

Lions go down with a whimper after double loss

THE LEE Valley Lions endured a gruelling weekend with two league defeats in as many days.

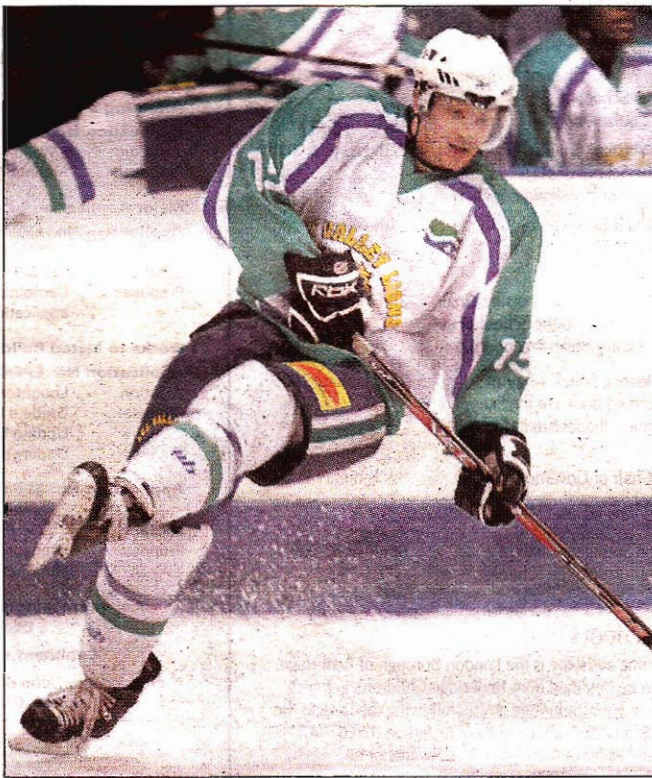
On Saturday, the Lions took on the league leaders of the South Two division of the English National Ice Hockey League, the Chelmsford Chieftains in a home tie.

And the visitors produced a display worthy of their place, burying the Lions 12 goals to three, prompting one figure to liken the defending to the "parting of the Red Sea."

The Lions were a depleted force. Missing were Luke Kirkland with an injury, along with Romanas Fedotovas, Chris Wilson and Freddie Trimble, while the home side were also getting used to life without Michael Jacobs and Scott Beeson, who have left for pastures new.

But they battled hard in a fast, flowing first period and the Chieftains ended it just a single goal ahead after netminder Andrew Boot fumbled a shot and was helpless as the puck crept in under his boot to put the visitors ahead.

However, Stas Prokofiev hit back soon after with a slapshot, before he fired the Lions in front with a stun-



Lions players couldn't find their feet during weekend's games

ning goal from a Ruslanas Jegorovas pass.

The lead lasted just a minute though, as an unmarked Chieftains forward capitalised on his position to equalise, and then scored again on 15 minutes to grab the advantage.

The Chieftains went on to dominate in the second and third periods, scoring four goals without reply in the second session, and then as many again in the third.

Midway through the final period Michael Ranby scored

a consolation for the Lions, but the Chieftains scored a brace to complete their victory.

The weekend woes were complete on Sunday, as the Lions went under 6-13 on the Isle of Wight, outnumbered in squad size and out-gunned on the rink by the Vectis Tigers.

The match contributed an answer to the age-old question of which mighty beast is better.

In the first period the Tigers slammed in three goals to the Lions one, via Nick Alley.

The second period brought a drubbing for the visitors as they conceded five goals in under four minutes.

Youth netminder Daniel Artis deputised well, forced to pick the puck from the net only twice. At the other end, goals from Ashley Curtin, Nick Alley and Joe Berry, maintained the Lions interest.

The final third saw fisticuffs and Alley sin-binned as a result. The Lions scored two goals to the Tigers three.

Afterwards, a Lions figure blamed the defeated a lack of depth in the squad.

The two defeats mean the Lions sit seventh from nine in the South Two table.