

OVERTIME GOAL THE WINNER

Dickens' was dazzling

By DON KENDALL
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Vernon Lakers lost a hockey game but gained a lot of confidence Tuesday night in Penticton.

Cal Brown scored at 3:19 of sudden-death overtime to give first-place Penticton Knights a 4-3 win over Lakers in B.C. Junior Hockey League action.

Vernon has not won in the Peach City, in regular season play, in three years and may never come closer to upsetting the defending Western Canadian Champions on their own ice.

"There's nothing to be ashamed of about losing to Knights, in overtime, in Penticton," said Lakers' Head Coach Don Moores. "We had 19 guys who came to play hockey tonight."

Brown's goal spoiled an amazing performance by Vernon netminder Darryl Dickens. Superlatives are insufficient to describe the performance turned in by the young netminder who blocked 53 shots including 21 in the third period.

Dickens made saves off Penticton forwards Chris Furnseth, Aaron Scott, and John Depourcq that had the three shaking their heads in disbelief.

Lakers' manager Vern Dye said, "It is a long time since I've seen goaltending like that. He (Dickens) is something else."

Lakers took a 2-0 lead in the first period on goals set up by slick centre Dennis Holland. At 5:07 Holland won a face-off in the Penticton end and Al Young put a low shot past Penticton netminder Warren Sharples.

Then, at 15:07, less than a minute after Holland limped off the ice after taking a slash in the back of the leg, he picked up the puck off the boards and slid a blind centering pass to Trevor Pohl who one-timed it into the net.

Lakers had a glorious opportunity to increase their lead early in the second period but Sharples made a good save on a breakaway by Wes Gentles.

Dave Shields finally solved the mystery of putting the puck past Dickens at 15:28 of the second period after Knights had applied relentless pressure for five minutes. Shields completed a three-on-two break with a low shot through Dickens' legs.

With Vernon's Sean Lofroth serving a five-minute major for high-sticking, Rod Summers tied the game at 19:03.

In the third period Holland put Lakers back in front with an unassisted goal. He stole the puck from a Penticton defender as he cut in front of his own, deked Sharples and put a shot in the top corner.

That goal seemed to spark Lakers and they had four opportunities to regain a two-goal margin midway through the period. Stacy Hartnell missed twice from point-blank range, Doug Spooner slid the puck wide on a rebound with Sharples out of position and Gentles misfired on a rebound directly in front of the Penticton net.

The teams resorted to end-to-end play in the latter stages of the third period and Chris Anderson finally got the equalizer for Knights at 15:47. Scott sped around a Vernon defender and slid the puck in front to Anderson who was left unprotected.

In the overtime Vernon had an excellent chance to win the game in the opening seconds but were unable to capitalize on a mad scramble in front of the Penticton net. Moments later, four Knights broke into Vernon's end with Brown taking a wrist-shot from left wing. Dickens made the initial save but with the Vernon goalie still on his knees from the first shot Brown put a high shot into the net.

Moores said, "it's always tough to lose but this game was a real morale booster for us, we proved tonight that we're as good as Penticton. With a couple of breaks we could have won the game."

Sharples also had a busy night with 46 stops, however many of those were of the easy variety.

Penticton took seven of 12 minor penalties and Lofroth was assessed the only major.



Vernon netminder Darryl Dickens turned in a sparkling performance Tuesday night in Penticton making 53 saves. However, Knights continued their domination over Vernon junior teams on their home pond, scoring in overtime to earn a 4-3 come-from-behind victory over the rapidly improving Vernon squad. Lakers next game is Friday night at Civic arena when they face Merritt Centennials. (Daily News Photo)