

California Golden Seals

The good news for the Golden Seals last season was that home attendance in Oakland hit a record 246,879 spectators, an average of 6,172 per game. The bad news for their fans was reflected in the Seals' final 19-48-13 record which relegated them to the Adams Division cellar.

There was good news for the Seals' supporters again last summer when a group headed by Melvin Swig, a San Francisco businessman, bought the team from the National Hockey League and announced he will keep it in the Bay Area. He said it will be located in Oakland this season and next, and then be shifted across the bay to Frisco. There have been numerous rumors that the Seals were headed for another area before Swig purchased them.

California made two notable additions during the off-season. One was Jack Evans, the new coach. Evans, who piloted Salt Lake of the Central League last season, takes over the Seals' job from Bill McCreary, who is still with the Seals as director of hockey operations.

The other big catch was right winger Jim Pappin, obtained from the Chicago Black Hawks in a trade for Joey Johnston. Pappin has scored 270 goals in the National Hockey League, including 36 last season.

"Our most pressing need right now is to get our offense untracked and score more goals," McCreary points out. "We've got to add another 50 goals or so. If we do that, we'll be right in there with most teams."

There have been other player changes. Stan Weir, a center, was traded to the Toronto Maple Leafs for Gary Sabourin, another forward. Ralph Klassen, a 19-year-old center, and Denis Maruk, also a forward, were the club's top choices in the 1975 amateur draft. Maruk paced the Ontario Hockey Association in scoring with 145 points, including 66 goals.

On the negative side, John Stewart, who scored 19 goals for the Seals in 1974-75, jumped to the World Hockey Association.

There are some good returning forwards, though. The list includes Larry Patey, Dave Gardner, Al MacAdam,

1974-75 Finish				1975-76 Prediction	
	W	L	T	PCT	
Fourth	19	48	13	51	Fourth
Leading Scorers					
	G	A	PTS		
Larry Patey	25	20	45		
Stan Weir	18	27	45		
Dave Hrechkosy	29	14	43		
Al Macadam	18	25	43		
John Stewart	19	19	38		
Dave Gardner	16	22	38		
Joey Johnston	14	23	37		

Ron Huston and Dave Hrechkosy. Hrechkosy, nicknamed "The Wrecker" scored 29 goals in the first year in the NHL in '74-'75. Up from Salt Lake City where he collected 26 goals is Gary Holt.

Jim Neilson who, like Coach Evans, is a former Ranger rearguard, heads the Seals' defense which also is comprised of Len Frig, Mike Christie and Bob Stewart. Gilles Meloche and Gary Simmons are the netminders.

A total of 18 rookies played for the Seals at various times last season. This is believed to be a league record. "That didn't make it easy," centerman Patey points out. "You never knew who your linemates were and it was difficult to adjust."

Patey adjusted well, however. He found the nets 25 times, and eight of those times came on the Seals' power play. Larry is 22 years old, 6-foot-1 and 185 pounds. "Larry is the type of player we hope to build this franchise around," says McCreary. "His performance last season is an indication of what fine potential he has."

Potentially, the Golden Seals will improve...not enough, though, to move out of last place.



Stan Weir



Dave Hrechkosy



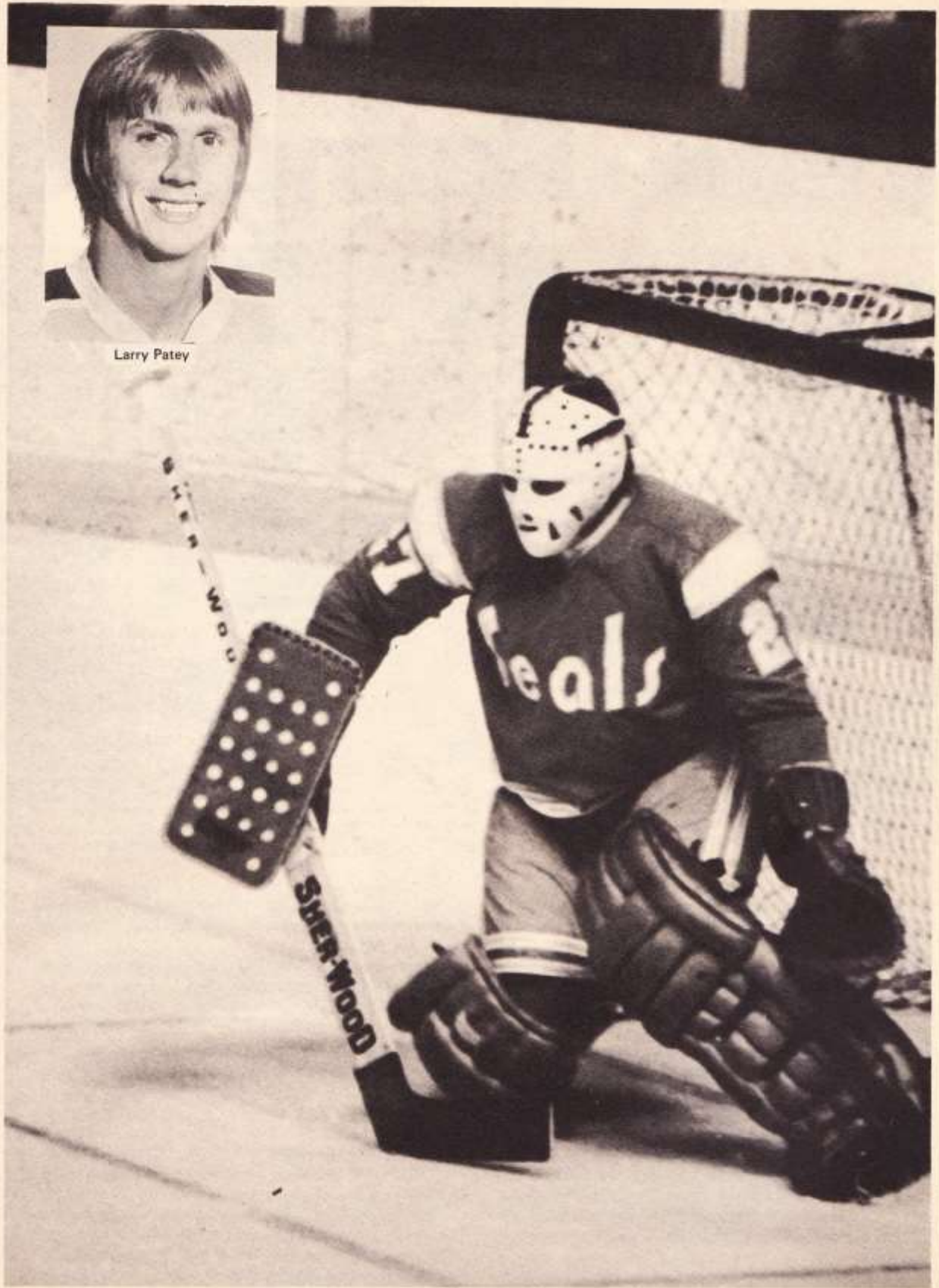
Al Macadam



John Stewart



Larry Patey



Gilles Meloche

