LEAD INTERIOR DIVISION SERIES 1-0

Lakers a bit sloppy but victorious



TREVOR POHL (24) battles his way over the Merritt blueline during second period action Tuesday night between the Lakers and the Centennials at the Vernon Civic Arena. Pohl went down with a shoulder injury though he may be back before the series ends. (Daily News Photo)

By JIM JUDD
Daily News Sports

The Vernon Lakers took a one game lead in their best-of-seven B.C. Junior Hockey League Interior Division semi-final series against the Merritt Centennials Tuesday night but only just.

Adrian Markin scored at 7:24 of the third period to provide the winner as the local junior squad posted a somewhat sloppy 5-4 victory against the Centennials at the Vernon Civic Arena.

On any given night the Centennials are no match for the Lakers when the teams are playing at full strength. Tuesday night it didn't matter. The Centennials scored three power-play goals and a short-handed marker to make life miserable for the Lakers who looked unorganized at times during the contest.

"It wasn't a pretty win but we had a territorial edge all night," suggested Head Coach Ernie Gare who breathed a heavy sigh of relief when it was all over. "Their goaltender kept them in it."

Merritt goaltender Gord Besse was outstanding — and busy, facing 40 shots on the night. Glen Fry turned in a passable performance though he had flashes of brilliance at times as well. He made 24 saves during the game.

To their credit, Vernon did well considering the strength they had watching from the sidelines Tuesday night. Both Mike Barkley and leading point-getter Dallas Drake didn't dress for the game. In addition, rugged right-winger Trevor Pohl, who was having an outstanding game, left in the second period with yet another shoulder injury. He will be out for an indefinite period of time.

Drake suffered a broken blood vessel in the back of his hand, late in the season, and between the pain and the swelling he can't grip his stick. Barkley is nursing a bruised shoulder back to health. All three palyers could be back in the lineup in a week.

In the meantime, there was some juggling of line combinations. Some of it worked but some of it didn't for Gare.

"We put one line together that had never played with each other all year," he said.

Mark Greyeyes scored once and set up another goal while other Vernon goals came from Chad Blafore, Phil Soukoroff, and Adrian Markin. Jamie Steer and Greg Parnell each had two assists.

Merritt jumped in front of the Lakers 2-0 early in the first period on power-play goals by Bill Birks, his first of two for the night, and team captain Richard Brew. The visitors didn't score in the second frame but added a short-handed tally by Cal McGowan and anotehr power-play goal by Birks in the third frame to stay within strking distance of the Lakers all night long.

"Our penalty-killing wasn't very efficient but that short-handed goal gave them a big lift too," said Gare. "We were sloppy in our own end at times and we were guilty of coughing up the puck too."

Game two of the series takes place tonight in Merritt where the Lakers won every game the two clubs played this season. The Centennials will be looking to improve upon their Tuesday night performance enough to take the game from Vernon but Gare has other plans.

"We're going to have to take it away from them up there (Merritt)," he said.

Meanwhile, in other BCJHL playoff action Tuesday night, the Kelowna Packers, Richmond Sockeyes, and Nanaimo Clippers were all winners as well in their respective playoff series.

In Kelowna, Steve Williams scored two goals to lead the Packers. Kelowna led 2-0 at the end of the first period and 4-2 at the end of the second.

Doug Gardiner and Dewayne Gallant scored the other goals for the Packers while Darryl Mitchell, Ivan Moore, and Lance Momotani scored for Penticton.

In Nanaimo, Ross Laidlaw scored at 6:13 of sudden-death overtime to give the Clippers a 3-2 victory over the Delta Flyers.

And, in Richmond, Barry Kress scored two goals to lead the Sockeyes to an easy 8-3 win over the Juan De Fuca Whalers.

All three of those series resume this evening as well.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Lakers call up pair from minor affiliate

The Vernon Lakers will employ the services of two players from their Columbia Valley Rockies Junior B farm team tonight when they play Merritt Centennials. The Lakers, who have been plagued by injuries lately, will bring up former BCJHL centre Kevin Harder and centre/defenceman Dave Nikirk for game two of their best-of-seven Interior Division semi-final series with the Centennials. The Rockies recently completed a sweep in their own best-of-five semi-final series in the Kootenay International Junior Hockey League. Harder has four years of Junior A experience including more than a half season with

Canadian skaters win bronze medal

CALGARY (CP) — Matti Nykanen soared into Olympic history Tuesday and the Canadian duo of Tracy Wilson and Robert McCall danced their way to a dream come true at the Olympic Winter Games.

Nykanen became the first man to sweep both individual ski-jumping medals when he won the 90-metre event with ease.

Wilson, of Port Moody, B.C., and McCall, of Dartmouth, N.S., were the first Canadians ever to win a medal in the ice-dance figure skating competition when they earned bronze behind a pair of Soviet dance teams.

It was also the first time since 1964 that Canadian figure skaters managed to win medals in two events. Brian Orser of Penetanguishene, Ont., won the silver in the men's singles last weekend. The women's singles starts today with compulsory figures, with Elizabeth Manley of Ottawa a medal possibility. Canada has never won three figure skating medals in one Games.

The capacity crowd of 20,000 at the Olympic Saddledome gave Wilson and McCall a standing ovation following their medal-clinching routine, in which Klimova and Sergei Ponomarenko getting the silver.

The Soviets now have 22 medals — eight gold, eight silver and six bronze. East Germany is next with 17 — seven old, six silver and four bronze.

The Netherlands won its first gold of the Calgary Games when Yvonne Vangennip won the women's 3,000-metre speed-skating race, with a pair of East Germans finishing second and third.

Canada now has four medals, including Karen Percy's pair of bronzes in Alpine skiing.

WINS GOLD

But in demonstration sports, Canadians won four medals on Tuesday alone — two golds, a silver and a bronze.

Sylvie Daigle of Sherbrooke, Que., captured the women's 1,500-metre short-track speed skating gold and Jean-Marc Rozon, also of Sherbrooke, won the men's freestyle skiing aerial gold medal.

The silver went to Mario Vincent of St-Pierre, Que., in the men's 500-metre short-track speed skating event and the bronze to Lloyd Langlois of Magog, Que., in the freestyle aerials.

Canadian athletes in demonstration

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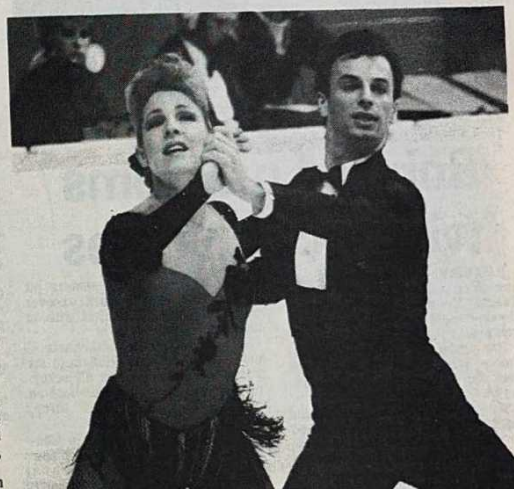

Fort Sask. 3 St. Albert 2

B.C. Junior

Nanaimo 3 Delta 2 (OT)

(First game of a best-of-seven quarter-final)

Richmond 8 Juan de Fuca 3

(First game of a best-of-seven quarter-final)

Kelowna 4 Penticton 3

(First game of a best-of-seven quarter-final)

Vernon 5 Merritt 4

(First game of a best-of-seven quarter-final)