VERNON 7, SUMMERLAND 3

Lakers spot Bucks early lead

By JIM JUDD
Daily News Sports

It looked as though the Vernon Lakers were going to play the role of gracious hosts Friday night as they spotted the visiting Summerland Buckaroos a two-goal lead early in the first period. However, when the dust had cleared Vernon skated off with a 7-3 victory.

The win, their 20th of the season, gives the Lakers a four-point lead over the Kelowna Packers who were 6-4 winners Friday night against the Salmon Arm Tigers. Vernon leads the B.C. Junior Hockey League Interior Division.

Vernon goaltender Glen Fry got off to a shakey start as he allowed the Buckaroos two goals on their first two shots. The first was on a break away which was the result of a clumsy play at centre ice involving two Vernon defencemen. Shane Varey caught Fry going the wrong way and slipped the puck along the ice past him on the open side.

However, five minutes later Barry Wolfe scored the easiest goal of his junior career as his knuckle-ball clearing shot into the Lakers' end eluded Fry to put the visitors ahead 2-0.

Later in the period Tony Hamilton provided Summerland with their third goal, off a blistering slapshot into the short-side. However, following that goal, Fry shut the door on the Bucks and his team-mates went to work offensively. Not before they received their due between periods, though.

"We gave them a little bit of a lead but we gave the boys a bit of a talking to after the first period," explained Lakers' Head Coach Ernie Gare. "Everyone wants to get in on the scoring against Summerland so we weren't working too hard in our own end."

Eventually, almost everyone did get in on the scoring however, as seven players shared in the total.

Mark Greyeyes and Dallas Drake had a goal and two assists apiece for three-point nights. Mike Barkley, completing the line with Greyeyes and Drake, had a goal and an assist.

Ian Alger, who had played the first half of the season on the above line, showed his experience will come in handy no matter what line he's on as he scored once and had an assist as well. Ditto Jamie Steer who also had a two point night including a goal.

Mike Paller and Dane Jackson rounded out the scoring with one goal each while four other players picked up assists for a well-balanced scoring attack in all.

Vernon completely took over in the second period, scoring once on the power-play, then getting a short-handed effort from Alger which was the result of tremendous hard work by Steer in the corner to set it up.

"We woke up after that first period," concurred Gare. The clubs were tied 3-3 after one period but Vernon led 6-3 after 40 minutes and Jackson's goal was the only marker during a scrambly third period.

Although it looked as though it was going to be a long night for Fry in the Vernon nets, he ended up with a total less than his goals-against average although Gare felt he could have done himself a favor if he had been sharper in the early going.

"If he hadn't let that long one in he might have had just one goal against him during the night," Gare suggested.

In other BCJHL action Friday night, visiting Juan De Fuca Whalers stole a 5-4 victory from Penticton Knights Nanaimo edged Abbotsford 8-7 in overtime and Kelowna defeated Salmon Arm 6-4.

Tonight, Lakers host Juan De Fuca and local hockey fans will have a chance to watch a pair of former Vernon players in action once again. Todd Demchuk, one of the heros of last year's playoff campaign, and Mike Van Sickle, who saw sporadic duty with the Vernon club for several seasons, both play for the Whalers. Gare isn't about to take the struggling Coastal Division club lightly either.

"We have to have a better first period tonight," he warned. "If we spot them two goals we might not be able to come back."

