LEAD PLAYOFF SERIES 2-0 . . .

. . . NEXT GAME FRIDAY NIGHT

"Textbook" hockey pays dividends



LAKERS' forward Todd Demchuk gets a rude reception in front of Penticton's goalmouth during action Wednesday night in game two of the BCJHL best-of-seven series between the two clubs. Demchuk had a goal and played a strong checking game as the local squad went ahead 2-0 in the series. Game three takes place at Civic arena Friday night.

(Daily News photo)

By JIM JUDD
Daily News Sports

Vernon Lakers played near-perfect textbook hockey in posting a 6-3 decision over the hometown Penticton Knights Wednesday night.

The victory gives Lakers a 2-0 lead in their best-of-seven B.C. Junior Hockey League Interior Division semi-final series with Penticton. Game three takes place Friday night at Vernon Civic arena.

Lakers played a tight, disciplined, positional style of hockey constantly and relentlessly checking Knights, forcing them to make mistakes and then seizing those opportunities to score. The local club totally dominated their opposition from the outset though they gave up the lead early in the second period when Knights posted back-to-back goals in a span of a minute and a half.

However, captain Doug Spooner tied the score with his first of two on the night, then high-scoring defenceman Campbell Blair put the winner by Knights' goaltender Jamie Loewen late in the second frame on a power-play.

Spooner added an insurance goal in the third frame while Craig Bedard scored into the empty net in the dying seconds of the game to put the icing on the cake.

Knights opened the scoring when Todd Hilditch beat Jason Palmer from the blueline with a screened wrist-shot after the Penticton club had successfully killed three consecutive minor penalties.

However, Shawn Howard beat Loewen at the 18:31 mark to even the score at 1-1 before the period ended. Ian Alger and defenceman Chad Biafore collected assists on Howard's goal — a hard wrist-shot from just inside the blueline.

Howard's third line accounted for two goals on the night as did the first and second lines giving Lakers their most well-balanced scoring attack in recent games.

Todd Demchuk, who had another outstanding game, put Lakers ahead early in the second frame when he put wrist-shot past Loewen, converting a pass made by Howard who was on his knees at the time.

A pair of goals by Ken McArthur and former Vernon forward Greg Guest put Knights ahead by the 6:53 mark of the second frame though the lead was short-lived.

Under constant pressure from Lakers' forward units, Knights began to make costly mistakes in their own end, giving away the puck on a number of occassions. Spooner connected on one of these occassions with Kevin Scott and Biafore receiving assists on the play.

Late in the period Blair notched the winner with Al Young and Bedard collecting assists. Young once again gave Lakers strong second-line support up the middle while line-mates Tuckwood and Bedard hustled all night long as well.

Scott and Mark Greyeyes drew assists on Spooner's second goal, another Knights' give-away in their own zone which produced a three-on-one situation for the Scott-Spooner-Greyes line. It was a picture-perfect three-way passing play.

Spooner explained later that forechecking and simple hockey tactics were what the team was practicing in this playoff series and by sticking to them they would be even more successful in future games.

"Forechecking and getting on them (Knights) is our game," he said. "We're working hard — we just dump it in and go for it — nothing fancy — just discipline."

Spooner also spoke of the team's confidence though he was quick to point out that none of them are getting cocky at this point.

"We're really confident now," he said. "We'll be back here Saturday night with a three-game lead. We're not cocky, we're just confident."

Meanwhile, Lakers' Coach Ernie Gare breathed another big sigh of relief following the game and spoke highly of the sudden vein of discipline that is running through the team.

"We played a real disciplined game and I just can't say enough about our defence," he said. "We don't want to change anything and we just want to play it one game at a time now.

"We're forcing them all the time and it's exposing their weaknesses," he added.

It is becoming apparent as well that Lakers' experience is starting to pay off. Knights' lack of experience cost them in game two as it did in the opening contest.

Penticton Coach Dwayne Pentland agreed that the lack of experience was hurting his club in this series.

"They (Lakers) have got us bottled up in our own end but we can adapt to that," he suggested. "We're struggling a bit as far as our own systems are concerned but the penalties hurt us a lot tonight (Wednesday)."

Meanwhile, in other BCJHL playoff action Wednesday night, Kelowna Packers defeated Merritt Warriors 5-4 in Merritt while Richmond Sockeyes thumped Nanaimo Clippers 7-2 and Langley Eagles edged Delta Flyers 4-3 in overtime.

Kevin Taillefer scored with 14 seconds remaining in regulation time to give Packers a 2-0 leaf in their series. Brent Mowery, Kerry Russell, Jamie Kurki and Bruce Bianchini were the other scorers for Kelowna which led 1-0 after the first period and 3-2 after 40 minutes.

Steve Manuel and Frank Biller led Warriors with two goals apiece. Manuel had u chance to win the game in the final minute when Merritt was awarded a penalty shot when Kelowna was called for daly of game.

Goaltender Dusty Imoo, who finished the night with 36 saves, refused to be fooled by Manuel's fakes and smothered the penalty shot. Merritt goaltender Randy Beekhuizen blocked 57 shots.

Vernon Panthers receive provincial reinstatement

Vernon Panthers received an 11th hour reprieve Wednesday morning reinstating the local "AA" Senior Boys basketball team and making them eligible for Okanagan Valley basketball playoffs.

Panthers were stripped of their wins this season and left ineligible for post-season play after the B.C. High School Athletic Association declared that they had used Nigel Robertson illegally this season. Robertson had transferred to Vernon Secondary School from Seaton School this year and when that incident occurrs the proper channels must first be cleared before he becomes eligible to compete in high school varsity sporting programs.

"Whenever a player transfers between grade 11 and grade 12 you have to appeal for his eligibility to play," explained Panthers' Coach Dave Jackson. "We lost that appeal but we took it to a higher process."

However, before the higher process turned over an earlier decision, Panthers were stripped of the four wins they had accumulated in regular season play leaving them in last place and causing some long faces during the last three games of Panthers' season. They also drew up the Okanagan Valley playoffs without Panthers in the picture.

"It just broke us in half," suggested Jackson. "We were really down for the last three games."

Since the re-instatement, Panthers are once again in third place in the Okanagan North zone. They will play Kamloops Red Devils tonight in Kamloops.

"We would be looking for an upset but at least we're in it," said Jackson.

The winner of the Okanagan Valley Championship advances to the B.C. High School Basketball Championship while the second place team plays off against the second place team from the Prince George School District and that winner would also go to the provincial championship.

In other matchups tonight, Penticton meets NorKam while Salmon Arm and Rutland lock horns as do Westside and Brockelhurst.

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



GRADE EIGHT GIRLS' CHAMPS

VSS Grade Eight girls recently won the Girls Provincial Basketball Championship in a tournament held at Vernon Secondary School. Team members include, back row, left to right; Tony Wolcott, Coach, Jacquie Sorenson, Gretchen Carlston, Leighann Hoyland, Tricia Hagel, Kim Pollon, Lori Shippy, Penny Woodard, and Jill Powell. Front row, left to right; Sarah Giddings, Stephanie Morrison, Tracy Donald, Jeanine Foisy, Rita Chisholm, Leanne Christieson, Dace Moore, and Tara Tymkiw. (Daily News photo)

SPORTS BRIEFS

Vernon racers find alpine course tough

Two Vernon racers were among the many victims of a tough slalom course, Tuesday, at the Canadian Alpine Ski Championships in Stoneham, Que. Brent Nixon and Eric Sollid did not finish their first run. Only 25 of 120 starters completed both runs. Alain Villiarf of St.-Adele, Que. won the slalom event with a two-run combined time of one minute, 30.28 seconds. He finished just nine one-hundredths of a second ahead of Calgary's Jim Read. Vernon's Murray Smith was the 25th, and final, finisher in 1:54.20.

Stacey seventh

Statistics released this week by the Canada West University Hockey League show former Vernon Laker forward Stacey Wakabayashi finished seventh in conference scoring. Wakabayashi collected 24 goals and 26 assists, for 50 points, in 28 games. Wakabayashi, a native of 100 Mile House, now stars for the University of Alberta.

Teams needed

Canadian Tire Mixed Slowpitch League is looking for teams to play in its spring season. Anyone interested is asked to phone Larry Heck at 549-1715.

Bowlers honored

Marci Koenig and Lawrence Kupryk have been honored by Polson Bowling Centre as its Bowlers of the Week. Koenig rolled a three-game total of 767,185 pins over her 196 average. Kupryk had an 875 triple, 206 pins over his 223 average.

PVHL action

John Kuly and Doug Wiffen scored three goals each to pace Big Momma's to a 9-3 victory over Telmast Warriors in Pleasant Valley Hockey League action Wednesday night at Civic arena. Ken Dodge added a pair of goals while Gradon Brown contributed a single for the winners. Clarence Klym, Allan Klym, and Curt Stenke replied for Warriors.

Intermediate Women

Following are the results of action Wednesday night in Vernon Women's Intermediate Volleyball League: Sun Valley Sports 2, Dunbars Destroyers 0; Sun Valley Sports 2, Nolans Drugs 0; Pink Panthers 2, Chinook Aggies 0; Pink Panthers 1, Inland Wheelers 1; Veefers 2, Malibu Girls 0; Veefers 1, Toros Six Pack 1; Two By Fours 1, Malibu 1; Two By Fours 2, Toros Six Pack 0; Country Gals 1, Chinook Aggies 0; Country Gals 2, Inland Wheelers 0; Dunbar Destroyers 2, Interior Appliances 0; Nolan Drugs 1, Interior Appliances 1.

Indoor soccer

In Men's Indoor Soccer League action Wednesday night Rangers bombed United 13-1, Selects edged Rippers 1-0, and Caps doubled Rovers 6-3. In Women's action Maradonas defeated Shooters 7-4 and Stingers downed Selects 5-4.

Race underway

ANCHORAGE (AP) — The longest snowmobile race in the world began Wednesday with a new rule forcing participants to make the Gold Rush Classic slower but more competitive.

Fourteen two-man teams left Big Lake at one-minute intervals. The winners are expected to cover the 1,600 kilometres to Nome by Friday night or Saturday morning.

The racers will have to carry all the parts for repairs because the new rule prohibits racers from getting logistical support or buying replacement parts along the way.

In the three previous races, some manufacturer-sponsored teams had air support.

Rodgers jailed

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Former Heisman Trophy winner Johnny Rodgers, who once played for the Montreal Alouettes, was jailed for six months on Wednesday after conviction for threatening a television repairman with a gun.

The six-month term also included three years' probation and a $1,000 fine.

Superior Court Judge Jack Levitt suspended a two-year state prison sentence, substituting the probation and local jail custody, but warned Rodgers he would automatically go to prison if he violates probation.

To host event

MANCHESTER, England (AP) — Wigan Athletic, an English Third Division side, will be allowed to stage its F.A. Cup quarter-final game against Leeds United at its Springfield Road stadium after police abandoned a demand to hold the soccer match on a neutral ground.

Leeds fans have a reputation for causing trouble and the Greater Manchester Police, anxious to avoid disturbances at the 25,000 capacity ground, at first wanted the game moved to a bigger, more secure stadium.

Wigan chairman Bill Kenyon said the move would punish the Third Division side rather than the hooligans. He launched a campaign to keep the match at Springfield Road even if it meant playing behind closed doors.

Not sanctioned

MEXICO CITY (AP) — The World Boxing Council said Wednesday that welterweight champion Lloyd Honeyghan's victory over Johnny Bumphus on Sunday wasn't a title fight because the WBC didn't sanction it.

"The main reason for our refusal to sanction it is that it was scheduled for 15 rounds, which goes against the measures for medical security of our organization," the WBC said in a statement.

The WBC, unlike other boxing organizations, limits its championship fights to 12 rounds.

Honeyghan gave up his World Boxing Association title, saying he didn't want to fight the WBA's top-ranked contender, South African Harold Volbrecht. Honeyghan, who is black, said he was protesting South Africa's policy of racial separation.

Local skiers win their categories

Two Vernon skiers, both members of North Okanagan Cross Country Ski Club, placed first in their respective categories during the Tips Up Cup Race held recently at Larch Hills Ski Area near Salmon Arm.

The event featured more than 100 competitors including 19 members of the North Okanagan club in this fun-oriented event.

Doreen Jones, competing in the Ladies 50-59 years category, along with Julien Laforce, competing in the men 70 and older category, placed first. Jones had a time of 26 minutes and 36 seconds over a 5 km course while Laforce's time over 10 km was 52:12.

A number of NOCCSC members placed second in their individual categories as well including the following:

Krista Larsson, girls eight and nine years, 1.5 km, 5:37; Steve Brewer, boys 14 and 15 years, 10 km, 36:00; Dave Brewer, men 50-59 years, 10 km, 39:15; Paul Jones, men 60-69, 10 km, 45:50.

Third place finishers included the following:

Shane Ertmoed, boys eight and nine years, 1.5 km, 4:59; Sarah Hickinbottom, girsl 16-17 years, 5 km, 21:05; Mike Maloney, boys 14-15 years, 10 km; 36:12; Helen Brewer, ladies 40-49 years, 5 km, 22:03.

Other member of the North Okanagan Cross Country Ski Club who competed in the event were Cory Ertmoed, Josh Smith, Stig Larsson, Erin Maloney, Howard Smith, Pat Maloney, Bill Maloney, and Pat Hickinbottom.

The top three men competitors in the 10 km event were Phil Wallensteen of Salmon Arm, Tom Hanson, also of Salmon Arm, and Farley Klotz of Kelowna. Wallensteen's time was 31:00, Hanson's time was 31:35 and Klotz crossed the finish line in a time of 31:39.

The last race in the series will be held at Sovereign Lake Ski Trails near Vernon March 21. Registration closes at 10:30 a.m. and racing begins at 11 a.m.

LOOK BACK FIVE YEARS

FEBRUARY, 1982

More than 250 skiers participated in the second annual Labatt's Over-the-hill Downhill Race. The winning team was from Kelowna's Big White Ski area. A Vernon foursome skied into second place. Teams from around B.C. and Alberta competed in the race.

JUDDS JOURNAL

Series produces some antics



by Jim Judd
Daily News Sports Writer

In this business playoffs usually provide the most entertaining working attraction and it's not always because the calibre of hockey is a cut above that played in the regular season. It's generally because there's so much character that begins to develop soon after a series begins and the latest best-of-seven series between Lakers and Penticton Knights is already producing some of this character.

Sports teams tend to be some of the most superstitious groups of people on the face of the planet under these circumstances as each team searches frantically for any additional psychological edge it can muster. This is when players on a winning streak take great pains to do everything just as they did it in the previous game and that doesn't necessarily mean on the ice.

Players will put their skates on in the identical manner, either right foot first, left foot first whatever they did in the previous game. It's generally considered that washing one's underwear during a winning streak will wash out the good luck. As a result most teams on a streak won't wash their ginch and this alone can can add a potent amount of character to a team within a game or two. Just as a way of warning local hockey fans, Lakers are in the midst of a winning streak and if you happen to notice a raunchy aroma in the confines of Civic arena come Friday night just remember that it's all done for the good of the club.

Players aren't the only ones affected by the idea of superstitious concepts either. Lakers' Coach Ernie Gare tugged at his tie Wednesday night following the club's 6-3 victory against Penticton in the Peach City and exclaimed that he was going to have to wear the same clothes once again on Friday night. Naturally they can't be laundered in the meantime. Ditto for Assistant Coach George Fargher, I suppose. I haven't asked yet but no doubt General Manager Mel Lis, who is currently wearing a grin from ear to ear, will be up to the same concept. The grin, as you may have guessed, will also remain.

There are other forms of additional entertainment surfacing in this series as well.

Wednesday night there were no fights on the ice but the Penticton announcer was ejected from the game by Kelowna referee Dave McClelland after he uttered a particular indiscretion aimed at McClelland himself. Albeit it was a funny one though and it caused a stir of laughter throughout the Penticton Memorial arena.

Following a bench minor penalty assessed to Knights, the local announcer got on the public address system to announce the penalty. "Bench minor to Penticton . . . for no apparent reason," he exclaimed in a sarcastic tone of voice.

McClelland immediately put whistle to lips and blew the loudest stoppage of play you've ever heard. He looked up to the broadcast booth and made an exaggerated motion towards the announcer indicating that he should vacate the premises immediately.

Some guys just have no sense of humor that announcer must have thought.

The word out right row is that Lakers are planning a small ceremony before Friday's game in order to pay some hommage to defenceman Campbell Blair and centre Kevin Scott. If it's true I might suggest that it's already overdue and that they needn't both keeping the ceremony small or informal.

Scott is the first member of the Vernon Lakers to win a league scoring title and that's no small potatoes in my books. However, it almost pales in comparison to the deeds performed by Blair this season. Blair broke four BCJHL records in becoming the highest scoring defenceman ever to play in the league.

In my books, and a lot of other people's for that matter, it's a situation that calls for Blair's sweater to be retired at centre ice, with all due trumpet and fanfare under spotlights and the whole nine yards. Come on guys, this is a once in a lifetime opportunity to give the local team some lasting character and a legacy that can be handed down from team to team in future years.

Blair certainly deserves the adoration of the local fans and likewise deserved the attention from his own hockey club. The ceremony, if done right, would not only serve to lift Blair and his teammates before a big game but it would serve to intimidate the opposition without even trying.

Just to reiterate the Vernon rearguard's accomplishments for this season he set new BCJHL records of goals scored in a season by a defenceman; points scored by a defenceman; career assists collected by a defenceman; and career points by a defenceman.

What more does a guy have to do to get his sweater retired?

Scott won the BCJHL scoring title with 126 points and even though his style of play continues to improve with each outing it would still be a nice gesture if the club would give him some official recognition for his accomplishment.

B.C. Junior

Richmond 7 Nanaimo 2

(Richmond leads best-of-seven quarter-final 2-0)

Kelowna 5 Merritt 4

(Kelowna leads best-of-seven quarter-final 2-0)

Vernon 6 Penticton 3

(Vernon leads best-of-seven quarter-final 2-0)

Langley 4 Delta 3 (OT)

(First game best-of-sevenquarter-final)