VERNON 7, ABBOTSFORD 6

Lakers hang on to edge Falcons

Vernon Daily News | sports
Editor — DON KENDALL

By JIM JUDD
Daily News Sports

The Vernon Lakers outplayed the visiting Abbotsford Falcons by a wide margin and held four-goal leads on several occasions, yet barely hung on for a narrow 7-6 victory Saturday night at the Vernon Civic Arena.

The win improves Vernon's record to 29-9 and keeps them in the hunt for first place overall in the B.C. Junior Hockey League. Currently they lead the Interior Division by 16 points over second place Kelowna Packers.

The Lakers so completely dominated that the Falcons didn't manage to get a shot on the Vernon net until almost 15 minutes had elapsed in the first period. However, they didn't need a lot of shots against the shaky netminding of Vernon goaltender Scott Austin. Austin managed to make just 16 saves and never looked sharp at any time during the night. At the same time, his counterpart at the other end of the rink, John Bukowski, made 46 saves and was the only reason the Falcons weren't blown out of the building after the first 20 minutes.

"They're trying to give me a few grey hairs," suggested Vernon Head Coach Ernie Gare. "But at leastt we're giving the fans their money's worth."

Gare had little option to start and stick with Austin whom the club recently picked up after he was cut from the Kelowna Packers. Glen Fry is nursing a stitched hand back to health and Barry Rysz is still in Gare's bad-books following a team-imposed suspension last week.

"He (Rysz) hasn't been on the ice since mid December," explained Gare.

The Lakers led 3-1 after the first period on goals by Mark Greyeyes, Duane Dennis and Dane Jackson and scored for the cycle to boot with an even strength goal, a power-play tally, and a short-handed marker by Jackson, who turned in a consistently good performance all night long.

"The first period was one of our best periods this year," said Gare. "We moved the puck really well."

The local club upped its lead to 6-2 early in the second period but penalty trouble began to plague the Lakers towards the end of the second frame and continued into the third period.

Vernon led 7-4 after 40 minutes but failed to score a goal in the entire third frame.

The Falcons ended up with three power-play goals and a short-handed effort of their own.

"If we played them five-on-five we'd blow them away but when I told the guys to stay out of the (penalty) box they didn't listen too well," said Gare.

Kevin Harder, Mike Barkley, Dassas Drake and Ian Alger each scored once in the second period to complete the Vernon scoring.

Blaine Moore scored three goals for the visitors while Dean Methorst had a pair and John Spencer chipped in a single.

Meanwhile, Sunday night, the law of averages caught up with Bukowski and Abbotsford as the hometown Merritt Centennials trounced them 13-5 in one of two blowouts in the Interior Division.

In the other contest, the Kelowna Packers bombed the Summerland Buckaroos 17-2.

In Merritt, the outburst came during a nine-goal second period during which the Centennials scored eight goals in 11 minutes. Frank Biller led the attack with three goals while Paul Kruse, Rich Brew and Stu Henderson added two goals each. Rich Blumer, Cal McGowan, Pat Corrado and Donneau Menard scored singles.

Doug McDonald led the Falcons with two goals while Methorst, Barclay Parnet and Brad Trudeau added singles.

In Kelowna, Todd Patz, Craig Gustafson and Richard Reay led Kelowna with three goals each. Curtis York and Tony Bower scored for Summerland.

In other games Saturday night, the Packers edged Summerland 10-8, the Richmond Sockeyes beat the Juan De Fuca Whalers 5-2 and the Chilliwack Eagles got by the Delta Flyers 8-7.



VERNON DEFENCEMAN Wes Elliott (5) tries to contain Abbotsford forward John Spencer during first period action Saturday night at the Vernon Civic Arena. Elliott was the Vernon player of the game and Spencer scored once in a losing cause as the Lakers edged the visitors 7-6. (Daily News Photo)

SPORTS BRIEFS

Winter Hawks upset Kamloops

Vernon minor hockey graduate Dennis Holland scored three goals and linemate Troy Mick added three assists to lead the Portland Winter Hawks to a 5-3 win over the first place Kamloops Blazers in Western Hockey League action, Saturday, in Portland. Mick and Holland will both be playing for the Western Division in the annual WHL all-star game, Tuesday, in Kamloops. Meanwhile, former Vernon Lakers' forward Jason Phillips scored an unassisted, shorthanded goal at 13:32 of the third period to give the Victoria Cougars a 4-3 win over the New Westminister Bruins.

Juveniles win

Vernon Coca-Cola Juvenile Reps blasted Kelowna 10-3 in Okanagan-Mainline Hockey League action, Sunday. Dan Hickson and Scott Cameron led the Coke attack with three goals each while Rich Dahlin added a pair. Singles went to Darren Fidler and Rich Anderson. Vernon trailed 2-1 at the end of the first period, but led 5-2 after 40 minutes. First place will be on the line next Sunday when Vernon (5-1) hosts Salmon Arm (5-1).

Weitzel stars

Canada's national women's volleyball team was defeated 3-2 by Cuba's second entry at an international invitational tournament, Sunday, in Bremen, West Germany. Sharon Weitzel of Vernon led the Canadian attack with 15 kills. The hard-fought match took two hours and 40 minutes to complete, with scores of 15-9, 14-16, 5-15, 15-9, and 10-15. Cuba's number one team, ranked top in the world, defeated the Soviet Union for the gold medal.

Fitness course

The Kamloops YV-YWCA will hold a fitness instructors' course at Body Shop Workouts, in Vernon, starting next Friday. The deadline for registrations is today. The course covers all aspects of theory and practical teaching skills for fitness instructors. Classes are scheduled Jan. 15, 16, 17, 29, 30, and 31. For further information phone 545-3002.

Indoor soccer

Cosmos blanked the Whitecaps 3-0 in Vernon Junior Indoor Soccer action, Saturday, at the Priest Valley Gymnasium. In other Dribblers Division games, the 86ers dumped United 5-1 and the Blazers trimmed the Rovers 2-1. In the Tacklers Division, the Wanderers blasted Albion 9-0 and the Spurs fought to a 5-5 deadlock with the Kickers. And in the Trappers Division, the Bombers shutout the Blizzard 6-0 and the Wreckers whipped the Stingers 11-2.

Fulton splits

Clarence Fulton Secondary School basketball teams split a pair of league games Saturday, in Revelstoke. The Fulton Maroons blasted Revelstoke 95-29 while Revelstoke downed the Lady Maroons 44-34. Ted Rush led the Maroons with 18 points while Sean Milliken added 15. The victory improves the



a Moscow dispatch from the Novosti press agency.

A copy of the dispatch, dated Friday, was delivered Saturday to The Canadian Press with the headline: Muscovites are surprised at Canadian hockey players' statements.

Harvey is fastest

ST-JEAN-DE-MATHA, Que. (CP) — Pierre Harvey continued to dominate the men's competition while teenager Marie Josee proved she's no flash in the pan in Vachon Cup cross-country ski action Saturday.

Harvey, Canada's best hope for an Olympic medal, captured the men's 10-kilometre classic style race at the Centre-de-la-Montagne Coupee. The St-Lambert-de-Levis, Que., resident won his fifth race since returning from Europe with a clocking of 28 minutes 43.02 seconds.

Josee, 17, of La-Tuque, Que., won the women's five kilometres in a combined field of seniors and juniors with a time of 17:47.01, 30 seconds clear of second place Lorna Sasseville of Ottawa, a national team member.

Lose defenceman

CHICAGO (AP) — The Black Hawks ended a four-game losing streak with their win over the Toronto Maple Leafs, but they have also lost all-star defenceman Doug Wilson for the rest of the National Hockey League season. Wilson, 30, had surgery on his left shoulder Friday in Los Angeles. Coach Bob Murdoch said he will not attempt to replace Wilson from outside the club. The Black Hawks beat Toronto 7-3 Friday night with ex-Leaf Steve Thomas scoring three goals.

Nill traded

WINNIPEG (CP) — The Winnipeg Jets traded seven-year NHL veteran Jim Nill to the Detroit Red Wings for right winger Mark Kumpel Sunday.

Strange victory

GOLD COAST, Australia (AP) — Curtis Strange fired rounds of 67 and 68 Sunday en route to aone-stroke victory in Australia's richest golf tournament, the $360,000 Sanctuary Cove Classic.

Strange finished with a 16-under-par 272, one shot in front of Briton Ian Woosnam, who carded a final-round 68.

Hartsburg sidelined

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. (AP) — The struggling Minnesota North Stars, 2-10-3 in their last 15 games, say defenceman Craig Hartsburg has a hernia and may have to have surgery which could keep him out of action for six weeks.

The National Hockey League

Broncos and Browns clash again in final

By The Associated Press

One year and one strike later, the National Football League's Final Four looks strangely familiar.

The Denver Broncos will take on the Cleveland Browns in the AFC championship game for the second straight season. And the Washington Redskins will once again play for the NFC title.

Only the wildcard Minnesota Vikings are new to the playoff party, filling in for the dethroned Super Bowl champion New York Giants.

"They've (the Browns) had a long time to look at and remember last year," Denver coach Dan Reeves said after the Broncos trounced Houston 34-10 Sunday. "It's a situation where you try to get as much as you can and you're out of time outs and you're trying to get a first down," Payton said.

McMahon, making his first start in a month because of a pulled hamstring, did not move the Bears in the second half.

McMahon completed 15 of 29 passes for 197 yards.

Payton, the NFL's all-time rushing leader with 16,726 yards, ran for 85 yards on Sunday. He had his career end on Chicago's final play, when he caught a pass from McMahon but was tackled near midfield, one yard short of a first down.

"It was a situation where you try to get as much as you can and you're out

Minnesota beat San Francisco as Anthony Carter broke an NFL playoff record by catching passes for 227 yards. Carter also broke the post-season record of 198 receiving yards set by Tom Fears of the Los Angeles Rams in 1950.

Chuck Nelson, meanwhile, set an NFL playoff record with five field goals for Minnesota.

Bernie Kosar threw three touchdown passes and Earnest Byner ran for 122 yards and scored twice as Cleveland beat the Colts.

Lakers juggle roster

Vernon Lakers' General Manager Mel Lis is shuffling his cards and hopes to come up with a winning hand by midnight tonight.

B.C. Junior Hockey League rosters are frozen, at 21 players, tonight. The Lakers currently have 23 players on their roster and Lis was working on three different deals today.

"We have several things on the go, but I can't say anything until later this afternoon or early tonight," Lis said this morning. "I'm looking at making two or three moves, but everything is up in the air right now."

With three gaolies on the roster, the Lakers are expected to release, or trade, newcomer Scott Austin. Austin was unimpressive in his debut, Saturday, against the Abbotsford Falcons.

Forward Barry Lightfoot, who has seen limited duty in recent weeks, is also expected to be traded or sent to Vernon's junior B affiliate, the Columbia Valley Rockies.

Lis would neither confirm, or deny, that ex-Laker Trevor Pohl is returning to Vernon. Pohl spent the 1986-87 season with the Portland Winter Hawks and was recently traded to the Medicine Hat Tigers. Rumors out of Portland state that Pohl is unhappy in Medicine Hat and may return to the Lakers.

"I will be making some moves, but nothing is finalized yet," Lis said. "This is a big day for us . . . we have some important decisions to make."

Vernon is idle until Friday night when it visits Abbotsford.