

TRY TO BEAT THAT!: THE 1978-79 BRANDON WHEAT KINGS

ON THE ICE

PLAYOFF ROUND-ROBIN

(Two of three teams advance to East Division final)

Brandon 4, Edmonton 0 Game 1, March 29, 1979

Recap: Brian Propp set the tone with a goal 1:39 into the first period and Dave Chartier added an insurance marker. Goalie Rick Knickle made 28 saves as Brandon made sure not to repeat the mistake it made a year earlier when it dropped its first two games in the round-robin in the 1978 playoffs. The penalty-killing talents of Dave Stewart, Brant Kiessig and Kelly McCrimmon were put to good use, especially when Laurie Boschman took a major in the second period. Edmonton went 0-for-8 with the man advantage.

BWK goals: Propp (2), Chartier, Stewart.

BWK goalie: Knickle.

Shots on net: 46-28 BWK.

Attendance: 1,995, in Lloydminster, Alta.

Record: 1-0-0.

Dunc McCallum: (on his 39th birthday) "We really played well. That was as good a present as I've ever received. We were in total control throughout."

Saskatoon 5 Brandon 4 (2OT) Game 2, March 30, 1979

Recap: Saskatoon forward Terry Paskurak banged in a rebound 16:01 into the second overtime as the Blades made an epic comeback. By the 13:38 mark of the first period, Brandon led 3-0 but Saskatoon scored the next four goals before Don Gillen tied it 4-4. In the second overtime, Saskatoon outshot Brandon 12-2 before notching the winner. Brandon took seven of the nine minor penalties en route to being badly outshot. The loss put the Wheat Kings in an unfamiliar spot in the standings. Saskatoon (2-1-0) was in first place, two points up on Brandon. Darren Gusdal missed the game with a bad groin and Dave Chartier suffered an ankle injury in the second period.

BWK goals: Coulson, Kiessig, Brad McCrimmon, Gillen.

BWK goalie: Olson.

Shots on net: 71-49 Sas.

Attendance: 4,314, in Saskatoon.

Record: 1-1-0.

Dunc McCallum: "We weren't hitting and we were up 3-0. We didn't do any checking at all and got completely off our game. When you're leading 3-0, it's tough to yell at the kids for not hitting."

Brandon 8, Edmonton 2 Game 3, March 31, 1979

Recap: Darren Gusdal, Dave McDonald and Don Gillen formed a new line, and Gusdal scored the winning goal after Edmonton had pulled within a goal to trail 2-1. With the Oil Kings keying on the Wheat Kings top line, the production was important. Brandon was without Brad Kempthorne, who sat out the fourth of his five-game suspension.

BWK goals: Boschman (2), Dietrich, McDonald, Gusdal, Brad McCrimmon, Propp, Allison.

BWK goalie: Knickle.

Shots on net: 50-27 BWK.

Attendance: 1,535, in Lloydminster, Alta.

Record: 2-1-0.

Rick Knickle: "The defence has been playing well in front of me. They have kept Edmonton forwards wide and have moved aside so I can see the shots from the point and can move out on them."

Brandon 4, Edmonton 3 Game 4, April 2, 1979

Recap: Ray Allison tied the game 1-1 just 62 seconds after Edmonton had taken an early lead, and Darren

Gusdal replied 65 seconds after the Oil Kings took a 2-1 lead. Allison and Brian Propp gave the Wheat Kings a 4-2 lead in the third period that the Oil Kings were unable to overcome.

BWK goals: Allison (2), Gusdal, Propp.

BWK goalie: Knickle.

Shots on net: 68-34 BWK.

Attendance: 2,819, in Brandon.

Record: 3-1-0.

Dunc McCallum: "I would think the Gusdal line has won us two hockey games. When I put that line out, all three want to stand in front of the net. In playoffs, you can't get fancy — you've got to muck and grind it out. And that's what that line does."

Brandon 5, Edmonton 3 Game 5, April 3, 1979

Recap: Ray Allison scored 1:40 into the first period as the Wheat Kings booked a spot in the Eastern Division final by eliminating the Oil Kings. The key goal, which made it 4-2, came off Brad McCrimmon's stick early in the third period to restore Brandon's two-goal lead.

BWK goals: Allison (2), Coulson, Brad McCrimmon, Kempthorne.

BWK goalie: Knickle.

Shots on net: 53-38 BWK.

Attendance: 2,455, in Brandon.

Record: 4-1-0.

Edmonton coach Norm Ferguson: "Brandon's fourth goal — right off the faceoff — hurt us badly. That made it 4-2 and seemed to take a lot out of us."

Brandon 4, Saskatoon 3 Game 6, April 6, 1979

Recap: The Wheat Kings built a 4-0 lead through 40 minutes and hung on for the victory. Brandon's top line didn't see much action beyond the power play. Still, Saskatoon coach Jack McLeod was angry enough at a double minor Brian Propp took in the first period to call the Wheat Kings "a classless organization." With Edmonton already eliminated, the schedule dictated the two teams would face each other three more times in meaningless round-robin games because they already knew they would face each other in the best-of-seven Eastern Division final.

BWK goals: Kempthorne, Roberts, Dietrich, Coulson.

BWK goalie: Olson.

Shots on net: 40-32 BWK.

Attendance: 3,783, in Saskatoon.

Record: 5-1-0.

Dunc McCallum: "I was just giving the big line a rest. I was getting the other guys ready."

Brandon 8, Saskatoon 2 Game 7, April 7, 1979

Recap: In a pair of meaningless games to end the round-robin, Saskatoon coach Jack McLeod let everyone know before the last two games began that he was resting seven regulars, hurting Brandon's box office. The Blades called up members of the SJHL's Saskatoon J's to fill out their lineup. Saskatoon actually opened the scoring but trailed 3-2 after the first period and 7-2 after 40 minutes. Ray Allison had a goal and four assists for the victors.

BWK goals: Dietrich (2), Kiessig, Stewart, Gillen, Allison, Brad McCrimmon, Boschman.

BWK goalie: Olson.

Shots on net: 58-26 BWK.

Attendance: 2,477, in Brandon.

Record: 6-1-0.

GM Jack Brockest: "(McLeod) showed an utter lack of consideration to us and our fans. We took our entire team to Saskatoon on Friday and filled his rink ... as we did all season. We consider every game an important one."

Brandon 13, Saskatoon 1 Game 8, April 8, 1979

Recap: The Wheat Kings scored five goals in the first 15 minutes in the rout. Brant Kiessig and Brad Kempthorne each posted hat tricks and Steve Patrick added four assists as the Wheat Kings outshot the Blades by a three-to-one ratio. Brandon outscored its two opponents 50-19 in the eight-game round-robin. In the Central Division, the second-place Lethbridge Broncos advanced to meet the third-place Calgary Wranglers and, in the Western Division, the first-place Portland Winter Hawks would play the second-place Victoria Cougars.

BWK goals: Kiessig (3), Kempthorne (3), Brad McCrimmon (2), Stewart (2), Propp, Gillen, Roberts,

BWK goalie: Knickle/Olson.

Shots on net: 70-23 BWK.

Attendance: 2,176, in Brandon.

Record: 7-1-0.

GM Jack Brockest: "I'm pretty damn proud that 4,600 fans showed up for the two games. Particularly after (Saskatoon coach Jack) McLeod let it be known well in advance he was going to be resting his better players."

EASTERN DIVISION FINAL

Brandon 9, Saskatoon 1 Game 1, April 10, 1979

Recap: Brandon led 1-0 after 20 minutes before exploding for six unanswered goals in the middle frame. It led 8-0 before the Blades found the back of the net in the third period. Brad Kempthorne picked up his second hat trick in a row, and Dave Stewart added a pair of goals in consecutive games. Brandon was without the injured trio of Dave Chartier, Dave McDonald and Larry Roberts. Wheat Kings goalie Scott Olson was sharp, making 41 saves.

BWK goals: Kempthorne (3), Boschman (2), Stewart (2), Patrick, Gusdal.

BWK goalie: Olson.

Shots on net: 63-42 BWK.

Attendance: 2,410, in Brandon.

Series: 1-0 BWK.

Dunc McCallum: "The first period kind of set the second period up. The hitting in the first got the second period going. They guys started playing loose in the second. They started to enjoy it ... and you've got to enjoy it, you've got to want to play."

Brandon 5, Saskatoon 3 Game 2, April 11, 1979

Recap: Brett Ashton drew Saskatoon within a goal when he scored midway through the second period to make it 2-1, but Ray Allison, Steve Patrick and Don Gillen replied before the period ended to put the game away. Saskatoon was the better team in the third period, outshooting Brandon 15-8 and outscoring it 2-0. Wheat Kings head coach Dunc McCallum said Scott Olson kept Brandon in the game in the third period, and Saskatoon netminder Tom Muc did the same for his team in the first period. Both Laurie Boschman and Wes Coulson left the game with knee injuries.

BWK goals: Allison (2), Kiessig, Patrick, Gillen.

BWK goalie: Olson.

Shots on net: 49-41 BWK.

Attendance: 2,530, in Brandon.

Series: 2-0 BWK.

Dunc McCallum: "The guys just made up their minds that they had scored enough goals. So they stopped forcing the Blades in their own end and we started getting fancy."

Brandon 7, Saskatoon 5 Game 3, April 13, 1979

Recap: The Blades were up 3-1 in the first period. The Wheat Kings tied it up, the Blades went back ahead by

a goal and then Laurie Boschman and Don Gillen struck 28 seconds apart as Brandon took its first lead. After Saskatoon tied it up 52 seconds into the third period, Ray Allison won it with his second of the game 35 seconds later, and Dave Stewart added a late empty-netter. Brandon was without Dave Chartier, Dave McDonald and Don Dietrich, who was injured in practice. Brandon Travelers defenceman Greg Mann dressed for the Wheat Kings but didn't play. Allison now had 10 playoff goals.

BWK goals: Boschman (2), Allison (2), Elcombe, Gillen, Stewart.

BWK goalie: Olson.

Shots on net: 50-31 BWK.

Attendance: 3,913, in Saskatoon.

Series: 3-0 BWK.

Wes Coulson: "The forwards deserve full credit. The forwards all played well. There were always two of them coming back and that was key."

Brandon 6, Saskatoon 4 Game 4, April 14, 1979

Recap: Brandon moved on after building a commanding 5-0 lead in the first period — Brant Kiessig scored the Wheat Kings' first two markers — before the Blades came storming back with four goals in the second. The Blades were sparked by the play of Pat Conacher, who moved back from centre to the blue-line, and Brent Ashton's hat trick. Brandon coach Dunc McCallum replaced netminder Scott Olson with Rick Knickle after the fourth goal. Saskatoon coach Jack McLeod wasn't happy with the work of referee Ian Sandercock, quipping "If that guy is a referee, I'm a tiddlywinks player."

BWK goals: Kiessig (2), Allison, Gusdal, Patrick, Boschman.

BWK goalie: Olson/Knickle.

Shots on net: 43-33 BWK.

Attendance: 2,883, in Saskatoon.

Series: 4-0 BWK.

Brad McCrimmon: "We were too loose. We stopped doing what we do best — hitting, skating and moving the puck. And those three things account for almost everything. Having Conacher on the blue line helped them a lot, too. With him back there, they had someone who could carry the puck out of their end. And when we quit hitting, he had lots of room."

SEMIFINAL ROUND-ROBIN

(Two of three teams advance to WHL final)

Brandon 6 Lethbridge 1 Game 1, April 19, 1979

Recap: The Wheat Kings victimized the Broncos with goals by Ray Allison and Brian Propp 28 seconds apart early in the first period and Brandon had all the offence it would need. Allison ended up with a hat trick and Steve Patrick added a pair of goals as Brandon led 6-0 before Lethbridge scored. The hosts played better as the game went on, outshooting Brandon 10-9 in a scoreless third period. Doug Morrison of the Broncos, who leads all playoff scorers with 30 points, was cut for 18 stitches on his forehead when he was hit by a shot off the stick of Brad McCrimmon. Lethbridge was playing its eighth game in 10 nights. The Wheat Kings were set to fly to Vancouver and bus down to Portland the next morning.

BWK goals: Allison (3), Patrick (2) Propp.

BWK goalie: Knickle.

Shots on net: 39-25 BWK.

Attendance: 4,461, in Lethbridge.

Record: 1-0-0.

Dunc McCallum: "We were in control from the start. We slackened off a bit in the third, but before then Lethbridge kind of played into our system in our offensive zone. They like to use the boards a lot, and that helped us contain them."

Portland 10 Brandon 0 Game 2, April 20, 1979

Recap: The Winter Hawks and Wheat Kings were scoreless for 14 minutes, but after the first period, Portland led 3-0. The Winter Hawks — they changed to the single word Winterhawks in 2009 — scored three more goals in the second and four in the third period in the kind of beating Brandon handed out so often during the season. Bart Hunter had the 20-save shutout for Portland. It was the first time Brandon was blanked all season.

BWK goals: None.

BWK goalie: Knickle/Olson.

Shots on net: 49-20 Port.

Attendance: 8,112, in Portland.

Record: 1-1-0.

Dunc McCallum: "It was complete domination. I realize the kids are tired, but they are not 10 goals tired. I can't recall in four years the guys not going like that. We never won a faceoff, we didn't hit ... we never won anything."

Brandon 13, Lethbridge 3 Game 3, April 24, 1979

Recap: Some nights you lose by 10, some nights you win by 10. Brad McCrimmon and Laurie Boschman scored an incredible six seconds apart just three minutes into the game and the rout was on. In the second period, Brandon forward Brant Kiessig scored two of his three goals 22 seconds apart. Brandon's 13-goal output tied the league record — it also scored 13 on April 8 against the Saskatoon Blades — matching similar outputs by the 1967-68 Edmonton Oil Kings and 1974-75 Blades. With the win, the Wheat Kings assured themselves a spot in the final against the Winter Hawks.

BWK goals: Kiessig (3), Boschman (2), Brad McCrimmon, Patrick, Allison, Stewart, Propp, Chartier, Gillen, Kempthorne,

BWK goalie: Knickle.

Shots on net: 73-26 BWK.

Attendance: 3,313, in Brandon.

Record: 2-1-0.

Dunc McCallum: "In defence of Lethbridge, both times we've played them in the round-robin, we've caught them at opportune times for us. The first time, they were coming off a seventh game win over Calgary and had to be down a bit for our game. Then, tonight, they were coming off that double overtime loss to Portland a night before."

Brandon 5, Portland 4 (OT) Game 4, April 25, 1979

Recap: Brian Propp scored his third goal of the game 4:04 into overtime as the teams met in a game that had no bearing on the playoffs, since both had already advanced to the final. Brandon trailed 3-1 in the first period and 4-3 in the third period, but defenceman Tim Lockridge's goal with 16 seconds remaining sent the game to extra time. Portland's Clint Malarchuk made 43 saves in the loss. Heading into the league final, Propp was sixth in league playoff scoring with 28 points (10 goals, 18 assists) while Ray Allison was second (15-17—32) and Laurie Boschman was fourth (10-20—30).

BWK goals: Propp (3), Gillen, Lockridge.

BWK goalie: Knickle.

Shots on net: 48-42 BWK.

Attendance: 4,981, in Brandon.

Record: 2-2-0.

Tim Lockridge: "We're going to be hitting them. But we're not going to be running at them like we did at times tonight. Tonight's win will really help us, though. If we would have lost tonight after losing to them on (April 20), it would have really hurt."

Wheaties can expect checkers

BY GREGG DRINNAN

This story originally appeared in the March 28, 1979 edition of the Brandon Sun.

Brandon Wheat Kings hit the Western Hockey League playoff trail at 9 o'clock this morning and by the time the Eastern Division pennant winners return home Brian Propp, Ray Allison and Laurie Boschman will be tired of playing me and my shadow.

Propp, Allison and Boschman are the Western Hockey League's three top scorers, so it's only natural that Edmonton Oil Kings and Saskatoon Blades pay special attention to them.

That means Edmonton coach Norm Ferguson can be expected to assign centre Gerrard Jubinville, left winger Terry Davis and right winger

Bruce Jacobson the job of checking Brandon's high-scoring unit. And, Saskatoon coach Jack McLeod will likely give the task to Pat Conacher between Marc LeClair and right winger Blake Stephen.

Already, Edmonton and Saskatoon have played a pair of games in the Eastern Division's double home-and-home round-robin affair. Oil Kings, who are playing their home games at Lloydminster, Alta., dumped Saskatoon Blades 6-3 in the opener on Monday night. Then, when the two teams met last night in Saskatoon, the Blades were 5-4 winners.

Wheat Kings get into the action on Thursday night in Lloydminster against the Oil Kings, before heading to Saskatoon and a Friday night encounter with the Blades. On



Ray Allison and his linemates on Brandon's top unit will likely be facing much tighter checking once the playoffs begin. (Brandon Sun file photo)

Saturday, Brandon goes back to Lloydminster for another game with Edmonton.

Statistically speaking, and on past performance, Edmonton and Saskatoon will have their hands full trying

to hold the Brandon aces in check.

Propp (194), Allison (153) and Boschman (149) combined for 496 points on the season Edmonton's threesome of Jubinville (35), Da-

vis (41) and Jacobson (36) totalled 112 points, while the Saskatoon unit of Conacher (110), Stephen (36) and LeClair managed 150.

The Brandon line banged in 220 goals, to 58 for the Saskatoon threesome (which got 40 from Conacher) and 49 for Edmonton's trio.

And, over the course of the regular season Propp, Allison and Boschman feasted on Edmonton and Saskatoon. Propp picked up 40 points, including 17 goals, against the Oil Kings, while Allison had 14 goals and 14 helpers and Boschman banged in 14 goals and added 25 assists.

Some quick calculation gives the Brandon line 45 goals, 62 assists and 107 points in 16 games with Edmonton. Against Saskatoon, they were even more devastat-

ing as three went at least a goal-a-game pace. Propp scored 20 times and added 23 assists, assists. Allison had 36 points, on 16 goals and 20 assists, and Boschman scored 16 goals and helped set up 18 others. Those figures add up to 52 goals, 61 assists and 113 points.

Wheat Kings, who suffered just five losses during the 72-game regular schedule, lost twice to the Blades and once to the Oil Kings Overall, Brandon had 10 wins, two losses and four ties with Saskatoon, and 13 wins, one loss and two ties with the Oil Kings. Brandon outscored Saskatoon 98-59 and Edmonton 107-49.

Word from Saskatoon after last night's game was that the Blades were not playing well, while Oil Kings were putting forth a solid effort.