PRE-SEASON ENDS

Lakers remain unbeaten

Vernon Lakers completed their B.C. Junior Hockey League exhibition schedule with a 5-3 win over Penticton Knights, Tuesday night, at the Civic Arena.

Lakers, who posted a perfect 5-0 record in pre-season play, travel to Penticton for the league opener, Friday night.

Vernon's forwards had little difficulty getting past the Knights' defence, but they did have trouble beating Penticton's netminders. Lakers outshot the Knights 45-19, but needed an empty net goal from defenceman Paul Soukeroff to clinch the victory.

Mike Barkley, Mike Paller, Jamie Steer, and Kevin Harder were the other marksmen for Vernon.

Brad Heschuk, with two goals, and Darin Harrold countered for Penticton.

Despite the victory and wide margin in shots on goal, Lakers' General manager Mel Lis said his club wasn't sharp. "We can play much better than that," Lis said. "We lacked intensity, at times."

Jamie Loewen, Ryan Dennis, and Todd Jones shared the Penticton netminding duties. Loewen, an all-star last season, was particulary sharp in the opening period when he kicked out 15 of 16 shots directed his way.

At the other end, Lakers used Tim Whaley, Travis Piercey, and Mark Tyszka between the pipes. Tyszka, who was acquired from Penticton last week, had little chance on the two shots that eluded him in the third period.

Lakers' Head Coach Ernie Gare said it was the toughest test of the pre-season schedule for his club. "Loewen made a big difference," Gare said. "We could have been up three or four goals in the first period."

The league opener, Friday night, is at 8 p.m. On Saturday, Portland Winter Hawks, of the Western Hockey League, visit Vernon for an exhibition game, also at 8 p.m.