Wow! Blades Won Over Buckaroos

Hard Checking Locals Bulldoze Past Kelowna

Vernon Blades scored the upset victory of the Okanagan Junior "A" Hockey League season by soundly trouncing league leading Kelowna Buckaroos 6-2 Saturday night.

Blades looked worth every inch of their win as they kept the smooth skating Buckaroos off balance throughout the game with ferocious fore-checking.

Goalie Norm Schiman was easily the star of the game for the locals. The agile netminder pulled off one spectacular save after another to keep the Blades in the lead.

Vernon caught Kelowna by surprise with their blitzing tactics and kept Kelowna bottled up in their own zone for much of the first period.

Allan Southward, one of the heroes of the night, knocked in the first of three goals he would tally during the game to have the few fans in the arena erupt with joy at 7:10 of the first period.

The play was pleasing to the eye as Bob Stein and Marv Maier played the puck perfectly to pass to Southward in front of the net.

The speedy Southward in his first game as a junior again finished off a Maier and Stein play at 6:41 of the sandwich session and even the fans who couldn't believe the first period score rose to their feet in a blast such as the arena hasn't heard this season.

When Marvin Maier beat Lawrenson in the Kelowna nets at 11:00 of the middle frame the whole place was bedlam—or as much bedlam as a hundred and some odd fans can make.

Maier drove the puck low into the twine on a relay from Dale Sorochuk and Gord Clark.

Marcella Verna broke Schiman's heart with a sizzler from the side at 19:28 of the second. The inspired Vernon goalie managed to get a pad on the perfectly screened 20 footer but the elusive puck bounced off into the net.

Verna also scored the Bucks second talley late in the third period when the Blades were counting down the last couple of minutes to victory.

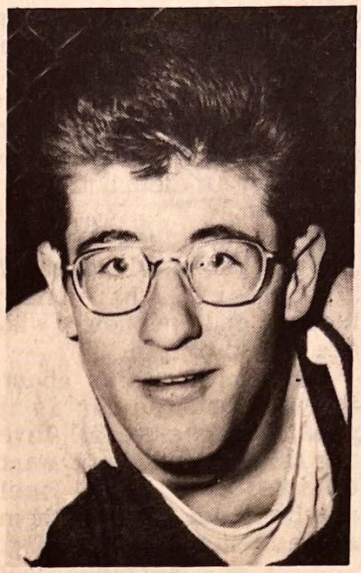
Bob Stein scored a fourth Vernon goal at 14:38 and Blades were on their way.

In the third period Kelowna came out with all they had but a leg-weary bunch of Blades managed to scrape up the energy for a tough forechecking game to keep the visitors rattled.

For a while it looked as if the Bucks might just pull off a comeback as they swarmed the Vernon net but Schiman was there to bar the door on some outstanding plays that brought the crowd to its feet.

Finally Maier got loose in front of the Kelowna nets and took a relay from Southward and Stein and Vernon led 5-1.

The best looking goal of the night came near the end when Bob Stein robbed Kelowna of the puck and faking a shot on goal, suddenly wheeled about and stormed in on the right side of the net. Putting on the brakes Stein just backhanded the puck over to Southward who was standing unmarked beside the net and the juvenile made no mistakes for his hat-trick.



ALLAN SOUTHWARD
. . . three goals



NORM SCHIMAN
. . . spectacular saves

Coach Hap Schaefer after the game had nothing but praise for his charges. He singled out the entire defence of Ted Palm, Gord Clarke, Scott Smith and Gil Morrow as the key to victory.

The Hot Stove League experts had to agree as for once Vernon played without the costly boobs that let in goals in past games.

Both Stein and Maier with five point nights are expected to figure well in the individual scoring when statistics are released from the league office sometime this week.

Referee Alex Kashuba assessed 20 penalties during the match, 15 going to Kelowna.

The Bucks were handed eight of these in a chippy third period when tempers began to slip a bit as they began to see the handwriting on the wall.

Kashuba also ejected Kelowna's Garth Riaauto (6:50) and Lynn Swanson (16:47) from the game during the third period for foul and abusive language the Kelowna players used in arguing penalties.

With only two lines the Vernon squad realizing that none of them could afford time in the sin bin played their best calibre of hockey of the year in an effort to steer clear of damaging infractions.

The results were obvious.

While Blades remain 13 games off the pace they figure to cause a bit of a stir in the league, now that they finally have broken the hold of their losing streak.

Sports Calendar

December

7—Vernon Intermediates host Salmon Arm. Game time 8:30.

9—Penticton juveniles at Vernon, 8:15 p.m.

12—Vernon Juveniles at Kelowna, 5:00 p.m.

10, 11—Christmas Basketball Tournament of Vernon Panthers. Watch for details.

11—Vernon travels to Kamloops

12—Vernon Blades host Kamloops at 2 p.m.