Lakers host Cents

The return of two suspended players to their lineup tonight may provide the Vernon Lakers with the additional spark and firepower necessary to contain the visiting Merritt Centennials.

The Lakers host Merritt tonight beginning at 8 p.m. at the Vernon Civic Arena. A victory by Vernon would extend their current winning streak to four games and would give them a three-point cushion over Kelowna Packers in the race for first place in the tough B.C. Junior Hockey League Interior Division.

Centennials, on the other hand, are still in the thick of the running, trailing Vernon by four points and occupying third place in the division. A win for them would mean a two-point spread between first and third place and it would give them an eight-point advantage over fourth-place Penticton Knights.

Returning to the fold tonight, will be forwards Mike Barkley and Kevin Harder, both of whom served recent suspensions. Harder was out of the Lakers' lineup for six games after being penalized for spearing in a game against Merritt, Oct. 30. Although Harder's original suspension was three games, the severity of the incident caused BCJHL authorities to hand out an additional three games to the speedy Nanaimo native.

Barkley picked up a three-game suspension for spearing a Kelowna player in a game played at Civic Arena Nov. 7.

The addition of Barkley and Harder will be a welcome one for the Lakers who have suffered a number of casualties lately. Forward Greg Parnell is still out with a shoulder injury he suffered during their last game in Summerland while defenceman Greg Olson, who has been sidelined by an ankle injury is still out of action.

Another defenceman, Keith Chase, quit the team last week. The result has been that the team was down to 15 skaters last weekend and there is no opportunity for General Manager Mel Lis to bring up any hopefuls from the club's Junior B affiliate in Castlegar.

"I wanted to bring up some Junior B players but they're down to 17 players themselves because of injuries and suspensions," explained Lis who took a swing through the Kootenay International Hockey League last weekend to watch some games.

Lis is adamant that the club must play its best hockey tonight, however, with first place on the line again.

"We'll have to be ready for them (Merritt) because it's a hell of a big game," he said. "But then, every game is tough in this division," he added.

Following are the individual team scoring statistics for Vernon Lakers:

Player	GP	G	A	Pts	Pim
Jamie Steer	21	19	28	47	6
Dallas Drake	16	8	33	41	10
Mark Greyeyes	21	16	24	40	35
Ian Alger	21	20	19	39	75
Greg Parnell	21	14	20	34	32
Phil Soukoroff	18	9	22	31	24
Chad Biafore	21	7	17	24	98
Mike Barkley	17	13	10	23	48
Dane Jackson	20	9	12	21	23
Darcy Martini	20	7	12	19	67
Wes Elliott	19	4	15	19	82
Mike Paller	21	6	10	16	48
Duane Dennis	11	6	9	15	15
Shawn Hendry	19	6	8	14	72
Kevin Harder	14	3	5	8	21
Barry Lightfoot	19	3	5	8	11
Adrien Markin	19	4	3	7	6

BCJHL

Coastal Division

	W	L	T	F	A	P
Delta	19	2	0	149	66	38
Richmond	12	10	1	143	113	25
Nanaimo	11	8	1	102	92	23
Juan De Fuca	10	8	1	105	93	21
Chilliwack	7	13	0	94	149	14
Abbotsford	6	16	1	117	144	13

Interior Division

Vernon	15	6	0	157	85	30
Kelowna	14	7	1	110	87	29
Merritt	13	10	0	134	140	26
Penticton	10	9	0	110	94	20
Salmon Arm	5	16	1	100	136	11
Summerland	2	19	0	73	195	4

SCORING

Coastal	G	A	Pts	Pim
Holmes, D	27	34	61	23
MacDonald, D	26	27	53	24
Desjardins, R	21	26	47	131
Butterworth, C	18	28	46	6
Biagioni, D	10	33	43	132
Van Sickle, JDF	26	15	41	31
Melhorst, A	20	20	40	81
McDonald, A	15	24	39	4
Zulinick, JDF	12	27	39	6
Clarke, R	20	18	38	122

Interior

Biller, M	29	24	53	105
Steer, V	19	28	47	6
Rushton, M	11	32	43	23
Drake, V	8	33	41	10
Greyeyes, V	16	24	40	35
Alger, V	20	19	39	75
Hilditch, P	12	24	36	25
McGowan, M	11	25	36	30
Schwartz, SA	15	20	35	105
Parnell, V	14	20	34	32

GOALTENDING

Coastal	MP	GA	Avg
Holland, D	280	14	3.00
Dickson, D	928	48	3.10
Sutherland, N	373	23	3.70
Dafoe, JDF	656	44	4.02
Palmer, R	825	62	4.51

Interior

Casey, Ke	632	36	3.42
Fry, V	783	48	3.68
Rysz, V	427	31	4.22
Jones, P	411	33	4.82
Loewen, P	615	52	5.078