-country skiing skills. (Don Weixl Photo)

SPORTS BRIEFS

## Toros Shooters win broomball championship

Toros Shooters got a goal from Vicki Loski with just 10 seconds remaining in regulation time to earn a 2-1 victory over Bud's Broomballers. The victory gave Shooters the Vernon Ladies Broomball League championship. Arnette Dengelsen scored the other goal for Toros while Ginger Davidson had the lone goal for the losers. Meanwhile, Sunset Properties defeated Kal Hotel 2-0 for third place. Sandy Price and Laurie Muchowski scored the goals while Betty Reid had the shutout.

### PVHL

Gary Gilchrist scored five goals and Dennis O'Ferrall added three tallies as Molson Magicians defeated Toros Canadians 12-6 in Pleasant Valley Hockey League action Tuesday night. Dave Schneider added a pair of goals while Murray Batty and Mike Kakoski contributed singles for the winners. John Box, with three goals, Dale Hildebrand, with two, and Lance Swanson replied for Toros.

### Top Bowlers

Carolyne Morneau and Randy Borton are the Lincoln Lanes Bowlers of the Week for Feb. 15-20. Morneau, who bowls in the Thursday Coffee League, had a 758 triple for 233 pins over her 175 average. Borton, who bowls in the Thursday 7-9 league, had a 678 triple for 168 pins over his average of 170.

### Wins award

NEW YORK (AP) — Greg Louganis, double gold medallist at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics and holder of a record 41 U.S. national diving titles, was named winner of the 1987 Jesse Owens International Trophy on Tuesday.

The award is presented annually to the athlete who "best personifies excellence in athletic performance and sincere co-operation and understanding among peoples of all nations."

Louganis was the 1986 world champion in both the 10- and three-metre boards.

### Top athlete

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Jackie Joyner-Kersee, who set world records twice in the seven-event heptathlon last year, was named Monday the 1986 winner of the Sullivan Award as the top amateur athlete in the United States.

Joyner-Kersee became the 34th track and field performer and the eighth woman to receive the award in its 67-year history.

### Tune-up tourney

EDINBURGH (AP) — The way has been cleared for a group of tennis players, including No. 1-ranked Ivan Lendl of Czechoslovakia, to use the Scottish Open championship as a grass-court tuneup for Wimbledon, officials said Tuesday.

Final approval came from the Edinburgh district council, which owns the Craiglockhart tennis club where the June tournament takes place, Douglas Lynd, secretary of the Scottish Lawn Tennis Association, said.

Those joining Lendl among the invitees are expected to include Mats Wilander of Sweden, Yannick Noah of France and Andres Gomez of Ecuador, Lynd said.

### Want review

DETROIT (AP) — Detroit will ask the NHL to review what coach Jacques Demers called a vicious stick attack on Red Wings' centre Steve Yzerman by Chicago defenceman Gary Nylund.

Nylund broke his stick against Yzerman's knee late in the overtime period of Sunday night's 2-2 tie in Chicago, then struck Yzerman and continued playing with the broken stick.

Yzerman scored both Detroit goals.

Demers said he wants to notify NHL officials about referee Bob Myers's refusal to call a penalty as well as the Black Hawk defenceman's attack.

### Ordinance rejected

BOSTON (AP) — A proposed ordinance calling for the arrest of professional athletes who fight during games has been rejected by a city council committee.

The full council is expected to endorse the decision and put the ordinance on indefinite hold at a meeting Wednesday.

The committee report said violence during games should be handled within the rules of the sport. It said the ordinance was vague and did not detail specific crimes and punishments.

### Sign free agent

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — The New Orleans Saints have signed free agent fullback Michael Waters.

Waters, six-foot-two and 230 pounds, was a ninth-round draft choice of the New York Jets in the 1985 NFL draft but was cut during training camp. He was with the Philadelphia Eagles for the first five games of last season.

### Earn TV rights

SEOUL (AP) — Japan's broadcasting pool has agreed to pay $52 million for exclusive TV rights in Japan for the 1988 Summer Olympics, the Seoul Olympic Organizing Committee announced.