Lakers withstand pressure to earn another road win

The Vernon Lakers scored three unanswered second period goals and used a strong defensive-style game to earn a 4-2 victory over the hometown Kelowna Packers Friday night in B.C. Junior Hockey League action.

The victory, Vernon's eighth-straight on the road this season, improves the club's record to 18-6 and gives them sole possession of first place in the BCJHL Interior Divison, two points ahead of the Packers who boast a 16-8-2 record. The victory also lengthened the club's recent winning streak to six consecutive games. Vernon has a chance to improve that record and put a four-point cushion between themselves and Kelowna with a game against Penticton Knights at the Civic arena tonight.

The Packers tried to dictate the pace of the game in the early going Friday night, putting a concentrated effort into the first 10 minutes and coming up with an early 1-0 lead. However, a short-handed goal by Vernon's Mike Barkley kept the Lakers on even terms after 20 minutes and after that it was all their show.

"It was a good team effort from the goaltender out," explained Assistant Coach George Fargher.

"The short-handed goal got us going — especially after they stuck it to us in the first 10 minutes," added Fargher.

In the second frame the Lakers opened the floodgates with goals by Shawn Hendry, Adrien Markin and Jamie Steer who notched the club's only power-play tally of the night. Vernon led 4-1 after 40 minutes.

Bruce Bianchini provided Kelowna with a late power-play goal to close the scoring. Craig Gustafson scored in the first period for the Packers.

Vernon outshot Kelowna by a close 30-27 margin. Dennis Casey went the distance in the net for the Packers while Barry Fry took over the number one goaltending position in the Interior Division by allowing just two for the Lakers. Fry and Casey now have identical averages but Fry has played more than 140 minutes longer between the pipes.

Meanwhile, Fargher believes that he and Head Coach Ernie Gare must caution their charges against falling into the old over-confident trap tonight when they host Penticton Knights.

"We have to be careful that we don't let down after a big win like that last night," suggested Fargher.

In BCJHL action Friday night Summerland Buckaroos picked up only their third win of the season as they defeated visiting Penticton 8-7 in overtime. Despite the win, the Buckaroos remain solidly in last place in the Interior Division though they have picked up a win and a tie against Kelowna and Penticton in the past week.

"There's no easy wins in this division now," said Fargher, referring to the Summerland victory.

In the only other game Friday night, Nanaimo defeated Chilliwack Eagles 5-4 in overtime.

Masters on top of basketball loop

Kokanee Masters stretched their winning streak to four games with an 88-65 victory over Okanagan College in Fosters Lager Men's Basketball League action, Thursday, at VSS.

Masters now have eight points, two more than Squires Four Pub and Golden Crown Restaurant.

Bill Pitcher led the Kokanee attack with 34 points while Tony Wolcott scored 16 and Bill Haworth added 15.

Art Dulaba, with 27 points, and Ted Vanderwal, with 16, were the top snipers for Okanagan College.

In other games, National Hotel trounced Squires Four B's 68-38, Spallumcheen Golf Club trimmed Apple Lane Restaurant 63-61, and Squires Four Pub dumped Golden Crown Restaurant 74-61.

Pat Clemens was the leading scorer for National Hotel with 20 points while Mark Boppre and Al Gatzke dropped in 14 apiece.

Andy Sherman, with 13 points, was the only B's player to hit double figures.

Spallumcheen trailed 19-6 early in the game and 40-27 at half-time before rallying to defeat Apple Lane.

Ted Kornelson led the Golfers' comeback with 21 points while Randy Ahl added 14.

Vic Eng was the top scorer for Apple Lane with 17 points, including a trio of three-pointers.

Squires Four trailed 38-31 early in the second half before scoring 14 consecutive points to take control of its game.

Rick Wilson sunk 19 points while Rod Gardner and Lorne Hansen added 13 each for Squires Four.

Wilf Haak replied with 28 points in a losing cause.

Maroons winners

Fulton Maroons easily defeated Brocklehurst, of Kamllops 85-70 in their first round robin game Friday night during the Salmon Arm Gold Senior Boys Basketball Tournament. Ted Rush led Maroons with 15 points while Andre St. Godard added 12 points and Todd Dulaba added 10. All 16 players on the Fulton team got on the scoreboard during the game. The Maroons led 48-22 at half time. Action continues today as well.