CHEDULE

The Western Hockey League will open its 20th Season, Monday, October 9th (Canadian Thanksgiving Day) with the Phoenix Roadrunners (last seasons Victoria Maple Leafs) visiting Vancouver. This will be the last season the Canucks open in the old Forum, which has housed WHL/pro hockey for the past nineteen years and before that the old Pacific Coast Hockey League. The new Vancouver Coliseum should be ready for the Canucks before the first of the year.

All teams will be idle until Friday night the 13th, when San Diego will play in Vancouver and Phoenix in Seattle. Saturday the 14th Phoenix will travel to Portland to open the Buckaroos season and San Diego will visit Seattle. A lone game will be played Sunday night when Vancouver visits Portland.

A total of 220 games will be played before the season ends Sunday, March 31st. Each Western League Club will play each other six times at home and away and will play the eight American League Clubs once each at home and away for a total of 72 games.

COACHES

One new and one returnee coach will join the three holdover coaches for the start of the season. Jim Gregory will make his professional coaching debut with the Vancouver Canucks. Gregory has had outstanding success with the Toronto Junior Marlboros who were the #1 junior farm club of the Toronto Maple Leafs. Alfie Pike returns to the League as coach of the Phoenix Roadrunners. Pike is no newcomer to the League having coached the Winnipeg Warriors for four years, the Calgary Stampeders for two years and the Los Angeles Blades for two years. He had his best success with the Warriors where he finished first twice and won the Lester Patrick Cup once.

Hal Laycoe, Portland Buckaroos coach, is the dean of the coaches and is starting his twelfth year in the League. Max McNab, coach of the San Diego Gulls, will be starting his seventh year in the League. Bill MacFarland, freshman coach with the Champion Seattle Totems, will be starting his second season.

CHANGES

Due to the expansion draft and the loss of Los Angeles and California Clubs to the League, a good many changes will be made. Phoenix will have the nucleus of last years fifth place Victoria Maple Leafs. San Diego, last place finishers last year, will have several new faces from Detroit and promise to be much stronger this year. The Champion Seattle Totems will have the bulk of their team returning as will the first place finishers Portland Buckaroos. The Vancouver Canucks will likely have the most new faces in their lineup, but several will not be new to the League. They will have several of last seasons California Seals in the lineup as well as some of the ex Los Angeles Blades.

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OFFICIATING

The Referees will be assigned by the National League to all professional leagues again this year and with N.H.L. clubs on the West Coast, WHL cities will see more of the top referees. Those signed by the National League and who will work all professional games are: Vern Buffey, John Ashley, Art Skov, Bill Friday, Bruce Hood, Ron Wicks, John D'Amico, Bob Sloan, Wally Harris, Tom Smith, Yves Tessier, Lloyd Gilmour, Dave Newell, Bryan Lewis, John McCauley, Bill Beagan. Scotty Morrison is the Referee-in-Chief and will be assisted by Frank Udvari and Dutch Van Deelen. Local linesmen will be used.

RETURNEES

Eleven of the first fourteen leading scorers will return this year as well as the top three goalkeepers, so in spite of the expansion draft there should be no noticable difference in the caliber of play.

Lou Jankowski of Phoenix will start the season with the record of most goals scored in the WHL by active player. Lou has 340 to his credit and is third in all-time scoring. Gordon Fashoway is the all-time goal scorer with 485 followed by Sid Finney with 368 - both have retired. Jankowski needs 28 goals to take over second place and could do so this year.

Guyle Fielder of Seattle is in fourth place with 333 followed by Art Jones of Portland with 328. Jones scored 38 goals last year and if he continues at this pace he could move into third place.

No active player is remotely close to Fielders record of 1088 assists - no active player in pro hockey is close to that mark. Fielder, also, leads in points scored in the WHL with a total of 1421 plus 83 points he scored one year in the American Hockey League for a total of 1504 points in pro hockey. Closest to this record is Gordie Howe of Detroit with 1436 points. All of the above records are for League Games only and do not include playoff points.

Next active player to Fielder in points is Art Jones of Portland with 846 and Phil Maloney with 824. Jones is in third place in all-time WHL records; 23 points behind retired Rudy Filion.

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WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE -- UPCOMING ACTION

Back-to-back meetings of last season's one-two clubs who are out in front again --- home openers for both San Diego and Phoenix . . . . and the year's first invasion by the American Hockey League . . . .

These are highlights of this week's eight-game Western Hockey League schedule.

The schedule opens with Seattle in Portland Wednesday night and Portland in Seattle on Thursday night.

Portland finished first in the last regular campaign and Seattle was second. But the Totems went on to win the Lester Patrick Cup. The clubs are tied for first in the early going this season, each sporting a 2-0 record.

Seattle won its season series against Portland, 6-5-1, last season for the first time since hockey returned to the Rose City in the fall of 1960.

This season's series could be especially dramatic because the clubs have switched goalies. Jimmy McLeod, No. 1 goalie in the WHL last year with Seattle, is now a Buckaroo. And Don Head, the league's all-time leader, has moved from Portland to the Totems.

Phoenix and San Diego, meanwhile, will square off against one another three times in three nights. The clubs will open San Diego's home season Friday night, will switch to Phoenix for the Roadrunners' home opener on Saturday night and will remain in Phoenix for a third clash Sunday night.

Since Phoenix is a new franchise, the clubs obviously did not face each other last season.

San Diego, incidentally, was the only WHL club with a losing home record last year. But the Gulls closed with a rush to win four of the last five games played in their International Sports Arena.

First American League visitor of the year will be the Cleveland Barons. The Barons will be in Vancouver Friday night, in Seattle Saturday night and in Portland on Sunday night.

Playing coach of the Barons is brilliant Fred Glover, one of the American Hockey Leagues all-time scoring and penalty leaders. Glover will be 40 years old on January 5th and still scored 60 points last season, including 25 goals.

Among Barons well known in the West is Larry Zeidel, hard-rock defenseman who was with Seattle three years ago.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

Opening week in the Western Hockey League was mighty pleasant for the home fans. Their clubs went undefeated, winning five and tieing one.

Seattle and Portland jumped into the early lead, Seattle stopping Phoenix and San Diego by identical 3-1 scores, Portland whipping Phoenix, 4-1, and Vancouver, 8-1.

In other clashes, Phoenix tied Vancouver, 3-3, in the season opener in the north, and Vancouver defeated San Diego, 5-3, as veteran Phil Maloney scored the first hat trick of the year and hit the 300-goal plateau in his WHL career in the process.

Continued -------

The biggest single explosion of the week rocked Vancouver in Portland Sunday night. Five minutes into the final period, the Canucks and Buckaroos were playing a tight one, Portland leading 2-1. The Buckaroos then scored six times in 11 minutes and 54 seconds.

Five of those goals came in 4 minutes and 18 seconds, not far off the league record for the five fastest scored by Edmonton against Portland in 1962 in 3 minutes and 34 seconds.

Veteran Portland winger Bill Saunders scored four third-period goals to tie the all time record shared with Pat Desbiens (1948), Joe Ciuman (1949) Don Poile (1953). He was the first player to score four in a single period in 14 years.

SCORING LEADERS

Portland's Bill Saunders, blanked on opening night, came back with six points in his second game to take the first-week scoring lead in the Western League. Tied for second are Buckaroo center Art Jones and Portland winger Dick Van Impe, each with a 1-4-5 mark.

Saunders leads in goals with four.

GOALKEEPERS

Last season's leaders stayed hot in the early going. Don Head allowed two goals in two games in the Seattle nets. Jim McLeod of Portland permitted one goal in his only appearance. Dave Kelly of the Bucks posted the same single-game mark. And the three are tied for the early lead among netminders with 1.00 goals-against marks.

PENALTIES

Tracy Pratt, Vancouver defenseman and son of hockey immortal Walter (Babe) Pratt, drew 23 minutes in penalties in three opening-week games to lead the league. Pratt was whistled for four minors, one major and one misconduct. Closest challenger was San Diego defenseman Jim Eagle with 17 minutes off the ice.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

It was not contest!

Portland winger Bill Saunders scored six points in one stretch of 17 minutes and 53 seconds, tied the all-time league mark with four goals in one period and took the scoring lead in the circuit.

He easily won Player of the Week honors in the Western Hockey League.

Continued ----------

WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE ---- UPCOMING ACTION

The Western Hockey League's interlocking schedule with the American League really takes hold this week, with six of the WHL's ten games slated against AHL opponents.

Cleveland's Barons, with one victory and two defeats in their first three games on the West Coast, will wind up their Western League invasion with clashes Thursday night in San Diego and Friday night in Phoenix.

The Vancouver Canucks, meanwhile, will be the first Western League team to swing East and will face a busy schedule. The Canucks will be in Quebec Tuesday night, Providence Friday night, Hershey Saturday night and Buffalo Sunday night.

The Portland Buckaroos, off to the same 3-1-1 start as last season, will make their first southern swing of the year, playing Wednesday night in Phoenix and Saturday night in San Diego before returning home Sunday night for a rematch with the Gulls.

Seattle's unbeaten (4-0-1) and league-leading Totems will face only one clash this week, Sunday night in Phoenix.

Vancouver, in the last interlocking series with the American League two years ago, broke even against AHL opponents, winning six and losing six. The Canucks won five of six at home, lost five of six on the road. The principal problem on the road was offense, as the Canucks scored only 11 goals in six games.

The Canucks will be paying return visits to Quebec (a 1-4 loss two years ago), to Providence (2-5) and to Buffalo (2-4). It will be Vancouver's first appearance in Hershey.

Hottest of the Canucks as the club heads East is young center Mike Laughton, who will take a three-game goal-scoring streak with him. Vancouver is 1-2-1 for the season.

Portland will take a 1-0 season series edge to Phoenix, the Buckaroos topping the Roadrunners 4-1 in Portland's home opener at the Art Jones-Cliff Schmautz-Dick Van Impe line collected three goals.

Portland's games against San Diego will be the first of the year between the two clubs. The Buckaroos last year handled the Gulls 9 times in 12 meeting. But Portland won the first six straight while San Diego was getting organized. The rest of the way the Bucks and Gulls broke even. And San Diego, in the process, handed Portland its second-worst defeat (9-1) in history.

The San Diego lineup includes more ex-Buckaroos than any team in the WHL. Fred Hilts, Len Ronson, Ed Panagabko and Jim Wilcox played for Portland. Gordon Sinclair, Ken Gustafson and Willie O'Ree were in Buck training camps.

It was not surprinsing that San Diego's top scorers against Portland last season were Ronson with 12 points, including 6 goals, and Hilts with a 5-4-9 mark. Portland's top scorer against the Gulls wasn't surprising, either --- Art Jones, 8-7-15.

Seattle, meanwhile, goes to Phoenix with the best start of any Western League team since the fall of 1962 when Vancouver opened with six straight victories.

The Totems, counting last springs playoff action, actually are unbeaten in their last ten games in a row.

Continued ----------

And if you're looking for a couple of reasons why Seattle stays hot, check a defense that has yielded just seven goals in five games for a 1.40 average and a team captain who gets younger every year named Guyle Fielder.

In Seattle's four victories, Fielder simply has scored one game-winning goal and has earned three game-winning assists.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

There's nothing like keeping the home fans happy, and Western Hockey League clubs certainly have done just that in the first two weeks of the young season.

In the first 14 games played, home teams have lost only once while winning 11 and the first 14 games played, home teams have lost only once while winning 11 and tieing 2. The home record last week was 6-1-1, Vancouver suffering the lone loss, 3-2 in overtime to Cleveland.

And speaking of home records, Seattle, unbeaten and untied in four appearances this fall in the Totems' Center Coliseum, is compiling an unbelievable mark. The Totems, counting the playoffs last spring, have won 21 of their last 22 games at home. And for their last 32 games, counting playoffs, the Totem record is 29 victories, 2 defeats and 1 tie.

The other big news of the week was attendance!

San Diego's Gulls opened their home campaign before a roaring throng of 12,219 to take top honors in the league. At Phoenix 8,217 fans turned out to welcome the Roadrunners to the city, the second best opening-night crowd. Portland, with a first night crowd of 7,341, ranked third in the WHL.

And just in passing, all three crowds topped the inaugural turnouts in the WHL's departed cities of Los Angeles (7,035) and Oakland (6,886).

In some individual highlights last week, San Diego veteran Al Nicholson notched the third hat trick of the Western Hockey League season by scoring three of his club's four goals in the home-opening 4-3 victory over Phoenix . . . the Gulls' Len Ronson snapped a brief slump with two goals and two assists in San Diego's 7-3 Sunday night triumph over the Roadrunners . . . . and Seattle's Don Head scored the season's first shutout by blanking his ex-teammates, the Buckaroos of Portland, 1-0.

SCORING LEADERS

Portland winger Bill Saunders, off to the fastest start of a professional career that started in the fall of 1959, scored two goals and added an assist in three games last week to hold the Western League scoring lead for the second straight week with 9 points.

Saunders, who didn't collect his 9th point until his 14th game last season, has sniped six goals and has added three assists. Tied for second with 7 points each are Buckaroos Art Jones and Dick Van Impe and Fred Hilts of San Diego.

Saunders leads all goal scorers with six in five games (he collected his sixth in his 15th game last season) while his top challengers are veterans Al Nicholson of San Diego and Lou Jankowski of Phoenix, each with four.

Continued ----------

Playmakers are led by San Diego wing Hilts with seven assists. Tied for second with five each are Jones, Van Impe and Norm Johnson, all of Portland.

GOALKEEPERS

Seattle and Portland are 1-2 in the league, and the goals-against marks of their netminders tell the story.

The leader is Seattle's Don Head with a goals-against average of 0.67 for three games and the league's only shutout. Head is off to the hottest start of a professional career that started with Portland in the fall of 1960.

Tied for second, meanwhile, are Dave Kelly of Portland and the Buckaroos' Jim McLeod, each with 1.00 records for one appearance.

Yet neither McLeod nor Kelly played last week as new Buckaroo Marv Edwards, a sensation in the amateur Eastern League the past three seasons who hasn't been awed by professionals, played all three Portland games, yielded seven goals and boasts an average of 2.33.

And in fifth with a normally-sizzling 2.50 record is Seattle's second-year pro Jim Armstrong.

The combined goals-against averages of Seattle goalies is 1.40 and of Portland netminders 1.80.

PENALTIES

Vancouver defenseman Tracy Pratt drew one minor in the only game he played last week to hold the Western League penalty lead for the second straight week. Pratt has been whistled for 25 minutes on five minors, one major and one misconduct.

Closest challengers are a pair of Phoenix Roadrunners, Tom Polanic and Neil Clark, each with 20 minutes.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Fred Hilts of San Diego collected six points in three games against Phoenix last week to climb into a tie for second in the scoring race and capture Player of the Week honors in the Western Hockey League.

And what a switch!

Hilts last season led the Western League in goals with 45. He hasn't scored a single goal in five games in this campaign. Instead, he apparently has turned playmaker.

All seven of his points, including the six that he scored last week, has been earned on assists.

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LINEUP CHANGES:

PORTLAND add Marv Edwards - Goal
VANCOUVER remove #17 Al McLean and add #17 Dan Delisle RW
SEATTLE remove #21 Nick Iannone

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WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE --- UPCOMING ACTION

The undefeated Seattle Totems will have a shot this week at tieing the best season start in Western Hockey League history.

The Totems, defending Lester Patrick Cup champions, have won five and tied one of their first six games and will face three clashes this week.

If the Totems can win all three, they will match the Western League's all-time season-opening record set in the fall of 1957 by the Vancouver Canucks, who opened the campaign with an undefeated string of nine in a row, including one tie.

Meanwhile, eight of 11 WHL games schedule this week are interlocking clashes with American Hockey League opponents, Vancouver winding up its Eastern swing with four games and Buffalo heading West for the first of four road tests.

Seattle's bid for a record-matching string will begin Tuesday night in Phoenix. The Totems have handled the new Roadrunners twice (3-1 and 4-3) this season.

The Totems then will return home Wednesday night to face the San Diego Gulls, a club they beat 3-1 in the two teams' first meeting of the year. The Gulls are fresh from back-to-back victories over Portland and boast the top three scorers in the league in Fred Hilts, Al Nicholson and Warren Hynes.

But Seattle has lost only once in the last 22 games on home ice, so the challenge will be a tough one for the Gulls.

The Totems will wind up action for the week by hosting Buffalo on Saturday night.

Buffalo, second American League team to swing West, will be in Phoenix Wednesday night, in San Diego Friday night, in Seattle Saturday night and in Portland Sunday night.

In the first interlocking schedule two years ago, Buffalo broke even with WHL opponents, winning all four games at home but losing all four on the road. The Bisons held a 19-5 home edge in scoring, were outscored 22-13 on the road.

This season's Bisons will head West with a 4-2 record, a hot gunner named Alain (Boom Boom) Caron and a goalie well known to WHL fans last season in Don Simmons, ex-Vancouver Canuck. Caron, who scored 35 goals for Portland last season, has sniped five in his last two games and for the season has seven in six clashes.

Vancouver, meanwhile, will wind up its Eastern swing Tuesday night in Baltimore, Wednesday night in Cleveland, Saturday night in Rochester and Sunday night in Springfield.

And the Canucks still are looking for their first victory. Counting a home loss to Cleveland, Vancouver is 0-5 against the AHL, has been outscored 29 to 11 and outshot 193 to 171. The Canucks this season have played well enough in the first two periods of games but have been outscored 21 to 6 in final ones.

In the only other game of the week, Portland will host Phoenix on Friday night. The rivals are even for the season, the Bucks winning 4-1 at home but losing 3-1 in Phoenix. The Buckaroos will be out to snap a three-game losing streak, a rarity for Portland hockey clubs in the past seven years.

Continued -----

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

Ouch! It was a rugged week for Western Leaguers in their cross-country battle with American League rivals who are not proving one bit friendly.

Six inter-league games were played last week, and the American League won all six, four in the East and two in the West. So in the early going, the AHL holds a 7-2 edge in the series.

Two things have stood out thus far in the competition.

First, American Leaguers don't panic. They have scored the jump goal only four times in nine games --- yet have won seven.

Second, it's an old story in sports that championship contenders win the close ones. And that certainly was the story of Cleveland's successful swing West.

The Barons won three of five and all three victories were by a single goal -- 3-2 in Vancouver in overtime, 4-3 in San Diego and 3-2 again in Phoenix.

The big news of last week, in a sense, was written Sunday night when San Diego won in Portland and Seattle won in Phoenix.

These were the first two road triumphs all season by Western League clubs. Only other road victories posted in the first 24 games of the campaign were the three by Cleveland.

Individually, it was a big week for San Diego Gulls Fred Hilts and Warren Hynes, who finished action Sunday with six-game point-scoring streaks, longest in the WHL this season. ıd the Gulls' Al Nicholson has four-game string alive.

A pair of Vancouver Canucks also made news. Mike Laughton stretched his goal-scoring string to four straight games with a red light in Quebec before he was stopped in Providence. The four-game string is the league's longest of the year. And Canuck rookie defenseman Larry Mavety was penalized in Vancouver's first six games in a row before he rested. This, too, is the WHL's longest string of the young campaign.

SCORING LEADERS

San Diego Gulls are 1-2-3 in the scoring race.

Fred Hilts leads with 16 points, including four goals. Al Nicholson (6-4-10) and Warren Hynes (3-7-10) are tied for second.

And what a start for Hilts this year!

After eight games last year, he had 7 points. He has more than doubled his production. He leads the league in assists with 12, five more than teammate Hynes. With San Diego last season, he collected his 12th assist in his --- believe it --- 33rd game of the year.

And Hilts, who tied a Western League record for hat tricks with five last season, already is tied for first this year. He collected San Diego's first three goals, all in the opening eriod, in the Gulls' 4-2 victory over Portland down south Saturday night.

In goal scoring, veteran Gull winger Nicholson sniped a pair against Portland Sunday night to move into a tie for the league lead with the Buckaroos' Bill Saunders. Each has six goals. Nicholson, incidentally, leads the league in power-play goals with four.

Continued--

GOALKEEPERS

Among the 'regulars,' Seattle netminder Don Head still leads all Western League goalies with a goals-against mark of 1.25 for four games.

In Seattle's only game last week, Head yielded three goals in a 4-3 triumph in Phoenix in which the Totems were outshot 37-23.

Head, of course, owns the lowest career goals-against average in Western League history.

Two Portland netminders, Jim McLeod and Dave Kelly, boast goals-against records of 1.00. But each has played only one of Portland's eight games.

PENALTIES

In a relatively quiet week, Vancouver defenseman Tracy Pratt drew three minors in four games in the East to hold the Western League penalty lead with 31 minutes off the ice, one more than teammate Larry Mavety, who has 30.

Mavety, however, tops the WHL in minors with 10.

Pratt, incidentally, did more than draw penalties last week. He also drew assists in all four of Vancouver's games. And with 6 points for the season, he moved into a tie for 16th in the Western League scoring race.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

It's a young Western Hockey League campaign --- just three weeks old.

And for the second straight week the Western League's Player of the Week is San Diego winger Fred Hilts.

Hilts last week was almost unbelievable.

Against Cleveland, San Diego scored three goals. Hilts sniped one and assisted on the other two.

Against Portland, he collected the first three of his team's four goals in a 4-2 triumph down south.

In a rematch against the Buckaroos up north, Hilts earned assists on two of San Diego's three goals in a 3-1 triumph.

He thus collected eight points in three games --- best record in the WHL --- and figured directly in eight of the 10 goals scored by his team.

There was no other choice.

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LINEUP CHANGES:

SAN DIEGO Add Ross Perkins #21 - Center

WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE --- UPCOMING ACTION

Only five games are scheduled in the Western Hockey League this week --- one of the two lightest slates of the season --- but the clashes are mighty big ones.

The amazing Seattle Totems will figure in most of the drama when they attempt to set an all-time Western Hockey League record of opening the season with a 10-game undefeated string.

The Totems, with seven victories and two ties in their first nine clashes, will shoot for the record Friday night in Vancouver. Ironically, it was a Vancouver hockey club that set the old record of nine without a loss in the fall of 1957.

Meanwhile, Portland's Buckaroos, with a rare losing (4-5-1) record after a month of action, will get three chances on home ice to make their move. The Buckaroos will host Phoenix on Wednesday night, Vancouver on Saturday night and Seattle on Sunday night.

In the only other game, Buffalo of the American Hockey League will wind up its Western swing on Tuesday night in Vancouver. The Bisons have won one of their first four on the Coast and will face a Canuck team that should be boiling over a 10-game winless string, including an 0-7-1 record on a just-completed swing through the American League.

In fact, only a 3-3 tie in Rochester Saturday night kept the Canucks from matching the club's all-time losing string of nine in a row.

Another angry team should be Phoenix in Portland on Wednesday night. In their last clash, the Roadrunners were bombed 9-1 Friday night by the Buckaroos in a game that produced the most lop-sided score of the campaign.

Portland, which has scored almost half of its goals (17 of 36) in two of 10 games, holds a two-one season edge over Phoenix, Cliff Schmautz leading the way with eight points, including five goals, in the three clashes.

The Seattle-Vancouver clash Friday night matches the two senior members of the Western Hockey League for the first time this season. Vancouver played all of the WHL's first 19 professional campaigns, and Seattle played 18.

In all-time competition, Vancouver holds a 109-102-28 edge over Seattle. Last year the Totems won 8 of 12 from the Canucks, but posted a 2-4 record on Vancouver ice.

Counting playoff action, Seattle will be shooting for its 10th straight victory over Vancouver.

The Totems have been amazing because they have been outshot in six of nine games, including the last four in a row, and are still unbeaten. In fact, they have outshot opponents in only one of the last 13 periods played.

But they have been getting the jump (seven first goals in nine games) and have proved exceptionally steady. Only twice in 27 periods has a team scored more than one goal against Seattle this season.

And, counting playoffs last spring, the Totems now have lost only 3 of their last 32 games. There have been 26 victories and 3 ties

Continued ----------

Seattle center Guyle Fielder will take a six-game point-scoring string into action Friday night. This matches the longest streak in the WHL this season.

Vancouver then will move to Portland Saturday night, looking for revenge. The Canucks were whipped 8-1 by the Buckaroos in the first meeting of the two clubs in Portland. This was the big game for Bill Saunders, who collected four goals and two assists for the Bucks against the Canucks.

The week's schedule winds up with Seattle in Portland Sunday night. The Totems are 1-0-1 against the Buckaroos, winning 1-0 in Seattle on Don Head's shutout, only whitewashing in the league this year, and skating to a 4-4 tie in Portland.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

Aside from Seattle's continued unbeaten streak, the San Diego Gulls wrote the big news last week by stretching their current undefeated string to four in a row, with the Gulls holding second place in the process.

San Diego fought Seattle to a 2-2 tie on the road, then returned home to score four goals in the final period and stop Buffalo 5-3 before a crowd of more than 10,000.

Individually, there were three hat tricks.

Veteran winger Tommy McVie scored one for Phoenix against Buffalo to pace a 7-4 victory.

And Portland's 9-1 explosion past Phoenix was sparked by hat tricks by both Cliff Schmautz and Larry Leach.

It was "old hat," so to speak, for sharp sniper Schmautz. But it was Leach's first hat trick for the Buckaroos and the second of a professional career that started in the fall of 1956. He scored his other for Providence in the 1963-64 campaign.

And to add spice to the hat trick, Leach scored two of his goals while his team was short-handed, just one off the league record of three short-handed goals set by Charlie Burns with the San Francisco Seals.

SCORING LEADERS

San Diego Captain and winger Fred Hilts had a six-game point-scoring streak snapped in Seattle Wednesday night but bounced back with a goal (the game-winner) and two assists against Buffalo Friday night.

And Hilts retained the scoring lead in the Western Hockey League with 19 points on 5 goals and 14 assists.

Phoenix rookie Walt McKecknie moved into second with 13 points on 4 goals and 9 assists, while a pair of Portland Buckaroos, Art Jones and Bill Saunders, are tied for third with 12 points each.

Saunders, meanwhile, sniped goals in both of Portland's games --- one against Phoenix and one against Buffalo, to take the Western League lead all alone with eight. There's a three-way tie for second. With six each are Al Nicholson of San Diego and Phoenix Roadrunners Tommy McVie and Lou Jankowski. Hilts, with 14 assists, continues to pace all playmakers. McKecknie and Jones are tied for second with nine each. Continued --------

GOALKEEPERS

Goalkeeping in the Western League this season has proved amazing among the leaders.

Seattle's Don Head yielded two goals in one appearance last week to hold the league lead with a sizzling 1.35 average for 310 minutes of action.

Portland's Jim McLeod, who came to the Buckaroos in a trade for Head, returned to action and gave up just four goals in two clashes to hold second for the season with a 1.67 average for 180 minutes of play.

Meanwhile, Dave Kelly, sold to San Diego by Portland, yielded a single goal in one appearance for the Buckaroos and is 1.00. Seattle's second-year pro Jim Armstrong is 2.16 for 250 minutes, and Portland rookie Marv Edwards is 2.76 for 370 minutes.

PENALTIES

It was another relatively quiet week for young Vancouver defenseman Tracy Pratt, just two minors in four games.

But Pratt held his Western League lead in penalty minutes with 40, four more than teammate Larry Mavety, who has 36.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

A 19-year-old Phoenix rookie fresh out of the Ontario Junior ranks captured Player of the Week honors in the Western Hockey League.

In three games last week, the 6-3, 190-pound McKecknie collected six points on three goals and three assists to move into second in the Western Hockey League's individual scoring race.

McKecknie has scored eight points in his last four games and in Portland Wednesday night he'll take a three-game goal-scoring streak and a four-game point-scoring streak into action.

In 11 games this season, he has collected 4 goals and 9 assists.

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WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE --- UPCOMING ACTION

The Seattle Totems finally tasted defeat, 5-3 in Portland Sunday night, to end the longest season-opening unbeaten string, 10 in a row, in Western Hockey League history.

The Totems, still leading the league by five points, will have little time, however, to reflect on their new record.

They'll play four games in five nights, the first three on the road, to highlight a nine-game Western League schedule.

San Diego also will play four games, and so will Phoenix, the Roadrunners facing two home tests and then swinging East to begin their eight-game swing through the American Hockey League.

The week's schedule opens Tuesday night with Seattle in Phoenix. The Totems are perfect against the Roadrunners this season with three straight victories. But the series must puzzle Phoenix. The 'Runners have outshot the Totems in all three games, once by a 37-23 margin.

Seattle center Guyle Fielder will take an eight-game point-scoring streak into action in Phoenix --- the longest in the Western League this season --- and he also has a five-game assist streak alive. This, too, is the longest of the campaign. Despite Seattle's dominance, top scorer in the series is rookie Phoenix center Walt McKecknie, with five points.

On Wednesday night, Seattle will move into San Diego for what could prove one of the early season's classics. The Gulls, who had an 11-day layoff, will return to action with a four-game unbeaten string that now is the longest in the WHL.

The teams have clashed twice in Seattle, the Totems winning 3-1 and the two clubs tieing 2-2.

On Thursday night, San Diego will move into Phoenix holding a two-one season edge over the Roadrunners in a wild series that has produced 28 goals in three games. Fred Hilts and Len Ronson have paced the Gulls' attack against Phoenix with seven points each. (Ronson, in fact, has scored all but one of his eight points against the Roadrunners.)

In Friday night action, Seattle will be in San Diego for a rematch, and Portland will be in Vancouver. And there's a bit of a revenge motive for both the Buckaroos and the Canucks in this one.

The Bucks, off to a bit of a shaky start, bounced back with two victories in three games last week. But that lone loss, before the home fans, was to Vancouver.

Yet the Canucks remember suffering their worst defeat of the season (8-1) in an earlier clash in Portland. This has been a big series for Portland winger Bill Saunders who has scored seven points in two games against Vancouver.

On Saturday night, Vancouver will be in Seattle and Phoenix will open its American League swing in Springfield.

This will be only the second meeting of the year of the Canucks and Totems, the Seattle club winning the first one, 4-2 in Vancouver last Friday night.

Continued ---------

Springfield, meanwhile, should prove a mighty tough opening opponent for Phoenix. The Easterners won seven of their first nine games this season to boom into the Eastern Division lead in the American Hockey League. In the first inter-locking series two years ago, Springfield was 2-5-1 against Western League opponents.

The week's schedule winds up Sunday night with Phoenix in Buffalo and San Diego in Portland.

And the Roadrunners' reception could be a hot one. In a first meeting with Buffalo in Phoenix, the Western Leaguers exploded to a 5-1 first-period lead and stayed tough for a 7-4 decision.

The Portland-San Diego series, meanwhile, is a far different one from last year's in the early going. The Bucks last season whipped the Gulls six straight times before San Diego could pull one out. This year the Gulls are 2-0 against Portland, including their first victory of all time on Portland ice.

It figures that San Diego's top scorer against Portland has been ex-Buckaroo Fred Hilts, with five points (including a hat trick) in the first two games. Gull goalie Bob Champoux has saved his best games for the Bucks with a 1.50 average for the two clashes. And San Diego Coach also can throw into action ex-Buck netminder Dave Kelly, who still technically is leading the league with a 1.00 average for the one game he played for Portland.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

Seattle Coach Bill MacFarland rally didn't expect to go undefeated for 72 games. But his charges appeared to be giving it a try.

The Totems set the new league season-opening record of 10 straight Friday night in Vancouver before dropping their first one in Portland. And the Totems, leading 3-2 after two periods, forced the Buckaroos to come from behind for the victory.

Seattle's overall record will go into the books at eight victories and two ties. And, counting the last game of the last regular season, the Totems actually tied their all-time club record for an unbeaten string at 11 straight.

Vancouver, after a tough swing through the East, showed definite signs of bouncing back last week with victories over Buffalo and Portland overshadowing the loss to Seattle.

And talk about a guy making his goals "count." Canuck forward Stan Gilbertson scored his first two of the season last week, and both were game-winners, including one on a penalty shot against Portland.

The Buckaroos, meanwhile, bombed Phoenix 8-2 for one of their two victories. And when the Bucks explode, they go wild. Of their 51 goals in 13 games, the Buckaroos have scored almost half (25) in just three games.

Continued ----------

SCORING LEADERS

San Diego winger Fred Hilts, with his team on vacation, could do nothing last week but read the scoring summaries in the paper.

But when the week ended, Hilts was still out in front in the scoring race with 19 points in 10 games. And he still leads the league in assists with 14.

Closest challengers in the point race are Buckaroos Bill Saunders and Art Jones, each with 16 points, while Jones is second in assists with 12.

Saunders, meanwhile, sniped one goal in three games last week and continues to lead the Western League with nine for the season. His closest challengers, with seven each, are Phil Maloney of Vancouver, Dick Van Impe of Portland and Lou Jankowski of Phoenix. Van Impe now needs only two more goals to match his output of nine in 51 games last season.

GOALKEEPERS

Seattle goalie Don Head turned in a fine two-goal performance in Vancouver Friday night, then ran into a buzzsaw in Portland Sunday night. Forced into the game with nine minutes to play because of an injury to starter Jim Armstrong, Head yielded two goals and took the loss.

He continues to lead the Western League, however, with a still-sizzling 1.74 goals-against mark for 379 minutes of action.

Jim McLeod, traded to Portland by Seattle for Head, now is second with a 2.25 mark, while Seattle's Armstrong hold third at 2.39.

(Dave Kelly of San Diego is 1.00 but has played only one game.)

PENALTIES

Vancouver defenseman Tracy Pratt drew three minors in three games last week to hold the Western League's penalty-minute lead with 46 for the season. Pratt has drawn 13 minors, 2 majors and 1 misconduct.

Canuck teammate Larry Mavety, whistled for four minors last week, also continues to rank second in the WHL with 40 minutes off the ice. He's been called for a league-leading 15 minors and one match penalty.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Player of the Week honors in the Western Hockey League were shared last week by Portland defenseman Doug Messier and Vancouver forward Bruce Carmichael.

Both scored six points in three games.

Messier, better known for penalty minutes than points, collected three goals and three assists, and his efforts included the jump goal against Vancouver and the game-winning goal against Phoenix. He had scored two points in his first eight games for the Buckaroos.

Carmichael, meanwhile, collected four goals and two assists after scoring five points in his first 11 clashes this season.

# # # # # #

LINEUP CHANGES:
San Diego remove #16 Nick Libett
San Diego change from #19 to #1 Dave Kelly - Goal

WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE --- UPCOMING ACTION

Ten games are scheduled this week in the suddenly tightening battle for the Western Hockey League championship, with the San Diego Gulls and the Phoenix Roadrunners taking the spotlight.

The Gulls, who have lost only once in their last eight tests and are tied for second with Portland just three points back of Seattle, will face the Totems once and the revitalized Vancouver Canucks three times.

The Roadrunners, meanwhile, will continue their swing through the American League with games Tuesday night in Quebec, Thursday night in Rochester, Saturday night in Cleveland and Sunday night in Buffalo.

And astounding Phoenix, after two games in the East, is still unbeaten. The Roadrunners opened their swing with a 4-2 Saturday night victory in Springfield and a 2-2 Sunday night tie in Providence. The victory was the first of the season by a Western League team on American League ice.

The week's schedule opens Tuesday night with San Diego in Vancouver. The Gulls are 6-1-1 in their last eight games, which included the longest undefeated string, seven in a row, in the club's history. Scoring has told the story of the San Diego surge. The Gulls were outscored 22-25 in their first six games. In their last eight, San Diego has outscored opponents 32-19, including margins of 12-4 in opening periods and 17-8 in final ones.

Yet the Canucks, who have won three of five since returning from an American League swing, are the only WHL club with a winning record against San Diego. Phil Maloney's hat trick paced Vancouver to a 5-3 victory in the only previous meeting of the clubs. Maloney, incidentally, will take the league's longest current scoring streak -- six straight games--- into action.

And despite a bad start, don't sell the Canucks short. They have outshot every Western League opponent --- 42-25 over Phoenix, 105-99 over Portland, 33-27 over San Diego and 61-49 over Seattle. Slow starts have hurt the Canucks. They have scored first only 3 times in 16 games.

Vancouver and San Diego also will clash Saturday and Sunday nights on the Gulls' home ice as the Canucks make their first swing south this season.

On Wednesday night, San Diego will be in Seattle with a 2-1-1 edge in the series. It's been a big series for the Gulls' Willie O'Ree, who has scored 6 of his 12 points against Seattle, and for the Totems' Bill Dineen, who has matched that output against San Diego.

On Friday night, Seattle will be in Vancouver in a match of "spoilers." In the first meeting this season, the Totems beat the Canucks in Vancouver, 4-2. But Vancouver got revenge Saturday night with a 6-1 victory in Seattle.

And this one was memorable. It was Vancouver's first victory in Seattle since March 13, 1966, after eight straight defeats, counting playoff action.

Continued --------

The Vancouver triumph ended a 12-game unbeaten streak for Seattle --- counting playoffs --- on home ice and was only the second defeat in 22 straight home tests for the Totems.

And it was Seattle's worst home defeat since April 1, 1966, when Portland won by the same 6-1 score.

On Saturday night, Seattle will return home to face Portland's Buckaroos, who will skate into action with a three-game winning streak in their only test of the week.

This series has been tight in every respect. The teams are deadlocked at 1-1-1, with Portland holding a 9-8 edge in goals and an 86-83 edge in shots. Top series scorer has been the Bucks' Arnie Schmautz, who collected 4 of his first 8 points against Seattle.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

A couple of tremendous crowds and sparkling play by road clubs highlighted last week's Western Hockey League action.

On Friday night, the largest crowd of the Western League season, 12,777, turned out in San Diego to cheer the Gulls to a 6-4 victory over Seattle.

(On the same night, just in passing, the Detroit Red Wings and the Los Angeles Kings of the National League played before 9,497 in Los Angeles.)

And on Saturday night the Totems returned home to a season-high turnout of 10,060 for their game against Vancouver.

(On the same night, incidentally, the Montreal Canadiens and Oakland Seals of the NHL played before 8,140 in Oakland.)

The Totems, in a span of 26 hours, played before 22,837 fans.

And it was the week that road clubs got tough, winning 5, losing 3 and tieing 1 -- first time this season road teams had posted a winning effort for the week.

Some great goaltending told the story!

Portland went into Vancouver and was outshot 42-26 but won 2-1 behind Marv Edwards. San Diego went into Phoenix and was outshot 41-33 but won 6-2 with Dave Kelly in the nets. Phoenix was outshot 37-25 in Springfield but won 4-2 behind Rick Charron. And Phoenix skated off with a 2-2 tie in Providence as Charron stopped an incredible total of 52 shots.

Meanwhile, Portland's Buckaroos have started to play to form. In winning three straight, the Bucks ended Seattle's record season-opening unbeaten string at 10 straight, ended San Diego's club record of seven in a row without a loss and won Portland's first road game of the season in Vancouver.

The league-leading Totems last week finally proved human, losing three straight as the defense gave up 17 goals in the three clashes.

SCORING LEADERS

It's starting to get crowded at the top in the race for the Western League's individual scoring championship.

Continued ----------

For the fourth straight week the leader is San Diego captain Fred Hilts with 22 points. Hilts scored three points in his first two games last week, was injured in San Diego's Friday night game against Seattle and missed his club's Sunday night game against Portland.

Tied for second with 18 points each are Phoenix rookie Walt McKecknie, Seattle's perennial champion, Guyle Fielder, and perennial contender Art Jones of Portland.

In goal-scoring, San Diego's Al Nicholson sniped three in four games last week to climb into a tie for the lead with Portland's Bill Saunders. Each has nine. Saunders was blanked in two games last week.

Fielder collected four assists in four games last week to move into a tie for first in playmaking with Hilts. Each has 15 assists for the campaign.

GOALKEEPERS

It's getting tight, too, in the battle for goaltending honors.

Ranking 1-2 are a pair of netminders who haven't seen much action --- San Diego's Dave Kelly with a goals-against mark of 2.01 for 179 minutes and Portland's Jim McLeod with a 2.25 average for 240 minutes.

Among those with more time on the ice, Don Head of Seattle continues to stay out in front with a 2.28 average --- despite yielding 8 goals in two games last week --- and Portland rookie Marv Edwards, who gave up just 2 goals in two games, has moved into second with a 2.36 mark.

All four averages would fracture the all-time Western League record of 2.40 if maintained over a full season.

PENALTIES

A pair of Vancouver Canuck defensemen, Tracy Pratt and Larry Mavety, continue to rank 1-2 in penalty minutes. Pratt drew one minor in two games last week to hold the lead with 48 minutes for the season, but Mavety, with three minors in two games, closed in a bit and now has 46 minutes off the ice. Mavety leads in minor penalties with 18.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

A pair of San Diego Gull wingers, Len Ronson and Willie O'Ree, share Player of the Week honors in the Western Hockey League.

Each scored seven points in four games last week, Ronson climbing into a tie for 9th in the Western League scoring race with 15 points for the season and O'Ree climbing into a tie for 19th with 12 points. RONSON scored five goals and two assists, collected a hat trick against Seattle. --O'REE scored three goals and four assists, also collected a hat trick against the Totems.

LINEUP CHANGES:

		#				
Vancouver	add	#10	Ron Boehm	LW	remove	Tom Thurlby and
		# 4	Bob Lemieux	Def.		Bill Sweeney
San Diego	add	#16	Jack Faulkner	LW	remove	Nick Libett
Phoenix	add	#15	Jack Matheson	LW		

WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE --- UPCOMING ACTION

A furious battle for first, Springfield's invasion of the West and the windup of a spectacular Phoenix swing through the East will highlight this week's nine-game Western Hockey League schedule that includes six interlocking games with the American League.

The battle for first is shaping up. Only three points now separate leading but suddenly-troubled Seattle from the surging Portland Buckaroos, who have won four in a row for the club's longest winning streak since last February.

And each team faces three games this week, including a head-on collision Sunday night in Portland.

Continending San Diego, meanwhile, must mark time a bit with only one game scheduled for the Gulls.

Springfield, third American League team to swing West, will have a large say in the race for the title by playing all three of the top contenders, plus Vancouver, this week.

The invading Kings open their Western swing Tuesday night in Vancouver and will play Wednesday night in Portland, Friday night in Seattle and Sunday night in San Diego.

And doesn't the AHL ever send losers West? Cleveland arrived unbeaten. Buffalo was 4-2 and on a three-game winning string. And Springfield leads the American League's Eastern Division.

The Kings, incidentally, are one of hockey's most colorful clubs with a roster that includes Jimmy Anderson, fourth-highest goal scorer (392) in AHL history; Doug Robinson, who set a club record of 39 goals for Baltimore last year; one-time Spokane Comet Yves Locas, first All Star in the AHL in '64 when he scored 40 goals for Pittsburgh; Gerry Foley, Western League's Rookie of the Year with Seattle in '53; Roger Cote, holder of the AHL's all-time season penalty record of 224 minutes whistled with Rochester in '61, and Larry Johnston, who drew a staggering 262 penalty minutes for Tulsa in '65. The Kings' coach Johnny Wilson, was an Ivy Leaguer a year ago, skipper of the Princeton hockey club.

Top scorers against the American League of Springfield's opponents this week are Larry Popein (4-3-7) of Vancouver, Bill Saunders and Andy Hebenton (4 points each) of Portland, Earl Heiskala and Guyle Fielder (3 points each) of Seattle and Fred Hilts (2-4-6 in two games) of San Diego.

Seattle is the only WHL club unbeaten (2-0-0) against the AHL. Portland and San Diego are 1-1, while Vancouver is 1-8-1.

Phoenix, meanwhile, winds up its American League swing with games Wednesday night in Hershey and Saturday night in Baltimore. And forget that 10-2 bombing in Cleveland Saturday night. The Roadrunners won three and tied one of their first four games in the East.

And that's more victories (3) and more points in the standings (7) than any Western League team collected on American League ice in '65-'66 --- first year of the interlocking schedule. The road leaders that season were Seattle with 2 victories and Seattle and Portland with 4 points in the standings.

Continued ---------

In intra-league action this week, Vancouver will be in Seattle Wednesday night, Portland will be in Vancouver Friday night and Seattle will be in Portland Sunday night to complete the cycle.

Vancouver holds a two-one edge in the Seattle series and has outscored the Totems 13-5, paced by Bruce Carmichael's 6 points. Top Seattle scorer against the Canucks has been blue-liner Larry Hale with 3 points. Rookie Canuck goalie Tony Esposito has been hot with a 1.67 goals-against mark in the series.

Portland leads Vancouver 2-1, paced by Bill Saunders' 4-3-7 record.

And the Buckaroos now lead Seattle 2-1-1 in a series in which every game has gone to the wire. This has been a big series for Portland's Arnie Schmautz, who has scored 7 of his 12 points against Seattle.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

Sensational goaltending by a couple of youngsters, an explosion of hat tricks and a close miss for a Western Hockey League record highlighted last week's games.

Young Rick Charron of Phoenix left for the American League swing with a goals-against average of 4.82. In his first four games back East, he simply held opponents to a total of six goals for a sparkling 1.50 average during the tough road stretch.

More impressive was the way he did it. He stopped a staggering 159 shots in those four tests for an average of a fraction under 40 a game. The highlight was a 43-save game in Rochester where Charron posted his first regular-season professional shutout. (He had one for Portland in the '66 playoffs.)

Then there was young Tony Esposito. The Vancouver rookie shut out San Diego for his first whitewashing as a pro. He liked it so well he blanked Seattle in his next test. The Gulls then beat him in San Diego.

Esposito, in a stretch of four games dating back to the previous week, played 187 minutes and 56 seconds without permitting a goal. (The all-time WHL record of 235 minutes and 22 seconds was set by Dave Kelly for Portland in March of 1964.)

Chuck Holmes of Seattle (against San Diego), Bruce Carmichael of Vancouver (against Seattle), Len Ronson of San Diego (against Vancouver), and Stan Gilbertson of Vancouver (against San Diego) -- scored the hat tricks.

It was the fifth hat trick of Carmichael's Western League career but his first since '63-'64. It was the third in the WHL for Holmes but his first since '61-'62 with Edmonton. Gilbertson's was the first of his (professional) career. For Ronson, it was his second hat trick in 11 days to take the Western League lead and the fifth of a WHL career that started in the fall of 1965.

Carmichael of Vancouver threatened the record. In Vancouver's first two games of the week, he scored five goals. This gave him seven in three consecutive games --- one off the all-time mark of eight in three consecutive clashes.

Continued ----------

SCORING LEADERS

It's almost tough to believe but San Diego winger Fred Hilts is the Western Hockey League's top scorer for the fourth straight week with 22 points on 7 goals and 15 assists. It's tough to believe because Hilts hasn't scored a point since November 16. He missed one game and was hampered by injuries in five others since that date.

But is the race ever tightening! Gull teammate Len Ronson and Vancouver center Phil Maloney, who both scored six points in four games last week, have moved into a tie for second with 21 points each, and Seattle center Guyle Fielder is one point back in fourth with 20.

And one big night could completely juggle the scoring race. Three players have 19 points, two have 18, two have 17, five have 16 and five have 15.

Meanwhile, Ronson and Vancouver's Bruce Carmichael have moved into a tie for the goal-scoring lead with 12 each. Carmichael sniped five in his first two games last week, was blanked in the last two. Ronson was stopped in the first two, scored five over the weekend against Vancouver.

Seattle center Guyle Fielder has moved alone into first among playmakers with 17 assists, two more than the 15 of Hilts.

GOALKEEPERS

The race for goaltending honors is just as tight as the battle for the individual scoring lead.

San Diego's Dave Kelly holds first with a 2.21 average by a whisker over Seattle's Don Head, who is at 2.23. And the same whisker thickness back is Portland's Jim McLeod at 2.25, with the Buckaroos' Marv Edwards still in there tough at 2.32.

Head, meanwhile, scored his second shutout of the season last week and is tied for the lead with Vancouver rookie Tony Esposito, who collected two in a row.

PENALTIES

Three minor penalties Sunday night moved Vancouver's rookie defenseman, Larry Mavety, into the Western Hockey League penalty lead for the first time this season. Mavety now has 58 minutes off the ice to 56 for teammate Tracy Pratt, the season-long leader until Sunday.

Mavety drew six minors in four games last week and leads the circuit in minors with 24 for the season. Pratt was shistled for four minors in four games.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Three players scored six points last week, Len Ronson of San Diego (5-1-6), Phil Maloney of Vancouver (1-5-6) and Stan Gilbertson of Vancouver (5-1-6). Ronson and Gilbertson both scored hat tricks. And Gilbertson has a five-game point-scoring string alive ---- longest in the league at present.

Each is a worthy Player of the Week candidate --- but the honors go to a rookie Vancouver goalie, Tony Esposito. On home ice, he turned in back-to-back shutouts, first of his professional career, and on the road he broke even in two games in San Diego. He's given up only 14 goals in his last seven games for a sparkling average of 2.00 in that stretch and has dropped his season goals-against mark to 2.73.

# # #

WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE --- UPCOMING ACTION

The Seattle Totems, leading the Western Hockey League by seven points in their battle for a first regular-season championship since 1959, will swing into action four times this week to highlight a nine-game WHL schedule.

The Totems, bouncing back with a three-game winning streak after a brief slump, will trade home-and-home dates with Vancouver, entertain Rochester and then swing south to San Diego.

Meanwhile, Rochester, fourth American Hockey League team to swing West, will play three games in three nights --- Thursday in Phoenix, Friday in San Diego and Saturday in Seattle.

And the Americans, winless in two games against Western League opponents, will bring some mighty familiar faces to the West Coast. Milan Marcetta and Bob Barlow were with the Victoria Maple Leafs last season, while Bryan Hextall, Bob Cook and Ken Block all played for Vancouver.

In addition, defenseman Don Cherry was with Spokane and goalie Bob Perreault with San Francisco in recent seasons.

The week's schedule opens Tuesday night with Springfield winding up its tour of the WHL in Phoenix. The Kings won one of their first four games, The Roadrunners, 4-5-1 against the American League, will be out to snap a four-game losing streak on home ice they haven't seen since November 16.

Most effective Roadrunner against the American League has been winger Tommy McVie with 10 goals --- plus 3 assists --- in 10 games. McVie, incidentally, has scored six goals in his last five games. His top helpers against the AHL have been Del Topoll and Lou Jankowski, each with 10 points in 10 clashes.

On Wednesday night, Portland will be in San Diego shooting for a fourth straight road victory and Vancouver will be in Seattle.

The Buckaroos, who have won five of their last seven, will face a Gull club with a strong 8-2 home record. San Diego leads the Portland series, two victories to one, paced by Fred Hilts, who has scored five points in the two games he has played against his one-time teammates. Hottest Gull right now is Len Ronson, another ex-Buckaroo, with 9 points, including 5 goals, in his last three games.

Seattle and Vancouver, meanwhile, are all square at two victories each. It's been a sizzling series for the Canucks' Bruce Carmichael, seven goals in four games against the Totems, and Phil Maloney, who has picked up seven points. Defenseman Larry Hale, with four points, has paced Seattle.

A lone Thursday night clash will send Rochester to Phoenix, while on Friday night Seattle will travel to Vancouver for a rematch and Rochester will move to San Diego.

The Gulls are now two-one against American League opponents, with Fred Hilts going just a bit wild. In three games against the AHL, Hilts has collected a staggering 11 points on 4 goals and 7 assists.

On Saturday night Rochester will move north to Seattle and Portland will visit Phoenix.

Continued ----------

The Totems are the only Western League club still unbeaten against the American League --- three games, three victories. And a major reason has been winger Earl Heiskala, who has sniped four goals in the three clashes.

Portland, meanwhile, holds a 3-1 edge over Phoenix, with a whopping 22-7 margin in goals. The Buckaroos, however, were tipped in their only previous clash in Phoenix. This has been a big series for Cliff Schmautz of the Bucks, who has sniped all six of his goals against the Roadrunners and has added four assists for 10 points in four games. Larry Leach has scored four of his seven goals against Phoenix.

The week's schedule winds up Sunday night with Seattle in San Diego. This series is deadlocked at 2-2-1. Top scorers have been bill dineen with eight points and Chuck Holmes with four goals for Seattle and Willie O'Ree with a 3-3-6 record for San Diego.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

A resurgence of the Seattle Totems, continued sparkling play in the nets and a Sunday night explosion in San Diego highlighted last week's Western Hockey League action.

The Totems, who had lost five of six games and had ended the previous week on a sour night by losing at home to Portland before their largest crowd of the season, bounced back with three straight victories.

Don Head stopped Vancouver 5-1 and Springfield 4-2 for a 1.50 average for the week, then Jim Armstrong took over to whip Portland 2-1 before the Buckaroos' largest home crowd of the year.

Other top performances in the nets were turned in by Marv Edward of Portland, who scored his first professional shutout in Vancouver and yielded just six goals in three games, and by young Bob Champoux of San Diego, who stopped 38 shots and gave up just one goal in the Gulls' Sunday night victory over Springfield.

The final score of that one was 8-1, biggest explosion of the year by San Diego and most decisive victory of the season by a Western League club over an American Hockey League opponent.

SCORING LEADERS

San Diego Captain and winger Fred Hilts, hampered by injuries the past three weeks, lost the Western Hockey League scoring lead he had held for five straight weeks briefly last week.

So in San Diego's lone game of the week Sunday night, Hilts took care of that. He collected two goals and three assists to increase his season scoring total to 27 points and go three in front of teammate Len Ronson, who has collected 24. Ronson collected three assists Sunday night.

Hilts now is 9-18-27 for the season, while Ronson is 12-12-24.

Vancouver veteran Phil Maloney holds third with 23 points.

Continued ----------

Tommy McVie of Phoenix, meanwhile, scored three goals in two games last week to climb into a tie for the Western League lead with Bruce Carmichael of Vancouver, who sniped one in three games. Each has 13 for the season. Tied for third are Earl Heiskala of Seattle and Len Ronson of San Diego, each with 12.

Seattle's Guyle Fielder picked up two assists in three games last week and continues to lead WHL playmakers with 19, one more than Hilts of San Diego.

GOALKEEPERS

Seattle goaltender Don Head, yielding just three goals in two games, climbed back into the lead in the Western League race for net-minding honors.

Head's goals-against average now is a sizzling 2.11 for 739 minutes of action.

Dave Kelly, who saw no action for San Diego, is still 2.21 and holds second ahead of Jim McLeod and Marv Edwards, both of Portland and both now sporting goals-against average of 2.25.

Head and Tony Esposito of Vancouver continue to lead in shutouts with two each.

PENALTIES

Vancouver defenseman Tracy Pratt, the season-long penalty leader of the WHL until November 26, moved back on top last week with 13 minutes in three games for a total for the campaign of 69 minutes off the ice.

Pratt moved past his teammate, defenseman Larry Mavety, who failed to draw a penalty last week, but still holds second in the WHL with 58 minutes.

Pratt has drawn 22 minors, 3 majors and a misconduct. Mavety has been whistled for a league-leading 24 minors, plus one match penalty.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Four players scored five points in Western League action last week.

Fred Hilts of San Diego was 2-3-5, Tommy McVie of Phoenix was 4-1-5, Chuck Holmes of Seattle was 2-3-5 and Don Chiz of Seattle was 1-4-5.

But Hilts collected all five of his points in the only game his team played. And for the third time this season, the San Diego captain and winger wins Player of the Week honors in the Western Hockey League.

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LINEUP CHANGES:

Seattle	add	#20	Gary Kilpatrick	Def.
"	remove	#20	Ian Campbell	RW
Phoenix	add		Gary Milroy	

* * * * * *

WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE -- UP COMING ACTION

This could be a week of decision and a week in which a bit of history might be written in the Western Hockey League.

The decision? Well, the Seattle Totems, leading the league by 5 points, will play in half of the eight games scheduled. And three of the four will be against a last-place Phoenix club the Totems have whipped four straight times.

A continuation of this "trend" would be no means wrap up a championship for Seattle, but it would give the Totems a big jump on the field.

The history? The Rochester Americans will shoot to become the first team to go unbeaten on the road in two seasons of interlocking play between the Western and American Hockey Leagues. The Americans, after three straight victories in the West, will wind up their swing Tuesday night in Vancouver and Wednesday night in Portland.

Only two teams, Hershey (3-1) two years ago and Cleveland (3-2) this season, ever have posted winning road records.

The week's schedule opens Tuesday night with Seattle in Phoenix and Rochester in Vancouver.

And the Roadrunners must be shaking their heads over four straight losses to Seattle, because Phoenix actually has outshot the Totems, 118 to 103, in the series. Phoenix will be out to shake a seven-game losing streak and a five-game losing string on home ice. Scoring balance has paid off for Seattle in the series, six Totems collecting a point a game or better against Phoenix.

Rochester, meanwhile, takes a four-game winning streak into Vancouver to face a Canuck team that is 8-6 since returning from its American League swing. Rochester is 3-1-1 against WHL opponents and tied Vancouver 3-3 in a meeting back East. And the sparks of the Rochester attack have been players who were in the WGL last season. Milan Marcetta, Bob Cook, Bob Barlow and Ken Block have scored 10 of Rochester's 14 goals against the Western League. And former San Francisco Seal Bobby Perreault has posted a sizzling 1.60 goals-against average in Rochester's interlocking series.

On Wednesday night Rochester will move into Portland and it could be an historic game for Buckaroo Captain Art Jones. He needs one point to become the second-highest scorer in Western League history. With 869 points, Jones now is tied with retired Seattle Totem Rudy Filion for second behind Guyle (1444 points) Fielder.

Portland has dropped two of three decisions, both losses by one goal, to AHL opponents. Two years ago the Bucks and Americans traded 4-3 decisions in splitting their series. Top Portland scorer against the AHL this season has been Bill Saunders with six points.

On Thursday night, Seattle will be in Phoenix for a rematch in which the Roadrunners' Tommy McVie is slated to play his 600th Western League game.

On Friday night, Portland will be in Vancouver and Seattle in San Diego.

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And it may amaze you, but the Bucks are the only Western League team with a winning (3-1) record against Vancouver. There have been two major reasons --- Marv Edwards in goal and third periods.

Edwards has played two games on Canuck ice, has stopped 66 shots and has yielded only one goal for 2-1 and 2-0 decisions. Tony Esposito of Vancouver is a sizzling 2.00 for two home games against Portland and hasn't won yet.

As for final periods, the combined scores of Portland-Vancouver games have been 4-4 in the first two periods of action. In third periods, Portland leads 10-2.

San Diego, meanwhile, now holds a 3-2-1 edge over Seattle --- and the Gulls are the only team in the Western League with a winning record against the Totems. Top Gull scorers in the series are Willie O'Ree with seven points and Alex Faulkner with six. Top Seattle scorer against the Gulls has been veteran winger Bill Dineen with 10 points on 4 goals and 6 assists.

On Saturday night, Phoenix will be in Seattle and Vancouver in Portland for rematches. There are no games scheduled Sunday.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

A Portland defenseman and a visiting goalie made the biggest splashes in the Western Hockey League last week.

The defenseman, of course, is James Alexander (Red Eye) Hay. With three minors and a major against San Diego Wednesday night, Hay became the most-penalized player in Western Hockey League history.

Hay, who added another minor against Phoenix Saturday night, now has a career total of 1,227 minutes off the ice to break the former all-time mark of 1,218 minutes set by Frank Arnett with Seattle, Winnipeg and Los Angeles. Arnett drew his penalties in 529 games, while Hay drew his record total in 764 games (to date) with Edmonton, Brandon, Victoria, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle and Portland.

In his professional career, Hay has drawn 1,623 penalty minutes in 1,063 regular-season games in five different leagues. And counting playoff action, he has drawn 1,692 minutes in 1,143 games.

The goalie who stirred up the Western League last week, as an enemy, was Bobby Perreault of Rochester.

Perreault, in two WHL seasons with San Francisco, played 138 games, posted a goals-against mark of 3.80 and never scored a shutout.

But in three road games last week, Perreault whipped Phoenix 4-2, San Diego 4-1 and Seattle 3-0 for a combined goals-against average of 1.00.

In other action last week, road clubs made life miserable for home fans by winning seven of the nine games scheduled.

And for a touch of irony, try Springfield's 4-3 overtime victory over Phoenix. The WHL plays overtimes. The AHL doesn't. So in the interlocking series, overtimes are played in the West but not in the East. The Springfield-Phoenix overtime was the third in

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the series. And the AHL has won all three of them to just about account for a 20-12-2 lead in the series.

SCORING LEADERS

Since the third week of the Western Hockey League season, San Diego winger Fred Hilts has held the scoring lead, with the exception of a couple of nights when Vancouver's Phil Maloney took over temporary command.

And Hilts collected five points in three games last week to stay on top with 32 points for the season on 12 goals and 20 assists in the 18 games he's played.

For the second straight week, Len Ronson of San Diego holds second with 27 points, with Vancouver's Maloney third with 25.

Leader Hilts, incidentally, scored the 500th point of his professional career in his first game last week, and it's a record with remarkable balance --- 250 goals and 250 assists. He now can look back, after Sunday night action, on 251 goals and 251 assists.

Ronson sniped his 14th goal of the season against Seattle Sunday night to take the Western League lead by one over Bruce Carmichael of Vancouver, Tommy McVie of Phoenix and Earl Heiskala of Seattle --- all knotted at 13 each.

In playmaking, Seattle's Guyle Fielder and San Diego Captain Hilts are tied for the WHL lead with 20 assists each.

GOALKEEPERS

Seattle goalie Don Head yielded 8 goals in 160 minutes of action last week but retained the lead among the Western League's "regular" netminders with a goals-against average of 2.26.

San Diego's Dave Kelly (299 minutes) has a goals-against mark of 2.21 and Portland's Jim McLeod (240 minutes) boasts a record of 2.25 --- among netminders who have not seen regular duty.

PENALTIES

Vancouver defenseman Tracy Pratt drew only one minor in two games last week but still leads the Western League penalty parade with 71 minutes off the ice on 23 minors, 3 majors and 1 misconduct.

Still in second place is Pratt's Canuck teammate, blueliner Larry Mavety, with 60 minutes on a league-leading 25 minors plus 1 match penalty.

HOT PLAYERS

Longest point-scoring streaks alive as action gets under way this week are six-game scoring strings owned by both Alex Faulkner of San Diego and Del Topoll of Phoenix. Gary Milroy, new Phoenix winger, has the longest assist streak alive at four straight games. Norm Johnson of Portland and Mike Corbett of Vancouver have the longest goal-scoring strings at two games in a row.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK -- There's that name again --- Fred Hilts! The San Diego scoring leader collected five points in three games last week to tie his center, Warren Hynes, who also scored five points, for Western League Player of the Week honors. It was the fourth time this year that Hilts has won or shared the award. # # # # # # #

WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE --- UPCOMING ACTION

Despite Seattle's seven-point lead in the standings, the Western Hockey League battle for the regular-season championship could tighten up considerably in the next nine games scheduled through Christmas night.

Seattle, which has played five more games that second-place Portland and six more than third-place San Diego, will be in action only twice through Christmas.

Portland and San Diego, meanwhile, each will play four games during this stretch. And even fourth-place Vancouver, with five games through Christmas, has an outside chance at a tie for the lead.

The club under the gun, in a sense, is Portland, with three of the Buckaroos' next four clashes scheduled on home ice. After that, 11 of the Bucks' next 13 games will be on the road.

Strangely, every club in the Western League moves into the holiday season in a resonably festive mood. Phoenix has won two of its last three games. Seattle has a two-game victory string alive. Vancouver and San Diego each has won three of the last five. And Portland has won 8 of its last 12.

Action this week starts Tuesday night in Vancouver where the Canucks will host Phoenix. And introductions will be in order. It'll be the first time the Canucks and Roadrunners have clashed since the WHL opener on October 9, when the teams fought to a 3-3 tie. Phoenix will be facing a hot Vancouver goalie in rookie Tony Esposito, who boasts a goals-against average of 2.17 for his last six clashes.

On Wednesday night, the Roadrunners will move to Portland. And this has been a strange series. Portland has won four of five from Phoenix, has outscored the Roadrunners 27-9, yet leads only 153-151 in shots on goal. In this series, Cliff Schmautz of the Bucks has collected 6 of his 7 goals, 11 of his 19 points. The Buckaroos have won all three previous games in Portland and have outscored the 'Runners 21-4.

The Thursday night schedule sends Vancouver to San Diego a nd Portland to Seattle.

The Canucks are the only Western League club with a winning (3-1) record against the Gulls. Top series scorers have been Phil Maloney (5-1-6) for Vancouver and Len Ronson (also 5-1-6) for San Diego.

The Buckaroos and Totems, meanwhile, are all even at 2-2-1. Even the shots on goal are the same at 137 each. Star of the series has been Portland's Arnie Schmautz with seven points.

On Friday night, Vancouver will be in San Diego for a rematch, and on Saturday night the Canucks will play their first game of the season in Phoenix in another rematch.

A second Saturday night clash sends San Diego to Portland,and this has been a big series for the Gulls, only club with a winning (3-1) record against the Bucks. Ex-Buckaroo Fred Hilts with eight points has paced San Diego's attack against Portland, with 6-point help from his center, Warren Hynes.

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Gull goalie Bob Champoux has been hotter (a 1.33 goals-against average) against Portland than against any other club, and this is reflected in Portland's scoring. The Bucks have been paced against San Diego by a pair of defense partners, Jim (Red Eye) Hay and Connie Madigan, each with three points. The Bucks may be smarting from a 7-1 defeat in San Diego, worst loss of the season for Portland.

No games are scheduled on Christmas Eve, but on Christmas night, San Diego will be in Seattle and Vancouver will be in Portland.

The series between the Gulls and the Totems is all square at 3-3-1. Willie O'Ree with seven points has paced the San Diego attack against Seattle, while Bill Dineen of Seattle couldn't think of a better way to celebrate Christmas than by playing the Gulls. He's scored 13 points on 6 goals and 7 assists in seven clashes against the San Diego club.

Portland, meanwhile, is the only club in the WHL with a winning (4-2) record against Vancouver. And what a wild series this has been. The Buckaroos have won all three games played in Vancouver, while the Canucks have won two of three played in Portland.

Phil Maloney has paced the Canuck attack against the Bucks with five points, while Bill Saunders (5-5-10) and Art Jones (5-4-9) have been the Portland leaders. But the star of the series has been Buck goalie Marv Edwards, who is 1.50 for four tests against Vancouver.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

Phoenix, Portland and Vancouver each won two of three games last week to post the best Western League records.

And it was a week with some odd twists.

Seattle, most-penalized team in the WHL, played two straight in Phoenix and drew only one minor in 120 minutes of action . . . Roadrunners' goalie Rick Charron stopped 47 shots in holding Seattle to one goal in those two clashes, then was beaten 5 times while making only 15 saves in a third meeting up north . . .

Bary Watson of Vancouver scored the 14th hat trick of the WHL season, and only the second on the road, when he pumped in the Canucks' first three goals in a 4-1 Saturday night victory in Portland . . . Watson now has four goals, all of them against the Buckaroos, and he has 15 points and has scored 13 of them on the road . . .

Phil Maloney of the Canucks was whistled for a penalty in Portland, his first of the season . . . leaving Bill Dineen of Seattle and Dave Duke of Vancouver as the only season-long "regulars" without a single minute off the ice . . .

Speaking of Duke, he sniped the goal that ended Marv Edwards' shutout goal-tending string at 152 minutes and 3 seconds Friday night in Vancouver . . . it was just history repeating . . . Duke scored the goal against Portland in 1964 that ended the longest shutout streak in Western League history . . . 235 minutes and 22 seconds by Dave Kelly, then with the Buckaroos . . .

Then there is Phoenix. The Roadrunners now have scored the first goal of the game in six straight contests, in 12 of their last 14 clashes and, for the season, in 21 of 29 games.

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SCORING LEADERS

San Diego winger Fred Hilts collected one assists in the only game his club played last week to hold his Western Hockey League scoring lead for the seventh straight week with 33 points on 12 goals and 21 assists.

Tied for second with 28 points each are Bill Dineen of Seattle and Phil Maloney of Vancouver, and one back at 27 is Hilts' San Diego teammate, Len Ronson.

Meanwhile, Tommy McVie of Phoenix sniped two goals in three games last week to take over the Western League lead for the season with 15, one more than the 14 of Ronson and Vancouver's Bruce Carmichael. The WHL leader for the first time this season, McVie has collected 8 of his 15 goals on the road and 10 of his 15 against American League opponents.

In playmaking, Seattle's Guyle Fielder earned three assists in four games last week to take the league lead with 23 for the season. Fred Hilts of San Diego is second with 21.

GOALKEEPERS

It's still Don Head of Seattle out in front of Western League goalies. Head yielded only three goals in two games (both strangely, losing efforts) last week, dropped his season goals-against average to a torrid 2.18 for 1,023 minutes of action. Top challengers among "regulars" are Marv Edwards of Portland at 2.40 and Tony Esposito of Vancouver at 2.57.

Dave Kelly of San Diego, meanwhile, is 2.21 for just 299 minutes of action, while Jim McLeod of Portland is 2.25 for 240 minutes.

PENALTIES

A shoulder injury limited Vancouver defenseman Tracy Pratt to just one game last week. He drew one minor to increase his Western League lead in penalty minutes to 73 for the season. Teammate Larry Mavety, rookie defenseman, drew three minors in three games and continues to rank second with 66 minutes off the ice.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Veteran winger Bill Dineen of the Seattle Totems collected five points -- four goals and one assist --- in four games last week to win Player of the Week honors in the WHL.

Dineen, who moved into a tie for second in the WHL scoring race, scored the game-winning goals, incidentally, in Seattle's week-ending victories over San Diego and Phoenix.

HOT PLAYERS

There are no long scoring strings alive at present in the Western Hockey League. But Vancouver's Phil Maloney has collected points in 15 of his last 18 games, Del Topoll of Phoenix has scored points in eight of his last nine clashes and Alex Faulkner of San Diego has picked up points in six of his last seven games.

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LINEUP CHANGES:

Vancouver	add	#6	Terry Clancy	RW
	remove	Larry Popein - to Oakland		
	remove	Rudy Panagabko - to Memphis		
Phoenix	add	#9	Brian Smith - remove	Bill Shvetz

WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE --- UPCOMING ACTION

There is nothing quite like starting the new year with No. 1 battling No. 2. And that's the week-long forecast for the Western Hockey League on New Year's night when the Seattle Totems, leaders since the first of the season, will be in Portland to clash with the suddenly-surging Buckaroos.

As action gets under way this week, Seattle still leads the Western League with 36 points, but the Buckaroos are just one back at 35.

Each club faces four games through New Year's night. And the fourth game for both the Bucks and the Totems will be the head-on meeting to start 1968.

The week's schedule opened Tuesday night with Vancouver hosting San Diego and Portland playing the first of three straight games in Phoenix.

The Canucks were still the only team in the Western League with a season edge over the Gulls - 3-2-1 -- but the tightness of the series is reflected by goals scored and shots on goal. Vancouver leads 22-20 in goals and 182-179 in shots on goal.

For Vancouver, it's been a big series for both Stan Gilbertson and Phil Maloney ---- each with identical 5-3-8 records against San Diego. The Gulls, meanwhile, have been paced against the Canucks by Len Ronson (6-2-8) and Alex Faulkner (3-4-7).

Portland has dominated the series against Phoenix, winning five out of six and outscoring the Roadrunners 31-10.

Six Buckaroos have scored at a point-a-game-or-better pace against Phoenix, Cliff Schmautz leading the way with 12 points on 6 goals and 6 assists.

Top Roadrunner against Portland has been veteran winger Lou Jankowski with three points.

The Buckaroos, incidentally, have won seven of their last eight games in starting a drive for a fourth-straight regular-season championship in the Western Hockey League.

On Wednesday night, Seattle will host San Diego in the 8th game of a series now deadlocked at 3-3-1. This has been the big series for the Totems' Bill Dineen, who has scored 13 points, including 6 goals, in 7 games against the Gulls.

San Diego's leader against Seattle has been Will O'Ree who has collected 7 points on 3 goals and 4 assists.

Portland will be in Phoenix for a rematch on Thursday night, and Seattle will move to Vancouver for the lone game on Friday night.

The Totems and the Canucks, after six clashes, are dead even with three victories each. Seattle's leaders in the series may surprise you --- defenseman Larry Hale and tough-checking center Gerry Leonard, each with five points and each with three goals included in the total.

Happiest Canucks in the series have been Bruce Carmichael (7-3-10) and Phil Maloney (2-7-9).

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Portland will play the third in a row in Phoenix on Saturday night, and on Sunday night the Roadrunners will fly to Seattle for the only New Year's Eve clash in the league.

The Totems hold a 5-2- winning record against Phoenix, with Bill Dineen leading the attack with 8 points on 5 goals and 3 assists. Rookie Walt McKechnie still leads Phoenix against Seattle with 6 points in the series.

The week's schedule, through New Year's night, winds up with that No. 1 and No. 2 meeting of Seattle and Portland on the Buckaroos' home ice.

Portland leads in the series by a 3-2-1 margin, with Arnie Schmautz (3-5-8) and Larry Leach (3-4-7) leading the attack.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

There was no question about who wrote the story last week in the Western Hockey League. ----- The Portland Buckaroos were the authors -- with a bang! They played four games. They won four games. And how they did it was most impressive. They stopped Phoenix 4-0 at home, defeated Seattle on the road 4-2, set an all-time league record in routing San Diego 13-1 at home and then topped off the week by blanking Vancouver 3-0.

It adds to 24 goals scored by the Buckaroos and 3 against the Portland club.

The record was set Saturday night in Portland where the Bucks became the first team in Western League history ever to score 13 goals in a row.

The old mark of 11 straight goals scored has shared by three different clubs -- New Westminster against Seattle in 1952, Edmonton against Winnipeg in 1959 and Portland against Edmonton in 1963.

And season records fell all over the place.

Until the 13-1 rout of San Diego, no Western Leaguer had earned more than three assists in one game. -- Connie Madigan of the Bucks broke this mark by picking up four in the first two periods. --- But Art Jones went him one better by earning five in the contest. And Jones tied the season mark of teammate Bill Saunders of scoring six points in a single game.

Saunders also tied a season record by scoring his second hat trick of the year. This matches him with Len Ronson of San Diego for the league lead.

SCORING LEADERS

It's tightening up!

The top scorer in the Western Hockey League for the eighth straight week is San Diego winger Fred Hilts with 36 points on 14 goals and 12 assists.

But closing in are Phil Maloney of Vancouver with 35 points on 13 goals and 22 assists. Art Jones of Portland with 33 points on 11 goals and 22 assists, Bruce Carmichael of Vancouver with 33 points and Bill Saunders of Portland with 31 points on 18 goals and 13 assists.

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Saunders, with six goals in his last three games, now leads the league with 18 for the season, one more than Bruce Carmichael of Vancouver, who has 17.

Top playmaker is Seattle's Guyle Fielder with 27 assists.

GOALKEEPERS

Jim McLeod of Portland, who owned the lowest goals-against average in the league last season with Seattle, started to see some action with the Buckaroos last week.

He responded!

He shut out Phoenix and Vancouver, stopped Vancouver with one goals and lowered his season's goals-against average for 420 minutes of action to 1.57.

Among the "regulars," Seattle's Don Head still tops 'em all with a 2.22 goals-against mark for 1,081 minutes of action.

PENALTIES

Vancouver defenseman Larry Mavety takes the lead in penalty minutes for the first time this season with 80 minutes off the ice on 35 minors and 1 match penalty.

Mavety replaces Canuck teammates Tracy Pratt, who had 76 minutes in penalties before he was called to the Oakland Seals last week.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

There were some great scoring surges in the Western Hockey League last week, but Player of the Week honors go to Portland goalie Jim McLeod, who played 180 minutes of hockey and permitted opponents ---- three different ones -- to score only one goal.

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LINEUP CHANGES:

Seattle - add #3 Ray LaRose Def.
remove #3 Don Fedun Def.

Vancouver - add # 4 Jerry Odrowski Def.
add #12 Billy McNeill Ctr.
remove # 3 Tracy Pratt Def.
remove # 4 Bob Lemieux Def.
Number change from #6 to #5 Lar y Mavety Def.

Phoenix - remove #17 Gary Milroy Ctr.

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SPECIAL NOTE: Next week's release will be mailed Tuesday, January 2, 1968

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WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE --- UPCOMING ACTION

The Western Hockey League's interlocking schedule with the American League will return with a bang this week as seven of 11 WHL clashes are scheduled against AHL opponents.

The Providence Reds, fifth American League team to swing West, will play four games on the Pacific Coast.

Meanwhile, the Portland Buckaroos, after a home date against the Reds Wednesday night, will be the third Western League club to head East, the Bucks playing three weekend games in American League cities to begin a rugged trip of 8 games in 10 nights.

Providence, unbeaten against the WHL after a 7-2 victory over Vancouver and a 2-2 tie with Phoenix in the East, will bring West one of the modern wonders of professional hockey in Playing Coach Dave Creighton.

Creighton, at 37, is playing his 20th professional season, and, according to latest AHL records, still is leading his club in scoring.

The Reds also will bring West a number of familiar faces, including ex-Western Leaguers Mo Mantha (second All Star defenseman with San Francisco in '63), Marcel Paille (second All Star goalie with Vancouver in '64), John Sleaver, Adam Keller, Wayne Muloin and Eddie Kachur.

The week's schedule opens Tuesday night with Providence in Seattle and Vancouver in Phoenix. In Seattle, the Reds will face the only Western League team with a winning (3-1) record against the American League. Big gun for the Totems has been forward Earl Heiskala, who has collected five points, including four goals, in four tests against the AHL.

Vancouver owns a 2-1-1 record against Phoenix, paced by Bruce Carmichael's six points and Tony Esposito's 2.00 goals-against mark in the series. This game matches the team that has gotten the jump most often (Phoenix) against the club which has scored first the least often (Vancouver).

On Wednesday night, Providence will move to Portland to face a Buckaroo club that is 2-2 against AHL opponents. For Portland, it will be the first of nine straight games against the American League. The Bill Saunders - Norm Johnson - Andy Hebenton line has scored seven goals in four games against the AHL, while Marv Edwards has sparkled in the nets with a 1.97 goals-against mark for three tests.

On Thursday night, Seattle will be in San Diego and Vancouver will stay in Phoenix for a rematch. The Totems will be looking for their fourth straight victory over the Gulls and lead 5-3-1 in the series, paced by Bill Dineen's 13 points in 9 games. It's been a good series for Totem goalie Don Head, who is 2.09 against the Gulls.

On Friday night, Providence will move to San Diego and Portland will open its AHL swing in Rochester. San Diego is 2-2 against the AHL, and it's been an astounding series for Fred Hilts, who has scored 11 points in four games.

The Bucks, meanwhile, whipped Rochester in the first meeting of the season, 4-0. Rochester is 3-3-1 against the Western League, led by goalie Bob Perreault, who is 2.29 in the interlocking series.

Continued ----------

Saturday night games will send Providence to Phoenix and Portland to Springfield. The Reds and Phoenix battled to a 2-2 tie in the East. Top Roadrunner gunners against AHL teams have been Del Topoll (5-9-14) and Tommy McVie (10-3-13).

Portland and Springfield have met twice in history and both games went into overtime --- 2-2 in Springfield two seasons back and 4-3 in Portland this season, with the Kings winning. Springfield is 3-4 against the West in this campaign, paced by Howie Mendard's 11 points in seven games.

The week's schedule winds up Sunday night with Portland in Quebec and San Diego in Phoenix.

In their only previous meeting, the Buckaroos and Aces tied 2-2 two years ago. The Aces this year are even against the West after beating Vancouver 4-2 and then losing to Phoenix by the same score.

San Diego, meanwhile, has whipped Phoenix four times in five games and there have been four major reasons why. In five games, Len Ronson has scored 14 points, including 6 goals. Fred Hilts has collected 11. Warren Hynes has scored 8. And Al Nicholson has sniped six goals in the six clashes.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

When the San Diego Gulls snap a four-game losing streak, they certainly do it with a bang!

The Gulls had ended the old year with four straight defeats and in the process had scored exactly four goals. In fact, in their last eight games of 1967, they had scored a total of 19 goals.

The Gulls matched that total of 19 in just two games last week as they exploded past Phoenix, 7-2, and Vancouver, 12-2. The 12-2 victory was San Diego's biggest of the season and the defeat was the worst of the campaign for the Canucks.

San Diego winger Len Ronson tied an all-time Western Hockey League record by scoring back-to-back hat tricks, three goals against Phoenix and then three more against Vancouver. It's a record Ronson now shares with eight other players.

The hat tricks were Ronson's third and fourth of the season to lead the Western League. And he now is within one of tieing the circuit's all-time record of five in a season. The record is shared by Bronco Horvath (Edmonton, 1954-44) and Ronson's San Diego teammate, Fred Hilts, who collected five last season.

The Gulls, in sweeping a pair, ran their home-ice record to 13 victories, 4 defeats and 1 tie --- best mark in the Western Hockey League this season.

In another highlight of last week's light schedule, Phoenix extended its unbeaten streak to five in a row --- longest of the year for the Roadrunners --- with a 2-0 victory in Vancouver -- before falling to San Diego.

In the 2-0 triumph, Lou Jankowski of the Roadrunners sniped his 350th Western Hockey goal.

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SCORING LEADERS

San Diego winger and Captain Fred Hilts collected six points in two games last week to move back into the Western Hockey League scoring lead with 42 points for the season. Hilts collected four goals and two assists to snap a scoring drouth in which he had collected only one point in his previous five games.

Phil Maloney of Vancouver, who took over the league lead for one week from Hilts, scored two points in three games to hold second with 39, while Len Ronson of San Diego, who collected eight points in two games, moved into third with 38.

Ronson exploded for six goals in two games to take the Western League lead with 23 for the season, Bill Saunders of Portland and Bruce Carmichael of Vancouver are tied for second with 19 each.

Seattle veteran Guyle Fielder leads in assists with 31, five more than the 26 earned by Maloney.

GOALKEEPERS

With Portland idle last week, Buckaroo goalie Jim McLeod retained the lead among goaltenders with a goals-against mark of 2.06 for 670 minutes of action.

Seattle's Don Head, with almost twice as much playing time (1272 minutes) is second at 2.26 and leads in shutouts with three.

PENALTIES

Vancouver's rookie defenseman, Larry Mavety, drew only one minor penalty in three games last week but kept his Western Hockey League lead with 88 minutes for the season. Mavety also leads in minor penalties with 39.

Mavety's closest challenger now is defenseman Tom Polanic of Phoenix with 78 minutes off the ice.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

There certainly was no doubt about the Player of the Week in the Western Hockey League.

Record-tieing back-to-back hat tricks and a total of eight points in two games earned the honor for San Diego winger Len Ronson.

And Ronson right now is one of the hottest players in Western Hockey history.

He scored just two goals in his first 10 games this season. In his last 21 games, he has collected exactly 21 goals for a goal-a-game clip.

He leads the league with 23 for the season.

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LINEUP CHANGES:

San Diego	remove	- #14	Ed Panagabko	
	remove	- #16	Jack Faulkner	
	add	- #12	Gordon Wilkie	Center
*****	add	- #22	John Brenneman	Left Wing *****

WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE --- UPCOMING ACTION

The heaviest Western Hockey League schedule of the season --- 14 games in six nights --- will be highlighted this week by 10 interlocking clashes against American HL Clubs.

The Portland Buckaroos, who moved into first place past Seattle last week, will wind up their eight-game swing through AHL territory with five games in six nights starting Tuesday in Baltimore.

And the San Diego Gulls, who have won four of their last five, will open their American League trip with four games in six nights.

Meanwhile, a hot Phoenix club that has lost only twice in 10 games, will face three home tests in the Roadrunners' late-season drive to climb in the standings. Seattle hopes to snap a five-game winless streak on the road. And Vancouver will have two games in which to end a six-game winless string.

The week's schedule opens with a bang Tuesday night with Seattle in Phoenix, Providence in Vancouver, San Diego in Quebec and Portland in Baltimore.

The Totems have won five of eight from Phoenix this season but have dropped three of the last four to the surging Roadrunners. Top series scorers are Bill Dineen (5-4-9) for Seattle and rookie Walt McKechnie (2-5-7) for Phoenix. All of the goalies own averages under 3.00 in this series, Don Head leading the way with a 1.80 mark for five tests.

Providence will be winding up its Western swing in Vancouver against a Canuck club the Reds whipped 7-2 in an earlier meeting in the East. Providence is 3-2-1 against WHL teams, paced by a pair of ex-Western Leaguers, John Sleaver (3-5-8) and Eddie Kachur (6-1-7). Vancouver is 3-8-1 against the AHL.

San Diego's meeting with Quebec will be the first of all time. The Aces are now 2-1 against WHL foes, while the Gulls are 3-2 against the American League, paced by Fred Hilts' 12 points (5 goals, 7 assists) in five clashes.

Portland, 1-2 on its Eastern swing, is now 4-4 for the season against American League foes. And all four Portland defeats have been by a single goal. Baltimore is still unbeaten after two WHL tests, with victories 4-1 over Vancouver and 5-4 over Phoenix. Buck goalies, incidentally, have allowed AHL opponents only 14 goals in eight games.

On Wednesday night, Portland will be in Cleveland. The Bucks won 5-2 in the first meeting this season with the Barons. But they must stop Norm Ferguson and ex-Seattle Totem Jim Paterson, who both have scored 12 points in seven games against the West.

On Thursday night, Seattle will be in Phoenix for a rematch, and on Friday night, the Totems will move to Vancouver, San Diego will be in Baltimore for a first ever meeting with the Clippers and Portland will be in Providence for second clash, the Bucks winning the first one 5-0 in the West.

The Totems will take a 4-3-1 series edge to Vancouver and have lost only once in five appearances on Canuck ice. It's been a big series for Vancouver's Bruce Carmichael (8-4-12) and Phil Maloney (2-10-12). Don Chiz has paced Seattle with 8 points, while five Totems have collected 7 against the Canucks.

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On Saturday night, Portland will be in Hershey for a first meeting of the season, San Diego in Springfield and Vancouver in Phoenix.

The Gulls stopped Springfield 8-1 in the first game out West. Overall, the Kings are 3-5 against the Western League, despite a 5-6-11 record in eight games by Howie Menard.

Phoenix, meanwhile, will shoot for its fourth straight victory over Vancouver, leads 3-2-1 in the series. Top series scorers are Del Topoll (3-6-9) and Tommy McVie (5-3-8) for the Roadrunners and Phil Maloney (3-4-7) and Bruce Carmichael (2-5-7) for the Canucks.

The week's schedule winds up Sunday night with San Diego in Providence and Portland finishing its AHL swing in Buffalo.

San Diego topped Providence 4-3 in a meeting out West, while Buffalo tipped Portland 3-2 on the Buckaroos' home ice. Overall, Buffalo is 3-4 against the Western League, paced by Bob Jones (1-6-7) and Mike Labadie (5-1-6), both in the Western League last season.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

The Portland Buckaroos moved back into first place in their drive for a fourth straight regular-season championship in the Western Hockey League, and the Bucks would own more than a one-point bulge over the Seattle Totems if they could win the tight one.

The Buckaroos took two of four from American League foes last week and both defeats were by 2-1 margins in the East. The Bucks now have played six games decided by a single goal and have lost five of them.

Phoenix, meanwhile, won three of four to continue a surge the Roadrunners started the day after Christmas. Since Christmas the Phoenix club has won seven, tied one and lost only two.

San Diego ran its home-ice winning string to five straight with decisions over Seattle and Providence, then dropped the first of nine straight road tests in Phoenix. The Gulls are 15-4-1 at home --- best record in the league --- but have won only 2 of 15 road games.

Individually, Tommy McVie of Phoenix scored his second hat trick of the season, and Dave Kelly of San Diego collected his first shutout of the campaign.

Walt McKechnie of Phoenix had a six-game point streak snapped Saturday night by Providence, and Del Topoll of the Roadrunners had a five-game assist string ended Sunday night by San Diego.

SCORING LEADERS

San Diego's Fred Hilts scored two points, a goal and an assists, in three games last week to hold the Western League scoring lead with 45 points for the season.

Tied for second with 40 points each are Len Ronson of San Diego, Del Topoll of Phoenix and Phil Maloney of Vancouver, with Topoll collecting seven points in four games last week to make the biggest move among the top four scorers.

Continued ---------

Tommy McVie of Phoenix, meanwhile, collected six goals in four games to take the Western Hockey League lead for the season with 24. Second among goal scorers with 23 is San Diego's Ronson, who was blanked in three tests last week.

Seattle's Guyle Fielder failed to pick up an assist in two clashes but continues to lead the league for the season with 31.

GOALKEEPERS

In two appearances last week, Portland goalie Jimmy McLeod shut out Providence on the Buckaroos' home ice, then stopped Springfield 3-1 on the road to lower his league-leading goals-against average to 1.82 for 790 minutes of action.

Seattle's Don Head allowed two goals in one appearance to lower his season record to 2.25 for 1,332 minutes and hold second place among netminders.

PENALTIES

Vancouver defenseman Larry Mavety was whistled for only one minor in two games last week but continues to lead the Western League in penalty minutes with 90 for the season.

Mavety also leads the WHL in minor penalties with 40.

In total minutes, Phoenix blue-liner Tom Polanic has taken second behind Mavety with 80 minutes off the ice.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

In four games last week, Tommy McVie of the Phoenix Roadrunners collected nine points on six goals and three assists to capture Player of the Week honors in the Western Hockey League.

McVie, in the process, took over the goal-scoring lead with 24 for the season and moved into a tie for fifth in the overall scoring race with 38 points for the campaign.

McVie's selection was especially appropriate because in his second game of the week --- on January 11th against Vancouver --- he became the ninth player in Western Hockey League history to hit the 300-goal plateau.

McVie now has 302 goals in 614 games to rank ninth on the all-time list.

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LINEUP CHANGES:

Vancouver remove #3 Jerry Odrowski - Def. (returned to Oakland Seals)

add #4 Bob Lemieux - Def.

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WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE --- UPCOMING ACTION

There's an interlocking flavor to the Western Hockey League schedule again this week with seven of eleven clashes scheduled against American League opponents.

San Diego will wind up its eight-game slate in the East with four clashes, and the Quebec Aces, sixth AHL team to hit the Pacific Coast, will begin their five-game Western swing.

There's also a "first place" flavor to this week's schedule. The Portland Buckaroos are out in front of the Seattle Totems by two points with both teams finally even in games played. Both clubs will return to home ice after road trips, each facing a pair of tests.

The Phoenix Roadrunners, meanwhile, will play three games and hope to continue their recent sizzling pace of losing only three times in their last 13 clashes.

The week's schedule opens Tuesday night with Vancouver in Phoenix. The 'Runners and the Canucks are all square in their season series at 3-3-1, with Del Topoll of Phoenix the top scorer in the series with nine points.

On Wednesday night, San Diego will be in Hershey and Vancouver in Portland. The Gulls now are 4-5 against American League opponents, with Fred Hilts still going wild in the series with 16 points in nine games. Hershey is 2-0-1 against Western League foes.

Portland, meanwhile, holds a 5-2 series edge over Vancouver, and it's been a strange one. The teams have split, 2-2, on Portland ice, while the Bucks have won all three games played in Vancouver. This has been a series of hot goaltending. Tony Esposito is 2.17 for six tests against Portland --- his best record against any rival. Yet he's lost four games because Marv Edwards is 1.50 and Jim McLeod 2.00 against Vancouver. Top series scorers have been Bill Saunders (6-5-11) and Art Jones (5-5-10) of Portland.

Jones, incidentally, will take a four-game goal-scoring streak into action, needs one more to tie the longest string of the WHL season.

On Friday night, Quebec will open its Western swing in Seattle, San Diego will be in Rochester and Phoenix will be in Vancouver for a rematch. The Phoenix-Vancouver game was moved up to Friday night because of later conflicts in Vancouver.

Quebec will come West with three victories in four games against WHL opponents, one of the most talked-about players in pro hockey and a goaltender who is well known in the Western Hockey League.

The player drawing the raves, of course, is Andre LaCroix, who sniped 31 goals and a total of 64 points in his first 39 games --- and in the stretch collected an amazing six hat tricks, two of them four-goal explosions.

The "old friend" in the nets is veteran Al Millar, who played in the WHL with Seattle, Portland, Victoria and Denver. He's held WHL opponents to just eight goals in four games this season.

Seattle, meanwhile, owns a 3-2 record against the American League.

San Diego's Friday night foe, Rochester, is 4-3-1 against Western League opponents chiefly because of goalie Bob Perreault, who is 2.25 for eight games in the inter-locking series.

Continued --------

A pair of Saturday night clashes will send Quebec to Vancouver and San Diego to Cleveland. Vancouver is 3-9-1 against the AHL, lost to the Aces 2-4 in the East. Top Canuck scorer in the series is Bruce Carmichael with 10 points.

Cleveland, meanwhile, has taken six of eight from the West, including the last five in a row, and defeated the Gulls 4-3 in San Diego. Big Cleveland guns against the WHL with 13 points each in eight games have been Norm Ferguson and ex-Seattle Totem Jim Paterson.

The schedule winds up Sunday night with Phoenix in Seattle, Quebec in Portland and San Diego in Buffalo.

The Roadrunner-Totem series is deadlocked at five victories each, but Phoenix has won the last three straight and five of the last six. Phoenix netminder Rick Charron has been at his best in this series, holding Seattle to 2.25 goals a game in eight clashes. Seattle, in fact, has scored just eight goals in the last six games against Phoenix, and five of those were in one contest.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

The big news last week was opening of Vancouver's new coliseum, with turnouts of 12,403 and 9,479 to watch the Canucks' first two games in their new home.

The Canucks responded by 'joining the club' and losing both clashes, 4-2 to Providence and 3-2 to Seattle.

Phoenix then joined up Saturday night. Before the largest crowd in the city's young hockey history ---10,012 --- the Roadrunners were shutout by angry Vancouver, 4-0.

The club? Well, Seattle lost to Portland before Seattle's largest crowd of the season, and Portland then lost to Seattle before Portland's largest crowd of the year. That's four out of five home losses before the biggest crowds o f the campaign, with only San Diego refusing thus far to bow.

No one can accuse Western League clubs of being "homers."

There was big news, at least from the Western viewpoint, on Sunday night, too. Portland snapped a five-game winless string with a 4-2 victory in Buffalo. San Diego ended a four-game losing streak with an 8-3 triumph in Providence. And these victories ended a 10-game unbeaten string by American League clubs against WHL opponents.

Individually, Gordon Redahl of Phoenix scored the game-winning goals in a pair of the Roadrunners' victories over Seattle. And these made it three straight games in which Redahl scored the game-winner. Redahl, in fact, owns an amazing record. He has 10 goals. He has five game-winners. He has three first goals. And four of his five assists have been game-winning assists.

Dave Duke of Vancouver and Bill Dineen of Seattle also made news. Each drew his first penalty of the season. And there now isn't a regular left in the Western League without at least one penalty this season.

SCORING LEADERS

Fred Hilts of San Diego collected two goals and two assists in four games in the East last week, retained his Western Hockey League scoring lead with 48 points on 21 goals and 27 assists.

Continued ----------

Tied for second with 43 points each are Len Ronson of San Diego and Art Jones of Portland.

Ronson, meanwhile, sniped three goals in four games to regain the Western League goal-scoring lead with 26 for the season. Tommy McVie of Phoenix, blanked in three games last week, dropped to second with 24.

Guyle Fielder of Seattle continues to top all playmakers with 31 assists, three more than the 28 of Warren Hynes of San Diego and Phil Maloney of Vancouver.

GOALKEEPERS

Jimmy McLeod of Portland and Don Head of Seattle both slipped a bit last week but continue to rank one-two among Western League goaltenders.

Both played two games on the road. Both allowed seven goals. And McLeod's average is now 2.04 (up from 1.82 a week ago) and Head's record is 2.36 (up from 2.25 a week earlier).

Four netminders --- Head, McLeod, Rick Charron of Phoenix and Tony Esposito of Vancouver -- are now tied for first in shutouts with three each.

PENALTIES

Vancouver defenseman Larry Mavety was whistled for two minors in three games last week and continues to lead with Western League in penalty minutes with 94 on 42 minors and one match infraction.

Still closing in is Phoenix defenseman Tom Polanic, who drew three minors in three games last week and now has 86 minutes for the season.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Four players scored five points in Western Hockey League action last week -- San Diego's Willie O'Ree and Portland Buckaroos Andy Hebenton, Art Jones and Norm Johnson.

But Player of the Week honors go to O'Ree, who played just four games to five for the Buckaroos.

O'Ree, in fact, scored all five of his points --- one goal and four assists--- in San Diego's 8-3 victory Sunday night in Providence.

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DENVER --- Rudy Pilous, veteran Hockey Coach, has been named Coach and General Manager of the Denver entry in the Western Hockey League. The club has opened offices at 1724 Stout Street, Denver, Colorado 80202.

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SCHEDULE CHANGE CORRECTION: Please correct 'schedule change' on page 3 - Release #28 to read, "March 19th game against San Diego has been switched to February 20th."

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LINEUP CHANGES:

Vancouver add #3 Tom Thurlby Defence

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WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE ---- UPCOMING ACTION

The Portland Buckaroos and Seattle Totems will continue their wild battle for first place this week to highlight an 11-game Western Hockey League schedule.

The Bucks, leading the Totems by 2 points in their fight for a fourth straight regular-season championship, will face three home tests, while Seattle will play two games, both of them also on home ice.

Meanwhile, the Phoenix Roadrunners, who have lost only 5 of their last 16 games, will face the heaviest schedule, five clashes, in their late-season drive for both playoff position and a shot at the title.

In interlocking play, the powerful Hershey Bears, defending champions of the American Hockey League's Eastern Division, will be the seventh AHL club to swing West, and the Quebec Aces will wind up their WHL tour with two games.

Hershey, incidentally, will bring West such familiar players as Roger DeJordy, ex-Edmonton Flyer who scored 52 goals for the Bears last season; goalie John Henderson, in the nets for Victoria when the Maple Leafs won the Lester Patrick Cup in 1966; defenseman Ralph Keller, a standout a few years back with both Vancouver and Los Angeles, and a pair of last season's California Seals, Wayne Maxner and Bobby Leiter.

The week's schedule opens Wednesday night with Phoenix in Vancouver to continue a series deadlocked at 4-4-1, although the surging Roadrunners have won four of the last six. Top series scorer has been Del Topoll of Phoenix with 12 points, with veteran Roadrunner winger Lou Jankowski leading in goals with 7. Vancouver will be shooting for its third straight victory in the Canucks' new coliseum.

Wednesday night clashes will send Phoenix to Portland, Vancouver to Seattle and Quebec to San Diego.

The Buckaroos will take the ice with a four-game unbeaten string and a 5-3-1 series edge over Phoenix, but the 'Runners were 2-0-1 in their last three meetings with Portland. Buck Captain Art Jones will take the ice with a six-game goal-scoring streak, longest in the Western League this season. But the top series scorer has been Portland's Cliff Schmautz, who has collected 14 of his 30 points and 7 of his 12 goals against Phoenix.

Seattle will shoot for its fourth straight victory, holding a 5-3-1 series edge over Vancouver, thanks in large part to some tough goaltending (2.50 for seven games) by Don Head. In this series, Vancouver's scoring leaders have been predictable, Bruce Carmichael (8-4-12) and Phil Maloney (2-10-12). But Seattle's leaders have been the tough checking due of Gerry Leonard (6-4-10 and Charlie Holmes (2-8-10).

Quebec, meanwhile, is still looking for its first victory after three games in the West and will run into a San Diego club angry at the American League after a 1-6-1 tour in the East and happy to return to home ice where the Gulls boast the best record (15-4-1) in the Western League.

Top San Diego scorer against the AHL has been Fred Hilts, 8-10-18 in 13 games.

Continued ----------

A pair of Friday night clashes will send Quebec to Phoenix, where the Roadrunners have lost only twice in their last 11 games, and Hershey to Vancouver for the opener of the Bears' Western swing. Phoenix is 4-8-1 against AHL foes but tipped Quebec, 4-2, in a meeting back East. Top Roadrunners against the American League have been Del Topoll (5-11-16) and Tommy McVie (12-3-15).

Hershey comes West unbeaten (3-0-1) against the Western League after scoring 21 goals in four games and averaging 42 shots on goal a contest in the interlocking schedule. Vancouver is 4-9-1 against the AHL but has won four of five games from Eastern opponents since returning home from last fall's swing East.

Saturday night clashes will send San Diego to Phoenix and Hershey to Portland.

The San Diego-Phoenix game is a big one for both clubs, since the two southern arrivals play one another eight more times as they battle for playoff position. San Diego leads 4-2 in the series and it's been a wild one --- 52 goals in six games. Three Gull scorers have been hot against Phoenix --- Len Ronson (6-8-14), Fred Hilts (3-9-12) and Al Nicholson, eight goals in six games.

Portland, meanwhile, is unbeaten against Hershey after a victory (1-0) two years ago and a tie (2-2) in a meeting back East this season. The Bucks are 6-7-1 against the AHL, paced by 14 points apiece by Bill Saunders and Norm Johnson and hot goaltending from Jim McLeod (2.20) and Marv Edwards (2.43).

The week's schedule winds up Sunday night with Phoenix in San Diego for a rematch, Hershey in Seattle to face the only Western League club with a winning (4-2-0) record against the AHL and Vancouver in Portland.

The Bucks have won six of eight from Vancouver, led by goaltending that has sizzled. Marv Edwards is 1.50 for four tests against the Canucks, and Jim McLeod is 1.67. Top series scorer has been Portland's Bill Saunders (7-6-13), but it's been a good series for Vancouver's Barry Watson, who has sniped almost half (5 of 11) of his goals against Portland.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

It was a frantic week in the Western Hockey League.

Portland and Seattle both won a pair on home ice to keep their battle for first place a tight one.

Vancouver won a pair at home before a combined turnout of 16,600 fans which raised Canuck attendance in Vancouver's new coliseum to 38,482 for four clashes --- an average of better than 9,500 a game.

The Canucks and Phoenix got together in the highest-scoring game of the Western League season, with Vancouver taking a 9-6 decision. It was typical of Phoenix in the Roadrunners' stretch drive that has produced 10 victories, 5 defeats and tie in the last 16 games. In the 10 victories, Phoenix goalies have held foes to 15 goals -- a dazzling average of 1.50 a game. In the five defeats, goalies have yielded 32 goals --- an average of 6.4 a contest.

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The 9-6 game produced two hat tricks, the first of the season for both Mike Corbett of Vancouver and veteran Lou Jankowski of Phoenix.

And on Sunday night, in his second game with Seattle, Bob Courcy, obtained from Quebec, scored the third hat trick of the week and the 22nd of the WHL season --- just three short of matching the 25 recorded during the entire last campaign. Courcy wasted no time getting his hat trick started with two goals in the first 138 seconds of action.

SCORING LEADERS

Fred Hilts of San Diego collected only two points (one goal, one assist) last week in the Gulls' final four games in the East, but retained his Western Hockey League scoring lead with 50 points for the season on 22 goals and 28 assists.

Climbing into second was veteran campaigner Del Topoll of Phoenix, who collected six points in his final two games of the week and now has 48 for the season on 17 goals and 31 assists.

San Diego's Len Ronson scored one goal in four games to retain his WHL goal-scoring lead with 27, three more than the 24 of Tom McVie of Phoenix, who failed to collect a red light in three games.

Seattle center Guyle Fielder picked up four assists in two games and leads all playmakers with 35 for the season, four more than runnerup Topoll's 31.

GOALKEEPERS

The 1-2 goalies stayed hot. Jim McLeod of Portland allowed Vancouver one goal in his only test of the week, continues to lead the league with a goals-against average of 1.98, a record-breaking pace.

Don Head of Seattle also allowed one goal in one appearance against Quebec, dropped his average to 2.30 for the campaign, a pace also below the all-time season record of 2.40.

PENALTIES

Vancouver defenseman Larry Mavety was whistled for four minors in four games last week, increased his Western League-leading penalty total to 102 minutes on 46 minors and one match infraction. Tom Polanic of Phoenix is second with 90 minutes off the ice.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Two old pros --- Gordon Vejprava of Vancouver and Del Topoll of Phoenix --- share the Western League's Player of the Week honors after scoring six points each in action last week.

Topoll moved into second in the scoring race as he collected one goal and five assists.

Vejprava moved into a tie for third in the scoring race, scoring four goals and adding two assists. Two of his goals, incidentally, were the important first goal of a game and one was a game-winner.

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LINEUP CHANGES:

Seattle	add	#18	Robert Courcy	RW
	remove	#19	Tom Iannone	LW

WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE --- UPCOMING ACTION

The surging Portland Buckaroos will put a six-game streak, their longest in a year, on the line this week as they attempt to pull away in their bid for a four straight regular-season championship in the Western Hockey League.

The Buckaroos will face four tests, two on the road and two at home, and the big one will be Wednesday night in Seattle to face a Totem club that now trails Portland by six points in the battle for first.

San Diego, meanwhile, will be the busiest team in the league. The Gulls have five games scheduled and four of them are on the road where San Diego has won only four times this season. If the Gulls can get tough away from home, they'll still be in position to challenge for first place.

The week's 10-game schedule opens Tuesday night with San Diego in Phoenix and Seattle in Vancouver.

The Gulls lead in the series, six victories to tow, and it's been a wild one with 69 goals scored in eight clashes. Top series scorers have been Len Ronson with 18 points and Fred Hilts with 14, while Al Nicholson has sniped 9 goals against the Roadrunners. The Gulls, incidentally, have collected two of their four road victories in Phoenix.

Seattle will be playing its last game of the regular season in Vancouver, and the Totems may not be happy about leaving. They own a 4-1-1 record on Canuck ice, lead 6-3-1 in the series and are unbeaten in their last five games against Vancouver. It's been a big series for Don Chiz, Gerry Leonard and Chuck Holmes, each with 10 points against Vancouver. Leonard has scored half of his 12 goals against the Canucks. Top series scorer, however, has been Vancouver's Bruce Carmichael with 13 points.

On Wednesday night, Portland will be in Seattle and Hershey in San Diego.

The Buckaroos are the only Western League team with a winning (4-2-1) record against Seattle, paced by the goaltending (2.28 in the series) of rookie Marv Edward. The Buck attack has been led by "checkers" Larry Leach and Arnie Schmautz, each with 8 points.

Hershey will bring to San Diego a 5-1-1 record against Western League foes. The Bears won two of their first three games on the West Coast in last week's action. The Gulls, meanwhile, are 5-8-1 against the American League but are 4-2 on home ice. San Diego's top scorer against AHL foes has been Fred Hilts with 20 points, including 10 goals.

Three Friday night clashes will send San Diego to Seattle, Portland to Vancouver and Hershey to Phoenix.

Seattle leads the San Diego series 5-4-1, but the Gulls still haven't won on Seattle ice, losing four and tieing one in their first five tests. Top series scorer has been Bill Dineen of Seattle with 13 points, and a pair of ex-Portland goalies, Don Head and Dave Kelly, have sparkled. Head is 2.04 against San Diego, while Kelly is 2.05 against Seattle --- his best record against any opponent. Willie O'Ree has led San Diego scorers with 8 points, while Fred Hilts, league scoring leader, has had his toughest time against Seattle with only 3 points.

Continued ---------

Portland, meanwhile, holds a 7-2 edge over Vancouver and is undefeated on Canuck ice with a 3-0-0 record. Biggest reason has been goalie Marv Edwards, who is 1.50 in four tests against the Canucks. Top series scorers have been Portland's Art Jones (15 points) and Bill Saunders (13).

Hershey will face a Phoenix club that is 4-9-1 against the American League and astoundingly owns a better road record (3-4-1) than a home record (1-5-0) in the interlocking series. Discounting empty-net goals, four of the five Phoenix defeats at home have been by one red light.

San Diego will move to Portland for games both Saturday and Sunday nights, and Vancouver will be in Seattle Sunday night for a rematch.

The Gulls are the only Western League team with a winning (3-2-0) record against Portland, although they were trampled 13-1 in their last appearance on December 23 on Buckaroo ice. Ex-Buck Fred Hilts has paced the San Diego attack, scoring 9 points, including 5 goals, in the four games he's played in the series.

The Gulls may be running into a buzz saw, however, since the Buckaroos will take the ice with the longest home winning streak --- 10 in a row --- in the club's history.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

Portland, individually and collectively, made most of the news last week in the Western Hockey League.

With victories over Phoenix, Hershey and Vancouver, the Bucks stretched their winning streak to six straight --- longest since Portland won seven in a row last February---- and their undefeated string to seven in a row.

The Bucks made it 10 straight on home ice to break the old club record of 9 in a row set between January 1 and February 5 of 1966. In their current string, Portland has outscored opponents by a staggering 57-12 margin, including an edge of 17-1 in opening periods.

Art Jones, meanwhile, had scored goals in seven straight games --- longest string in the league this season --- before he was stopped by Hershey Saturday night. He will take into action this week a nine-game point-scoring string that matches an earlier one by Seattle's Guyle Fielder as the longest in the WHL during the current campaign. Jones' goal-scoring streak, incidentally, was the longest of his professional career.

Bill Saunders of the Buckaroos had a five-game goal-scoring string --- his longest in seven seasons with Portland --- snipped Sunday night by Vancouver.

Hottest single game of the week was turned in by Gordon Redahl, who had a hand in all five of his club's goals in a loss to Quebec. Redahl scored the 23rd hat trick of the Western League season and added two assists. Two more hat tricks will match the 25 scored during the entire last campaign.

Continued --------

SCORING LEADERS

The race for individual scoring honors in the Western Hockey League is tightening up, with San Diego's Fred Hilts, on top most of the campaign, now leading Art Jones of Portland by just one point in a battle of team captains.

Hilts collected four points in three games last week and now has 54 for the season on 25 goals and 29 assists. Jones, meanwhile, picked up eight points in three games to climb into second with 53 points on 21 goals and 32 assists. Tied for third with 49 points each are Len Ronson of San Diego and Del Topoll and Tommy McVie of Phoenix.

Len Ronson of San Diego, meanwhile, sniped two goals in three games last week to retain his Western League lead with 29 for the season. At his current pace, he would wind up with 47 goals --- highest total since Bob Barlow sniped 47 for Seattle in '63. Fred Hilts of San Diego, Bill Saunders of Portland and Tom McVie of Phoenix are knotted for second in goals with 25 each.

Seattle's Guyle Fielder picked up one assist in two games, continues to lead WHL playmakers with 36. Art Jones of Portland has moved into second with 32.

GOALKEEPERS

The Western League's one-two goalies, Jim McLeod of Portland and Don Head of Seattle, posted identical records last week, each yielding five goals in two tests. McLeod continues to lead all netminders with a goals-against average of 2.02, while Head is second at 2.32 and Marv Edwards of Portland third at 2.35. All of the averages are below the Western League all-time season record of 2.40.

PENALTIES

Vancouver defenseman Larry Mavety drew four minors in four games last week, continues to lead the Western League in penalty minutes with 110 on 50 minors and one match infraction. Tom Polanic of Phoenix was whistled for five minors in five games to hold second on an even 100 minutes for the season.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Veteran winger Gordon Redahl of Phoenix collected nine points in five games to capture the Western Hockey League's Player of the Week honors. Redahl scored five of his points in one game against Quebec, including his first hat trick of the Western Hockey League season.

MILESTONES

Some major milestones are drawing close for Western Hockey Leaguers. ART JONES of Portland needs just one goal to hit the 350-mark and just one point to hit the 900 plateau. BRUCE CARMICHAEL of Vancouver is three goals short of an even 300. DICK LAMOUREUX of Phoenix needs four points to hit 400, BILL DINEEN of Seattle needs two goals to hit the 200-mark and GORDON VEJPRAVA of Vancouver needs five goals to hit 200.

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LINEUP CHANGES:

San Diego add #22 Jim Eagle Def. -- remove #22 John Brennaman

Phoenix add #8 Jim Dorey Def.

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WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE --- UPCOMING ACTION

The most crucial two week in the battle for the Western Hockey League's regular-season championship are dead ahead.

The Portland Buckaroos, the Seattle Totems and the San Diego Gulls are running one-two-three in the title chase, with nine points separating the first-place Bucks and the third-place Gulls.

And all three clubs, in the next two weeks, will face perhaps their stiffest challenges of the campaign.

The task for the Totems is obvious. They must swing through the American Hockey League. And no Western League team has posted a winning record on the grueling eight-game journey through the East.

Portland, meanwhile, leading Seattle by five points, will play the next five in a row in Phoenix and San Diego. And in those two cities, the Buckaroos have won only once in seven tests this season.

And San Diego? The Gulls will play four of their next five games --- in a stretch of eight nights --- in the city of Vancouver. And San Diego never has won a hockey game in Vancouver since returning to the Western League in the fall of 1966. The Gulls dropped six straight in Vancouver last season, stretched the losing streak to nine in a row with three losses in this campaign.

This week's nine-game schedule opens Tuesday night with San Diego in Vancouver and Seattle in Quebec.

San Diego has lost just two of its last eight games and suddenly has come alive on the road with a 3-1-1 record in the Gulls' last five games away from home after a 3-17-2 road start this season.

But the Canucks are the only Western League team with a winning (4-3-1) record against San Diego. Vancouver's Stan Gilbertson has paced the Canucks with a 7-3-10 record that includes almost half of his 15 goals against San Diego. The Gulls' Len Ronson has been even hotter in the series with 10 goals in eight games against the Canucks.

Seattle will take a 4-3 record against the American League into Quebec in a series highlighted by goaltending of Jim Armstrong (2.25 against the AHL) and Don Head (2.00). Offensively, Guyle Fielder and Marc Boileau have paced the Totems against the AHL with six points each. Quebec is 4-5-0 against the Western League but is 3-1-0 at home. Top scorer for the Aces against the West has been Andre Lacroix with 14 points.

On Wednesday night, San Diego will be in Vancouver for a rematch and Portland will be in Phoenix.

The Buckaroos, who have lost only twice in the last 11 games and who have scored the jump goal in eight of their last nine clashes, are 6-3-1 against Phoenix, but are 1-3-1 on the Roadrunners' home ice. This has been the biggest series of the season for Portland's Cliff Schmautz, who has collected 15 of his 35 points and 7 of his 15 goals in 10 games against the Roadrunners. Hottest Roadrunner in the series has been Lamoureaux with 8 points.

Continued ------

On Friday night, San Diego will play its third straight game in Vancouver, while Portland will remain in Phoenix for a rematch.

On Saturday night, Seattle will move into Springfield to face a team that is 4-5-0 against the Western League with Howie Menard the Kings' big gun in the series with 11 points, and Portland will move to San Diego.

The Gulls own the best home record (17-5-1), in the Western League and are the only club in the circuit with a winning (4-3-0) record against Portland. The Gulls won both of the first two games played in San Diego. The Gulls' leader against Portland has been ex-Buckaroo Fred Hilts with 11 points on 6 goals and 5 assists in the six games he's played. (He missed one with injuries.) Portland has been paced against San Diego by Art Jones with 10 points on 3 goals and 7 assists.

The week's schedule will wind up Sunday night with Seattle in Providence. The Rhode Island Reds are 5-3-1 against the Western League and 2-1-1 on home ice. Their top scorer against the WHL has been ex-Western Leaguer Eddie Kachur with a 9-2-11 record.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

The Portland Buckaroos made news in the Western Hockey League again last week, both individually and collectively.

Buck Captain Art Jones scored points in all four of his club's clashes to run his still-alive point-scoring string to 13 consecutive games --- longest string in the Western Hockey League this season.

Another Portland string ended, however, Sunday night when San Diego tipped the Buckaroos 5-4 in overtime in Portland. It was the Bucks' first home-ice defeat after 11 consecutive victories in Memorial Coliseum.

The 11 straight home-ice triumphs are a new club record for Portland but fell four short of matching the Western League record of 15 in a row at home set in '63-'64 by the Denver Invaders.

San Diego's overtime victory, incidentally, was the first in seven attempts this season.

Seattle, meanwhile, closed out its season series in Vancouver with a 2-1 victory that left the Totems with a remarkable 5-1-1 record on the Canucks' home ice.

For Portland, it was a bad week for overtimes, the Bucks dropping a 2-1 decision in Seattle and the 5-4 nod at home to San Diego.

Individually, San Diego's Fred Hilts sniped his second hat trick of the season and the 23rd of the Western League campaign in an 8-2 victory over Hershey. The Gulls lead the Western League in hat tricks with eight.

SCORING LEADERS

For the first time this season, Portland Captain Art Jones owns a share of the lead in the battle for individual scoring honors in the Western Hockey League.

Continued ------

Jones and another team captain, Fred Hilts of San Diego, leader most of the campaign, are now tied for first with 59 points each, Jones on 24 goals and 35 assists in 50 games and Hilts on 29 goals and 30 assists in 46 games.

Jones, who has scored an amazing four first goals in his club's last eight games, collected six points last week on three goals and three assists in four games. Hilts scored five points on four goals and one assists in five clashes.

In head-to-head competition over the weekend, Jones moved out in front Saturday night with two goals while Hilts was blanked, but Hilts came back with two points to one for Jones Sunday night to leave the two deadlocked.

San Diego's Len Ronson, meanwhile, collected three goals in five games last week, and leads all Western League snipers with 32 red lights for the season, matching his output for the entire last campaign. Ronson's top challenger is teammate Hilts with 29.

Seattle's Guyle Fielder failed to pick up an assists in four games last week but still leads all WHL playmakers with 36 for the season. It's getting tight, however, with Portland's Jones one back at 35 and San Diego's Warren Hynes third with 34.

GOALKEEPERS

Portland's Jimmy McLeod allowed two goals in one appearance last week to retain his lead among Western Hockey League netminders with a goals-against mark of 2.02 for 1,156 minutes of action.

Seattle's Don Head yielded four goals in two games and continues to rank second with a 2.29 record for 1,756 minutes on the ice.

Both averages, of course, are well below the all-time season low of 2.40 posted by Lorne (Gump) Worsley with Vancouver in 1954.

Rich Charron of Phoenix continues to lead in shutouts with four.

PENALTIES

Rookie Vancouver defenseman Larry Mavety failed to draw a penalty against Seattle Sunday night, ending a string of five straight games with infractions. He drew three minors in the other two games he played, however, and continues to lead the Western Hockey League in penalty minutes with 116 on 53 minors and one match.

Mavety's closest challenger is Tom Polanic of Phoenix with 108 minutes off the ice.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Vetern winger Al Nicholson of the San Diego Gulls collected seven points in five games last week to win Player of the Week honors in the Western Hockey League.

Nicholson's first six points all came on assists. His seventh came on a goal and a big one --- the game-winner in overtime Sunday night against Portland and his 20th of the season.

This is Nicholson's seventh straight Western League campaign with 20 or more goals and his ninth in 10 seasons in the WHL. The spurt moved Nicholson into eighth in the WHL scoring race. He has 48 points on 20 goals and 28 assists in 50 games.

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WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE --- UPCOMING ACTION

The pressure will be intense in the Western Hockey League this week as the surging San Diego Gulls take dead aim at first-place Portland, the Seattle Totems wind up their American League swing with five games in the East and Vancouver and Phoenix battle for their playoff lives.

The Portland club, driving for a fourth-straight regular-season title, still leads Seattle by four points and San Diego by five.

But the Gulls and Totems are the two hottest teams in the league right now. San Diego has lost only two of its last nine games, just three of its last 12. And Seattle has lost only two of its last 12 and is off to a solid (1-1-1) start on its Eastern swing.

Biggest clashes of the week will be in San Diego Wednesday and Saturday nights when the Gulls and Buckaroos battle. A pair of San Diego victories --- and the Gulls own the best (18-5-1) home record in the league --- could cut Portland's to one point.

Just as important to Vancouver and Phoenix will be two meetings up north of these two clubs which apparently will fight it out for the fourth and final playoff position this season.

The week's 10-game schedule opens Tuesday night with Seattle in Baltimore and San Diego in Vancouver.

The Totems now are 5-4-1 against American League foes, paced by scoring of Guyle Fielder (10 points in the interlocking series) and Earl Heiskala (9) and solid goaltending of Don Head (2.60 in the series) and Jim Armstrong (2.60). But Baltimore is unbeaten (4-0-0) on home ice against the WHL, with Joe Daley's 1.75 goals-against average against Western Leaguers a big factor in this success.

San Diego and Vancouver are all square at 5-5-1 going into this last meeting of the year on the Canucks' home ice. The Canucks should be boiling. They have dropped five of their last six at home, have won only once in their last nine games, have scored exactly one goal in five of their last six clashes. Top series scorers have been Len Ronson (11-4-15) for San Diego and Stan Gilbertson (8-4-12) for the Canucks. Gilbertson has collected exactly half of his goals against San Diego.

On Wednesday night, Seattle will move to Hershey and Portland will be in San Diego. The Bears are 6-2-1 against the West and are unbeaten (3-0-1) at home, whipped Seattle 4-2 on the Totems' home ice. Top Hershey scorers against the West have been Mike Nykoluk (13 points) and Roger DeJordy (12).

San Diego, meanwhile, is the only WHL team with a winning (5-3-0) record against Portland, and the Gulls have won all three games played in San Diego. Ex-Buckaroos Fred Hilts, Len Ronson, Willie O'Ree and Gordon Sinclair have collected 16 of San Diego's 26 goals against Portland. Art Jones has paced the Buckaroos with 10 points in the series.

On Friday night, Seattle will be in Rochester and Phoenix in Vancouver.

Continued-----

Rochester is 5-3-1 against the Western League, thanks chiefly to goaltending of ex-San Francisco Seal Bobby Perreault, who is 2.00 for nine interlocking tests. The Totems know about Perreault. He shut them out in Seattle 3-0 in the first meeting with Rochester.

Vancouver holds a 5-4-1 edge over Phoenix, with four games remaining between the contenders for fourth place. On home ice, the Canucks are 3-1-1 in the series. It's been a big series for Tommy McVie and Del Topoll of Phoenix, each with 13 points, and for Gordon Vejprava who has collected the same number for the Canucks. Top series goal scorers are Lou Jankowski (7) for Phoenix and Mike Corbett (6) for Vancouver.

On Saturday night, Portland will be in San Diego for a rematch and Seattle will move to Cleveland. The Barons are 6-2-1 against the WHL, are 3-0-1 at home and boast the single top scorer against the West in Norm Ferguson (14 point, including 10 goals). Seattle defeated Cleveland 4-1 in the first meeting out West.

The schedule winds up Sunday night with Phoenix in Vancouver for a rematch and Seattle concluding its AHL swing in Buffalo. Buffalo is 4-5-0 against the WHL but is 3-1-0 at home. Seattle won the first meeting of these two clubs, 2-1.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

Both at home and on the road, the San Diego Gulls made news last week in the Western Hockey League.

On Saturday night, the Gulls drew the largest crowd, 13,752, of their two seasons back in the Western Hockey League and the largest of the current campaign in the entire WHL.

The fans were rewarded, too, with a 3-1 victory over the Portland Buckaroos.

A check of the paid attendance will be necessary, incidentally, before determining whether a new all-time league attendance mark was set in San Diego. The current paid record is 13,459 set January 26, 1963, in Los Angeles. The turnstile count that night was 13,952.

Even more important to the Gulls' chances of a regular-season championship was the surge of the club on the road.

The Gulls last week went into Vancouver, where they never had won a hockey game, suffering nine straight losses over two seasons, and won two of three from the Canucks. This gave San Diego a four-two record for a two-week, six-game road swing.

And those four victories matched San Diego's total for the first 24 road games the Gulls played this season.

Individually, the longest point-scoring streak of the Western League season ended Friday night in Phoenix where Portland Captain Art Jones was blanked after getting on the scoresheet in 14 consecutive games.

SCORING LEADERS

Portland center Art Jones collected two assists in three games last week, now leads the Western Hockey League scoring race by himself for the first time this season.

Jones, runnerup for the scoring title the past four seasons in a row, now has 62 points on 24 goals and 38 assists.

Continued ------

Tied for second with 60 points each are a pair of San Diego Gulls, Len Ronson and Fred Hilts, Ronson scored six points in four games last week, while Hilts was held to one point in four clashes.

Ronson, meanwhile, sniped three goals in four games and leads the Western League with 35 for the season. Ronson is scoring at a 47-goal pace over a full season, already has passed his previous professional career high of 34 goals with Kitchener-Waterloo in the old Eastern Professional League in '62.

Teammate Hilts is second in goals with 30, after sniping one in four games last week.

Guyle Fielder of Seattle collected four assists in three games last week to lead the league with 40 for the season.

GOALKEEPERS

Portland's Jim McLeod allowed five goals in 113 minutes of action last week, continues to lead Western League netminders with a 2.09 goals against mark which, of course, is a record-breaking pace.

Don Head of Seattle allowed 7 goals in two games, continues to rank second with a goals-against mark of 2.36.

PENALTIES

Phoenix defenseman Tom Polanic is closing in on Vancouver rookie Larry Mavety in the "battle" to lead the Western Hockey League in penalty minutes.

Mavety was whistled for one minor in three games last week, continues to lead the WHL with 118 minutes in penalties on 54 minors and one match infraction.

Polanic was called for a minor and a major in two games last week, holds second with 115 penalty minutes on 50 minors, one major and one misconduct.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

A pair of San Diego Gulls, Len Ronson and John MacMillan, shared Player of the Week honors in the Western Hockey League.

Each collected six points in four games, Ronson on three goals and three assists and MacMillan on one goal and five assists.

It was the third time this season that Ronson has won or shared Player of the Week honors. For MacMillan it was his first appearance on the select list.

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LINEUP CHANGES:

Phoenix	add	#17	Morris Stefaniw	Center
	remove	#8	Jim Dorey	Def.
Vancouver	add	#19	Mike Laughton	Center
	add	#20	Ken Block	Def.
	remove	#18	Barry Watson	LW AND #20 Jean Marc Picard Def.
San Diego	add	#14	Ed Panagabko	Center
	remove	#21	Ross Perkins	Center - Recalled by Detroit-emergency

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WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE --- UPCOMING ACTION

The Portland Buckaroos have opened five points of daylight between themselves and Seattle in their drive for a fourth straight regular-season championship in the Western Hockey League.

And the Bucks will get three chances, two of them at home, this week to increase their league lead.

Seattle, after a 2-4-2 swing through the American League, will return home for two clashes, and San Diego, still strong in title contention although seven points back of Portland, will try to gain ground with three home-ice tests.

Baltimore, meanwhile, last American League club to swing West in this season's interlocking series, will play the first four of five games on the Pacific Coast this week.

The week's nine-game schedule opens Tuesday night with Baltimore in Phoenix.

The Clippers, battling for playoff contention in the AHL, come west with a 4-1-0 record against the Western League, thanks chiefly to the 1.75 goal-tending of a one-time San Francisco Seal, Joe Daley. The Clippers' lineup includes a number of ex-Western League standouts---Tom McCarthy, Jean Marie Cossette, Dick Meissner (first All Star with Los Angeles last season), Les Hunt, Nich Polano and Gilles Boisvert, just to skim the list. Phoenix, meanwhile, is 4-10-1 against the American League and has won just one of six clashes on home ice, (despite 17 points each in the interlocking series by Tommy McVie and Del Topoll). McVie's total includes 12 goals. In an earlier meeting back East, Baltimore tipped Phoenix 5-4.

On Wednesday night, Baltimore will move to San Diego and Phoenix will be in Portland. San Diego is 6-8-1 against the AHL, has won five of seven at home and has been paced in the interlocking series by Fred Hilts, top Western League scorer against the American circuit with a 13-10-23 mark.

Phoenix will be looking for its first victory in Portland after five straight defeats, trails 4-7-1 in the series. The Roadrunners know they must improve on a 6-20-2 road record to make the playoffs. Top series scorers have been Portland's Cliff Schmautz (9-8-17) and Art Jones (5-11-16).

On Friday night, Phoenix will swing to Seattle and Portland will travel to Vancouver.

Seattle is 6-5-0 against Phoenix and 3-1-0 at home despite goaltending of Rick Charron of the Roadrunners, who has played his best (2.25 goals-against mark) against the Totems. Guyle Fielder of Seattle is the top series scorer with a 2-11-13 record, while Del Topoll (3-6-9) has paced Phoenix.

Portland, meanwhile, is 8-2-0 against Vancouver --- biggest domination by any single team over the Canucks --- and more amazingly has won all four games played in Vancouver. Buck goaltending has been the answer. Tony Esposito of the Canucks is a solid 2.96 against Portland but has been beaten by Marv Edwards (1.40 in the series) and Jim McLeod (1.95). Top series scorers are Art Jones (7-10-17) and Bill Saunders (8-6-14) of the Bucks.

Continued ------

On Saturday night, Vancouver will open a two-game set in San Diego and Baltimore will be in Portland.

The San Diego-Vancouver series has been a tight one, the Gulls leading 6-5-1, with a 3-1-1 record at home. The Gulls have won four of the last five from the Canucks. Fantastic in the series has been San Diego's Len Ronson --- 12 goals in 12 games, plus 5 assists, while Stan Gilbertson (8-4-12) and Phil Maloney (5-7-12) have countered for the Canucks. It's been a solid series for the Gulls' Dave Kelly, who is 2.62 against Vancouver.

Portland is dead even at 7-7-1 against the AHL --- so the Baltimore clash will determine the winner of the Bucks' interlocking series. Baltimore handed Portland its worst defeat (5-0) on the Buckaroos' Eastern swing. In fact, it was the Bucks' second-worst loss of the season. Top Bucks against the AHL have been Bill Saunders (7-8-15) and Norm Johnson (5-10-15). Portland goaltending against the American League has sizzled --- 2.19 for Marv Edwards and 2.20 for Jim McLeod.

The week's schedule winds up Sunday night with Vancouver making its last appearance of the regular season in San Diego and Baltimore moving to Seattle. The Totems, after their Eastern swing, now are 6-7-2 against the AHL and must win this one to break even.

ATTENDANCE RECORD SMASHED

It's official now!

A new all-time Western Hockey League attendance record for a single game was set on Saturday night, February 17, in San Diego where the Gulls hosted Portland. The paid turnout was 13,752 to break the old mark of 13,459 set in Los Angeles on January 26, 1963, for a game between the old Blades and the San Francisco Seals.

The total crowd at the San Diego-Portland record-breaker, incidentally, was 14,247.

The new record was threatened in both of San Diego's home games last week against Portland, too. A Wednesday night clash drew 13,148 and the Saturday night game drew 13,542.

Three consecutive Gull-Buckaroo games in San Diego drew a total of 40,442 --- by the largest three-game turnout in the history of the Western Hockey League.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

The big news last week was Portland's two victories in San Diego, 3-0 and 5-3, that meant the difference between the Bucks' seven-point lead over the Gulls and --- if San Diego had won the pair --- a one-point lead and first place for the southerners.

The Buckaroos thus completed a five-game swing through Phoenix and San Diego with three victories --- compared with only one triumph in seven previous games in the south this season.

Also crucial --- to playoff chances --- were Vancouver's two straight victories at home over Phoenix. The Canucks now lead the Roadrunners by three points in the battle for the Western League's fourth and final playoff position. A pair of Phoenix victories would have given the 'Runners a five-point lead over Vancouver.

Continued -----

Seattle, meanwhile, won one, tied one and lost three of its final five games in the East to wind up its swing through the American League with a 2-4-2 record. Two Totem defeats were by a single goal. And that's been the story of AHL success. Against the WHL, American Leaguers have played 16 games decided by a single goal and have won 13 of them.

SCORING LEADERS

Portland Captain Art Jones collected two goals and one assist in two games last week to retain his Western Hockey League scoring lead for the second straight week with 65 points on 26 goals and 39 assists.

Len Ronson of San Diego, who collected four points in three games, is second with a 36-28-64 record, while teammate Fred Hilts is third with 62 points.

Ronson sniped one goal in three games, continues to lead in this department with 36 for the season, four more than the 32 of Hilts, who collected two goals in three tests last week.

Seattle's Guyle Fielder collected four assists in five games last week, continues to lead all playmakers with 44 for the season.

GOALKEEPERS

Portland's Jimmy McLeod made only one appearance in the nets last week but it was a dandy --- a 3-0 shutout in San Diego.

McLeod's league-leading and record-breaking goals-against average now is 1.99 and the shutout was his fourth to boost him into a tie with Rick Charron of Phoenix and Tony Esposito of Vancouver for the league lead.

Marv Edwards of Portland moved past Don Head of Seattle into second place among goalies with a 2.41 goals-against average.

PENALTIES

Larry Mavety, rookie defenseman with the Vancouver Canucks, drew four minors in five games last week to hold his Western Hockey League penalty lead with 126 minutes for the season on 58 minors and one match infraction.

Still in second is Tom Polanic of Phoenix with 120 minutes on 50 minors, two majors and one misconduct.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

A pair of Seattle Totem veterans, Guyle Fielder and Chuck Holmes, shared the Western Hockey League's Player of the Week honors by scoring six points each in five games in American League territory.

Holmes collected four goals and two assists --- including three goals and both assists in one game in Baltimore --- while Fielder scored two goals and earned four assists.

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LINEUP CHANGES:

Phoenix	add	#6	Peter "Pat" Goegan	Def.
	add	#9	Bob Charlebois	LW
	remove	#9	Brian Smith	
	remove	#15	Jack Matheson	

WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE --- UPCOMING ACTION

This will be a crucial week for the two top contenders for the Western Hockey League's regular-season championship --- the Portland Buckaroos and the Seattle Totems.

The Buckaroos, bidding for a fourth straight regular-season title, now lead the Totems by four points. Portland has 14 games to play, Seattle 13.

Each club will see action three times this week, with Portland at home for all three clashes and Seattle playing two at home and one in Portland in the first of six remaining head-to-head battles between the bitter rivals.

After this week, the Totems will have the best of the schedule. They will face six home games and four on the road. Portland will have four home tests and seven on the road.

A six-game schedule opens Tuesday night with the Baltimore Clippers in Vancouver for the final clash of an 80-game interlocking series between the Western and American Hockey Leagues.

The American League already has wrapped up the series and winning the close ones was the biggest single reason. Seventeen interlocking games were decided by a single goal---- and the American Leaguers won 14 of them.

Vancouver, winners only 3 times in their last 10 home games, is 4-10-1 against the AHL, while Baltimore owns a 5-3-1 record against the West. Top interlocking series scorers for the Canucks have been Phil Maloney and Gordon Vejprava with identical 6-7-13 records.

On Wednesday night, San Diego will be in Portland and Vancouver will be in Seattle.

The Gulls and Buckaroos are all square (5-5-0) in their season series, although Portland has won four of the last six. Strangely, the Bucks, with the best (19-8-2) home record in the WHL, will be out to snap a three-game winless string in their Memorial Coliseum. And the Gulls, weak on the road earlier in the season, have posted a 6-2-1 record in their last nine outings away from home. Top series scorer has been Art Jones of Portland (5-8-13), while Fred Hilts (7-5-12) has paced the Gulls against the Bucks.

Seattle, meanwhile, has a seven-game unbeaten string (5-0-2) alive against Vancouver, leads 7-3-2 in the series --- but is only 2-2-1 on home ice against the Canucks. Tony Esposito of Vancouver owns his best goals-against average (2.90) against Seattle, but Don Head of the Totems has been even tougher (2.44) against the Canucks. Top series scorer is Bruce Carmichael of Vancouver with a 9-5-14 record, while "checkers" Gerry Leonard (6-5-11) and Chuck Holmes (3-8-11) have paced the Totems against the Canucks.

Seattle will move to Portland for the big one Friday night. The Bucks lead 4-3-1 and are 2-1-1 at home in a crucial series so bitter that 12 major penalties --- 6 on each club have been whistled in the first eight games. All three Portland losses, incidentally have been by a single goal. Goaltending has sizzled with Marv Edwards of the Bucks 2.22 against the Totems, and ex-Buck Don Head 2.38 against his former teammates. Top series scorers, all with eight points, have been Arnie Schmautz and Larry Leach of Portland and Larry Lund and Bill Dineen of Seattle.

Continued --------

On Saturday night, Phoenix will be in Seattle to continue a strange series. Seattle leads it, 7-5-0, and has won four out of five on home ice. Yet the 'Runners have outshot the Totems, 341 to 309.

Phoenix goalie Rick Charron, with an overall goals-against mark of 3.65 for the season, has turned tiger against Seattle with a 2.30 average against the Totems. Don Head has answered for Seattle with a 2.14 record. Top series scorer is Seattle's Guyle Fielder (2-12-14), while Del Topoll has paced Phoenix with a 3-6-9 mark.

The week's action winds up Sunday night in Portland with the final game of the regular season between the Buckaroos and Phoenix. Portland has clinched the series with a 7-5-1 record, including five victories in six games on home ice. Yet the Roadrunners have won four of the last six and actually have outshot the Buckaroos, 394 to 383. A number of shooters will hate to see the series end. Cliff Schmautz of Portland is 9-10-19 against Phoenix, Art Jones is 6-13-19 and Bill Saunders has sniped nine goals. Walt McKechnie of the Roadrunners has collected 9 of his 20 goals, meanwhile, against Portland.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

Four Western League teams wound up their season series against the American League last week, and there were no winners because the close ones were lost.

Portland tied Baltimore 1-1 to finish at 7-7-2. And five of Portland's seven defeats were by a single goal. The Bucks actually outscored AHL opponents 49-34.

Phoenix tripped the Clippers 5-3 to finish at 5-10-1 in the interlocking series. And discounting empty net goals, the 'Runners lost four times by one red light.

San Diego was tipped, 4-3, by Baltimore to finish at 6-9-1 despite a 60-57 edge in goals scored.

And Seattle finished 7-7-2 after stopping Baltimore in the windup, 5-2. The last two Totem defeats were by a single goal/

Meanwhile, the first Western League series to wind up was completed in San Diego, with the Gulls losing 7-6-1 to the Vancouver Canucks. Top star of this series, without much question, was San Diego's Len Ronson, who punctured Vancouver for 19 points on 13 goals and 6 assists in the 14 games.

One jinx ended last week when Phoenix won its first game in Portland, 6-5 in overtime. But another one, and an amazing one, continued. The Portland Buckaroos, trailing 4-1 at the start of the final period, exploded for five third-period goals to whip Vancouver, 6-4 on the Canucks' home ice. And Portland is a perfect 5-0-0 for the season in Vancouver. Every Western League team now has beaten every Western League opponent in every rink in the circuit -- except that Vancouver hasn't won one at home against the Buckaroos. The victory increased Portland's season record against Vancouver to 9-2 --- biggest domination by one club over another during the current campaign.

The other highlight of last week's WHL schedule was the sudden turn of events in San Diego. The Gulls, in their first 24 home games, posted an 18-5-1 record that was the best in the league. Last week they dropped three more at home to run their home-ice losing streak to five straight.

Continued -----

SCORING LEADERS

Portland Captain Art Jones collected six points (one goal, five assists) in three games last week, ran his current point-scoring string to five straight games and for the third straight week was alone at the top of the Western Hockey League scoring race.

Jones, who won his only previous scoring title with 100 points in 1961 but who has been runnerup for the last four straight seasons, has collected 71 points on 27 goals and 44 assists.

Still challenging is Len Ronson of San Diego, who scored five points (two goals, three assists) in three games last week and has 69 points for the season.

Ronson's points last week included two more goals as he remained the Western League leader with 38 for the season. Portland's Bill Saunders collected four goals in three games to move into a tie with Fred Hilts of the Gulls for second. Each has 33.

Seattle's Guyle Fielder collected two assists in two games, holds the league lead with 46 for the seasnn. Jones of Portland is second with 44.

GOALKEEPERS

Jimmy McLeod of Portland suffered his worst night of the season in yielding six goals to Phoenix in an overtime clash, but bounced back with a one-goal effort in overtime against Baltimore and continues to pace Western League goalies with a 2.09 average for the campaign.

Portland teammate Marv Edwards ranks second at 2.46, while Don Head of Seattle is third at 2.49.

PENALTIES

Vancouver's rookie defenseman, Larry Mavety, was whistled for six minors in three games last week and continues to lead the Western League in penalty minutes with 138 on 64 minors and one match infraction.

Still second is Phoenix blueliner Tom Polanic, who drew two minors in three games and now has 124 minutes for the season.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Art Jones, veteran center of the Portland Buckaroos, captured the Western Hockey League's Player of the Week honors by collecting six points in three games.

Jones, in moving into the Western League scoring lead during the past month, has collected at least one point in 19 of the last 21 games he has played. He has picked up a total of 34 points in those 21 clashes on 14 goals and 20 assists.

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LINEUP CHANGES:

Vancouver	add	#18	Barry Watson	LW
	remove	#4	Bob Lemieux	Def

WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE --- UPCOMING ACTION

The sizzling Portland Buckaroos, unbeaten in their last five games and losers only once in their last eight clashes, can take giant strides this week toward a fourth straight regular-season championship in the Western Hockey League.

The Buckaroos, leading second-place Seattle by six points, will play in four of the six games scheduled. Three of the four are on the road, and three of the four are against the San Diego Gulls.

And for the Gulls, this is THE week of decision. If they lose two of three to the Buckaroos, they will be eliminated from championship competition.

Seattle, meanwhile, will be at home twice, with the second clash a Saturday night "four pointer" against Portland.

Vancouver's Canucks, leading Phoenix by five points in a battle for the fourth and final playoff position, can do nothing this week but watch the papers and see if the Roadrunners can close the gap in two tough road tests.

With three weeks left in the regular season, this is the picture:

Team	Left	Home	Road	Points	Points	Highlights
Portland	11	4	7	74	96	Eight of last 11 vs. San Diego & Seattle
Seattle	10	6	4	68	88	Five of last 10 games vs. Portland
San Diego	11	7	4	58	80	Eight of last 11 vs. Phoenix & Portland
Vancouver	6	2	4	53	75	Two games left in Phoenix are the key
Phoenix	8	4	4	48	74	Five of last 11 games vs. San Diego

The week's schedule opens Tuesday night with Portland in San Diego, and the Gulls won't need any pep talks. They've lost six straight, including five in a row at home to match the longest home losing streak in two years.

The Bucks, a torrid 19-8-1 against Western League foes since December 9, own a 6-5-0 edge in their toughest series and are 2-3 in San Diego. But Portland has won the last three in a row and five of the last seven. Art Jones has paced the Bucks in the series with 14 points, but Norm Johnson leads in goals with eight and has scored five of his last six against San Diego. Fred Hilts (7-5-12) is the top Gull in the series. Nineteen of San Diego's 30 goals against Portland have been scored by one-time Buckaroos. Hottest goalie is Jimmy McLeod --- 1.00 for four tests.

On Wednesday night, Phoenix will be in Seattle for the windup of a series the Totems lead 8-5-0, winning five of six on home ice. Team leaders in the series are Guyle Fielder (2-13-15) for the Totems and Walt McKechnie (3-7-10) for the 'Runners. Phoenix goalie Rick Charron has sparkled against Seattle with a 2.45 average. Don Head (2.14) and Jim Armstrong (2.50) have answered for Seattle.

On Thursday night, Portland will be in San Diego for a rematch, while on Saturday Phoenix will move to San Diego and Portland will be in Seattle.

Continued ----------

The Gulls are 5-3-1 for the season against Phoenix, but the Roadrunners own a 2-1-1 edge for the last four games. San Diego has won three of four at home.

Al Nicholson has sparkled at a goal-a-game pace (9 in 9 clashes) against Phoenix, while San Diego's top overall scorer in the series is Len Ronson (7-11-18). Walt McKechnie with 10 points, all on assists, has paced Phoenix.

Portland will take a 5-3-1 series edge to Seattle where the teams are all even in four meetings --- two victories each. All three Buckaroo losses have been by a single goal.

Art Jones and Arnie Schmautz have paced the Buck attack against Seattle with 10 points each, while Larry Leach leads in goals with five. Bill Dineen (4-5-9) has been the Totems' leader. Marv Edwards of Portland is a hot 2.22 against Seattle, while Don Head has had more trouble (still a solid 2.88) against his ex-Portland teammates than against any Western League foe.

The week's schedule winds up Sunday night with San Diego in Portland for the Gull-Buckaroo series finale.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

Last week's biggest explosion in the Western League delighted Portland's largest crowd of the season, 8,974, as the Buckaroos scored five straight goals and then held on for a 5-3 victory over Seattle. The result meant the difference between a two-point and a six-point lead in the standings for Portland.

For the first time this season, Jim McLeod of Portland and Don Head of Seattle faced one another after the trade of last summer.

And the Buckaroos and Totems are still bitter rivals in every way. Four major penalties were whistled, two on each club, bringing the season total to 16 majors in just nine games between Portland and Seattle. Eight have been called on each club.

The Western League's series against the American League ended on a winning note, Vancouver stopping Baltimore 7-1, but the AHL still won the series with a 43-30-7 record. And those one-goal decisions did it. The AHL won 14 of 17 clashes decided by one red light.

Seattle stretched its undefeated string against Vancouver to eight straight games with a 7-2 victory highlighted by Don Chiz' first hat trick of the year and the 25th of the Western League season --- matching the output for the last campaign.

Individually, Bill Saunders of Portland must hate the number "six." He scored against San Diego to make it five straight games with goals, then was stopped by Seattle. It was the third time this season that Saunders has put together a five-game goal-scoring streak only to be stopping in the sixth clash.

SCORING LEADERS

Portland Captain Art Jones scored seven points (four goals, three assists) in three games last week to take nine-point lead in his battle for a first Western League scoring championship since 1961.

Continued ------

Jones now has 78 points on 31 goals and 47 assists, while Len Ronson, who was blanked in one appearance last week, is runnerup with 69 points.

Ronson, although stopped last week, continues to lead in goals with 38, while Bill Saunders of Portland, with one goal in three games last week, moved into second with 34 for the season. Fred Hilts of San Diego, who has missed the Gulls' last three games with injuries, is third with 33.

Guyle Fielder of Seattle picked up three assists in three games last week, continues to lead all playmakers with 49 for the season; Jones is second with 47.

PENALTIES

Vancouver's rookie defenseman, Larry Mavety, drew three minors in two games last week and continues to lead the Western League in penalty minutes with 140. Tom Polanic of Phoenix is second with 132 minutes and Seattle forward Earl Heiskala has moved into contention with 124.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Player of the Week honors were shared by Art Jones of the Portland Buckaroos and Seattle winger Bill Dineen. Each scored seven points in three games, Jones on four goals and three assists and Dineen on two goals and five assists.

MILESTONES

The next point scored by Norm Johnson will be the 800th of the Portland Buckaroo center's Western Hockey League career. And GORDON VEJPRAVA of Vancouver needs just one goal to hit the 200-mark. In addition, BILL SAUNDERS of Portland now has 496 Western League points, needs just four more to hit the 500 plateau.

TORRID PLAYERS

Art Jones of the Portland Bucks, who already owns the longest point-scoring streak (14 games) of the Western League season, is off on another tear . . . he'll take an eight-game streak into action this week, has scored 16 points in those eight clashes . . . Jones has scored points in 22 of Portland's last 24 games. . . Bob Kabel of Phoenix and Mike Laughton of Vancouver both have five-game scoring strings alive . . . Don Chiz of Seattle has collected six goals in his last four games after scoring five in his previous 22 in a row. . . Bill Dineen of the Totems has scored 10 points in his last four games after scoring 10 in his previous 22 straight . . Larry Lund of Seattle has eight points in his last four games and Earl Heiskala of the Totems has sniped seven goals in his last eight contests.

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WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE ----UPCOMING ACTION

This is the week of decision for the Seattle Totems in their drive for a first regular-season championship in the Western Hockey League since 1959.

Trailing first-place Portland by five points, the Totems will play in four of seven Western League games scheduled this week --- the first three in a row against third-place San Diego and the fourth against the Buckaroos in a "four pointer."

A hot week would put Seattle in strong position for a final-week run at Portland. But a cold one would just about eliminate the Totems from title contention.

Portland, meanwhile, seeking a fourth straight regular-season title, needs only one victory in three tests this week to clinch at least second place.

And Vancouver, leading Phoenix by three points in the fight for the fourth and final playoff position, can widen its margin this week as the Canucks play three games to only one for the Roadrunners.

This is the picture in brief as the next-to-last week of the regular campaign begins:

Team	Points	Games Left	Home	Road	Poss. Points	Games Left Against
Portland	76	7	3	4	90	Seattle 4, Vancouver 3
Seattle	71	8	4	4	87	Portland 4, San Diego 3, Vancouver 1
San Diego	63	7	4	3	77	Phoenix 4, Seattle 3
Vancouver	53	6	2	4	65	Portland 3, Phoenix 2, Seattle 1
Phoenix	50	6	4	2	62	San Diego 4, Vancouver 2

The week's schedule opens Wednesday night with San Diego, losers just once in their last four games, in Seattle to face the Totems who have lost just once in their last seven games and Vancouver, 5-2-0 in their last seven outings, in Portland.

Seattle and San Diego are dead even at 5-5-1 in their season series, with the Totems 4-1-1 against the Gulls on home ice. Offensively, it's been a hot series for Bill Dineen (6-7-13) and Guyle Fielder (2-9-11) of Seattle and Willie O'Ree (5-5-10) of San Diego. A pair of ex-Portland Buckaroos have sizzled in the nets. Don Head of Seattle is 2.17 against San Diego for 471 minutes of action, while Dave Kelly owns his best record, 1.78 for 236 minutes, against the Totems.

Portland, meanwhile, is 9-2-0 against Vancouver --- biggest dominance of one opponent by another in the Western League this season. Six Portland players have scored at a point-a-game clip or better against Vancouver, paced by Art Jones (7-12-19) and Bill Saunders (9-7-16). No Canuck has hit the point-a-game clip against the Bucks, Phil Maloney leading Vancouver with an 0-9-9 record. Portland goaltending in the series has been astounding. Against Vancouver, Marv Edwards is 1.83 for 360 minutes and Jim McLeod is 1.95 for 246 minutes.

On Thursday night, Seattle will be in San Diego for a rematch, and the Totems have had problems on the Gulls' home ice --- just one victory in five games.

A Friday night rematch sends Portland to Vancouver --- and just the reverse is true in this series. The Buckaroos have whipped the Canucks five times in five games this season on Vancouver ice.

Continued ---

On Saturday night, Seattle will be in San Diego for a third straight meeting with the Gulls and Vancouver will play the first of a two-game set in Phoenix.

The Canuck-Roadrunner clash is all-important to the playoff chances of both clubs. The Canucks lead the 'Runners by three points and each team has six games to play. But Phoenix has four home games left to two for Vancouver.

The Canucks lead in their series with Phoenix, 7-4-1, and have won four straight from the Roadrunners. But Vancouver has won only two of five games played in Phoenix. Top series scorers are Gordon Vejprava (6-9-12) and Bruce Carmichael (5-9-14) for Vancouver and Del Topoll (5-10-15) and Tommy McVie (6-8-14) for Phoenix. Leading goal scorers in the series are Mike Corbett of the Canucks with eight and Lou Jankowski of the 'Runners with seven.

The week's schedule winds up Sunday night with Portland in Seattle to continue the roughest series of the Western Hockey League season.

It's not particularly common to spotlight penalty figures, but the totals after 10 Buckaroo-Totem games are not particularly common, either. The Totems have been whistled for 163 minutes on 54 minors, 9 majors and 1 misconduct, while the Bucks have been sentenced to 162 minutes on 56 minors, 8 majors and 1 misconduct. The 10-game totals --- 325 minutes on 110 minors, 17 majors and 2 misconduct --- indicate a distinct lack of love between the two top championship contenders.

The Buckaroos lead 5-3-2 in the series and are .500 in Seattle at 2-2-1. And all three Portland losses have been by a single goal. Portland's attack has been paced by Art Jones with 11 points, Arnie Schmautz with 10 and Larry Leach with 9, while Bill Dineen has led Seattle with 9. It's been the hottest series of the season Don Head of Seattle is 2.66 against his seven-season teammates in Portland.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

There was no question about the two highlights of action last week in the Western Hockey League.

First, the San Diego Gulls turned on the Portland Buckaroos with two victories and a tie in three games for five of six possible points. The Gulls, in the process, won their season series from first-place Portland by a 7-6-1 margin. The Bucks have a winning record against every other club.

Ironically, it was ex-Buckaroos who killed their former teammates. In the nets, Dave Kelly, who started the season in Portland, held the Bucks to five goals in three games for a 1.67 goals-against average for the week. And the game-winning goals in both of San Diego victories were scored by Gordon Sinclair, who was traded by Portland at the start of last season.

The week's other highlight was a turnout of 13,070 in Seattle to watch the Totems and Buckaroos battle to a penalty-filled 2-2 overtime tie. The crowd was Seattle's largest of the season.

Continued ------

SCORING LEADERS

Portland center Art Jones continues to lead Western Hockey League scorers with 81 points on 31 goals and 50 assists but saw his lead over Len Ronson of San Diego cut from nine to seven points last week.

Ronson picked up five points on two goals and three assists in five games and now has a season record of 74 points on 40 goals and 34 assists. Jones earned three assists in four games last week.

Ronson's 40 goals lead the circuit, while Bill Saunders of Portland is second with 35, including one in four games last week.

And Seattle's Guyle Fielder continues to lead in assists with 51, collecting two in two games last week. But Jones now is just one back with 50.

GOALKEEPERS

Portland's Jim McLeod was nicked for eight goals in two games last week, and saw his goals-against mark rise from 2.08 to 2.20. But he still leads the Western League and his average is still well below the all-time league record of 2.40.

Marv Edwards of Portland is second with a 2.44 mark, while Don Head of Seattle is third at 2.52. Both Head and Edwards yielded five goals in two appearances last week.

PENALTIES

For the first time since Christmas, there is a new Western Hockey League penalty leader.

It wasn't entirely "fair," however, since Vancouver defenseman Larry Mavety didn't play last week and his penalty total remained at 140 minutes on 65 minors and one match infraction.

Phoenix defenseman Tom Polanic drew one misconduct in two games last week and increased his season total to 142 minutes on 56 minors, 2 majors and 2 misconducts to take over the lead.

A strong challenger now is Seattle forward Earl Heiskala with 132 minutes on 44 minors, 5 majors and 2 misconducts. Heiskala drew his fifth major last week against Portland to move into a tie for first with Jim (Red Eye) Hay of the Buckaroos.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Three San Diego Gulls -- Len Ronson, Alex Faulkner and Warren Hynes --- scored five points in four games last week to pace Western League scorers. But Player of the Week honors go to San Diego goalie Dave Kelly, who stopped first-place Portland with five goals in three clashes. The Bucks in their seven previous games had scored 34 goals for an average of almost five a contest. Kelly dropped his goals-against average during the week from 3.01 to 2.86 and in his last 11 games has allowed only 25 goals for a 2.27 average for that stretch.

#-30- # # # #

WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE --- UPCOMING ACTION

The Portland Buckaroos can wrap up their fourth straight regular-season championship in the Western Hockey League --- and their sixth in the last seven years --- with a victory at home over the Seattle Totems Wednesday night.

That's the picture as the final week of action of the Western League's 20th season gets under way.

The Buckaroos, by tipping the Totems 2-1 in Seattle Sunday night, increased their lead over the Totems to five points --- with four games left for each club. The Totems and Bucks will clash in three of the last four, and even one Totem loss will eliminate Seattle.

A Totem victory Sunday night, of course, would have cut Portland's lead to one point and would have set the stage for a battle right to the wire --- although it's still possible.

Meanwhile, Vancouver and Phoenix will clash on the Roadrunners' home ice Tuesday night in the biggest single game of the season for either club.

A Vancouver victory would put the Canucks five points ahead of the 'Runners in a battle for the fourth and final playoff position and would force Phoenix to win at least three of their final four games against San Diego to stay in contention.

A Phoenix victory, on the other hand, would cut the Canucks' lead to a single point. And the Roadrunners would have four games left --- all against San Diego --- to two for the Canucks, who must play No. 1 Portland and No. 2 Seattle in their final two clashes.

This week's 10-game schedule opens with the Tuesday night crucial in Phoenix. Vancouver leads 7-5-1 in the series but has won only two of six on the Roadrunners' ice, where Phoenix will skate into action with a three game home winning streak.

Vancouver, incidentally, has not scored a goal in the Canucks' last 131 minutes and 6 seconds of action and is threatening mildly the longest goal drouth in WHL history,--- 182 minutes and 29 seconds by Victoria in 1949-50. Ironically, just before the scoreless string started, the Canucks scored four times in 13½ minutes against Portland on the Buckaroos' home ice.

Top scorers in the Vancouver-Phoenix series with 15 points each are Gordon Vejprava of the Canucks and Del Topoll of the Roadrunners. Goal-scoring leaders are Mike Corbett of Vancouver with eight and Lou Jankowski of Phoenix with seven.

On Wednesday night, Phoenix will be in San Diego and Seattle in Portland.

For the Totems, it'll be now or never. And they trail 3-6-2 in the Buckaroo series --- just about Portland's margin over Seattle. Art Jones of the Bucks is the top series scorer with 12 points, while Bill Dineen has paced Seattle with 9. But the big difference has been rookie goalie Marv Edwards of the Bucks. He's held Seattle to 2.03 goals a game for 563 minutes of action.

San Diego, meanwhile, leads 5-4-1 in the series with Phoenix --- but the complexion of this rivalry has changed in the last half of the season. The Gulls won four of the first five. Phoenix is 3-1-1 for the last five tests.

Continued ----------

It's been a wild series for Len Ronson of the Gulls (19 points in 10 games) and for teammate Al Nicholson, 9 goals in 10 clashes. Phoenix leaders have been Walt McKechnie and Tommy McVie, each with 11 points.

On Thursday night, Vancouver will wind up its season series with Seattle on Totem ice. Seattle holds an 8-3-2 edge, paced by 13 points from both Larry Lund and Don Chiz and the 2.39 goaltending of Don Head. Top series scorer and goal scorer has been Vancouver's Bruce Carmichael --- 14 points and 9 goals.

Friday night action sends San Diego to Phoenix for a rematch and Portland to Vancouver.

And Portland's record in Vancouver is record-setting --- six games, six victories.

There's no mystery about the reason. Portland goalie Marv Edwards has faced the Canucks seven times this season and has allowed them 1.57 goals a game. He has played all six games in Vancouver and has been even more unbelievable. His record on Vancouver ice is a staggering 1.17 for 420 minutes of action.

This has been a big series for Portland's Art Jones (21 points in 13 games) and for Bill Saunders, 10 goals. Answering for the Canucks has been Phil Maloney with 12 points all on assists.

In Saturday night rematch, San Diego will stay in Phoenix and Portland will return to Seattle, and the regular season will wind up Sunday night with Phoenix in San Diego and Seattle in Portland.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

Sentimentality? In the Western Hockey League? Forget it!

On Wednesday night in Portland, the Buckaroos threw a night that included dozens of gifts for winger Arnie Schmautz, who is calling it quits after 13 professional seasons.

The visiting Vancouver Canucks spoiled the evening by stopping Portland 4-2 before the Buckaroos' largest mid-week crowd, 7,388, of the season. And the worst of the guests was Phil Maloney, who set up three Vancouver goals.

Two nights later, the Canucks threw a night --- and more wonderful gifts --- for all-time great Maloney, and Vancouver's largest crowd of the year, 12,583, turned out. Portland won, 3-0, and you probably know that it was Arnie Schmautz who scored the first and game-winning goal for the Bucks and set up the insurance tally.

Otherwise, two types of explosions highlighted action last week --- attendance and fists. Check the attendance first --- 13,672 in San Diego, second largest crowd of the year, for a game against Seattle . . . the 7,388 mentioned in Portland . . . the 13,583 mentioned in Vancouver . . . the second-largest crowd of the year (9,368) cheering Phoenix over Vancouver as Rick Charron posted his league-leading fifth shutout of the campaign . . and finally a throng of 12,068, Seattle's third-largest crowd of the season, disappointed as the Totems lost that big one to Portland.

Continued -------

Seattle and San Diego, meanwhile, really turned on one another. They played three games. The first two produced 35 minors, 8 majors and 2 misconducts for a total of 130 minutes in penalties. The third quieted down except that one major was whistled on both clubs. San Diego, in summary, drew five majors in three games after drawing seven in the Gulls' first 65 games of the season. The Totems now have 26 for the year --- most by any WHL club since San Francisco drew 29 in 1962-63.

SCORING LEADERS

With three points in three games last week, Portland Captain Art Jones increased his Western League scoring lead to eight points over Len Ronson of San Diego, who collected two points in three games. Jones now has 84 points on 32 goals and 52 assists in his drive for a first scoring title since 1961. Ronson has 76 points on 41 goals and 35 assists.

Ronson sniped one goal in his three tests and still leads the league with his 41 for the season. He already has a career record. Bill Saunders of Portland, meanwhile, collected two in three games and has 37 for the year --- tieing his career record --- to rank second.

In assists, Guyle Fielder of Seattle picked up two in four games and still leads with 53 as he tries to top the league for the sixth straight year, the 10th time in the last 11 seasons and the 12th time overall. Top challenger --- and close --- is Art Jones of Portland with 52. Jones never has led the league in assists.

GOALKEEPERS

It could be a race to the wire now between a pair of Portland Buckaroo teammates for the lowest goals-against average among Western League netminders.

Jimmy McLeod still leads with 2.26 mark --- up from 2.20 a week ago after he yielded four goals in his only appearance last week.

But rookie Marv Edwards is a challenging second now at 2.34 after giving up only one goal in two tests last week. Seattle's Don Head yielded only seven goals in three three games last week and still is not out of the race at 2.52.

PENALTIES

The tightest Western League "race" of all at the moment is the battle to lead the circuit in penalty minutes. As the final week of action starts, it's Tom Polanic of Phoenix in front with 144 minutes, Earl Heiskala of Seattle second with 143 and Larry Mavety of Vancouver third with 142. Heiskala made the biggest "advance" of the week with 17 minutes in four games on six minors and one major. Mavety drew one minor in three games and Polanic one minor in one game.

If Heiskala finishes on top, he'll be the first winger to lead the WHL in penalty minutes since Duke Edmundson finished first with New Westminster in 1958.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

The snipers weren't particulary not last week --- Seattle's Guyle Fielder and Bill Dineen leading the way with four points each in four games. But it would have taken quite an explosion to knock rookie Marv Edwards out of WHL Player of the Week honors. Edwards played two games, yielded one goal --- and both tests were on the road. He wins going away after a shutout in Vancouver and a 32-save one-goal effort in Seattle. # # -30- # # # #

WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE -- UPCOMING ACTION

It's a brand new season as the Western Hockey League playoffs get under way this week with the defending Lester Patrick Cup champion Seattle Totems battling the Phoenix Roadrunners and the league champion Portland Buckaroos tangling with the San Diego Gulls.

The Buckaroos, of course, wrapped up their fourth straight regular-season title last week --- a feat amazing when you consider that no other club in WHL history ever won more than two straight championships.

The Bucks will begin playoff action by hosting third-place San Diego Wednesday night in Portland. These clubs then will rest until Tuesday night, April 9th, when they will meet again in Portland in the second of the best-of-seven series.

Seattle, meanwhile, will host fourth-place Phoenix on both Friday and Saturday nights to open this best-of-seven set.

Taking a look at each series:

Portland vs. San Diego is a natural between the league's two highest-scoring clubs who together boast six of the WHL's top ten scorers, including champion Art Jones of Portland and runnerup Len Ronson of San Diego. And the league's four highest goal scorers -- Ronson and Fred Hilts of the Gulls and Jones and Bill Saunders of the Bucks -- will be in action.

San Diego was the only Western League team with a winning (7-6-1) record against Portland, although the Bucks led in goals (45-41) and shots on goal (415-405). The Gulls were 4-2-1 at home and 2-5-0 in Portland. The Bucks got the jump, incidentally, by scoring first in 9 of 14 clashes.

Top series scorers were Art Jones (16 points) for Portland and Fred Hilts and Warren Hynes (13 each) for San Diego. Hottest goalies were Jimmy McLeod (1.94) for Portland and Dave Kelly (2.27) for San Diego.

Adding spice to this series is the fact that Gull Coach Max McNab once played for Buck Coach Hal Laycoe at New Westminster, plus the presence of seven ex-Buckaroos on the San Diego roster. The rivalry was tense this season. San Diego handed the Bucks their worst loss (7-1) of the entire campaign, and Portland handed the Gulls their worst defeat (13-1) of the season.

This is the eighth straight season in the playoffs for the Buckaroos, who won Lester Patrick Cups in 1961 and 1965 and were in the finals in 1966. It's the first playoff for San Diego, of course, since 1950, days of the old Skyhawks.

Portland finished the season hot, five victories in the club's last six games, while the Gulls finished cold, (two victories) in their last nine clashes.

The Totem-Roadrunner series, meanwhile, matches the two clubs with the best records in the league at winning the close ones and two teams with five of the seven most penalized players in the circuit. So it could be rugged going.

The Totems won the season series against Phoenix 9-5-0, although the Roadrunners scored first eight times in 14 games and actually led in shots on goal, 400-376.

Continued ---

The Totems won six of seven at home, were 3-4-0 in Phoenix.

It was a series of "streaks." Seattle won the first four in a row. Phoenix took five of the next six. And the Totems closed out with four straight victories.

Top series scorers were rookie Walt McKechnie and Del Topoll (11 points each) for Phoenix and Guyle Fielder with a whopping 19 points for Seattle. Toughest goalies were Don Head (2.25) for the Totems and Rick Charron (2.60) for the "Runners. This was Charron's lowest average against any club.

The clubs finished the regular season on contrasting notes. The second-place Totems won only two of their last seven games as the offense went dead, producing only 10 goals in that stretch. Phoenix, meanwhile, clinched the fourth playoff spot with a six-game winning streak (ended Sunday night) that was the longest in the entire league this season.

This, obviously, is the first playoff action for new Phoenix. It is Seattle's 14th appearance in the playoffs. The Totems won the Lester Patrick Cup in 1959 and last spring when they roared past Vancouver in four straight in the finals.

One note of possible interest. In the last half of the season, Seattle posted a 16-16-4 record for 36 points in the standings. Phoenix was 17-18-1 for 35 points.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

The big news last week was Portland's fourth-straight regular-season title and the Buckaroos' sixth in their last seven campaigns --- a record unmatched in professional hockey history outside the National League.

In the process, the Buckaroos posted the best defensive record in the history of the Western League, giving up only 168 goals to break the record of 174 shared by the Vancouver hockey clubs of both 1954 and 1958.

Attendance made news, too. Phoenix drew its largest crowd of the year, 10,087, as the Roadrunners clinched fourth place. Portland drew its biggest crowd, 9,181, as the Buckaroos wrapped up the title. And Seattle snapped a four-year jinx by stopping Portland before the Totems' second-biggest turnout of the season -- 12,087.

The closing surge of Phoenix was noteworthy in that five consecutive game-winning goals in the six-game winning streak were scored by rookies --- the first two by Walt McKechnie and the last three by Maurice Stefaniw.

SCORING LEADERS

Captain Art Jones of the Portland Buckaroos is the individual scoring champion of the Western Hockey League with 87 points on 34 goals and 53 assists --- even though he sat out Portland's last two games with mild injuries.

This is the second scoring title for Jones, who last won with 100 points in 1961. He finished seven points in front of runnerup Len Ronson of San Diego, who scored 80.

There was considerable irony in Jones' title. His 87 points were his lowest total in five seasons and matched the all-time WHL low for a scoring leader.

Continued ---

Eddie Dorohoy with Victoria in 1951 also captured the scoring title with a total of 87 points.

After finishing second for four straight seasons, however, Jones is not complaining Jones played twice in the final week of action and picked up two goals and one assist.

The Western League's goal-scoring champion is San Diego's Len Ronson, who sniped 45 goals to match the total of last season's leader, teammate Fred Hilts. Ronson's 45 goals are a career record for the Gull winger. His best previous record was 34 goals with Kitchener-Waterloo in the old Eastern Professional League in '61-'62.

Top playmaker in the Western League for the sixth straight season, the 11th time in 12 years and the 13th time overall is Guyle Fielder of Seattle, who finished with 55 assists.

Fielder's total was the lowest ever to lead the Western Hockey League --- a tribute, along with the record of Jones, to the tough defenses.

GOALKEEPERS

A pair of Portland Buckaroos, Jim McLeod and Marv Edwards, both finished this campaign with goals-against averages lower than the all-time record 2.40 posted by Lorne (Gump) Worlsey with Vancouver in 1954.

McLeod played 1,961 minutes and yielded just 73 goals for an average of 2.23. dwards played 2,366 minutes, gave up only 93 goals and finished with a record of 2.36.

To be eligible for the Leading Goalkeeper Award, a goalkeeper must have played a minimum of 2,100 minutes-35 games. Therefore, Edward's will be recognized as the Leading Goalkeeper.

Don Head of the Seattle Totems was third at 2.52 --- and this was a pro career low for the former Portland Buckaroo.

In the final week of action, Edwards played 110 minutes and gave up five goals, while McLeod played 130 minutes and was beaten only four times.

PENALTIES

The Western Hockey League's leader in penalty minutes is a winger for the first time since 1958. Earl Heiskala of Seattle wound up with 157 minutes off the ice on 51 minors, 5 majors, 2 misconducts and 1 game misconduct.

It was tight to the wire, however, with defenseman Tom Polanic of Phoenix finishing with 156 minutes on 63 minors, 2 majors and 2 misconducts. In the final week of action, Polanic drew six minors in five games, while Heiskala was whistled for two minors and one game misconduct.

The league-leading total of 157, incidentally, is the lowest since 1954 when Lloyd (Pete) Durham finished on top with the same number of minutes for New Westminster.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Seven points in five games earned Player of the Week honors for Del Topoll of Phoenix.

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