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July 27 2012

Venom claim Junior B box crown

By Graeme Corbett - Vernon Morning Star Published: July 27, 2012 1:00 AM 



Lisa VanderVelde/Morning Star

Mason Limb (right), of the Vernon Tigers, and Jamie Forster, of the Kamloops Venom, scramble for a loose ball in junior lacrosse action Wednesday night at Wesbild Centre.

The Kamloops Venom are the Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League champions.

The Venom clinched their second title in three years with a 15-10 win over the host Vernon Re/Max Tigers in Game 4, eliminating the Cats 3-1 in their best-of-five set Wednesday night at Wesbild Centre.

Veteran sniper Riley Donahue powered the Venom offence with five goals and some stellar playmaking ability in front of an estimated 700 fans.

"It feels good on my last year," said Donahue, Venom captain. "I can't ask for much more.

"We beared down. We've been running all season for particularly this game and this series. They looked like they died in the last two games here, but they still put up a fight. That's what we love, and Vernon's a great team to play against."

The teams swapped goals in a high-tempo first period, with Ethan Anderson, Ryan Landels and Braden Barr tallying for the Tigers. Quinn Smith (2), Donahue and Jamie Forster, on a tremendous shorthanded solo effort, gave Kamloops a 4-3 lead at the break.

Special teams were a major factor Wednesday, with the Venom burying three shorties, and three powerplay goals (one was a delayed penalty). Vernon clicked twice on the man advantage.

"They just keep running that same system over and over, and eventually they just break through the cracks," said Tigers' captain Brett Hanna, of the Venom's short man.

For the second game in a row, the Tigers took a cat nap in the second period, and Kamloops capitalized with unanswered goals by Zach Bruneau, Chris Case and Donahue to start the frame. Blaine Boomer, on a bounce shot, Jimmy Latin, hustling for a shorthanded goal, and Donahue streaking out of the penalty box to score on the fly, made it 10-5 after 40 minutes.

Nolan Frame, catching netminder Mitch Horsman off his post, and speedy Mason Limb, picking the corner on a breakaway, countered for the Cats.

"It was a tough loss and Kamloops proved for the second game in a row, if you take any time off or make any errors, they will capitalize on those opportunities," said Tigers' head coach Myles Brumpton.

"The last two games, the second period was our Achilles heel. It cost us this series, and ultimately going to provincials.

"I am very proud of the young men I coached this season. We started off with an 0-4 record and ended our season by losing to a solid team who should take gold in the provincials.

"The guys showed a lot of heart and a lot of commitment all season long. They took on a beast, and it was a tough challenge."

As if to quash any idea of a Vernon comeback, Kamloops continued their assault with goals nine seconds apart in the first minute of the third period.

The Tigers could have rolled over, but instead kept pressing, getting further offence from Jay Seaton, Landels, Midget call-up Liam Drabiuk, Darryl Landels and Limb, on a brilliant end-to-end rush.

Donahue, Jerome Thorne and Kyle Pauwels completed the Venom offence.

Kamloops' head coach Doug Clark credited the Tigers for their persistence.

"They're a real hard-working team, well coached and they battled right to the end," he said. "Nothing but respect for them."

Kamloops' keeper Mitch Horsman made 32 saves for the win. Josh Point and Tyler Landry combined for 35 stops for Vernon. Landry took over for Point in the third period and was steady in relief.

The Tigers were without starting netminder Joel Fruncillo for the playoffs after he broke his thumb late in the regular season.

Vernon will lose just one player, Ryan Oliverius, to graduation this year.

"This team loses one guy only, and we've got kids coming up," said Brumpton. "This team is a true homegrown team."

The Venom advance to Junior B provincials, Aug. 3-5 at Bear Mountain Arena in Juan de Fuca.

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July 25 2012

Vernon Tigers face elimination in Game 4 tonight at Wesbild

By Staff - Published: July 25, 2012 1:00 AM 



Allen Douglas Photo

Vernon Tigers' Ryan Landels (front) is hounded by the Kamloops Venom's Jerome Thorne in Game 3 of the Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League finals Monday night at Memorial Arena. Game 4 goes tonight (7:30) at Wesbild Centre.

There will be no room for error when the Vernon Re/Max Tigers host the Kamloops Venom in Game 4 of the Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League finals tonight (7:30) at Wesbild Centre.

The Cats burned their final Get Out of Jail Free card in Monday night's dismal 17-8 loss to the host Venom in Game 3 at Memorial Arena.

A win tonight would push the best-of-five series back to Kamloops Friday night. A loss equals season over.

"None of us are panicking right now," said Vernon head coach Myles Brumpton. "As far as I'm concerned, the pressure's all on them.

"We told the boys to wash this one away and we've still got another crack at it. That's the beauty of a five-game series. We've got some great leaders and some real character on this team. I don't see these guys laying down."

Trailing 5-4 heading into the second period, Vernon buried three unanswered goals to take a 7-5 lead midway through the frame. However, things seriously unravelled for the visitors as Kamloops went on a nine-goal run to all but seal the win before the break. After that, it was all about damage control for Vernon.

“All four aspects of our game – between goaltending, offence, defence and transition – went to sleep, and everything they shot went in,” said Brumpton.

“If we would have had one more goal (earlier in the second period), we would have put their crowd to sleep. It was a quiet building after our third goal.

“They got a lucky bounce off one of our player’s sticks that deflected in and that just seemed to give them momentum. It was one goal after the other. Guys that don’t normally score were scoring highlight-reel goals.”

Craig Bigsby, with a pair, Jay Seaton, with a great shorthanded effort, and Mike Quarin handled Vernon’s offence in the first period. Quarin, Nolan Frame and Landels tallied for the Cats in the middle frame, and Jordan Orr scored once in the final period.

The Venom got goals from nine different players, led by Jerome Thorne’s 4+3 performance. Captain Riley Donahue added 2+2.

Vernon netminder Tyler Landry returned to the crease Monday night after playing last weekend with the Thompson-Okanagan Zone 2 team at the B.C. Summer Games in Surrey. The Venom’s second-period scoring spree resulted in Josh Point taking over, and finishing the game.

The series winner advances to Junior B provincials, Aug. 3-5 at Bear Mountain Arena in Juan de Fuca.

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July 20 2012

Venom tame Cats to even series

By Graeme Corbett Published: July 20, 2012 1:00 AM 



Graeme Corbett/Morning Star

Vernon Tigers' Mason Limb protects the ball from Jerome Thorne of the Kamloops Venom in Game 2 of the Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League finals Wednesday night at Wesbild Centre.

Their regular-season records might show otherwise, but there hasn’t been much to choose between the Vernon Re/Max Tigers and Kamloops Venom in the Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League finals.

After dropping the best-of-five series opener in overtime Monday, the Venom, who dominated the TOJLL at 14-1-1, needed a third-period rally to upend the Tigers 9-8 in Game 2 Wednesday night at Wesbild Centre.

Game 3 goes Monday at Kamloops Memorial Arena, and Game 4 is Wednesday at Wesbild.

Aside from some defensive miscues in front of netminder Josh Point in the third period, the Tigers, regular season runners-up at 8-6-2, matched up well against the Venom. They took a one-goal lead into the final frame, but gave up unanswered goals to captain Riley Donahue and Kyle Pauwels, both on rebounds from in close, and Blaine Boomer, and never recovered.

“We made some key errors on the defensive end that cost us those goals,” said Vernon head coach Myles Brumpton.

“They’ve got to clamp down first on the stick, and that’s one thing you see Kamloops doing. If they would have done that, they probably would have saved two out of those three goals right there.

“We didn’t expect to sweep them, but it would have been nice to win at home and go up 2-0.”

Vernon’s Mike Quarin and Kamloops’ Chris Case swapped singles later in the third period, and with Point pulled for an extra attacker, Ryan Landels cut the lead to one with 20 seconds to play with his third goal of the night.

“We played a really good game; both teams did,” said Landels, first star. “We had a couple unlucky breaks and it came down to putting the ball in the net. We couldn’t bury any in the last part there.

“We’d like to see a bit more movement on offence, and just talk it out when we get back on the bench. We need to see more production out of everybody.”

The Venom’s Quinn Smith opened the scoring just 54 seconds into the game, but Quarin and Nolan Frame, spinning off his check and firing, put Vernon in front at the 8:08 mark.

Singles by Landels and Craig Bigsby, and the Venom’s Case and Boomer, had it knotted 4-4 after the first period.

Point, who hadn’t played with the Tigers since the beginning of the season, looked a little shaky in the early going, but stood tall once he settled down and recorded 39 stops. Big Mitch Horsman made 44 saves for Kamloops.

“He watched last game so he had a chance to see their shooters,” said Brumpton, of Point. “He came in and played real well; he had good angles.”

Landels and Frame, both picking the top left corner, clicked for Vernon in the second period. Jerome Thorne, diving fully outstretched through the crease, answered for Kamloops.

Donahue, the game’s third star, liked his team’s response after Monday’s loss.

“We got beat in the last game and we needed that to open our eyes a little bit,” said the Venom captain. “We came out a little harder and wanted it a bit more tonight. It’s just hard work and wanting it more and respecting the other team.”

Added Kamloops’ head coach Doug Clark: “Part of that (win) was us breaking them down a bit defensively. We were getting to the net and being aggressive.

“We need to play with the same energy and desire that Vernon plays with. If we do that, we have a good chance to win most nights.”

Tigers power past Venom in OT

By Staff - Vernon Morning Star Published: July 18, 2012 1:00 AM 



Allen Douglas Photo

Vernon's Nolan Frame (left) takes the high-angle shot on netminder Mike Frolek (35) before defender Marc DuPont checks him in Game 1 of the Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League finals Monday night at Kamloops Memorial Arena.

Ryan Landels and Nolan Frame each collected a pair of overtime goals as the Vernon Re/Max Tigers outgunned the host Kamloops Venom 16-13 in Game 1 of the Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League finals Monday night at Memorial Arena.

The Tigers looked to have walked away with the win in regulation, but the Venom were awarded a penalty shot at the buzzer when a referee called Vernon netminder Tyler Landry for pushing his net off its moorings. Quinn Smith converted to draw even at 12-12 and force extra time.

"It was unfortunate there was a penalty shot called after the final buzzer, however it was very gratifying as a coach to see our captains and veterans step up and realize the significance in re-grouping the team immediately," said Tigers' head coach Myles Brumpton.

"That veteran rally showed poise and maturity in our leaders."

The Tigers will host Kamloops for Game 2 of the best-of-five championship series tonight (7:30) at Wesbild Centre. Game 3 is slated for Monday in Kamloops.

Landels was a force early, pocketing four first-period goals to go along with a 7+5 performance. Mike Quarin, who was double-teamed pretty much every time he touched the ball, had Vernon's other goal in the opening period.

Ben Saklofsky, Ty Hamer-Jackson and Jake Latin answered for Kamloops.

The Cats, who finished the regular season at 8-6-2, built a 9-6 lead after 40 minutes on singles by Landels, Craig Bigsby, Frame and Ryan Oliverius. Smith and Brady Jorgensen replied for Kamloops, who took the regular-season pennant at 14-1-1 (their only loss was to Vernon). Raiders' captain Riley Donahue was ejected in the second period for crosschecking Jake Soleway near the players' bench.

The Venom cranked up their offence in the final frame, getting goals from Latin (2), Smith, Jerome Thorne, Jorgenson and Colton Defrias. Darryl Landels, Ryan Sarazin and Frame countered for the Tigers, who took just eight total penalty minutes, including a coincidental roughing minor.

“Overall the boys played a very disciplined, selfless and determined game as there were few errors made by either team,” said Brumpton. “The game was a real chess match as each team was very methodical in their approach and execution.”

Landry finished with 41 saves and a pair of assists. Mike Frolek had 37 stops and a helper for the hosts.

Landry will miss Game 2 as he and fellow Midget call-up Liam Drabiuk are playing with Thompson Okanagan Zone 2 at the B.C. Summer Games this week. The Tigers will start Josh Point tonight.

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July 15 2012

Vernon Tigers finish off Armstrong Shamrocks

By Graeme Corbett - Vernon Morning Star Published: July 15, 2012 1:00 AM 



Graeme Corbett/Morning Star

The Armstrong Shamrocks' Owen Barker (left) and Vernon Tigers' Liam Drabiuk reach for a loose ball in Game 4 of the Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League semifinals Thursday night at Nor-Val Sports Centre. Vernon won 9-7 to eliminate the Rocks.

Two scraps, four lead changes, 30-degree heat and zero quit - it all added up to a thrilling series-deciding Game 4 between the Vernon Re/Max Tigers and Armstrong Shamrocks Thursday night at a humid Nor-Val Sports Centre.

The other number to add that Junior B lacrosse stats line is the five goals scored by big Mike Quarin, who literally powered the Cats to a 9-7 semifinal playoff win to eliminate the Rocks in front of 400 boisterous fans.

Vernon now faces the powerhouse Kamloops Venom in a best-of-five Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League final. Game 1 goes tonight (6:30) at Kamloops Memorial Arena. Game 2 has tentatively been slated for Wednesday (7:30 p.m.) at Wesbild Centre (visit members.shaw.ca/vernontigers for schedule updates).

"This is what we've been working for," said Tigers' assistant coach Dave McWhirter. "The boys

have really showed they want to get to the next level.

"I think we're bigger, I think we're stronger and we're as fast as they (Venom) are. It's going to come down to the team that makes the least amount of mistakes and who has the better goalie."

Thursday night was a back-and-forth affair, with neither team building anything more than a one-goal lead, at least until 25 seconds to play, when Nolan Frame set up Quarin for an insurance marker.

"I was lucky I got that final goal to take the pressure off a bit and clinch the win," said the humble Quarin, a Prince George product.

"We came out strong. We knew we had to win, and I couldn't have done it without my teammates. They all rallied and played a solid game."

With both goalies - Armstrong's Cole McFarlane and Vernon's Tyler Landry - solid from the start, it took until the 10-minute mark for the Rocks' Carston Schlaak to set up Cam Nelson for the opening goal. Quarin opened Vernon's account at 14:40, barging through four defenders before finding the net.

"Mike's a big load; he's hard to stop," said McWhirter. "When he gets going, he's got a nose for the net. And when you get two guys on him, he's quick to dish."

Nelson and Quarin swapped singles again to make it 2-2 after one period. A little over a minute into the second frame, captain Brett Hanna worked a 2-on-1 to set up Ryan Olivierus to give Vernon its first lead. The Shamrocks equalized and then went ahead at 9:00 when Drew Hassard picked the lower right corner through a screen.

Earlier in the period, Armstrong's Owen Barker and Vernon's Theo Wagner squared off in a spirited scrap. Wagner, who used a hip toss to take Barker down, was ejected when he kept throwing punches as the referees tried to separate the two.

Quarin, with a rocket from the top of the circle, and speedy Mason Limb, slipping his check to earn an open shot, gave the Cats a 5-4 lead after 40 minutes.

The final period started with a quick tilt between the Rocks' Daniel Peterson and Tigers' Ryan Sarazin. Brett Hawrys pulled Armstrong even yet again at 3:33 with a rocket from the top of the circle, only to have Frame convert a gorgeous diving shot at the five-minute mark.

Willy Hanley, playing with a broken hand, responded for the hosts 22 seconds later, and added another snipe after Quarin had restored Vernon's lead with his fourth goal.

The heat took its toll on the undermanned Shamrocks as the game wore on. Head coach Pat Nelson was impressed by both team's effort level.

"It was just a hard-fought game on both ends," said Nelson. "It's tough when you get these temperatures; it sucks the energy out of the guys."

"Those three extra sets of legs would have been nice to help the guys out on the floor and give them a rest."

Ryan Landels supplied the winner on a shifty solo effort, pinballing off a couple defenders to beat McFarlane from in close.

"I've gotta take my hat off to Armstrong; those guys worked hard," said McWhirter. "That was anybody's game, right up until two minutes to go."

"It was either going to be close, which is what we wanted, or it was going to be a blowout and get ugly. They forced us to dig deep. It shows a lot of character on our guys' part, but Armstrong just never gave up."

"It shows Armstrong has a lot of talent. They are a team of the future for sure."

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July 13 2012

Tigers take control in semifinal

By Staff Writer - Vernon Morning Star Published: July 13 

Special teams, or a lack thereof, played a major role in helping the Vernon Re/Max Tigers stake their first lead in the Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League semifinal series with the Armstrong Shamrocks.

The Cats earned a 2-1 lead in their best-of-five series with an 11-7 win Tuesday night at Wesbild Centre, aided by a pair of short-handed goals in the third period.

The Rocks trailed 7-5 midway through the final frame and looked to equalize with the man advantage, only to fall victim to Vernon's short man.

"When you got the advantage and they score a couple shorthanded goals, it makes it pretty tough." said Shamrock head coach Pat Nelson, who felt his team's focus was a little off Tuesday night.

"Our shots were missing the net too much and our passing was a little shaky. The number of small things that we didn't do right makes a difference in the game. They're a good team and we have to make sure we're prepared. Mental preparation will play a big part."

Game 4 went Thursday (7:30 p.m.) at the Nor-Val Sports Centre in Armstrong. A fifth game, if needed, would be played Saturday a 7:30 p.m. at Wesbild.

The teams were tied 3-3 after one period, with Jordan Orr, Midget call-up Liam Drabiuk and Craig Bigsby scoring for Vernon, and Brett Hawrys, Owen Baker and Cam Nelson answering for Armstrong.

The Tigers snapped a 5-5 tie late in the middle frame with a goal at 18:57, taking a 6-5 lead into the dressing room. Mason Limb, Braden Barr and Drabiuk did the damage for the hosts; Hawrys and Drew Hassard tallied for the Rocks.

The Cats put the game away with five goals in the final 20 minuets, led by a Nolan Frame hat trick, and singles by Orr and Drabiuk, who completed his hat trick for a five-point night. Ryan Landels chipped in with three assists.

"Entering Game 3, we asked the guys to check their emotions at the door and to put the team first by avoiding selfish penalties, as Game 1 and 2 saw a handful of self-serving penalties," said Tigers' head coach Myles Brumpton.

"Overall, the boys played a fundamentally sound game in all aspects - from defense, to transition, to offence. This play carried over to special teams play as well, as the penalty kill did a great job."

Barker, who finished with 2+3 and Nelson capped the visitors' attack.

Tyer Landry finished with 48 saves and an assist in the win. Cole MacFarlane had 44 save in the loss.

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July 11 2012

Junior Cats even series

By Staff 

After averaging one goal every two minutes over the first 40 minutes, just one goal was scored in the third period.

And it was a huge one for the Vernon Re/Max Tigers.

Braden Barr's powerplay marker at 13:16 of the final period gave the Tigers an 11-10 win over the Armstrong Shamrocks Saturday at Nor-Val, evening the best-of-five Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League semifinal at one game apiece.

Barr slipped his shot short side on netminder Cole McFarlane for the winner.

"Braden rifled the ball with true conviction," said Tigers' head coach Myles Brumpton. "It was a beautiful goal. It was signature Braden Barr."

The first two periods were polar opposites, with Vernon jumping out to a 7-1 lead after 20 minutes, only to watch the Shamrocks outscore Vernon 9-3 in the middle frame to make it 10-10 heading into the third.

Ryan Landels jumpstarted the Vernon attack with a first-period hat trick; other offence came from Nolan Frame (2), Jordan Orr and Midget call-up Liam Drabiuk.

Owen Barker supplied Armstrong's goal in the first period.

"It was seamless lacrosse for the first 20 minutes," said Brumpton. "We had Armstrong on their heels."

"In the second period, the roles were reversed. A combination of the heat and the adrenaline put us on our heels in the second period. Armstrong came out flying and built up some momentum."

Brett Hawrys fired three goals for the Baby Rocks in the second period, with Conor Payne, Joel Castle, Barker, Drew Hassard, Cam Nelson and Nathan Marcetta also getting on the scoresheet.

Said Shamrocks' head coach Pat Nelson: "Our recovery from a rough first period was outstanding. We swung the momentum totally in our favour and the response was exceptional, it really shows what we can do as a team."

"We played two very good periods, the second was outstanding and we just couldn't get a bounce in the third. Our team doesn't roll over when we are down. We come together when we are down and that's the sign of a good team."

Drabiuk, with his second, Mike Quarin and Mason Limb connected for the Cats in the second frame.

"Third period was a chess match," said Brumpton. "Both teams buckled down on defence and we just happened to capitalize on the powerplay."

Tigers' Midget call-up keeper Tyler Landry made a couple of breakaway saves in the final minute to preserve the win.

Game 3 went Tuesday night at the Wesbild Centre, and Game 4 goes Thursday night (all games 7:30) at Nor-Val. If necessary, Game 5 would go Saturday at Wesbild.

The winner will face the Kamloops Venom in the league final. Kamloops swept the South Okanagan Flames after the Flames forfeited Game 3 Saturday night.

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July 6 2012

Shamrock duo shoots down Cats

By Staff - Published: July 06, 2012 1:00 AM 



Lisa VanderVelde/Morning Star

Drew Hassard (left) of the Armstrong Shamrocks is knocked off his feet by Mike Quarin (centre) and Brett Hanna, of the Tigers in Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League playoff action Wednesday night at Wesbild Centre.

Brett Hawrys and Owen Barker have been deadly for the Armstrong Shamrocks all season.

The Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League snipers continued that trend in Game 1 of the post-season, combining for 11 points in a 12-9 win over the host Vernon Re/Max Tigers Wednesday night at Wesbild Centre.

Barker, who finished third in regular-season scoring with 50 points in 11 games, collected four goals and two assists, while Hawrys, the scoring leader with 84 points in 13 games, scored once in each period and supplied two helpers.

The best-of-five semifinal series shifts to Nor-Val Sports Centre for Game 2 Saturday night (7:30). Game 3 is slated for Tuesday at Wesbild, and if necessary, Games 4 and 5 would be Thursday at Nor-Val and Saturday, July 14 at Wesbild respectively.

If the Cats want to rebound in this series, head coach Myles Brumpton knows those two will have to be contained.

“We were not as cohesive as a defence unit as we have been all year by allowing two players basically dictate the outcome of the game,” he said.

“The boys know they need to focus on Barker and Hawrys. If we take them off their game, the Rocks’ offensive depth drops off after that.

“The silver lining in the loss is that it is a five-game series and it will turn it into a war of attrition.”

Rounding out the Armstrong attack were Drew Hassard, with 2+1, Joel Castle, with 1+2, and Kyle Versteeg and Daniel Petersen each adding singles.

Armstrong was backstopped by a stellar goaltending performance from Trent Gabriel,

particularly in the second period when the Baby Rocks got into some penalty trouble.

"We played a great team game tonight; everybody contributed in some way," said Armstrong head coach Pat Nelson.

"We got ourselves into some penalty trouble in the second and opened the door for them, but we focused ourselves and fought our way back. Vernon is a very strong team and we are going to have to bring that same work ethic with us on Saturday night at home."

Ryan Landels led Vernon's offence with a hat trick and two assists. Mike Quarin (2+1), Jordan Orr (2), Craig Bigsby and Midget call-up Liam Drabiuk also got in on the scoring.

Brett Hanna and Nolan Frame each chipped in with two helpers, while Austin Lewarne, Matt Kolb and Sam Oliver each had one.

The Tigers were the least penalized team in the regular season, but earned a minor in the opening minute and had trouble staying out of the box after that.

"Right out of the gate we had no flow to our game," said Brumpton. "Although the penalty minutes were even (25 minutes apiece) for both teams, we did not capitalize on our opportunities whereas the Rocks did by scoring six powerplay goals to our one.

"I thought our guys were gripping their sticks a little too tight all night and uncharacteristically dropped balls, threw bad passes and hit 10 posts over the course of the game."

In the other Junior B semifinal, the powerhouse Kamloops Venom doubled the South Okanagan Flames of Penticton 14-7 Tuesday night at Kamloops Memorial Arena.

Game 2 goes tonight at Kelowna Memorial.

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June 27 2012

Armstrong Shamrocks for Vernon Tigers in first round

By Staff - Published: June 27, 2012 1:00 AM 



Andre Lodder/Morning Star

Mason Limb of the Vernon Re/Max Tigers shields the ball from Zac Bruneau of the Kamloops Venom in Junior B lacrosse action Saturday night at Wesbild Centre.

It will be an all-North Okanagan affair when the Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League playoffs get underway next Wednesday at Wesbild Centre.

The second-place Vernon Re/Max Tigers (8-6-2) will host the third-place Armstrong Shamrocks (6-8-2) in Game 1 of a best-of-five semifinal series. The remaining games alternate between Nor-Val Sports Centre and Wesbild (see attached schedule), all with 7:30 p.m. start times.

The Tigers dropped their first two games of their regular-season series with Armstrong, but won the last two.

“There’s always that rivalry with Armstrong and Vernon with the guys playing together growing up,” said Tigers’ assistant coach Dave McWhirter. “There’s some pride to be swallowed by the loser when you have a rivalry like that.

“We didn’t play very well against them the first two games, but played better lacrosse the last two games and we’re looking forward to carrying that over.”

The first-place Kamloops Venom (13-1-1) will battle either the fourth-seeded South Okanagan Flames (4-10-2) or fifth-place Kelowna Raiders (4-10-1), pending the outcome of Thursday’s tilt between Kamloops and Kelowna. If Kelowna wins, they are in; a loss would eliminate them, and a tie would go to a head-to-head tiebreaker.

The Cats ended their regular season last weekend, handing the Venom their first loss of the season with a 12-9 decision Saturday at Wesbild. They drew the Flames 13-13 Sunday in Penticton.

“It was definitely our best game of the year,” said McWhirter, who praised defenders Matt Kolb, Theo Wagner and Austin Leware for their physical play.

“We really punished Kamloops. Jake Soleway must have laid three or four guys out. We’re big, strong guys on the back end and they came ready to play. They (Venom) didn’t want to cut through the middle at the end of the game.”

Vernon continued its trend of building solid starts, rushing out to a 5-0 lead on the strength of three shorthanded goals against Kamloops. Nolan Frame and Prince George import Mike Quarin, each with a deuce, and singles by Ryan Landels and Bayne Bosquet accounted for the Cats’ first-period barrage. Jordan Ellis and Braidy Jorgenson handled Kamloops’ offence.

The margin remained the same in the second frame as Landels, who added five assists, Ryan Sarazin, Frame and Darryl Landels recorded singles for Vernon, and Brett Defrias (2), Jimmy Latin and Gage Deacon scored for the visitors.

Jordan Orr, who supplied three assists, and Sarazin completed Vernon’s scoring in the final frame. Jamie Forster, Quinn Smith and Blaine Boomer tallied for the Venom. Vernon captain Brett Hanna chipped in two helpers.

Kamloops outshot Vernon 57-42, but Tigers’ netminder Joel Fruncillo backstopped his team with a 48-save effort. Unfortunately, Fruncillo will miss the playoffs as he broke his thumb making a save Saturday. It required pins.

“That’s gonna hurt,” said McWhirter, of losing their starter.

The Tigers are expected to go with a tandem of Midget call-up Tyler Landry and Trail’s Thomas Bella, who started Sunday’s game against South Okanagan.

Bella, having never practised with the team, nor having played with the larger nets, was pulled in favour of Landry in the third period.

“Thomas played well, we just didn’t give him the support he needed,” said McWhirter. “We didn’t come to play. We were behind the whole game.”

With Vernon trailing 11-8 heading into the third period, Frame scored twice with the goalie pulled

for the extra attacker to salvage the tie.

“It just shows our guys are able to deal with adversity,” added McWhirter. “You never want to go into the playoffs on a weak game.”

Ryan Landels put on a clinic against South Okanagan, registering five goals and eight assists. Frame supplied 6+1, Sarazin had 1+4 and was great on faceoffs and Darryl Landels fired a single.

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June 22 2012

Vernon Tigers reel off fifth straight win

By Staff - Published: June 22, 2012 9:00 AM 



Lisa VanderVelde/Morning Star

Liam Drabiuk of the Vernon Re/Max Tigers tries to get off a shot as he gets bowled over by Ryan Phillips of the Kelowna Raiders in Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League action Wednesday night at Wesbild Centre.

The Vernon Re/Max Tigers will head into their Saturday night showdown at Wesbild Centre against the first-place Kamloops Venom brimming with confidence.

The Cats racked up their fifth consecutive win, improving to 7-5-1 overall, by clipping the Kelowna Raiders 11-10 Wednesday night at Wesbild.

They end the Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League regular season with a Sunday matinee against the South Okanagan Flames in Penticton.

“Right now, the boys have found their swagger and they are playing with confidence and determination,” said Vernon head coach Myles Brumpton. “The team is having fun and our results are proof of that.”

The Cats raced out to a first-period lead on a pair of goals by Nolan Frame, and singles by Ryan Landels, Craig Bigsby, Ethan Anderson and Mike Quarin.

Andrew McMillan (2), Dillon MacLennon and Iain Hart answered for the Raiders (4-9-1).

“Other than a few breakdowns, from a systems perspective, the team put forth a consistent effort and were very composed and focused for the entire 60 minutes of play,” said Brumpton.

“We transitioned the ball well as our d-men tallied assists on 50 per cent of our goals, which is impressive considering we had four powerplay markers.”

The Raiders crept to within a goal in the second period on singles by McMillan, Jaman Heslop and Brendan Urban, with Landels and Ryan Sarazin countering for Vernon.

The teams fired three goals apiece in the final frame; Landels, Anderson and Liam Drabiuk for the Cats, and Ryan Phillips, Scott Renner and Jordan Laverock for the Venom.

The second-place Tigers don't know who their first-round opponent will be when the postseason begins July 4. The third-place Raiders and fourth-place Armstrong Shamrocks (4-5-2) battled for third place Thursday night in Kelowna.

"With only two games remaining, our goal is to remain focused and carry forward the confidence, determination and overall play that has boosted us into second place," said Brumpton.

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June 20 2012

Cats find late-season form

By Staff - Published: June 20, 2012 1:00 AM 



Andre Lodder/Morning Star

Ryan Landels of the Vernon Re/Max Tigers fires on netminder Brad Stel of the South Okanagan Flames in Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League action Saturday night at Wesbild Centre. The Tigers won 15-8, recording their fourth straight victory.

Relaxed at practice, focussed on the floor.

The Vernon Re/Max Tigers have finally gelled as a team, as evidenced by four consecutive Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League wins.

The revitalized Cats, second overall at 6-5-1 in the five-team loop, brushed back the South Okanagan Flames 15-8 Saturday night at Wesbild Centre.

They will look to make it five straight when they entertain the 4-8-1 Kelowna Raiders tonight at Wesbild Centre. Vernon closes the regular season with a pair of weekend tilts, hosting the first-place Kamloops Venom (10-0-1) Saturday, 7:30 p.m., at Wesbild before visiting the Flames (3-9-1) Sunday afternoon in Penticton.

Vernon started the year at 2-5-1, and assistant coach Dave McWhirter credits the mid-season return of players like Bayne Bosquet and Jake Soleway, along with much-improved netminding from Joel Fruncillo, for helping turn the team around.

"They're really having fun together, and that's key," said McWhirter.

"They're on the floor 10 to 15 minutes before practice. They're joking around throwing the ball around and having a good time. That carries over to the game, and they've got each other's backs."

The positive vibe has certainly sparked the Tigers' offence, which has averaged 13.5 goals over the four-game streak.

"We're getting scoring from seven, eight guys a game, and when you get that, it's hard to stop," said McWhirter.

"We finally adjusted our systems so they work well with the talent we have. You don't have one guy trying to run through three guys. We're continually advancing the ball and it's fun to watch.

"We don't really have a weak link right now, and we have a full bench too."

The Tigers raced out to an 8-0 lead Saturday night, getting first-period offence from seven different players – Mike Quarin (2), Ryan Landels, Matt Kolb, Brett Hanna, Jordan Orr, Bosquet and Darryl Landels.

Kees Mooijer, Chris Pond and Nick Kapusty responded for the Flames in the second frame, while Ryan Sarazin and Bosquet handled Vernon's scoring.

Singles by Kolb, Nolan Frame, Darryl Landels and Quarin, with his hat trick goal. Mooijer and Kaid McLeod each scored twice for the Flames in the final 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, the injury-plagued Armstrong Shamrocks (4-5-2), losers of three straight, end their regular season with a pair of away games, visiting the Raiders Thursday and the Venom Sunday.

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June 17 2012

Tigers take over second place

By Staff - Published: June 17, 2012 1:00 AM 

A third consecutive win saw the Vernon Re/Max Tigers take over second place in the Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League Thursday night.

The Cats, now 5-5-1, withstood a third-period barrage by the host Kelowna Raiders, and hung on for a 9-7 win at Memorial Arena.

Vernon hosted the last-place South Okanagan Flames (3-8-1) Saturday night at Wesbild.

Vernon raced out to a 5-1 lead after the first period, pushing the gap to 8-2 after 40 minutes before getting outscored 5-1 by the 4-7-1 Raiders in the third frame.

"The team played a very aggressive and controlled game for the first 40 minutes," said Tigers' head coach Myles Brumpton.

In the third period, Kelowna tried to intimidate the Tigers and dictated the play for the first 10 minutes.

"The boys stayed composed and showed a lot of character in not bowing to Kelowna's intensity, and matched Kelowna's aggression by taking it to some of the of veteran Raiders," added Brumpton.

Nolan Frame scored once in each period to lead the Tiger attack, with Ryan Landels (2+3), Jordan Orr (2G), Ryan Sarazin and Sam Oliver all getting on the scoresheet. Captain Brett Hanna and Liam McPhee each supplied two helpers.

Andrew McMillan and Iain Hart, each with a pair, were the main threats for Kelowna.

Brumpton praised netminder Joel Fruncillo for coming up with some key saves in the third period, noting he showed good poise when he got steamrolled by a Kelowna player late in the game.

The Tigers entertain the Raiders Wednesday at Wesbild.

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June 13 2012

Vernon Tigers' offence explodes

By Staff - Published: June 13, 2012 1:00 AM 



Lisa VanderVelde/Morning Star

Ryan Landels (right) of the Vernon Tigers scoops up the ball as Daniel Peterson of the Armstrong Shamrocks tries to trip him up in Junior B lacrosse action Saturday night at Wesbild Centre.

Things finally seem to be clicking for the Vernon Re/Max Tigers.

After outlasting the Armstrong Shamrocks 12-7 Saturday night at Wesbild Centre, the Cats made it two straight Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League wins by snuffing the South Okanagan Flames 19-16 Monday at Memorial Arena in Penticton.

“It was the OK Corral last night,” smiled Tigers’ head coach Myles Brumpton.

“This was the first game where I felt the bigger nets were a factor... this season. Dave (McWhirter, assistant), Keith (Hanna, assistant) and I were very happy with the 19 goals we scored, but weren’t very excited about the 16 goals against.

“I can’t emphasize enough the importance of getting contributions from 12 of your 18 runners; it’s like trying to hit a moving target.”

Trailing 11-10 after 40 minutes, the 4-5-1 Tigers, who leapfrogged the 3-8-1 Flames for third place, exploded for nine goals in the final frame. It was 7-7 at the first intermission.

Ryan Landels earned three of his five goals in the final frame, and added a helper. Mason Limb chipped in with 4+1, with other Vernon offence coming from Nolan Frame (2+4), Ethan Anderson (2+4), Ryan Sarazin (2+2), Sean Connors, Bayne Bosquet, Darryl Landels and Sam Oliver.

Mitch Walton, with 5+5, was the Flames’ main threat.

Midget call-up Tyler Landry played the third period and he did a good job, especially considering the minimal exposure he's had with the bigger nets.

Ryan Landels was also stellar against the 4-4-2 Baby Rocks, pacing the Tiger attack with 2+5.

Mike Quarin, Darryl Landels and Sarazin also turned in two-goal efforts, with singles from Ryan Oliverius and Braden Barr.

"Overall, we played a very sound game against Armstrong for all three periods and we took advantage of the fact that Armstrong had five call-ups for the game," said Brumpton.

"It was a disciplined game where the boys didn't deviate from our systems and that mixed well with the fact that the officials let us dictate the outcome of the game by only calling one penalty per team in the third period.

League scoring leader Brett Hawrys recorded 3+3 for Armstrong, with Owen Barker adding a hat trick and Cole Siedel a single.

The Baby Rocks host the Kamloops Venom tonight at Nor-Val Sports Centre, while the Re/Max crew visits the Kelowna Raiders Thursday at Memorial Arena.

Vernon entertains the Flames Saturday at Wesbild.

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June 6 2012

Cats tie up Venom

By Staff - Published: June 06, 2012 1:00 AM 



José Larochelle/Morning Star

Vernon Re/Max Tigers' Ryan Landels (right) fires on net with Riley Donahue of Kamloops Venom in pursuit in Junior B lacrosse action Saturday night at Wesbild Centre.

The Vernon Re/Max Tigers came within three seconds of handing the powerhouse Kamloops Venom their first loss of the Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League season Saturday night.

Instead, the Venom pulled goalie Mike Frolek (28 saves) for the extra attacker and buried a late powerplay goal to salvage a 7-7 draw at Wesbild Centre.

“Kamloops was lucky to receive a point from the game as we were assessed a penalty on a technical chin strap call with 1:15 left in the game,” said Tigers’ head coach Myles Brumpton.

“The boys played well in every facet of the game, from winning loose ball battles to generating quality chances on offence and then punishing the Venom players who came inside the dotted line in the defensive end of the floor.”

Trailing 3-1 after 20 minutes, Vernon fired a trio of goals in both the second and third periods.

Ryan Landels led the 2-5-1 Tiger attack with three goals and an assist, while Nolan Frame chipped in with 2+1 and Sean Connors and Darrell Landels each had a goal and an assist. Mike Quarin added two helpers.

Joel Fruncillo turned aside 43 shots and recorded a helper for Vernon.

Mike Saklofsky fired a pair of goals for the 5-0-1 Venom, with a goal and three assists coming from Quinn Smith.

“The game had a relentless pace to it and the team played with a very determined effort where I believe the boys were sending Kamloops a message in saying ‘We don’t care how talented you are, you can be beat.’”

The Tigers weren’t as fortunate in a rematch Sunday night as they bowed 14-11 to the Venom at Kamloops Memorial Arena.

Darrell Landels turned the hat trick, with other offence coming from Quarin (2+2), Frame (2+1), Bayne Bosquet (2), Ryan Landels (1+6) and Ryan Sarazin.

Brady Jorgenson (3+1), Smith (2+2), Jamie Forster (2+1) and Robert Peterson (1+3) provided the bulk of the Venom firepower.

Down 6-1 early, the Tigers kept chipping away at Kamloops’ lead and brought the score to 11-10 in the third period.

“We dug ourselves a hole, but then we matched them for the rest of the game,” said Tigers’ assistant coach Dave McWhirter.

“With a team like Kamloops, when you’re down 6-1, it would be easy just mail in the game. To have the game come back and make it 11-10 it’s hard to be disappointed.

“They’re starting to come together as a team. They’re really buying into the program and they’re coming to work hard.

In other Junior B action, the Armstrong Shamrocks host the Kelowna Raiders tonight at Nor-Val Sports Centre.

The Baby Rocks visit the Tigers Saturday night (6:30) for the first game of a doubleheader at Wesbild. The Senior Rocks and Cats battle in the second tilt at 8 p.m.

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May 30 2012

Tigers rattle Shamrocks

By Staff - Published: May 31, 2012 4:00 PM 



Lisa VanderVelde/Morning Star

Owen Barker of the Armstrong Shamrocks prepares to land a punch in a scrap with Theo Wagner of the Vernon Re/Max Tigers Wednesday night at Nor-Val Sports Centre.

The Vernon Re/Max Tigers gonged Plan A and used some new, more efficient tactics in a 14-9 win over the Armstrong Shamrocks Wednesday night at Nor-Val Sports Centre.

Darrell Landels supplied four goals and one helper for the Tigers (2-4), who got 3+2 from Prince George import Mike Quarin in his Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League debut.

“It was a hard-working and rewarding win for the team as the boys earned every minute of those two points,” said Vernon head coach Myles Bronson. “In our last practice, the coaches decided to put our current system on the back burner and we implemented a new system that we feel is more conducive to our style of play.

“Overall the boys executed the game-plan and new system very well. We played a disciplined game and received only six minutes in penalties, when you wash out the fight between Theo Wagner and Owen Barker.”

Ryan Landels added 2+2 for the Tigers, while Ryan Sarazin had 1+2 and singles came from Austin Lewarne, Bayne Bosquet, Nolan Frame and Sean Connors, on a gutsy traffic goal where he “ate some titanium while rifling a beauty in the third period.”

Braden Barr and Matt Kolb each produced three assists for Vernon, who scored on 50 per cent of their powerplays and killed off two of three penalties while scoring a pair of shorties.

It was a very uncharacteristic no-show night for the Shamrocks who trailed throughout, and despite a third-period push that brought them to within one goal, they couldn't match the Cats' intensity and determination.

“We weren't prepared for the game mentally and that carried forward into our play on the floor” said Shamrock head coach Pat Nelson. “We were dropping passes, lacking hustle for loose balls, standing around watching on offence and missing defensive assignments.”

League-leading scorer Brett Hawrys pulled the hat trick for the Irish as did Carston Schlaak but secondary scoring was an issue.

"We need to be more than one dimensional on offence," said Armstrong assistant coach Ryan Nitchie. "We are fortunate to have an elite player like Brett but for us to succeed we need to play as a team on offence and generate opportunities as a team."

Added assistant Ryan Nitchie. "We have to give a lot of credit to the Tigers who outplayed us tonight in all aspects of the game. They were the hungrier team and deserved the win."

Added Brumpton: "Now we have to re-group and turn our focus to another formidable opponent as we face the talent-laden Kamloops Venom in back-to-back games this weekend."

The Tigers host the 4-0 Venom Saturday night (7:30, Wesbild Centre) before visiting Kamloops Sunday. Kamloops, who cut down to one team this season, stopped the South Okanagan Flames 17-13 in their last game.

The Shamrocks entertain the 2-2-1 Kelowna Raiders Saturday night.

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May 27 2012

Tigers at Raiders

By Staff - Published: May 02, 2012 1:00 AM 

In Junior B action, the Vernon Re/Max Tigers finally fielded a full lineup, but came up short in a 9-8 loss to the host Kelowna Raiders Thursday night at Memorial Arena.

Leading 6-5 after 40 minutes, the Tigers collapsed in the third period where they were outscored 4-2.

"We played very well for the first 30 minutes," said Tigers' head coach Myles Brumpton. "Halfway through the second period, half our team became passengers, basically waiting for somebody else to get the job done.

"We need to play with heart and determination, and ultimately we have to have the will and desire to win games. Without that drive and desperation, we're just playing an individual game as opposed to being a unified group.

"We got good systems in place, and when they play them, they play them well. They shut teams down."

Brumpton credited netminder Joel Fruncillo for helping Vernon(1-4) keep the lead heading into the second break. He praised the defensive efforts of Jake Soleway, Austin Lewarne and Ryan Oliverius, who were key in Vernon's short man.

Bayne Bosquet led the Tigers with a pair of goals and two helpers. The Coldstream product recently returned from his freshman year as a defender with the Simon Fraser University Clan field lacrosse team, where he earned a PNCLL All-Conference honorable mention.

Ryan Landels pocketed 2+1, and Darryl Landels, Braden Barr, Nolan Frame and Ethan Anderson, a Kamloops player making his debut for the Cats, chipped in with singles.

Scott Renner and Brendan Urban each collected three goals for Kelowna (2-2-1).

Vernon's Saturday game against the host Kamloops Venom was cancelled.

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May 16 2012

Vernon Tigers track first win



Lisa VanderVelde/Morning Star

Ryan Sarazin (middle) of the Vernon Re/Max Tigers fires on Kelowna Raiders' netminder Evan Richtsfeld before Cody Ridden can intercept in Junior B lacrosse action Saturday night at Wesbild Centre.

The Vernon Re/Max Tigers have their first Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League win of 2012.

Playing their second game in as many nights, the Cats pounced on the Kelowna Raiders 8-5 Saturday night at Wesbild Centre.

Featuring an all-Landels starting front line - brothers Ryan, Darryl and 14-year-old Midget call-up Thomas played as a unit - the Tigers turned in their most consistent game of the season.

"This if the first in four games we played a full 60 minutes," said Tigers' head coach Myles Brumpton.

"The boys played committed to the systems with a high compete level. We closed the door in the third period."

The Tigers, who led 2-1 after 20 minutes and were tied 5-5 after two, held Raiders sniper Scott Renner scoreless, aided by solid goaltending from Joel Fruncillo.

"We were strong in all facets of the game," said assistant coach Dave McWhirter. "Best overall team game so far. Every player came with grit and determination."

Vernon, now 1-3, used offence from Ryan Landels (2+2), Nolan Frame (2+1), captain Brett Hanna (1+2), Jay Seaton, Austin Lewarne and Darryl Landels. Thomas assisted on one of Ryan's goals, giving each Landels a point.

"You wouldn't have known (he was a call-up)," said Brumpton, of the 6-foot, 175-pound Thomas. "All the coaches were very impressed with his compete level on the floor and his lacrosse IQ. He sees the floor very well."

The McMillan boys, Cam (2) and Andrew, accounted for three of Kelowna's goals, with Tyson Schoenthal and Nick Evans each chipping in a goal and assist. The Raiders dipped to 1-1-2.

Vernon received a big boost with the return of Bayne Bosquet, who recently returned from his

freshman field lacrosse season with the Simon Fraser University Clan.

Meanwhile, the 2-1-1 Armstrong Shamrocks have notified the TOJLL they have cancelled their Thursday-night game at Nor-Val Sports Centre against the 2-0 Kamloops Rattlers.

The team cited a lack of personnel due to injury, sickness and personal commitments. It was unknown at press time whether the game will be rescheduled.

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May 13 2012

By Staff - Published: May 02, 2012 1:00 AM 

... the Vernon Re/Max Tigers bowed 17-11 to an emotional Baby Shamrocks squad in Junior B action Friday at Nor-Val Sports Centre.

Before the game, Armstrong held a moment of silence for teammate Cullen Rowan, who died last September in a workplace accident.

"They were pretty emotionally charged after that moment of silence for Cullen," said Tigers' head coach Myles Brumpton. "They came out fired up. You could just see their hearts swelling.

"Our hearts went out to the Rowan family as well as to the Armstrong organization. It was an honour to be a part of that game."

Vernon seemed to weather Armstrong's attack in the first period, trailing 5-3 at the break. But for the second straight game, they came unglued in the second frame, allowing five powerplay goals to trail 12-7 heading into the third period.

"Second period seems to be our Achilles heel right now," said Brumpton. "That was the game right there. It was a 40-minute effort and the result is indicative of that.

"We're not panicking. We saw way more positives than negatives. As a team, that's what we need."

The Cats got offence from Ryan Landels (3+3), Ryan Sarazin 2+1, Sean Connors (2), Craig Bigsby (1+3) and Midget call-up Liam Drabiuk (1+2).

Brett Hawrys (4+4) and Owen Barker (3+6) were once again the main threats for the Rocks, with Cole Seidel chipping in with 3+1.

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May 09 2012

Tigers tank in second period

By Staff - Published: May 09, 2012 1:00 AM 



Graeme Corbett/Morning Star

Darrel Landels (left) of the Vernon Re/Max Tigers battles for a loose ball against Derek Grimm of the South Okanagan Flames in Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League action Saturday night at Wesbild Centre. The Flames used a six-goal second period to secure a 9-6 win.

The Vernon Re/Max Tigers looked to be a lock to earn their first Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League win Saturday night at Wesbild Centre.

Up by four goals on the South Okanagan Flames in the first period, they appeared to be in complete control. And then the second period happened. The Cats gave up six goals and recorded only one, and went on to lose 9-6.

“The second period is what killed us,” said Tigers’ assistant coach Dave McWhirter. “We didn’t own any loose balls, we were standing still. We just didn’t deserve the second period.”

“It just comes down to heart and wanting to win, and right now we’re not digging hard enough. We’re still finding ourselves, and we’re better than this, but we’ve got to put it all on the floor.”

First-period singles by Mason Limb, Craig Bigsby, Ryan Landels and Liam McPhee pegged Vernon to the early lead before Kaid McLeod and Jean Luc Chetner responded for South Okanagan later in the frame.

Hard-working Derek Grimm fired a hat trick to spark the Flames’ attack in the second period, with McLeod, Josh Greenwood and Chetner adding singles.

Nolan Frame counted Vernon’s tally in the period.

Tiger captain Brett Hanna, after some tenacious work along the sidewall, and the Flames’ Quinn Ramsay swapped goals in the third period.

Shifty Jay Seaton collected a pair of helpers for the Tigers, while Greenwood and Mitch Walton had four assists apiece for the Flames.

Kamloops’ netminder Brad Stel earned the win. McWhirter said Josh Point could have used a little more support from his defence.

“We weren’t contesting shots and they were using us as screens,” he said. “The nets are wider this year, an extra six inches, and if you let a guy shoot through a screen it puts a lot a pressure on the goalie.”

The 0-2 Tigers visit the 1-0-1 Armstrong Shamrocks Friday night at Nor-Val Sports Centre.

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May 07 2012

Venom hopes TOJLL issue is finally resolved

By Mark Hunter - Daily News Kamloops Sports Reporter

The Kamloops Venom appears to have won its boardroom battle.

The Venom, Kamloops' lone team in the Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League, was supposed to have played three league games already, but they all have been postponed.

The reason, according to Venom manager Carol Pittman, is that two of TOJLL's five teams have questioned what should happen to the remaining players off the Kamloops Rattlers, who folded in the offseason. The Kelowna Raiders and Vernon Tigers felt there should have been a dispersal draft for those Rattlers players, while Pittman and the Venom argue that the players should stay in Kamloops and play for the Venom.

It came to a head on Saturday, when the Raiders were supposed to travel to Kamloops for a night game, but refused. An emergency governors meeting was originally scheduled for today, but was cancelled after Dan Wray, TOJLL's interim chair, sent out an email.

"As of this afternoon, I have the guarantee of the four teams to resume play in the TOJLL," he wrote. "So at this point there will not be a governors meeting. I will spend the next few days trying to sort things out."

Kamloops' other two scheduled games - against the host Raiders on April 26 and the host South Okanagan Flames on April 29 - also were postponed.

For Pittman, it has been a frustrating process.

Once the protesting teams made their complaints known, the Venom went to the B.C. Lacrosse Association for confirmation of the TOJLL's residency rules - the BCLA ruled in favour of Kamloops last week.

"I am writing to inform you that at an emergency meeting of the Senior Directorate, the 11-member panel voted to uphold point 5.06 in the BCLA Senior Operating Policy," wrote Christine Pollock, BCLA's senior directorate chair, in a ruling. "This allows for any junior age player residing in Kamloops to play for the Kamloops Venom, currently the only junior B team in Kamloops registered with the BCLA."

That ruling would be consistent with what happened in Kelowna last season, when the Rutland Raiders and Kelowna Warriors joined to form the Kelowna Raiders. Pittman said the Venom had no complaints when Kelowna went from two teams to one.

But the Raiders and Tigers felt that the Venom would be too strong, according to Pittman, a sentiment that was fueled by "half-truths."

"They called us a super-team," Pittman said. "I don't know how they would know this - we haven't played them . . ." The Venom did play a pair of exhibition games against the Surrey Rebels last month, winning 25-9 and 19-5.

Pittman said one of the "half-truths" was that the Venom was poaching junior A players. The Venom's lone junior A player is Kamloops native Quinn Smith who, according to Pittman, is with the Venom while awaiting a transfer.

Also, there was some question as to whether there were enough Kamloops players to field two

teams.

"(The Rattlers) just didn't have enough support," Pittman said. "(Former Rattlers president) Lon Kelsey said they had two team meetings and seven kids came out.

"He asked for the parents to help out . . . you need them if you want to have an executive, and no parents showed up." Pittman said there was a possibility that five Merritt players would come out for the Rattlers, but it wasn't enough.

"You can't have a lacrosse team with seven players and five maybes," she said.

The Venom joined the TOJLL in 2008, and won the league title in 2010. When it joined the league, it was the seventh team - two of them in Kamloops and two of them in Kelowna.

For now, the Venom is scheduled to play host to the Armstrong Shamrocks on Saturday, 7:30 p.m., at Memorial Arena. Pittman is glad that it appears as though the issue is settled, but feels further dialogue is needed.

"I'm relieved . . . but a little scared, too," Pittman said. "I think we need a meeting . . . there are a lot of things that aren't cleared up. I think we need to dispel a few rumours."

The Venom is scheduled to play 16 league games, eight of them at home. Of the three games that need to be rescheduled, two are road games.

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May 05 2012

Tigers vs Flames

They may be called the South Okanagan Flames but, it was the Re/Max Vernon Tigers that were on fire, starting the 1st period. First period, unassisted, goals by the Tigers' Ryan Landels and Mason Limb, with the game not even 4 minutes old, got the Tigers off to the start they wanted. A power-play marker by Liam Macphee put the Tigers up 3-0 at 4:14. Craig Bigsby scores at 9:14 for a 4-0 lead. The Tigers showed great hustle in the first ten minute which, included an awesome penalty-kill spree and superb saves by Josh Point. The Tigers got into penalty problems after that though, taking 5 of 9, being scored on twice. The Tigers could not capitalize on their chances on the man-advantage going only, 1-4. Score: 4-2 Tigers, Shots: 15-21 Flames, Penalties: 5-4 Tigers.

It was strange seeing many Tiger players out on the bench and not in the dressing room for the first period intermission.

The second period saw the building tilt in favor of the Flames as they scored 6 unanswered goals, chasing Josh Point from the net in favor of Joel Fruncillo. A shift latter Point re-enters the game, looking refreshed and focused enabling his team mate, Nolan Frame, to score late in the frame. The Tigers seemed to lack any offensive threat through-out this period with Ryan Landels not returning to the game after the 1st intermission. It seemed Bigsby intentionally ran into the Flames goalie near the end of the period, pushing and shoving ensued. Score : 8-5 Flames, Shots: 6/21 Tigers 17/42 Flames, Penalties: 4-1 Tigers.

It was back to the dressing room for the Tigers in the second intermission but the coaches were in the walk-way.

The Flames seemed to lay off, protecting the lead, in the 3rd period, inviting the Tigers to try and score. The Tigers could not muster any offensive threat as the Flames defense and goalie did a super job shutting them down. Josh Point, lost his cool when he was run into intentionally at about the midway mark of the period. His team mates restrained him but the coaches pulled Josh in favor of Joel Fruncillo. Joel played great in relieve allowing only one goal, giving his team a chance for a come-back. It was not to be, as the Tiger went down to defeat by a score of 9-6,

Shots: 14/43 Tigers 20/63 Flames, Penalties: 3-1 Tigers.

Tigers starting line-up: #8 Craig Bigsby, #10 Mason Limb, #44 Ryan Landels, #67 Brett Hanna, #80 Matt Kolb with #50 Josh Point in goal.

Tiger goal scorers: Ryan Landels (1), Mason Limb (1+1), #2 Liam Macphee (1), Craig Bigsby (1+1), #12 Nolan Frame (1) and Brett Hanna (1+1) with #6 Jay Seaton picking up two assists.

Penalties: The Tigers took 12 penalties for 24 minutes, the Flames 6 for 12 minutes.

Period scores: 4-2 Tigers after the 1st, 8-5 Flames at the end of the 2nd, game ended 9-6 Flames.

Period shots on goal: 24-15 Flames in the 1st, 42-21 Flames after the 2nd, game shots ended 63-43 Flames.

Game notes:

-- Tigers take 4-0 1st period lead. Flames score 8 unanswered goals (2 in the 1st, 6 in the 2nd period).

-- Josh Point was pulled twice with #00 Joel Fruncillo finishing the game on a strong note allowing only one goal in about 13 minutes of play.

-- Ryan Landels did not play in the 2nd or 3rd periods as he seemed to suffer some sort of lower body injury.

The Tigers next game is on the road May 11 when they play the Armstrong Shamrocks. The Tigers next home game is Saturday, May 12 as they host the defending TOJLL Champions Kelowna Raiders, 7:30pm Wesbild Centre.

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May 1 2012

Rocks surge in third

By Staff - Published: May 02, 2012 1:00 AM 



Lisa VanderVelde/Morning Star

Chris Inscho of the Vernon Tigers battles with Drew Hassard of the Armstrong Shamrocks in Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League play Saturday night at Wesbild Centre.

The Armstrong Shamrocks grounded Vernon Re/Max Tigers 11-7 in Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League play Saturday night at Wesbild Centre.

The Tigers opened the scoring just seconds into their home opener when Jordan Orr picked up a loose ball and scored on a partial breakaway. Vernon went up 2-0 on the powerplay when Nolan Frame bounced a weak dribbler that fooled Shamrocks' goalie Cole MacFarlane.

The Shamrocks stormed back in the second half of the period when slick Brett Hawrys scored his first of four on the night, followed shortly by a beautiful goal from rookie Kyle Versteeg, who cut behind the net, received a pass and reached around to register his first Shamrock snipe.

Willy Hanley potted his first of three on the night, on the powerplay, to give the Shamrocks a 3-2 lead heading into the second period.

The baby Rocks came out smoking in the second, potting three quick goals during special teams play by Owen Barker, Hawrys and Hanley, to go up by four.

The Tigers mounted a comeback late in the period which ended 6-5 Shamrocks.

Armstrong's short-man unit was exceptional, killing off a five-minute major assessed to Barker for high sticking, as well as several minors for slashing, relinquishing only one goal thanks to the stellar play of MacFarlane.

The Tigers equalized at 7-7 early in the third and Shamrocks' bench boss Pat Nelson called a timeout to regroup his troops. The strategy worked as the Irish used intense defence and a potent powerplay, led by rookie Keith Minnis (two goals), to notch four unanswered goals.

"This was a great character win for our team," said Nelson. "We didn't panic when Vernon pushed back. We just stuck to our system and played hard to earn the win.

"We had a lot of opportunities offensively during the game and kept hitting posts or just missing the net and we just weren't getting the lucky bounces, but we didn't lose focus and I was very pleased with the way the guys persevered."

Hawrys finished with 4+3, while Barker earned 1+6 for the Rocks. MacFarlane, Joel Castle and Sheldon Nelson each supplied two assists.

Nolan Frame bagged two goals for the Cats, while Ryan Landels provided 1+3. Other goals came from Liam MacPhee, Craig Bigsby, Orr and Ryan Sarazin. Brett Hanna had two helpers.

"Armstrong deserved the win as they played a 60-minute game and capitalized on our mistakes," said Tigers' head coach Myles Brumpton. "We, on the other hand, only played about 40 minutes of lacrosse that was pieced together over the span of the game."

Brumpton said the Tigers' powerplay, which went a woeful one-for-nine, needs work.

"We did take some positives away from the game, which was that our scoring was spread out amongst six players. Our fitness level is there as the game had a great pace to it with no team edging out the other. As coach Keith Hanna noted to players in last night's practice 'all our mistakes are fixable.'"

Matt Kolb of the Tigers and Brayden Bridge exchanged some bombs in a spirited scrap which saw Bridge trying for the late takedown.

Vernon outshot Armstrong 56-52 and took 37 penalty minutes to the Rocks' 36.

The Junior Rocks face the defending champion Kelowna Raiders Thursday night at Memorial Arena before their Friday, May 11 home opener against the Tigers.

Vernon hosts the South Okanagan Flames Saturday night (7:30) at Wesbild Centre.

April 29 2012

Tigers Home Opener

The Re/Max Vernon Tigers fell 7-11 to the visiting Armstrong Shamrocks in front of a very nice crowd in Wesbild Centre. The score line was 2-3, Shamrocks, after the 1st and 5-7, Shamrocks, at the end of the 2nd. Shots on goal were 15-14, Tigers, in the 1st and 35-34, Tigers, after the 2nd then finished 45-52, Shamrocks.

Vernons game starters were, Joel Fruncillo #50, Liam Macphee #2, Jordan Orr #9, Ryan Sarazin #15, Ryan Landels #44 and Matt Kolb #80. Tigers goal scorers were Jordan Orr (1g 1a), Nolan Frame #12 (2g), Ryan Landels, games 3rd star, (1g 3a), Liam Macphee (1g), Ryan Sarazin (1g). Assits going to Craig Bigsby #8 and Brett Hanna #67

Note: I missed the 6th goal

In goal for the Tigers was Cranbrook native Joel Fruncillo, with back-up Tyler Landry on the bench. In a surprise move, regular goalie, Josh Point #7, played as a defender for the game.

The first period was just 30 seconds old when the score was already 1-1. Jordan Orr off the opening faceoff had a break-away and scored on the first shot of the game. On the next faceoff it was the Shamrocks turn to tie the game. The teams setteled down after that and played a very entertaining defensive period. In the closing minutes of the period Fruncillo made an awesome save to keep his Tigers with-in one. The period ended 2-3 Shamrocks, shots 15-14, Tigers.

The second period seemed to be all Shamrocks as they opened up a four goal lead. Brett Hawrys of the Shamrocks, games first star with 7 points, was a throne in the neck of the Tigers as he lead his team, by example, to victory, he's definetly a fun player to watch. The turning point in the second was a 5 minute power-play for the Tigers in which they failed to score. The Tigers even gave up a short handed tally during that time. With numerous chances on the offensive side of the game to take control, the Tigers fell short as the Shamrocks' keeper kept most of those chances from scoring. At the end of the second it was 5-7 Shamrocks, shots 35-34, Tigers.

Third period, the Tigers trailing by two goals, the Tigers needed to push and push hard. Push they did, as they scored two to tie the game at 7 a-piece. From that point on it was all Shamrocks as they rallied to score 4 unanswered goals winning the game 11-7 and out shooting the Tigers 52-45.

Over-all it was an entertaing game, lots of great defensive plays and many awesome offensive thrusts from both teams.

Game two for the Tigers goes Saturday, May 5, 7:30 pm versus the South Okanagan Flames in Wesbild Centre.

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April 25 2012

Shamrocks rule Ice Breaker

By Staff - 



Jordan Orr (left) of the Vernon Tigers tries to get past Owen Barker of the Armstrong Shamrocks during the Shamrocks junior lacrosse Ice Breaker weekend Saturday at Nor-Val Sports Centre. Lisa VanderVelde/Morning Star

The Armstrong Shamrocks sent an early-season message with a pair of convincing wins at the Archie Jack Memorial Ice Breaker Junior B Lacrosse Tournament last weekend at the Nor-Val Sports Centre.

The baby Shamrocks thumped the shorthanded Vernon Tigers 17-5 in tournament opener Saturday morning, and then ambushed the defending champion Kelowna Raiders 14-8 later that day.

Brett Hawrys, last season's Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League Rookie of the Year, paced the Armstrong attack with five goals and three helpers against the Cats. Willy Hanley (4+2), Owen Barker (2+4), Cole Seidel (2+3), Sheldon Nelson (2+1), Carston Schlaak (1+2) and Joel Castle rounded out the Irish scoring.

"It was great to see us put together 60 solid minutes of lacrosse against Vernon," said Shamrock head coach Pat Nelson. "We played our systems and shot the ball well."

Hawrys pocketed 4+2 against Kelowna, rookie Cole Seidel potted 3+1 and veteran Brandon McGregor ripped a pair of top-shelf goals.

The Raiders mounted a comeback after the first period to bring the game to 6-5, however, Armstrong stuck to their game-plan to secure the win.

"This weekend was a really good chance for us to evaluate our play and build on our offensive and defensive systems as we get ready for the regular season," said Nelson.

The Shamrocks open the TOJLL regular season against the Tigers Saturday night (7:30) at Wesbild Centre.

For the Tigers, who fielded 11 players against Armstrong, and in their 9-6 loss to the South Okanagan Flames Saturday afternoon, the Ice Breaker was pretty much a glorified practice.

"We're not going to take much away from the weekend because it's hard to assess 11 guys," said head coach Myles Brumpton, who has a handful of players injured and is awaiting the return of some university students.

"The tournament was a good opportunity for us to see if our systems and processes are working. We also got to see some players play in different roles."

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April 17, 2012

Tigers rock Roadrunners

By Staff - 

The Vernon Re/Max Tigers and Armstrong Shamrocks invited the Richmond Roadrunners to the North Okanagan to help in their pre-season evaluations.

Both local teams saw plenty of positives despite different results versus the Roadrunners. Cody Nass supplied 5+3 as the Roadrunners opened up their swing Saturday night with an 11-7 win over the Shamrocks at Nor-Val Centre.

Jordan Orr counted 5+1 as the Tigers rocked the weary Roadrunners 16-9 Sunday morning in Armstrong. Connor Martyniuk supplied six snipes for Richmond.

"Overall, the coaches weren't looking at the outcome of the game, but rather the working parts of the game in total," said Vernon head coach Myles Brumpton.

"We wanted to see how the boys responded to some of the new systems we are working on, how they adapted at game speed when set plays went sideways and how composed they were when working in traffic."

The Tigers only had 13 runners and Brumpton was impressed with their gritty performance.

"Although there were some great individual efforts from some of our guys, I prefer to look at the game from a team perspective and the sum of all its moving parts. I certainly noted some real upside in our team game, and at the same time we have some tweaking to do since it's early in the season (Tigers open the regular season April 28 at home versus the Shamrocks)"

Nolan Frame pocketed 4+1 for the Cats and Jay Seaton earned 3+2. Braden Barr added 2+2 and singles went to Austin Lewarne and Ryan Sarazin. Craig Bigsby collected five assists.

"We want to thank Richmond for making the trek to the Okanagan and we tip our hat to them for their efforts in playing two games in less than 24 hours this early in the season," said Brumpton.

Spencer Bromley bagged 2+3 for Richmond, while Nass produced 1+3.

Matt Kolb of the Re/Max crew and Richmond captain Kris Briggs had a third-period fight.

On Saturday, Jesse Patterson added 2+2 for the Roadrunners, who got 1+3 from Spencer Bromley and other goals from Corey Tasaka, Spencer Holtan and Connor Martyniuk. Anthony Bayer bagged three helpers.

Brett Hawrys and Cole Seidel each scored twice for the Shamrocks, while Owen Barker provided 1+3 and took on Matteo Serka in a third-period fight. Daniel Peterson and Drew Hassald also fired singles.

Armstrong led 4-2 after one period, while Richmond pulled ahead 9-5 after two. The Roadrunners held a 56-32 shot advantage.

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April 13, 2012

Tigers back in action

By Staff - 

The Vernon Re/Max Tigers will get a boost on offence when they open their Junior B box lacrosse season with an exhibition tilt against the Richmond Jr. B Roadrunners Sunday, 11 a.m. at Nor-Val Sports Centre in Armstrong.

Vernon's Ryan Landels, who played last season with the Edmonton Eclipse of the Alberta Junior A league, will join the Cats for the 2012 campaign.

"I saw him at practice and it looks like a year of Junior A did him a lot of good," said head coach Myles Brumpton.

Augmenting a solid returning crop of veterans are North Okanagan Minor Lacrosse grads Jordan Orr, Ryan Sarazin, Mason Limb, Sean Connors and Liam McPhee.

"We've got our core coming back, which is good," said Brumpton. "We don't have to re-establish any of our processes; everything is already set."

With a handful of players still away at school, the Tigers will be shortbenched this weekend, but once they are at full strength, Brumpton believes they will field a competitive squad.

The Roadrunners, who tangle with the Armstrong Jr. Shamrocks Saturday night (7:30) at Nor-Val, were one of the top Junior B teams in the coastal loop last season.

"We're not putting a lot of stock into this weekend," said Brumpton. "It's just a good opportunity

to assess their conditioning and see how the newer recruits come in and play through traffic."

The Thompson Okanagan Junior Lacrosse League's annual Ice Breaker tournament goes next weekend.

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