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November 21
2007 TOJLL Awards

The 2007 TOJLL Awards handed out at the November 21st AGM:

Goaltender of the Year $\frac{1}{2}$ Mike Smith (Kamloops Rattlers)

Rookie of the Year $\frac{1}{2}$ Curtis McIntosh (Kamloops Rattlers)

Top Defensive Player $\frac{1}{2}$ Ryan Milling (Rutland Raiders)

Leading Scorer $\frac{1}{2}$ Doug Langlois (Rutland Raiders)

Most Valuable Player $\frac{1}{2}$ Kyle Donahue (Kamloops Rattlers)

Coach of the Year $\frac{1}{2}$ Dave McWhirter (Kelowna Warriors)

Executive of the Year $\frac{1}{2}$ Jan Antons (Kamloops Rattlers)

League Champions $\frac{1}{2}$ Kamloops Rattlers

Volunteers of the Year:

$\frac{1}{2}$ Derek Hedican (and the Kelowna Warriors)

$\frac{1}{2}$ Dan Wray (and the Rutland Raiders)

$\frac{1}{2}$ Lonnie Kelsey (and the Kamloops Rattlers)

BCLA Presidents $\frac{1}{2}$ Award $\frac{1}{2}$ Lonnie Kelsey (and the Kamloops Rattlers)

Congratulations to all the award winners ... awesome!!

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July 11
Tigers fall in overtime

By Nicole Berg: Morning Star Staff

The Rutland Raiders used their powerplay to stop the Vernon Source for Sports Tigers 10-9 in overtime Saturday night at the Multiplex.

The Raiders took the Thompson-Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League playoff semifinal series 2-0.

Penalties at first worked in the Tigers' favour. With two Tigers in the penalty box in the game's final five minutes, Robbie Short (3G) and James Dobrowolski banked shorthanded goals less than a minute apart to give Vernon a 9-8 lead.

But penalties ultimately cost the Cats in the end, as Rutland's Jordan Urban (2+1) equalized on the powerplay with just 13 seconds to go which forced the Cats to work their magic in overtime.

However, the game's first star Jacob Illichmann (1+6) deflated the Tigers' quick comeback, cashing in on the powerplay with two minutes left.

½The game was really back and forth all night and either team could have had the chance to win it all in overtime,½ said Illichmann, whose Raiders swept the Tigers in the playoffs for the third straight year.

½And to get the win in overtime on the powerplay makes it all the more sweeter. We had some problems on the powerplay earlier in the game letting the Tigers get all those shorthanded goals but we fixed it up when it mattered most.½

The Raiders, who are already guaranteed a spot in the provincials as the host team, will face either the first-place Kamloops Rattlers or the Kelowna Warriors.

Myles Brumpton, who wrapped up his first season behind the bench as head coach was satisfied on how the Tigers played. ½This was a much tighter game from the start and we brought a whole lot more energy and desire to the table. It was a real close game that could have gone either way but unfortunately we fell into some penalty trouble in overtime which has been happening a lot lately and it eventually cost us the win. But from the start of the season when we'd take 70-85 penalty minutes a game, we've really worked hard on improving our discipline and I felt later down the stretch we gelled more as a team.½

The Tigers escaped with a 3-2 lead after 20 minutes of play on singles by Josh Taylor (1+3), Miles Jespersen (2+1) and Short on the powerplay. Mike Miller was ejected in the closing minutes by taking his fifth penalty of the game. Urban and Kyle Van De Syde (1+2) provided the offense for Rutland.

Ryan Milling and Jared MacLennan each notched 1+1, Doug Langlois potted a pair and Brendan Urban and Brody Daft contributed the remaining Raiders' goals. Darren Kirby and Skolrood pocketed a goal each, while Jespersen and Short added a pair for the Tigers.

Cam Needham registered 36 saves in the Rutland cage.

Short, who finished the game with second star honours said: ½The first game against Rutland in this series was a real wakeup call for us, which made us realize that we need to come out with more intensity than them and not just sit back once we get an early lead. For this game, we pumped ourselves up by talking about coming out flying with an upbeat attitude in the dressing room before the game. Brodie held us in the entire game and did a great job all year coming up big for us when we needed him to. Also Tanner, who was a great leader in the dressing room and on the floor and Darren and Miles played a great rookie season clicking on offense.½

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July 7

Raiders rattle Tigers in series opener

by Nicole Berg: Morning Star Staff

The Vernon Source for Sports Tigers were anxious to get the second round of the Thompson-Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League playoffs started Thursday night.

The Tigers, however, were promptly dispatched like a punching bag, as the host Rutland Raiders unleashed two weeks of pent-up frustration with a 14-5 victory.

Game two in the best-of-three semifinal series went Saturday night at the Multiplex. A third game, if required, would go Tuesday night in Rutland.

The Raiders scored early on Tyler Parrent's first of three and didn't once let up, recording some great highlight goals and thunderous checks.

Our game-plan was to bounce back after our last loss against these guys and get on them early with lots of energy, goals and hits and not giving them any room to start a comeback, said Raiders' enforcer Sheldon McDonald, who dished out some timely hits on the Vernon forwards. I think Vernon's downfall and one of our keys to winning the game was letting the Tigers take a lot of penalties early and build that fast 6-1 lead on them after the first period.

With the Raiders up 4-1 on goals by Doug Langlois (2) and Jordan Urban, Jared MacLennan coasted the Raiders to a 5-1 lead on a grubby crease-side goal on a two-man advantage powerplay.

After MacLennan scored, he paraded a victory dance in front of the Tigers' bench that promptly cost his team an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.

But it didn't help the Tigers any as Parrent notched a single to close out the period. James Dobrowloski tallied the Cats' lone goal.

Vernon starter Brodie MacDonald was dinged with a five-minute major for spearing following some rough stuff in his crease after Parrent's goal. Josh Phillips took over for MacDonald.

Right from the start of the game we came out flat as too many of our guys were playing as individuals and not caring about a solid team effort, said a disappointed Tigers' head coach Myles Brumpton.

Those 20 penalty minutes compared to their eight in the first period was what really did us in and from then on, even though Rutland ended up finishing the game with more penalty minutes than us (40-36), we still couldn't get our act together to cook up a comeback.

McDonald who played like a delivery truck all night, pinning the Tigers into the boards, showed his offensive side with an awesome shorthanded effort. McDonald had no trouble out muscling the five Vernon players on the floor by breaking free from a holdup against the boards and striking the ball past Phillips.

That was a sweet shorty by Sheldon, said Rutland's head coach Travis Wray. He played phenomenal defense and even showed a bit of offensive flair with his goal. As well Tyler Parrent (3G) and Doug Langlois (4+2) were outstanding at the other end of the floor. We knew coming into tonight that the way to beat Vernon was to get under their skin and let them pile on the penalty minutes and for us to build a fast lead which worked out great. For Saturdays game I expect us to come out with double the intensity because we know the Tigers will be raring to go for a fast moving and hotly contested affair in their own barn.

Langlois with another pair and Kyle Van De Sype led the Raider attack in the third while Taylor and Riley Soleway scored for Vernon. Rutland's Jacob Illichmann chipped in with six assists.

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June 26

Tigers finish off Flames in first-round sweep

By Nicole Berg: Morning Star Staff

The Vernon Source for Sports Tigers will be seeking payback in the Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League semifinal playoff series.

The Tigers take on the Rutland Raiders in a best-of-three starting Thursday night at Kelowna Memorial Arena (7:30). Game two goes Saturday, July 7 at the Multiplex. A third game, if necessary, would go Tuesday, July 10 in Kelowna.

Last year, the Tigers forfeited their series to Rutland after the Raiders filed a protest over Vernon's use of ineligible Midget call-ups. The Tigers had tied the series 1-1 before their game-two win was overturned.

The Cats moved to the semifinals by torching the South Okanagan Flames 7-2 Tuesday night at Kelowna Memorial Arena, taking the series 2-0.

We started out pretty steady tonight and were careful to not fall into their trap, so that's what helped us to win both

our games,½ said Tigers' rookie Darren Kirby, who turned away a Flame who tried to pick a fight late in the game.½We did whatever we needed to do in order to win and did good by generating a lot of shots on net with 70, and playing an awesome defensive-minded game by not allowing them very many chances to score.½

The Cats wasted no time hitting the scoreboard, with Steven Clark finding the net at 22 seconds. Kirby padded Vernon's lead to 3-0 after the first with a pair of goals including a shorthanded breakaway tally.

The Flames got off to a fast start in the second on a fancy deke by Tyler Prentice which surprised Tigers' starter Brodie MacDonald.

MacDonald, who let in a record best of only two goals, said: ½This was probably the easiest game for me as a goalie to play as the Flames didn't get a whole lot of shots and towards the end of the game it seemed they were more focused on trying to unsuccessfully get our players to fight and taking stupid penalties and getting their coach kicked out in both games.

½Our team just looked beyond their antics and focused on sweeping them in both games and not have to worry about a winner take all game three.½

Jess Villeneuve, Kyle Whieldon and James Dobrowloski with a pair contributed the rest of the Tigers' goals while Chris Johnson replied for South Okanagan.

In other playoff action, the Kelowna Warriors stopped the host Armstrong Shamrocks 10-7 Tuesday night to take a 1-0 series lead. The series resumes next Tuesday night in Kelowna. Game three, if required would go Wednesday night in Armstrong.

The winner of that series will meet the regular-season champion Kamloops Rattlers, who like Rutland, received a first-round bye.

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June 25

Tigers get by Flames

by Nicole Berg: Morning Star Staff

The Vernon Source for Sports Tigers were ready to get the party started for their first Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League tilt Monday night against the visiting South Okanagan Flames.

The Tigers, who were never seriously threatened in a 12-7 victory over the Flames, used some savvy stickwork and kept their emotions in check to take game one of the best-of-three series.

With less than a minute remaining in the game, some rough stuff erupted in the corner with a few of the Tigers and the Flames' rugged Darcy Ricard in the centre of it all.

Ricard was ejected from the game which also carried a gross misconduct. He left the floor and ran down the hallway leading to the dressing rooms and tried to get a rise out of the Tigers' players.

Security flowed down to the dressing rooms and broke up the scuffle before anything got out of hand. Vernon's Brennan Plante escaped with only a two- minute minor penalty

The Cats led 1-0 after the first on a goal by Darren Kirby.

Kyle Marsh with a powerplay goal tied the game 48 seconds into the second. Tyler Prentice later put the Flames in the lead on an easy goal where he caught the Vernon defence snoozing as none of the Tigers were in their own end.

Goals by Robbie Short and Tanner Skolrood soon pushed the Tigers back in front at 3-2.

On Skolrood's goal, Andrew Lauer broke his stick in mid play and had to rush to the bench to get a new one, leaving only four of the Flames d-men to work on their own, but Lauer wasn't quick enough back to the floor as Skolrood wired the ball past Rory McDowall. Three by Josh Taylor, one by James Dobrowolski, and another breakaway goal by Prentice rounded out the period.

Taylor who finished the game with 5+2 said: ½The game started out mostly 5-on-5 as there wasn't that many penalties called and we played a really tight period to escape with a 1-0 lead. In the second we switched up our systems with guys playing in different positions and that really clicked so we played that way for the rest of the game.

I think our team is peaking at the right time with beating the league's two powerhouses Rutland and Kamloops to end the season so there's no reason we can't win this whole thing if we stick with the system.½

Upon Taylor netting his fourth on the powerplay, Vernon's goaltender Brodie MacDonald was assessed a five minute major for illegal equipment, due to his pads being too wide. However the Flames could only muster one goal on the Tigers in that frame by Brad Deshane.

Luke Mednis with his first goal of the year, Riley Soleway, Kirby and Taylor led the Tigers' attack in the third while Ryan Ferguson and Prentice on the powerplay scored for S.O.

Game two in the series went Tuesday night in Kelowna. A third game, if necessary, would be played Tuesday, July 3 at the Multiplex.

The third-place Tigers (8-5-2) finished the regular season with a 7-5 win over the visiting second-place Rutland Raiders Saturday night.

Braidy Webb and James Dobrowolski each with two goals, Tanner Skolrood, Robbie Short and Miles Jespersen scored for the Tigers.

The fourth-place Armstrong Shamrocks ended the regular season by losing 18-7 to the pennant-winning Kamloops Rattlers Sunday night on the road.

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June 17

Tigers stun Rattlers

by Nicole Berg: Morning Star Staff

Entering the McArthur Island Sports Centre in Kamloops as the underdog Sunday night, the third-place Vernon Source for Sports Tigers prevailed with a hard-fought 8-6 victory over the league leading Rattlers.

With one game to go, the win guaranteed the 7-5-2 Tigers a first-round date with the last-place South Okanagan Flames in the Thompson-Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League playoffs.

The best-of-three series starts Monday night at the Multiplex.

½I was quite pleased with the boys' efforts tonight to play a disciplined and controlled game to come out victorious over Kamloops,½ said Tiger head coach Myles Brumpton.

½It was our first win against them this year after 8-7 and 11-7 losses. This game had way fewer penalties than our last loss against them a couple weeks ago, which played a major role in us winning.½

Vernon struck first with Josh Taylor's first of three goals three minutes in.

Craig Mattioli equalized a few minutes later but that was the closest the 11-3 Rattlers ever got to the hungrier Tigers.

Darren Kirby shorthanded, Blake Lewis and Tanner Skolrood scored a string of goals in three minutes to put Vernon in front 4-1. Nathan Woldum added another goal for Kamloops.

½I believe that four-goal spurt by Vernon in the opening eight minutes was what put us in a deep hole which we couldn't climb out of,½ said Kamloops co-coach Rick Baker.

½Both teams had a lot on the line tonight. We could have wrapped up first place and Vernon, which they accomplished with their win, clinched third.

½If this game is any indication as to what our games will look like come playoff time, then I'm really excited to play these guys. I believe the rightful top three teams in the league (including the second-place Rutland Raiders) will compete for the banner this year.½

Curtis McIntosh led the Rattlers' attack in the second with a pair. On his second goal, he took a great feed from Adam Sibley and outran the Vernon d-men and popped the ball past starter Brodie MacDonald.

MacDonald, who recorded 32 saves, was excited to beat Kamloops.

½We really cracked down on our discipline tonight which was key to beating the Rattlers because they have such a

good powerplay,"½ said MacDonald.

"½If we didn't take any of those penalties we probably would have won like 8-3 instead because the rest of their goals came on the powerplay. Overall though I believe we played pretty good, however, we must work on our loose balls and face offs because they had us beat on that each and every time."½

Garrett Burton shorthanded, accompanied with Kin Kelsey for Kamloops, and the Tigers' Steven Clark and Riley Soleway scored the remaining game's goals.

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June 13

Tigers fall short

by Nicole Berg for TheMorningStar

Breakaways and penalties cost the Vernon Source for Sports Tigers a tight game against the Rutland Raiders Wednesday night at the Multiplex.

The Cats, who picked up 32 penalty minutes compared to the Raiders' 17, fell 10-9 to the faster and more disciplined Raiders in Thompson-Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League play.

The Raiders (8-3-1) have now automatically secured the position as the host team in the Junior B provincials starting Aug. 2.

Rutland, who was in a joined bid with the Kelowna Warriors to co-host the provincials at the beginning of the year, were awarded the right to host as the highest league finisher of the two.

Despite outshooting the Raiders for most of the game, and using a five-goal outburst in the second period, the Tigers couldn't keep up with the speedy Raiders.

"½The Raiders really caught us off guard tonight,"½ said Tigers' captain Tanner Skolrood. "½We had five of our regulars (Jess Villeneuve, Mitch Steel, Miles Jespersen, Ryan Minchenko and Joey Klein) out of the lineup and had four midget call-ups playing in their place who did pretty good for their first Junior B game.

"½Despite us playing with a short bench, we didn't stay focused, especially when we were shorthanded, and they had numerous chances to score on us without us looking, and they did just that by capitalizing on lots of breakaway goals.

"½Lacrosse is such a fast-moving sport that you only have a split second to make that creative play, and if you don't bear down and do something in that time, you're going to get beat."½

League-leading pointgetter Doug Langlois (22-31-53) in 11 games, earned first-star honours for the Raiders, netting two goals in the first period. Tyler Parrent and Sheldon McDonald helped give Rutland a 4-2 lead after the first. Riley Soleway and Steven Clark responded for Vernon.

The Tigers turned a complete 180 turnaround at the start of the second period, as Skolrood and Robbie Short, with a pair, and James Dobrowolski staked the Cats to their first lead of the game at 6-4, all in just under the opening three minutes.

"½We played really good for those opening minutes and turned the game around,"½ said Vernon assistant coach Brian Klein.

"½If we could have just played that way the entire game, we would have had a good chance at winning but instead we fell into penalty trouble and allowed Rutland to get the fastbreak and beat us."½

Skolrood with another two goals and Kyle Van De Sype, Jacob Illichman and Darcy Leach, with two goals each for the second-place Raiders, rounded out the rest of the scoring.

Rutland's head coach Travis Wray enjoyed another classic Tigers-Raiders game.

"½We have a really good rivalry with these guys and every time we play them the games always turn out to be close and hotly contested affairs,"½ said Wray.

"½This game had a real playoff-like atmosphere to it and I expect our future games, if we meet in the playoffs, to be even more competitive.

½Their goaltender Brodie MacDonald is the best goalie in this league and is so tough to get the ball past. Every game our team tries to think up new ways to solve him and tonight we finally figured him out."

The Tigers and Raiders meet again Saturday, June 23 (7:30) in the Cats' final home game at the Multiplex

Vernon, who are third at 6-5-2, visits the Rattlers Sunday in Kamloops. The first-place Rattlers are 9-2.

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June 9

Tigers Salvage 7-7 Tie

by Nicole Berg

The Armstrong Shamrocks appeared to have sealed their second win of the season over the Source for Sports Vernon Tigers Saturday night at the Multiplex. However, the Tigers had a different plan. Determined to not disappoint their hometown fans by losing to their bitter rivals, the Cats rallied late with a pair of goals to earn a 7-7 tie in Thompson-Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League action.

½I was real pleased with the boys in the dying minutes to string together a couple goals to gain one point from the Shamrocks after displaying a real close game,½ said Tigers' head coach Myles Brumpton. ½Our strong point was loose balls and that's what helped us stay close with Armstrong. They pressed hard all night and never gave up. They're a good squad to play against and always come out to play competitively to win.½

Shamrocks veteran goaltender Logan Pippolo was a wall for the Shamrocks, stopping 57 of the 62 shots he faced.

½Logan is a real good goalie and we had a tough time getting the ball past him. He is going to be a major factor for the Armstrong team this season,½ Brumpton continued.

On the game and his team's play Pippolo said: ½It was a really fun game to play tonight. I always look forward to playing the Tigers as they are my favourite team to play against.

½They always give us a run for our money and the games are always close with great talent displayed at both ends of the floor. In order to win tonight we had to follow through on our plan which was to stay disciplined. However it didn't work out the way we wanted it to as we put our focus on only checking on our man and not paying attention to the loose balls, which ultimately cost us the game.½

After building a convincing 3-1 lead over the Tigers in the first period on goals by Jordan Norstrom, Jarrett Medhurst and Cody Burt, the Rocks got into some penalty trouble as the Tigers climbed back into the game in the second with four powerplay goals by Tanner Skolrood (2), Darren Kirby and Robbie Short.

Cody Warren and Nathan Strohm supplied the Rocks' lone two goals in the period.

The Shamrocks were without their head coach Ryan Williamson going into the third period, as he was kicked out late in the second for questioning the referee's calls. He also was slapped with a gross misconduct.

The loss of their head coach didn't seem to bother the Shamrocks as they padded their lead to 7-5 on goals by Brooks Christensen and Jeremy Meredith.

With 4:51 remaining, the Tigers started hustling on their loose balls and keeping to their checks which was key to their four goal outburst in the second period and netted two quick strikes by Skolrood and Josh Taylor.

Vernon, who host the Rutland Raiders tonight (7:30) at the Multiplex, improved to a 6-4-2 record with an 8-6 Monday night win over the South Okanagan Flames. Taylor with 3+1, Blake Lewis with 2+2, Kirby, James Dobrowolski and Kyle Whieldon scored for Vernon. Short pocketed four assists.

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June 7

Phillips an Emergency Tiger Standout

by Nicole Berg

Back-up goaltender Josh Phillips recorded a stellar 40 save showing Thursday night as the Source for Sports Vernon

Tigers iced the host Kelowna Warriors 11-5 in Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League play.

Phillips had to step in at the last minute for his first start of the season, as starting net minder Brodie MacDonald was injured in the team's warm-up prior to the game.

½Josh needed to fill in for Brodie who was originally going to start but had to sit out due to a freak injury he received in practice where he was struck in the jaw on a shot by Tanner Skolrood,½ explained Vernon's assistant coach Brian Klein.

½We were so impressed with Josh tonight and he really stepped up when needed to. For his first full game, and to only allow five goals, was just amazing. The boys played a great defensive minded game and tried their best to seal the win for Josh. Also this game was a total turnaround from last week in Kamloops as we really clamped down on penalties (Vernon received ten minutes while the Warriors had six).½

Phillips, who is a 16-year-old rookie who saw some action last year as a midget call up, was considerably nervous for his first start.

½I wasn't prepared to play as Brodie was supposed to start but I had to cover for him at the last minute,½ Phillips said. ½I was worried the game might have been canceled as the game started 40 minutes late because the ref didn't show up. The boys played such a good defensive game for me and since we had ten minutes in penalties there wasn't as much tight penalty kill action I had in front to focus on. Overall the team played great and I'm really happy to be able to have a win in my first start this season.½

The Tigers sealed the season series against the Warriors with a 2-1 record. With the victory the Tigers (5-4-1) crept up two points behind the Rutland Raiders for second place.

The Cats got off to a quick start with an early goal by Skolrood. Despite Kelowna's Tyler French (2+2) responding right back 25 seconds later, the Cats stuck to their guns and didn't let up as they sailed past the Warriors as Josh Taylor (2+1), Steven Clark (3+1), Mitch Steel and Tyler Plante (1+1) scored to push the Tigers' first period lead to 5-2. Darcy Gordon also scored for Kelowna.

The teams exchanged two goals in the second period which also included a great breakaway tally each by French and James Dobrowski. Taylor for Vernon and Deryk McPhail (1+1) for Kelowna also scored.

Kelowna's Braden Renner, Robbie Short (1+2), Darren Kirby (1+1) and Clark with a pair netted the game's remaining goals in the third.

Clark, who fulfilled the role as assistant captain in the absence of enforcer Ryan Minchenko, thought his team had some ups and downs but overall played strong.

½From the opening face off we came out strong and were on them right away and didn't let up,½ said Clark.

"However in the second we let down a bit letting them get two easy goals but we still held our lead and stayed in front all game. In the third we were very strong and buried as many goals as we could as the game was ending to ensure the win.½

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June 2 & 3

Rattlers Top Tigers

by Nicole Berg

After mounting a monstrous comeback in the third period for an 8-8 tie with the host Rutland Raiders Saturday night, the Vernon Tigers looked to carry that momentum Sunday night in Kamloops.

The Cats did score first against the first-place Rattlers Sunday, but fell 11-7 in Thompson-Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League play.

The stingy Kamloops defence, who have only allowed a league-best 58 goals against, shut down the Tigers' top guns in the second period, outscoring the Cats 6-1. The Tigers fell to third place at 4-4-1, while the Rattlers went to 9-1, seven points up on the Raiders.

½The Kamloops squad is so dominate on defence as well as their powerplay which really put us in a hole, as they

scored five goals with the man advantage,½ said Tigers' assistant coach Brian Klein, who filled in for head coach Myles Brumpton (work commitments).

½Our five-on-five play was our only positive tonight and we lacked poor judgment by playing too undisciplined, and that's where we allowed Kamloops to get under our skin and beat us. We can't afford to play shorthanded against this team and expect to beat them.½

After Mitch Steel and Steven Clark scored two straight, the Tigers succumbed to a faster Kamloops squad who netted four goals by Russ McIntosh, Ryan Bullock, Garrett Burton and Shawn Donahue to lead the Cats 4-3 at the end of the first. Josh Taylor had Vernon's other goal.

Rattlers½ leading scorer Kiel Donahue (16-20-36) supplied three goals in the second, including two on the powerplay, and an additional shorthanded marker in the third.

Donahue's first goal came on a gritty hard-working play, where he stole the ball from a Tiger defender and ran in alone on starter Brodie MacDonald.

Derek Swan, Nathan Woldum and Devon Larsen, with a fabulous goal where he slammed the ball past MacDonald while leaping through the crease in midair, supplied the remaining goals for the Rattlers.

James Dobrowski and Darren Kirby scored for the Tigers.

Following some rough stuff in Adam Sibley's crease in the third, Vernon's Miles Jespersen was tossed from the game with a vicious slash on Sibley which included a match penalty.

Steel and Kirby each pulled hat-tricks in Rutland.

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May 26

Steel strong for Cats

by Nicole Berg: Morning Star Writer - www.vernonmorningstar.com

Vernon Tigers' rookie sensation Mitch Steel is making a name for himself in the Thompson/Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League.

Steel's four-goal performance stole the spotlight Saturday night as the Tigers pasted the South Okanagan Flames 14-5 before 200 fans at the Multiplex.

½I'm really glad to be back playing in my hometown,½ said Steel, who saw some action for the Surrey Intermediate A Stickmen earlier in the season. ½Playing on the coast really taught me a lot which I brought to the table back here in Vernon. The coast was really great but it's so much nicer playing in Vernon because these guys are all my buddies, who I have played lacrosse with since I was little, and we just mesh so well together.½

Steel, who boosted his stats to eight points in just two games, netted his fourth on a highlight-reel play where he caught Flames' starter Rory McDowall out of position and popped the loose ball into the net.

With their second win in a row, the Cats jumped into third place at 4-3. They are above .500 since the first game of the season when they beat the Armstrong Shamrocks.

½We finally got things clicking tonight 5-on-5 and on the man advantage by scoring seven goals,½ said Vernon head coach Myles Brumpton, tossed in the second period for questioning a referee's call. ½We still need to work hard on our penalty kill though as all of the Flames' goals came on the powerplay. They have a very impressive powerplay.½

The Cats, who outshot the last-place Flames 76-42, maintained a 4-2 lead going into the second period on goals by Darren Kirby (1+2), Steel, Tyler Plante (2) and Miles Jespersen, on a shorthanded breakaway beauty which surprised McDowall on a fancy deke.

Tyler Prentice (3) scored a pair of powerplay goals for the Flames. Sean O'Beirn (2+2) was the only other Flame to score for the 2-6 Flames, netting a pair of powerplay markers.

Following a relatively clean first period with just 10 penalty minutes being handed out on both sides, the second period featured chippiness on both ends with everything being called.

Flames' captain Darcy Ricard, who played his agitator role to a tee by getting in the Cats' faces all night, was ejected following a four-minute roughing penalty, to add to his 18-minute total. Vernon's Ryan Minchenko was also ejected with a face masking major.

Using the Flames' game total of 70 penalty minutes to their advantage, the Tigers (46 PIM) ripped past five goals in both the second and third periods on the goaltending tandem of McDowall and Dustin Oliver. Steel and Tanner Skolrood (3+3) led the way with three goals each and singles came from Plante, Josh Taylor (1+1), James Dobrowolski and Kyle Whieldon.

The Tigers now look to face the second place Rutland Raiders (5-2) in their first meeting of the season Saturday night in Rutland. Brumpton believes the Raiders should be a good test for his crew.

½They should be a very good opponent for us and the game's outcome will determine where we stand at. They have a high-octane offense which they'll use to their advantage so we'll have to see how our defence stacks up against them.½

The second-place Rutland Raiders brushed back the visiting Armstrong Shamrocks 10-9 Saturday night.

Logan Strohm with 3+2 and Cody Burt with 2+2 led the Shamrocks (4-6). Jeremy Meredith (2), Jarret Medhurst (1+2) and Nathan Strohm supplied singles. The Rocks host the Kelowna Warriors Saturday night.

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May 24

Tigers hold off Warriors

by Nicole Berg: for TheMorningStar - www.vernonmorningstar.com

The Vernon Tigers went into protect mode late to hold off the Kelowna Warriors in Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League action Thursday night at the Kelowna Memorial Arena.

The Warriors used a two-goal spurt in the dying minute to creep within one goal before coming up short in a 8-7 Tigers' victory.

With goaltender Steve Wiens pulled and the Warriors trailing by three goals, Darcy Gordon and Kurt Deschner(1+4) connected 12 seconds apart following a Warriors' face-off win and slapped the ball past the Tigers' Brodie MacDonald.

Darren Kirby (1+1), who stands as the Tigers' rookie leading scorer with (7+8) in six games and netted the Tigers' fourth goal shorthanded, thought the Warriors squad did all they could to tie the game.

"The final minute was definitely scary when they pulled their goalie," said Kirby. "They're very good at moving the ball with the extra attacker, but we pulled it together and stuck it out by holding them to the outside. They also have an amazing powerplay so by taking as few penalties as we did (12 minutes), it helped us in the long run.

Vernon's head coach Myles Brumpton was impressed with the way his club handled the game.

"Up until the final period we played a solid, controlled and disciplined game," said Brumpton. "Overall, I was very impressed with the discipline on both sides as there was only a total of 21 minutes. When the final minute rolled around, we knew Kelowna would try everything they could to catch up and they did just that by pulling their goaltender and coming really close with their two quick goals, but our club kept our composure and didn't panic."

Mitch Steel and James Dobrowolski, who both saw time in a Tiger uniform last season as Midget call-ups, made their rookie debuts with Steel netting 1+2 and Dobrowolski chipping in with two assists.

"Both these guys saw some action with our club last year as Midget call-ups and have committed to playing for the remainder of this season," said Tigers general manager Rich Zecchel. "They're both very skilled players who both made a great presence last season which should continue on into this year."

The Cats got off to a quick start on the game just 20 seconds in as Ryan Minchenko tucked in the ball at the side of starter Brant MacQuoid's net, who later was replaced by Wiens in the final period.

The Warriors led 2-1 after the first on markers by Joe Brown and Deryk McPhail (2+4), on a shorthanded tally, with just five seconds remaining.

In the second period, Kelowna potted two powerplay goals by McPhail and Jake Brown (1+1). Mike Miller, Steel and Kirby supplied singles for the Tigers.

Robbie Short, Braidy Webb, Jess Villeneuve (1+2) and Tony Minchenko, who recorded his first goal of the season on a beautiful breakaway goal, as he shot off the bench and intercepted a nice pass from Dobrowolski, paced the Tigers in the third period.

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May 16, 2007

Tigers fall to Rattlers

By Morning Star Staff

After memorizing the game-plan on paper, the Vernon Tigers almost pulled off a big upset Saturday night at the Multiplex.

The first-place Kamloops Rattlers were forced to rally for a thrilling 8-7 Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League victory. The 2-3 Tigers dropped into a four-way share of third spot in the six-team circuit.

Head coach Myles Brumpton implemented an offensive zone press to try and slow down the Rattlers' impressive transition game, and it worked well.

It allowed us to contain their platoon style of offense/defence for a majority of the game. I was very pleased how the boys adapted to the new system with no practice, said Brumpton.

Unfortunately, Kamloops capitalized on some untimely errors late in the game which ultimately cost us in the end. I'm not making any excuses but 75 per cent of the team has been riddled with the flu and we were pretty much drained after two periods.

Josh Taylor, Robbie Short, Ryan Minchenko and Riley Soleway staked the Cats to a 4-1 first-period lead. Derek Swan replied for the 5-0 Rattlers.

Jess Villeneuve counted Vernon's lone second-period goal, while Kamloops pulled within two, getting two goals from Curtis McIntosh and singles from Shawn Donahue.

Jared Emery (2), Devan Larsen and Garrett Burton supplied Rattler goals in the third period. Vernon goals came from Taylor and Tanner Skolrood. Darren Kirby and Skolrood each had two assists.

Brian Tommasini provided three assists for the Rattlers, who got two from Emery.

We played a very disciplined and controlled game (12 minutes in penalties) and I am very proud of the boys for keeping their emotions in check during a very physical war with Kamloops, added Brumpton.

Overall I thought we played a solid team game and honorable mention goes to Brodie MacDonald, Mike Miller and Ryan Minchenko for their defensive efforts.

MacDonald made 47 stops, while Mike Smith of Kamloops turned aside 32 shots. The Tigers get a break until Thursday, May 24 when they visit the Kelowna Warriors.

The Armstrong Shamrocks fell to 2-5 by losing 17-3 to the host Rutland Raiders Saturday night and falling 10-9 to the visiting South Okanagan Flames Friday. Rutland took over sole possession of second spot at 3-2. Armstrong tangles with the 2-2 Flames next Monday night at Penticton Memorial Arena.

Doug Langlois had 3+7 to lead Rutland, while the Rocks got goals from Daniel Giger, Taylor Trotter and Brad Wolgram. Davis Kelly pulled the hat-trick as the Flames clipped Armstrong. Logan Strohm with 5+1, Giger with 1+3, Braydon Sanders, Jarett Medhurst and Cody Burt countered for the Rocks.

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May 07

Tigers douse Flames

by Nicole Berg; for TheMorningStar

Darren Kirby scored three times as the Vernon Tigers grounded the South Okanagan Flames 7-3 in Thompson-Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League action Monday night at Penticton Memorial Arena.

The Tigers improved to 2-2 after suffering a 9-8 loss to the Kelowna Warriors Saturday night at Civic Arena.

Robbie Short with 1+2, Josh Taylor, Riley Soleway and Blake Lewis also scored for the Tigers. Tanner Skolrood chipped in with four assists.

Kyle Marsh (2) and Darcy Ricard replied for the 1-2 Flames.

In Saturday's game, the Warriors' brother act of Jake and Joe Brown accounted for nine points, including some clutch powerplay goals, to sink the Cats. Vernon grabbed a 3-1 first-period lead against the harder-hitting and faster Warriors.

Vernon took just 21 penalty minutes but their penalty kill couldn't contain the slick Brown brothers.

“I was real happy with the guys playing more disciplined tonight, but our penalty kill was awful and needs some work,” said Vernon head coach Myles Brumpton. “We definitely outplayed them on 5-on-5 though, and if it wasn't for those penalties we would have easily won the game 8-2. But it's still early in the season and we're still in a building process, so we should pull it all together soon for the rest of the season.”

The Tigers owned the first period, outshooting the Warriors 21-7 and connecting on three powerplay goals by Short (1+2) and a pair by Kyle Whieldon. Kurt Deschner (1+4) netted Kelowna's lone goal on the man advantage.

From the start of the second period, the Warriors ran circles around the Vernon defence, scoring three straight by Victor Wiens and Joe (2+2) and Jake (4+1) Brown.

Kelowna's 4-3 lead was short-lived however, as Skolrood (2+4) tied the game on a shorthanded beauty where he jumped off the bench with a clear path ahead to shoot the ball over Warriors' starter Steve Wiens' shoulder.

“I thought we seemed to be in control of the game during the first period,” said Skolrood. “But once we started taking penalties again and they started scoring all those powerplay goals, we couldn't keep up with the game anymore. Kelowna's team has an amazing ball movement on offence and they took our penalties to their advantage and that's how they pulled out the win.”

Jake Brown rallied to break the tie just seven seconds later with his brother soon after potting a powerplay tally to put Kelowna back in front, where the Warriors stayed for the rest of the game. Jake Brown would also add another powerplay goal and Tyler Plante additionally scored for the Tigers.

After Jake Brown scored his final goal of the night on the powerplay to open the final frame, and with the Tigers now trailing by three, Skolrood established a Tigers' comeback by netting his second. The Cats saw their comeback fall short as Deryk McPhail (1+2) sealed the deal three minutes later on the powerplay.

Jess Villeneuve added his first two goals as a Tiger to make things interesting.

“It felt really great for me to finally break the curse and get my first goal as a Tiger,” said Villeneuve. “The boys played with much better discipline tonight but we've really got to work on our short man and powerplay to improve for next game. The Warriors are a fast moving team and their powerplay executed well accounting for seven goals and that was the difference tonight.”

The Tigers host the 3-0 Kamloops Rattlers Saturday night at the Multiplex (7:30). The Rattlers ripped the visiting Armstrong Shamrocks 9-2 Sunday night. The Shamrocks are 3-3.

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May 05

Shamrocks Delight Full House

by Nicole Berg; for TheMorningStar (Edited)

Lacrosse night in lacrosseville lived up to its expectations Friday night at the Armstrong Spallumcheen Sports Centre.

The hometown fans left the arena with smiles after watching the Junior Shamrocks top the Vernon Tigers 9-7...

The Junior Tigers, who played in the doubleheader's first match, didn't fare out much better than their Senior leaders.

As a team, we really embarrassed ourselves tonight," said Vernon head coach Myles Brumpton. "Just like last game we took way too many untimely penalties and that really cost us the game in the end, as Armstrong scored five times with the man advantage. The first period we played awful letting them build that early 4-0 lead and were lucky to pull out of the first with a goal. The second period we played a little better, playing a more evenly matched game but our temper got the better of us and we couldn't stay out of the box."

The Shamrocks jumped out of the gate on three powerplay markers by Braydon Sanders and a pair by Meredith, coupled with a single from Brooks Christensen.

Robbie Short, who scored his first of three goals on the powerplay with just three seconds remaining in the first period, duplicated the same play at the conclusion of the second.

"We didn't really play as good as we could have to beat them like last week," said Short, who was the Tigers' top scorer with 59 points last season. "If we are to win games we must quit taking so many penalties and get a lot more shots on net during the whole game. Our powerplay was really good tonight but our penalty kill needs some work. Both Josh Phillips and Brodie MacDonald stood on their heads for us and played phenomenal in net."

Tyler Plante, Riley Soleway shorthanded, and Darren Kirby and Blake Lewis on the powerplay rounded out the rest of the Tigers' offense.

Christensen with his second powerplay maker and four straight goals by Jarrett Medhurst including one powerplay, one shorthanded and one penalty shot goal, led the Shamrock attack for the rest of the game.

"I'm really happy with how our club played against Vernon tonight, really stepping it up from our game against them last week where we lost," said Medhurst. "It felt really good to beat them this time in our own barn. Our defense stood tall, with our goalie Logan Pippolo standing out especially."

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May 02 2007

Tigers slip by Shamrocks

by Nicole Berg, for The Morning Star (www.vernonmorningstar.com)

Goaltender-of-the-Year in 2006, Vernon Tigers' goaltender Brodie MacDonald appears serious about maintaining that stature in the Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League this season.

MacDonald recorded 63 saves as the Tigers stopped the Armstrong Shamrocks 10-7 in their home opener Saturday night at the Civic Arena. The game was the first in a home and home series, which will see game two shift to the Armstrong/ Spallumcheen Sports Centre Friday.

MacDonald ensured the Tigers stayed in control for the most part of the game with a pair of all-world saves, including a point-blank breakaway shot off Nathan Strohm in the early minutes.

"That was a really high shooting game tonight," said MacDonald. "It's been a pretty long time since I've faced this many shots in any game. Most of their shots came from down low so I think I got them figured out on that."

It also marked the first time that newly-acquired Tiger Jess Villeneuve squared off against his former Shamrock teammates. The 21-year-old looked pretty comfortable, producing three helpers and dishing out some timely hits.

"I think Jess did just fine for his first game against his old teammates," said Tigers' captain Tanner Skolrood, who spent last year with the Junior A New Westminster Salmonbellies. "He played really hard against them and you've got to give him a lot of credit for that. He's a great team player who will be a great addition to our club, and should really shine this year."

The Cats had trouble staying out of the penalty box, getting dinged for 50 minutes, including a pair of 10-minute misconducts. The Shamrocks received only 22 minutes.

"We took more than enough penalties and we really need to work on improving our discipline," said Vernon head coach Myles Brumpton.

Overall though I believe we played a solid team game with everyone contributing in their own way, aside from a few mental lapses where we allowed them to get within one goal on us, and our untimely penalties.

½Armstrong competed with a good team effort and are a very well conditioned and running team. I predict the rest of the games we have against them this season will all turn out to be close.½

Following Kyle Whieldon's marker, Armstrong captain Jeremy Meredith (1+1) potted an unassisted marker, before the Cats answered back with three straight, with a single from Mike Miller and a couple from Skolrood (2+2), which included a powerplay goal.

½With this being my last season, I really want to improve on my play from previous seasons and be a good leader for these younger guys, who will hopefully follow my lead,½ said Skolrood. ½We have a great group of rookies in here who should be dominate forces in years to come.½

The Shamrocks pulled their team together and outscored the Tigers in the second frame 4-3 on singles from scoring ace and last year's league MVP Logan Strohm, Daniel Giger (PP), Cody Burt and Mike Belanger (PP). Darren Kirby with a pair and Steven Clark (3+1) rounded out the Tigers' offense.

The Shamrocks jumped out with Logan Strohm's second powerplay goal just 29 seconds into the third frame to pull within a goal, but saw its comeback fall short as Vernon rookie Joey Klein and Clark netted goals 23 seconds apart. Clark and Strohm both completed their hat-tricks in the final seven minutes of the game. Colin Dodds made 35 saves for Armstrong.

The Shamrocks got 5+2 from Logan Strohm and 3+3 from Brooks Christensen in a 15-9 win over the visiting Rutland Raiders Friday night.

Giger and Belanger each with two goals, Jarret Medhurst with 1+5 and Burt completed the Rocks' offence.

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April 25 2007

Tigers record split

By Morning Star Staff

Once an Armstrong Shamrock, newly acquired Jess Villeneuve appeared pretty comfortable in the Vernon Tigers' den Saturday night.

The 21-year-old, who was granted a release from the Rocks after four years with Armstrong, pocketed four assists as the Tigers stopped the Calgary Mountaineers 7-5 in exciting exhibition Junior B lacrosse play.

"He's a point man on the powerplay and he can shoot with both hands," said Tigers' GM Rich Zecchel. "He's very skilled. He doesn't make many mistakes or take many penalties."

Darren Kirby supplied 3+1 for the Tigers at the Armstrong/Spallumcheen Sports Centre.

Tanner Skolrood added 2+3 and Robbie Short (Vernon Viper winger) had 2+1. Brodie MacDonald and rookie Josh Phillips split the Vernon goaltending.

It was 3-2 Calgary after one period, and 4-4 after two sessions.

The Mountaineers, a class B2 team, stuffed the weary Tigers 8-0 Sunday afternoon in Armstrong.

"We were terrible," said Zecchel. "We took too many penalties (19 of 28) and we just weren't in good enough shape to play a second stop-time game against a very good team. They were running all over us."

Jesse Nagel with 1+2 and Brad Plumton (Westside Warrior hockey player) with three assists led the Mountaineers.

The Tigers open the Thompson Okanagan League season Saturday night (7:30) at Civic Arena (due to the King of the Cage fight card) against Armstrong.

The Tigers will play the rest of their home games at the Multiplex.

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Change for Cats

by Nicole Berg; For The Morning Star

The Vernon Tigers are starting their 2007 Thompson Okanagan Junior B Lacrosse League season a little differently this year.

Firstly, the Tigers will take on the 2003 Rocky Mountain Junior League champion Calgary Mountaineers this weekend in an two-game exhibition series at the Armstrong/Spallumcheen Sports Centre.

The series opener is Saturday night at 7:00 with game two a Sunday matinee at 1:30.

Secondly, the Tigers will see a new face behind the bench while also welcoming a familiar face back to the floor.

Former Vernon Royals' star Myles Brumpton will take over as head coach from Bill Kirkland, while 2005 standout Tanner Skolrood returns to the Tigers' den after playing Junior A with the New Westminster Salmonbellies last year.

"I'm real excited to be coaching for the Tigers this year," said Brumpton. "Our new rookies should form a real strong contingent. We also have a solid base of veterans returning. With this great mix of players, we should have a good foundation to build on for the new season. I expect for us to be a well-rounded club that goes deep into the playoffs."

The Mountaineers are a high-end Junior B team which split a two-game series with Vernon three years ago.

"The upcoming games we have against Calgary should be a really good test for our team," said Brumpton. "They're a well organized team, and we expect them to compete hard for the win."

Skolrood will add experience, speed and a talented stick to the Tigers. The former Kalamalka Laker quarterback had one goal and one assist, and nine penalty minutes in nine games with the 15-6 Salmombellies last season. Skolrood pocketed 75 points (second on the team) and earned the Coaches Choice Trophy, with Vernon, in 2005.

"It's really great to have Tanner back," Brumpton beamed about the 20-year-old. "He's a very skilled player and should be a good influence on the younger guys coming on. He's a great ball scorer and should compete for the team's scoring lead."

With graduating five-year veterans Chris Evans, Mitch Schochter and Karl Friesen moving on, the Tigers will depend on their new crop of rookies to fill the void.

"We've got about seven Midget graduates coming in," said Brumpton. "Darren Kirby, who saw some time with us last year, will make his rookie debut. He should be a really strong player for our club. Josh Phillips, who backed up Brodie MacDonald in goal last year as a Midget call-up, is also returning, and should compete with Brodie for the starting position."

The Ditchfield brothers Clayton and Brandon and Luke Lecavalier have opted not to play for the Tigers this season.

The Cats open the regular season Saturday, April 28 against the Armstrong Shamrocks (7:30, Civic Arena).

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