

Seals That Good?

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JUST SEVEN GAMES INTO THE WINNING Oakland Seals, happy scrappers without a loss in five straight games including last night's thrashing of the Pittsburgh Penguins?

Coach Vic Stasiuk, who is an honest man, honestly doesn't know.

"I've seen a lot of young teams like this go in there and do it right away," he said. "So many strangers getting together you wonder can they do it."

There was no doubt in a battling third period last night. The Seals had pounded back three times to hang up a 5-3 win which could only have been improved upon by the presence of another 10,000 warm bodies in the house.

Stasiuk gives one clue to his young group's success:

"It's a game of fundamentals. They always have that," he said. "If you're taught the fundamentals, the automatic things, it shouldn't matter who you play with, strangers or not. And these men have such enthusiasm to win."

Veteran defenseman Carol Vadnais returned to the ice last night and made his presence felt.

"I was kind of nervous, but I was anxious to get back," he said. "Not bad, to be one point out of third place, heh?"

That was the reward for a win last night. A loss would have dropped them five games back.

"One of the eastern hockey writers really put us down early in the year," teammate Bert Marshall said. "He wrote 'If the Seals win 13 games this season Fred Glover should be Coach of the Year.'"

It's academic now, to the Seals, what kind of a year Glover has. Marshall wants to be around to serve up a newspaper sandwich to the writer.

"This is a lot like our second year here," he said. "Everybody is here for a purpose, to prove we can win."

Stasiuk called the finale "the best third period we've had yet," and his grinning, baby-faced goaltender agreed.

He'd made a rookie mistake and got away with it.

"That third goal?" he fielded

the question, "I contested on it. I didn't close it off right away and it went right between my legs. It's a matter of experience I guess. But I'm glad to be here getting the experience rather than sitting on the bench someplace else."

Goaltending was a big question with the Seals as the season opened.

"Every team in the league can use good goaltending. We've got three guys and all they need is experience," Marshall said.

The puck that scored through Meloche quickly went back the other way, as the Seals bounced from a 3-2 deficit to the 5-3 win and threw

a wall of bodies in front of Penguin attackers.

"Vadnais displayed a lot of cool," Stasiuk said. "He has that thing with the puck. He gets in control."

The fans, the 3,293 who sounded like three times as many, let them know they like it.