VERNON 15, SALMON ARM 3

Lakers enjoy turkey-shoot against the toothless Tigers

By JIM JUDD
Daily News Sports

It was a Christmas turkey-shoot at Civic arena Friday night or maybe it was more like a Tiger-shoot for the Vernon Lakers as they thrashed the toothless Salmon Arm Tigers 15-3 before an enthusiastic Yuletide crowd.


JAMIE STEER

The victory gives the Lakers 44 points — eight more than second place Kelowna Packers. The two teams occupy first and second place, respectively, in the B.C. Junior Hockey League Interior Division.

The game began inoccuously enough with the Lakers nursing a 2-0 lead after 20 minutes and it appeared as though the game might be a repeat performance on Thursday's game in Salmon Arm which the Lakers won 4-3.

However, the floodgates opened up in the second period and all hell broke loose in the third frame when the local club scored six unanswered goals.

All of Salmon Arm's goals came during a brief spurt of slightly more than two minutes during the late going of the second period putting them in the game briefly after falling behind 7-0. The Lakers closed the second frame with two more goals to carry a 9-3 lead into the dressing room.

And, if the game was a turkey shoot then Lakers' Jamie Steer was Daniel Boone for the night. Steer scored four goals and collected four assists for his best night so far this season.

"He (Steer) was opportunistic tonight but he's the kind of player who works hard for his breaks," explained Vernon coach Ernie Gare.

Dallas Drake turned in a solid offensive performance for the night as well with three goals while newcomer Darren Hlarsa scored his first two goals in a Vernon uniform.

Greg Parnell also scored twice while singles came off the sticks of Chad Biafore, Dane Jackson, Mike Barkley, and Mike Paller. Barkley and Ian Alger also contributed three assists each.

It might have been an even bigger harvest for Steer if things had gone his way during the course of the game. He hit a goalpost and a crossbar, missed a break away attempt, and mishandled the puck during a three-on-one situation.

Terrance Head, Matt Phillips and Rod Ewacha replied for the Tigers who were outshot 49-34 by Vernon. Darcy D'Amour and Garwin Weber split goaltending duties for the Tigers while Barry Rysz went the distance for Vernon.

Some of the emotion from Thursday's game carried over into Friday's game with a number of fighting incidents breaking out during the evening and a lot of minor penalties called.

Gare was pleased with the outcome, naturally, though he felt something big was on the way.

"We had them (Tigers) down last night (Thursday) but we didn't finish them off so tonight we kept the pressure on all the time," he said. "We moved the puck well and it paid off for us.

"We really needed one of these games," he added. "A lot of guys have been struggling with the puck lately."

The Lakers are in action again tonight when they travel to Kelowna to take on the Packers. A victory tonight by Vernon would give them a healthy 10-point lead over Kelowna with two games in hand.

In other BCJHL action Friday night the hometown Nanaimo Clippers beat Summerland Buckaroos 7-5, and Chilliwack Eagles beat the Penticton Knights 5-4 in overtime.

Boyd takes first

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