

DEFEAT LANGLEY EAGLES 7-5

Lakers are on a roll

Vernon Lakers overcame a 3-2 first period deficit and outshot Langley Eagles 60-32 to defeat the hometown Eagles 7-5 in game two of their three-game swing through the B.C. Junior Hockey League Coastal Division Friday night.

Vernon, who struggled through the first six weeks of the BCJHL campaign, are now on a roll that has seen them win four of their last five games and their last three in a row. Included in those three consecutive victories have been emotional victories over the two top placed clubs in the league, Penticton Knights and Richmond Sockeyes.

THIRD PLACE

The victory boosts Lakers' record to 12 wins against seven losses and keeps

them solidly in third place in the BCJHL Interior Division behind Knights and Kelowna Packer, respectively. Vernon will face-off against Abbotsford Falcons, cellar-dwellers in the Coastal Division, tonight, in the third game of their current road trip. Lakers play the next six of seven games in November at home including a rematch against Langley Eagles Friday night at Civic Arena.

Stacey Hartnell and centre Doug Spooner combined to propel Lakers past their opponents Friday night. Each had two goals and three assists. Singles for Vernon came off the sticks of Troy Pohl, newcomer Campbell Blair and Steve Humphries.

Langley's Richard Sloan scored two and assisted on two while Elliot Kagna, Rob Kujala and Todd Hilditch had one apiece.

The loss dropped Eagles' record to 3-16.

BLAZERS WIN

Elsewhere in the BCJHL Friday night, Shuswap Blazers defeated Summerland Buckaroos 8-6, and Delta Flyers upended hometown Nanaimo Clippers 8-6.

Shuswap centre Darcy Allison provided two goals and three assists for Blazers including the game winner in the third period as Blazers dragged the Buckaroos down to a last-place tie in the Interior Division.

Kevin Taillefer and Murray Yewchuk each got a pair of goals for the Blazers now with five wins and 14 losses. Singles were by Kent Maltais and Kevin Scott — Scott's goal going into an empty net.

For Buckaroos, outshot 43-35 and now with a 5-15 won-lost record, Jackson Penny and Craig Beddard each contributed two. Andy Polupec and Dave Tomlinson got one apiece.

Delta scored twice in the first three minutes en route to the 8-6 win at Nanaimo. Mitch Evanish, Paul Rutherford, Gerry Numedro, Stan Marpole, Rod Ware, Joe Quinn, Scott Gmur and Mark McLeary tallied for the Flyers, who led 4-2 and 7-5 by periods.

Nanaimo's Bill Hardy and Kent Lewis each scored twice and Todd Jennings and Sean Stotts added singles.

In today's BCJHL schedule, Shuswap and Summerland play a rematch at Summerland, Kelowna at Merritt, Langley at Nanaimo and Delta at Sidney.

Good season in BCJHL

Fans have more reason than ever to come out and watch B.C. Junior Hockey League teams in action.

There has seldom, if ever, been as much competition in the league as there is this season. It used to be that Penticton would win everything every year so why bother going out to the games? Not so this season.

The old cliché about anybody being able to beat anybody on any given night is certainly true this season, at least for four of the Interior Division teams. Vernon, Kelowna and Merritt are all solid teams and they are all most capable of giving the Knights all they can handle.

APLEASURE

The Lakers let go a good one when Troy Mick flew the coop and landed on his feet in Merritt. Watching him and Dennis Holland play was a real pleasure if you were cheering for them, but a real downer if you had to play against them. The knock on Mick was his skating. He will never

be a Toller Cranston out there but how many goals did Toller score last year? As long as Mick keeps getting there and making solid plays he's got a good shot at being an all-star this year. Dumb move by the Lakers in letting him go for nothing. A move they may soon see come back and haunt them.

It's too early to think about rookie of the year, but Dennis Holland isn't a bad choice so far. He has done everything you could have asked for. The guy is truly magic with the puck. Sometimes I'd almost swear he has the puck tied to his stick. Holland is one of those rare guys the puck just follows around. Whatever side of the net he's on, that's the side rebounds come out on.

Personally, I'd like to see Holland get a little meaner on the ice because he'd have more room to dangle. Mind you I said the same thing some years ago about a skinny kid just breaking into the WHA with Indianapolis Racers. I think he wears



by
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number 99 with Edmonton Oilers today.

It's going to be a real dog-fight to see which team wins it all in the BCJHL this year. That's great news for the owners because they should be able to draw better crowds. It's good hockey.

Once you see a couple of games I bet you'll be back often. Admission for adults is \$5 which is pretty cheap entertainment. I do have, however, a suggestion for Laker management.

They've got to get the lead out and promote their product better.

You can have the best game in the world but if nobody's in the rink to see it, it's useless to you. Crowds this year in Vernon average between 350 and 400. That's a guesstimate. The rink holds about 2,500 people. Why not lower the price to a buck a game for say, three games. Call it a fan try-out. They give players a three-game tryout, why not do the same for the fans? Season ticket holders can get a three-game refund on their ducats.

GUARANTEE

Or, why not guarantee the product? Chrysler guarantees their cars. Offer the customers a deal they can't refuse. Say you'll cheerfully refund any customer who wants his money back after seeing the game. At least you'll get some fannies in the seats to come and see you play.

I'm betting there won't be many people asking for a refund. Because the on-ice product is terrific.