
Pioneers split opening games at President's Cup

Ladner drops 9-8 thriller to Caughnawaga Indians on Monday afternoon in Nanaimo

[Mark Booth](#) / Delta Optimist

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Ladner Pioneers are 1-1-0 after two games at the President's Cup national senior "B" lacrosse championships in Nanaimo.
Photograph By MARK BOOTH

Ladner Pioneers sit at 1-1-0 at the President's Cup senior "B" lacrosse championships in Nanaimo following a heartbreaking 9-8 loss to the Caughnawaga Indians on Monday afternoon.

Blaze Riorden netted the game winner with just 69 seconds remaining after Mike Berekoff and Tom Johnson had put Ladner on even terms minutes earlier. Johnson nearly sent the game into overtime but his potential tying goal was ruled after the buzzer.

The battle between a pair of 1-0 teams lived up to the hype and beyond with a terrific back-and-forth battle from the outset.

The Pioneers opened up a 2-0 lead on power play goals by Bryan Poole and Ryan Keith. The Three Nations Lacrosse League representatives replied with a pair of their own before the intermission. Ladner made it 5-3 with 5:11 left in the second but again the Indians answered with goals by Riorden and Hall just 34 second apart.

They took their first lead of the game when Vaughn Harris and Tylon Jacobs-Thompson made it 7-5 in the opening minute of the third before Ladner battled back.

Berekoff finished with a pair while Tyler Kirkby and Nathan Clare also scored.

Ladner had opened the eight-team tournament with a 13-6 win on Sunday morning over the Capital Region Axemen, jumping out to a 6-1 first period lead over its Ottawa opponent.

Kirkby led the way with a hat trick. Dylan Lacroix, Berekoff and Keith each scored twice. Bryan Poole had a goal and four assists. Brodie MacDonald was terrific in net with 43 saves.

The Pioneers return to action tomorrow afternoon against the winless Saskatoon Brewers (0-2) before a pivotal doubleheader on Wednesday. They face the Can-Am League's Onondaga Redhawks at 11 a.m. and the host Nanaimo Timbermen at 8 p.m.

The top four teams meet in the semi-finals on Saturday. The championship game goes on Sunday at 6 p.m.