

Packers host opening game

Coming off their most mediocre season in four years, Vernon Lakers, and particularly recently imposed Head Coach Mike Enemark, are adamant that they will sparkle during the B.C. Junior Hockey League playoffs.

Lakers open their best-of-seven Interior Division semi-final series in Kelowna, against second place Packers, tonight at 8 p.m. In another Interior Division matchup, league-leading Penticton



MIKE ENEMARK

Knights open their semi-final series against Merritt Warriors.

The Vernon squad ended its season on a losing note last weekend with back-to-back losses against Knights and Warriors and dropped five of their eight games since Enemark deposed Don Moores as mentor. However, with playoffs traditionally billed as a whole new season and very little to be gained in the final days of the regular season, Enemark feels there's no reason to think lakers won't do well.

"Since I started coaching all the guys have talked about is the playoffs," explained Enemark. "We clinched third spot so long ago that our enthusiasm waned a little towards the end of the season."

If Lakers are to be successful against Packers, who amassed a much more impressive record in regular season, not to mention the better record between the two teams in inter-club play, they'll have to stay out of the penalty box. Each of the top seven scorers on the club's roster has been fingered more than 100 penalty minutes with the exception of Dennis Holland, who led the club with 105 points in his rookie season but who took just 40 minutes in penalties.

Holland's linemates, Trevor and Troy Pohl, racked up more than 600 minutes in the sin bin, however, Enemark has no trouble defending these figures.

"I think the penalties might have hurt us in regular season but we didn't have a lot of minor penalties, we had a lot of misconducts," he suggested.

At the same time, Lakers penalty killing unit wasn't the most successful in the league by any stretch of the imagination though their power-play unit was very effective.

"We'll have to stay out of the penalty box. We know we can't shut down their (Packers) power-play but if we can reduce their success by 20 per cent we'll be satisfied," explained Enemark.

"The biggest key to the series will be containing some of their bug guns such as Pat Mangold," Enemark continued.

Another integral part of the team's defensive game will be goaltending and in that regard Enemark feels Lakers hold the upper hand.

"I feel we have better goaltending," he said. "I'm going to be quick to pull a goalie but I'll put him back in if he regains his composure."

Enemark has two quality goalers in Darryl Dickins and Scott King, with King starting tonight in Kelowna.

Game two of the series takes place Wednesday night at Vernon Civic Arena.

BCJHL

The British Columbia Junior Hockey League has announced the playoff schedule for the opening round. All series in opening round are best-of-seven:

Tues., March 4 Abbotsford at Richmond Nanaimo at Delta Merritt at Penticton Vernon at Kelowna

Wed., March 5 Abbotsford at Richmond Nanaimo at Delta Kelowna at Vernon

Thurs., March 6 Penticton at Merritt

Fri., March 7 Richmond at Abbotsford Delta at Nanaimo Merritt at Penticton Vernon at Kelowna

Sat., March 8 Richmond at Abbotsford Delta at Nanaimo Penticton at Merritt Kelowna at Vernon

Sun., March 9 (if necessary) Abbotsford at Richmond Merritt at Penticton Vernon at Kelowna

Mon., March 10 (if necessary) Nanaimo at Delta

Tues., March 11 (if necessary) Richmond at Abbotsford Delta at Nanaimo Penticton at Merritt Kelowna at Vernon

Wed., March 12 (if necessary) Abbotsford at Richmond Nanaimo at Delta Merritt at Penticton Vernon at Kelowna

LOOK BACK FIVE YEARS

MARCH, 1981

The suffering is over. The 1980-81 BCJHL season came to a merciful conclusion over the weekend for the Vernon Lakers with another pair of losses. The local squad finished the season with a 22-game losing streak, the last two being 7-1 and 9-2 losses to Kelowna and Merritt respectively. The Lakers won just eight games in 56 tries this season.