

# Goalie frustrates B's

By FRANK BARRETT, JR.  
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BOSTON — "How come whenever a goalie decides to have a great game he has it against us?"

The speaker was Boston Bruins coach Tom Johnson and he was reflecting last night on the dismal state of affairs that had just transpired at the Garden a few minutes before.

To wit: his Bruins had been shutout at the Garden by the California Golden Seals, 2-0, and the villain of the performance — witnessed by 14,899 frustrated onlookers — was the Seals 21 year-old goaltender Gilles Meloche.

Meloche, who was with the Chicago Blackhawks last year, was making his first regular season appearance ever for the Seals and all he did was turn back 34 Bruins shots as the Seals whipped the B's for the first time since November 15, 1970.

It was also the initial time that the B's had been whitewashed since November 5, 1970 when Glen Hall and Ernie Wakely combined for the goose egg for the St. Louis Blues.

"HE WAS GREAT, he was fantastic, he acted like he'd been in the league 10 years," enthused Seals' coach Vic Stasiuk, who was once a steller Bruin a few years ago. "He really took it to them and the rest of our guys followed suit."

Actually, the subject of all this praise has already had plenty of experience in the National Hockey League. Two games, that is.

"Yes, last year with the Blackhawks I played twice," smiled Meloche, a handsome youngster who looks all of 15. "But most of last year I played for Flint in the minors."

At Flint, Meloche had three games in which the opposition took 60 or more shots at him and in all three he surrendered only one goal.

That was enough for the Blackhawks, who brought him up late in the season.

In his two starts, young Gilles beat Vancouver 7-4 on March 16 and whipped Oakland (now California) 5-2 on March 19.

But with Tony Esposito and Gary Smith already in the nets for the Hawks, Meloche was cut free and the Seals picked him up.

He did so well last night that Stasiuk could barely contain himself. He fidgeted and jumped on the bench and as soon as the final buzzer

the ice to Norm Ferguson who fired the puck in before Johnston could react.

The Bruins' defense again failed Johnston at 6:26 of the third frame when Dick Redmond scooted around Rickie Smith and flipped in a backhander as Johnston, partially blocked by Smith, could not pick up the shot in time.

The referee, Wally Harris, also did not help the Bruins any — at least according to the Bruins.

He served 10 minute misconducts on Ken Hodge, Bobby Orr, and Wayne Cashman, each of them coming at a most opportune moment.

"I'm not making excuses for our bad start," said Hodge (last year at this point the B's were 7-1-1 with 46 goals; as of today they have only 30), "but the referees seem to have a quick whistle on us this year. We seem to be getting a lot of unnecessary penalties."

HODGE THOUGHT FOR a moment. "But

we're not playing our normal style. We're not hitting like we did before and we don't seem to be playing with our normal abandon.

"But it's early yet and the season still has a long way to go."

The Bruins can begin to make amends for their sloppy start this Sunday here against the North Stars.



SEALS' NET WIZARD GILLES MELOCHE (27)

... thwarts Bruins' Ken Hodge (8) as Bert Marshall (C) watches

AP Wirephoto

had sounded, he raced onto the ice and put his arms around his wunderkind, nearly bussing him in the process.

**AND A GROUP** of Bruins' devotees also applauded Meloche for his superlative showing as he skated off the ice.

That gang might have been the same one that booed Derek Sanderson when he stepped on the ice in the first period. Derek, as you may recall, had some unkind things to say the other day about a special portion of the Garden galleryites.

"Yes, I coached the Flyers (Philadelphia) for two years and we never beat the Bruins once," Stasiuk grinned. "Once we had them beat with six seconds left and they tied it up."

Fred Glover started the year as coach of the Seals but was fired after three games and Stasiuk, who was in retirement, decided to return behind the bench.

"And tonight was one of my finest wins," he added.

Like an orangutan gone amuck, Meloche flipped and flopped all over the ice and within a space of about 45 seconds in the third period, he made diving stops on John Bucyk, Fred Stanfield, and Phil Esposito, falling flat on his face each time in the process.

"I WANTED TO make sure there was no rebound," he explained. "They got a lot of goals that way. So I covered up the puck."

Lyle Carter has been the regular goalie for the Seals this year but three days ago, Stasiuk told Meloche he was going to start against the Bruins.

"No, I wasn't nervous," said Meloche, "especially after the first period (the Bruins had 15 shots in that frame). I think the save I made on Phil (Esposito) early in the period helped a lot."

Meloche was talking about his diving stop on an Esposito forehand shot from in close, a shot that frequently nets Espe a raft of goals.

"They ought to give that kid a raise," said Espe.

Now the Bruins have lost three times already this year and that's enough to cause worry among their followers.

"No, we're not going to make any great changes, make any trades or do things like that," said Johnson. "The kid (Meloche) just played great. Nothing you can do about that. It's too bad we had to waste a great game by Eddie (goalie Eddie Johnston)."

**THE SEALS SCORED** at 15:26 of the first period when Johnston went out from the net to greet former Bruin Tommy Williams who was bearing down on him with the puck.

Johnston got set but Williams passed across

