

EVERYTHING CAME TOGETHER

Lakers win playoff preview

By JIM JUDD
Daily News Sports
Vernon Lakers finally put all the proper ingredients into a single game Friday night and the result was a 9-3 trouncing of visiting Kelowna Packers in B.C. Junior Hockey League action at Civic arena.

Lakers had a combination of offence, defence and desire that was virtually unstoppable.

The win leaves the status of the two teams unchanged however. Packers continue to hold down second place in the BCJHL Interior Division while Lakers are now 11 points back in third

place with two games in hand on Packers.

However, even if the two clubs reversed the order in the standings it wouldn't alter the fact that they will meet each other in the Interior division semi-final when playoffs begin next month.

This fact led Lakers' Head Coach Don Moores to a decision about Friday's game.

"We have to face them (Packers) in the playoffs and we know it," he explained. "We wanted to set a precedent for them... they feel they've had our number all year."

The teams battled to a 1-1 draw during the first period. The local club had

their defensive abilities put to the test early in the game when they were fingered for a minor penalty barely two minutes into the contest. That, coupled with a good deal of pressure exerted by Packers, made life miserable for Lakers in the opening minutes, but they persevered.

Troy Pohl opened the scoring at the 5:36 mark when he converted a play set up by linemates Dennis Holland and brother Trevor Pohl. The latter was ejected from the game following a shouting match with referee Darren Zupp when the period was barely half gone.

Packers tied the contest at 16:38 but it was the only time during the game

that they would be close to Lakers.

The Vernon squad opened up some daylight in the score during the second period when they outscored Packers 6-1. Newcomer Mark McLeary, playing in only his second game with Vernon, notched three goals during the period while Pohl had his second of the night. Doug Spooner also scored while another newcomer, Troy Backogorge, scored his first of three for the game.

For Backogorge and McLeary, both major junior veterans, it looked as easy as falling off a log. However, Backogorge's three goals were his swan song with the club. The talented forward will leave the team to take up his education where he left off in Manitoba.

"I thought about going out in style and it seemed to work that way," suggested Backogorge. "I sacrificed my education last year and half of this year and I don't want to get any more screwed up."

Backogorge added two more goals in the third period. Shawn Harrison scored twice in a losing cause for Packers who were outshot 65-31 by Lakers. Harrison also set up a goal by team-mate Alan Schuler.

Meanwhile, Moores praised the individual efforts of a few but overall he was more satisfied with the team play.

"Some individuals had good games tonight but it was a team effort," he said.

Although the offensive unit seemed to be running on full throttle Moores expressed disappointment with his power-play unit who managed just one goal in a good number of attempts.

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Editor — DON KENDALL



RECORD SNOWFALL AT SILVER STAR

A record January snowfall of more than 70 cm has created some extra work for Silver Star Mountain staff. Digging out a car are Silver Star

Operations Manager Walt Keckalo and lift operator Julie Clark. The mountain reports a base of about 180 cm. (Don Weixl Photo)

DAILY
NEWS



SCOREBOARD

VERNON CURLING CLUB SUPER LEAGUE STANDINGS (Jan. 28)

SKIP, SPONSOR	W	L	Pts
G. McCune, Sun Valley Sports	11	2	22
D. Smith, Mountain Pacific Air	9	4	18
T. Buchy, Kublai Khan Restaurants	8	4	16
P. Baryl, Super Save Gas	7	6	14
J. Fuhr, Golden Crown Restaurant	5	8	10
D. Willis, Hytec Manufacturing	4	7	8
T. Kenny, Vernon Yamaha	4	7	8
K. Ganden, Ganden Vision and Hearing	3	9	6
R. Lister, Fairglass Windows and Doors	3	9	6

SUNDAY HONEYMOONERS VOLLEYBALL

TEAM	GP	W	L	Pts
Lakeside Oldstylers	12	10	2	10

Holland considering playing for Portland

Dennis Holland, go to Portland.

Holland, one of the finest pure talents I've seen in my tenure as a Western Hockey League scout, is considering playing for the Portland Winter Hawks of the WHL. Take it from me Dennis, there isn't a finer organization in the country.

I've been in the Portland rink on several occasions, both as a scout and a newspaper man, and I have been treated first class everytime. My fondest memory was the 1983 Memorial Cup, hosted by the Winter Hawks. What a great team that was. Playing for the Winter Hawks that year were people like Ken Yaremchuk, Richard Kromm, Alfie Turcotte, Mike Vernon and Jim Benning. All of these players made it to the NHL at one time or another and, given time, they'll all be regulars. Okay, Yaremchuk is a regular with Chicago and Benning suits up regularly with Toronto but the other three can all be major leaguers, too.

The Winter Hawks went on to win the Memorial Cup, whipping Oshawa Generals 8-3 in the grand finale. In actual fact, the game was over before it began. Thanks mainly to the Portland fans.

I vividly recall waiting for the ho-hum opening ceremonies to conclude in eager anticipation of the championship action. As it turned out, those opening ceremonies were the best I've ever seen. It was something out of a Hollywood movie.

There were 9,500 raving Portland lunatics in the crowd, all of them completely out of their gourds. The Portland arena crew shut all the lights down and each player was ushered on to the ice with a single searing spotlight. You don't think those guys were pumped? Oshawa never got a shot on goal until the game was five and a half minutes old. By then Portland had outshot them 13-1 and led the game 2-0.

It was an incredible performance by the Winter Hawks. The Generals never had a chance. It was an ambush all the way. Every Winter Hawk played like he was an all-star. They took heavy



by
Al Paterson

Daily News
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hits to make plays and it was truly an awesome sight.

It got better after the game, too. The victory party was held at the Red Lion Inn, one of Portland's classier hotels. Boy was that joint jumping that day. You should have seen the bedlam when the Winter showed up, all of them resplendent in their team jackets, slacks and ties. The place went absolutely berserk. Even the waitress that served us was up on our table roaring her head off. It was quite a sight, I'll tell you.

After a few hours I wandered into the Winter Hawks party room and grabbed the Memorial Cup. I talked with several of the players and they, to a man, said this was a night they would never forget.

It was hard for me to pick a highlight out of it all, but an outstanding memory I have is that of the Winter Hawks and Generals sharing a beer or two, arm in arm, towards midnight. I saw a couple of Oshawa players crying because they lost but I also saw some fantastic sportsmanship displayed.

As hockey programs go in this country, Portland is tops. They have a great building, tremendous fans, a solid reputation and great organization. If I had a son who I felt had pro hockey potential, I'd be tickled if he had a chance to play in Portland.

However, being a Portland Winter Hawk means much more than being a hockey player. It involves pride, hard work and a great deal of self-discipline. All of those qualities stand a person in good stead throughout his life. And that's why I feel Dennis Holland would be making the right move in joining the Hawks.