

# Seals Are NOT Bowlegged!

By PAUL LIPPMAN

Contrary to what Prescott Sullivan had to say in his column the other morning, there isn't a bow-legged defenseman on the entire San Francisco Seals roster.

We checked them out yesterday and found all of them to have limbs as straight as pins under them.

Why did they let a team score 11 goals against them then? Well, according to coach Max McNab, "it's one of those things that'll happen to you once in awhile. Every team in the league will have one of those nights before the season is out, you can count on it."

And, then, McNab put his finger on a sore spot around these 49er parts.

"Why does a football team beat an opponent one week and then turn around and get trounced by the same team a week or two later?" he asked. "It works the same way in hockey. A hot team will get a couple of quick goals on you and then everything might snowball against you."

## NO HORSE COLLAR

It must be pointed out that prior to that horrendous night in Seattle, the Seals were coming around on defense. They had allowed but four goals in their two previous games combined.

You can't hang the horse collar on the goalie, Bev Bentley. He is only one third of the defensive unit. There are two defense men (right and left) in every lineup whose job it is to clear the puck off

(This is the fifth and final article on ice hockey and the San Francisco Seals.)

after the attacking team has had a shot at the goalie.

Funny thing is, excluding the Seattle game, the defense men also were coming around. At the start of the season, they had been a little too charitable, allowing the opponents from 35 to 40 shots per game at the goal, but they were getting it down to a respectable 25 at the last.

Bentley has seen a lot of pucks during his hockey days. He started out in Los Angeles of the old Pacific Coast Amateur League in the late 1940s.

In the off season he's a prosperous wheat farmer in Delisle, Saskatchewan.

At 5-9 and 145 pounds, Bentley is a little wisp of a guy for a goalie, but he has that necessary alertness.

A married man with no children, Bev, is considered a good man on the angles—on the ice, that is. He gives the opponent nothing but the smallest part of the net to shoot at and it's tough to deke (fake) him out.

An old pro with hockey sense, Bev is the nephew of Max Bentley, one of the all-time greats with the Chicago Black Hawks.

He's been around the Western League long enough to have the book on all of the opposing players, an important asset for a goalie. Every player will shoot the same way when pressed and the goalie has to know this. His

book isn't unlike that of a pitcher's in baseball.

## 'OLD RED EYE'

One of Bentley's chief aides on defense is Jim (Red Eye) Hay. Old Red Eye is a former Detroit Red Wing who recently was acquired from the Los Angeles Blades. He figures to help the Seals immeasurably.

He's the Eddie Stanky of the team, the holler guy, the morale-builder. According to McNab, Hay probably is the most colorful player on the roster.

Though not a smooth skater, he skates hard and works all the time.

The other fellow in his defensive unit is Hugh Currie, who was at Vancouver with Seals owner Coley Hall for several years.

## BONUS BOY

Like Bentley, he, too, knows all the players in the league and knows how to deke them.

Currie and Hay make up a good penalty-killing combination, where experience makes the difference.

The best defensive team in the league is Portland, where the same four policemen have been playing together for three years. That's why the Buckaroos could afford to

## Seals, Blades In TV Game

The San Francisco Seals end a six-day layoff tonight when they take on the Los Angeles Blades in a televised hockey game from the Sports Arena in the southland.

The game, first in a series between the Western Hockey League's two newest teams, will be televised back to the Bay area on KTVU, Channel 2.

Bud Foster of KTVU and Jerry Doggett, Los Angeles Dodger broadcaster, will handle the play-by-play, starting at 8 p.m.

give up Tom Thurlby to the Seals.

Thurlby, a prime prospect at 22, is a third year pro who was drafted as a rookie by the Boston Bruins for the peak \$20,000 price.

McNab is especially high on Tom because the 5-10, 183 pounder has blazing speed and can serve as a utility man, alternating offensively as a wing if necessary.

Another fellow McNab really likes is Floyd Hillman, who has been playing in a defensive unit with Thurlby.

Hillman at 28, 5-9 and 180

pounds, is a strong guy who will give you an honest night's work. He'll even double back in a pinch and pass up a rest period if the situation warrants. Also, according to McNab, Floyd never complains about double duty.

A married man with no children, Floyd comes to the Seals from Providence of the American Hockey League.

## NEW FLIPPERS

The two other defensemen on the Seal roster are Jean Marc Picard, a Boston player who has a lot of natural ability and skates and shoots well, and Jim Wilcox, a 20 year old who just recently acquired his professional flippers.

Wilcox played the regulation five games as an amateur and was taken on as a pro before the Seattle debacle last week.

He's a big kid as hockey players go — 5-11 and 191 pounds — and, according to McNab, has a lot of desire.

Biggest man on the Seal roster, though, is former Toronto Maple Leaf Gary Collins, a 6-0, 192 pound offensive player with an injury problem.

A fast skater who can shake down the opposing team's defense, he was counted on for some heavy duty this year. But he was hurt in training camp, then had just begun to

come around when he broke his hand in an early league game. One thing you have to have in hockey is a healthy pair of hands. Also good eyes, and here too, Collins is in arrears. He has to wear contacts and he broke one of those in a recent game.

McNab particularly bemoans all of this ill luck because he has played on teams with Collins and knows him to be an excellent hockey player.

But injuries are nothing new to Coach Max. Though a star for the Detroit Red Wings a few years ago, it was a chronic back ailment that kept him from becoming one of the great players of the National Hockey League. He was plagued with it throughout an illustrious career.

Now, at 37, that's all by the boards and he is given only to an occasional headache—when his team loses.

"Don't think for a minute that I'm giving up on this club," said Max, alluding to that 11-1 defeat the last time out. "This team has a lot of ability and when it starts piecing together you're going to see a whale of a hockey team."

Though they're called "the Seals," we'll be looking forward to seeing a whale of a hockey team.