

# Seals Fire Coach Bert Olmstead

By SPENCE CONLEY

Bert Olmstead, iron-fisted ruler of the Oakland Seals in their catastrophic first season in the National Hockey League, has been fired.

And unless there is an unexpected switch in the feelings of the NHL's Board of Governors, the team will operate in Oakland "until the area has had a fair test as a site for an NHL franchise."

These two developments were revealed to The Tribune last night by a source in Vancouver, the city which seeks

to wrest the club out of Oakland.

Olmstead's release was decided unanimously by the Seals' five-man board of directors who met Wednesday in San Francisco.

Barry Van Gerbig, the 28-year-old Floridian who hired him, was to have informed Olmstead of the board's decision.

The source said Olmstead, who was supposed to be in Kansas City, scouting the Central Pro League playoffs, was

being given the option of resigning.

The 43-year-old former NHL star was signed as a coach, but after the Seals fired Rudy Pilous, he assumed the duties of general manager as well.

He reportedly had a three-year contract, but after the Seals' horrible showing on the first road trip (five lost out of six) he asked for a one-year contract.

He didn't sign either and has been under a "verbal agreement" to serve the club

until the end of May.

The departure of Olmstead leaves the Seals without direct hockey management at a critical time.

Three big operating decisions remain to be made: How will the June NHL equalization player draft be conducted; where will the Seals place their required Central League development team; where will they train now that their Port Huron, Mich. site appears to be unsuitable?

Neither Seal president

Frank Selke, Jr. nor publicist Tim Ryan could be reached last night for comment. Van Gerbig was at his West Palm Beach home and also unavailable.

Olmstead's Seals—his first-ever major league coaching job—finished the year with a 74-game season total of 42 losses, 17 ties and 15 wins, a bitter sixth in the expanded Western Division, far out of the playoffs.

With 21 games left, he turned over his coaching duties to aide Gordon Fasho-

way. The latter's record was five wins, 10 losses, and six ties.

Fashoway, the ex-Portland Buckaroo executive, and aide De Camp Ken Wilson, also appear to be out now.

A complete shakeup and streamlining of the Seal front office also is in progress.

"The Seals are bucking an 8-4 vote against moving right now," the Vancouver source revealed. "Since Labatt's gave them the money to pay

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