

# Celts return to win column

**Sheri LAMB** *Citizen staff*  
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It was redemption Saturday for the junior bantam Prince George Celts, who rebounded from their first loss in more than a year by shutting down the Vanderhoof Vikings 19-0.

Celts head coach Brett Morrow said his Prince George Minor Football Association team played a solid game at Lakewood Field, a week after a sloppy 26-24 loss to the P.G. Whites.

“The boys were amped up to go,” said Morrow. “They just really showed what type of character they have.”

A week after the Celts’ offence gave up three defensive touchdowns, the Kaiden Witso-led offence hemmed the Vikings inside its own end for most of the game in building a 13-0 advantage at the half.

Tyell Laing put the Celts on the board with a 6-0 lead on Prince George’s first possession after the Vikings offence went backwards to start the game. The 13-year-old added a 20-yard touchdown in the third quarter to put the home side up 19-0.

“Tyell is one of the most athletic players in the entire province,” said Morrow about the fourth-year receiver, running back and safety. “He’s got a lot of heart as well – he doesn’t get down on his teammates; he really encourages them.”

Evan Bichon powered through the Vikings’ defence for the Celts other touchdown – Laing ran for the extra point on the only conversion P.G. made – in the sec-

ond quarter.

“He is pound-for-pound probably the strongest kid in junior bantam,” said Morrow about Bichon. “And, he’s got a really good motor; he works harder than anybody else in games and practice.”

Bichon also contributed five first-half sacks and several hard tackles in the win.

The Vikings were unable to cross midfield until late in the third quarter when Steven Williams returned a kickoff after Laing’s second score deep inside the Celts’ end by evading several tackles.

Vanderhoof also saw quarterback Wyatt Giesbrecht and his replacement both go down with suspected cracked elbows. Williams stepped in at third-string and promptly went down, winded, after a hard tackle caused him to fumble.

Laing gave credit to his teammates for working hard in practice and carrying it over to the game in rebounding from the first loss most of the team suffered in a year.

“I think we really improved in our blocking and our running backs really stepped up today,” said Laing.

The win gives the Celts a 2-1 record this season, while it was the Vikings (2-1) first loss. The Celts are off until Sept. 28 when they have a rematch against the P.G. White at Masich Place Stadium.

In other Saturday action, the Prince George Green No. 2 held off their atom Prince George White opponent 27-6, but the other P.G. White squad was shut out 13-0 by the atom Vanderhoof Vikings. In



**Tyell Laing had two touchdowns Saturday as the Prince George Celts handed the Vanderhoof Vikings a 19-0 loss in junior bantam PGMF action.**

peeewe, the P.G. Whites earned a 27-13 victory over the Vikings.

Saturday at Lakewood Field, there are five games, starting with atom P.G. White facing P.G. 2 at

9 a.m., with the other P.G. White team suiting up against Vanderhoof at 10 a.m. The P.G. White peewees take on Vanderhoof at 11 a.m., with the junior bantam game

between the P.G. White and Vanderhoof to follow at 1 p.m. A bantam game between P.G. White and Vanderhoof ends the day with a 3 p.m. kickoff.

# Smiling Sid eager to see how quickly he can be Crosby of old

**Alan ROBINSON**  
*The Canadian Press*

PITTSBURGH — Sidney Crosby was uncommonly upbeat a few minutes before his fourth training camp practice in as many days Tuesday, regularly flashing smiles while fending off the playful kidding of his Pittsburgh Penguins teammates.

The reason for Crosby’s cheerfulness seems evident. He appears to be getting closer to being cleared for contact – the biggest remaining hurdle as he recovers from a concussion that has sidelined the Penguins’ star for 8 1/2 months.

Only two weeks after being asked repeatedly during a news conference if he would play this season, Crosby is fielding questions about how well he will play once he is back. It’s a sign his on-ice comeback from a serious injury is going even better than he might have expected after a few workouts.

“I’m pretty happy with the way they’ve gone so far,” Crosby said.

That was evident as Crosby skated full speed through another vigorous, go-all-out practice, this time with Penguins co-star Evgeni Malkin skating alongside him in the same workout group. Malkin, who is recovering from knee surgery, scored two goals during an

intrasquad game Monday night in Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

Crosby hasn’t backed off any drill, except those that require contact. But he hasn’t appeared reluctant to engage in any contact, skating just as hard and as fast into the corners as any of his teammates during puck possession drills.

Crosby clearly has progressed significantly from a few weeks ago. Back then, he was forced to cut back on his off-season conditioning work due to concussion-related side effects that occurred once he reached the 90 per cent exertion rate.

During camp, Crosby has been going at full speed full time and with no symptoms.

“That’s the optimistic thing about seeing Sid out there. It’s tough,” coach Dan Bylsma said. “It’s not a practice toward the end of the year where the

heart rate is not getting near max.

“You’re getting maxed out and you push through fatigue. ... He’s getting tired and he’s working just like every other guy out there.”

When camp started Saturday, Bylsma didn’t commit to Crosby being available for every practice, saying only he was day to day.

Crosby still won’t guess when he might be cleared for hitting during camp, saying, “No clue.” But there are numerous signs it could be relatively soon.

“The practices I’ve been in have been pretty tough, pretty intense,” Crosby said. “But I think everyone’s kind of felt that way, so I don’t feel like I’m too far behind.

“That being said, hitting kind of throws in a whole different element. It makes it a little bit more difficult.”



**SANDWICHED** — Edmonton Oilers’ Taylor Hall, centre, gets stuck between teammate Kirill Tulupov and Minnesota Wild’s Brett Bulmer, of Prince George, during NHL pre-season hockey action in Edmonton on Tuesday.



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