

# Crusaders earn point vs. Clan

Special to The Daily Courier

Jan 26  
B1

The top-ranked Simon Fraser University Clan (15-2-2) came to Kelowna last weekend for one reason and one reason only: to reiterate their B.C. Intercollegiate Hockey League dominance.

For the expansion Okanagan College Crusaders (7-9-2), the two-game set was all about reassurance that they can indeed play with the top-dogs.

Friday night's affair at Winfield Arena began as a lopsided bout with SFU firmly in control by the midway point, leading 5-0. The Crusaders literally attempted to fight back and send a message to the Clan that the word quit is not part of Crusaders hockey.

Both Derek Liebel and Dave Mann dropped the mitts to rally the troops, and, evidently, it worked.

Three straight goals in the third by Kyle Vestner, J.J. Kalawarny and Aaron Hocking narrowed the gap to 5-3. But that is as close as the Crusaders would come, as the come-back ran into some hot goaltending and, ultimately out of time, despite Okanagan out-playing and outshooting SFU 14-6 in the third period.



Saturday's rematch at Memorial Arena in Kelowna saw Travis Ingram get his second official game start for the Crusaders. The Clan came out firing in the first and quickly led 2-0, 12 minutes in, working their power play to full advantage. But Ingram stood tall and was solid — stopping every SFU shot in the second period — as the Crusaders regrouped from a slow start.

In the third, SFU went ahead 3-0 just 42 seconds into the frame on another power play before Dekker Mende got the home team on the board less than four minutes later. But the Clan answered right back to make it 4-1 before the never-say-die Crusaders completely took over the final period.

The Crusaders dominated the Clan for the remaining 11 minutes, and were rewarded on their own power play when Andrew Rebus cashed on the efforts of a Micah Anderson end-to-end rush. Then, two minutes later, Mende scored his second of the game, cutting the Clan lead to 4-3. The Crusaders didn't let up and, less than a minute later, Sasha Golin netted the equalizer with a helper from Mann as Okanagan earned a 4-4 tie.

The Crusaders, now fourth in BCIHL standings, visit the University of Victoria (6-7-3) this weekend.