

Exhausting Standoff for the Seals

Arena Shootout



Tribune photos by RUSS REED

Dennis Maruk slips puck into net to start California on a three-goal spree during 7-7 tie

By JOHN PORTER

To the purist, the hockey game was like fumes that belch from a bus tailpipe.

The players themselves were exhausted after an unusually long game of three hours, but it wasn't because they worked up much of a sweat on defense.

The best defense came after the game when everyone tried to explain how the Seals and the Toronto Maple Leafs scored 14 goals at the Arena last night.

"That was one of the worst displays of hockey I've ever seen," said goalie Gary Simmons, after the 7-7 tie. "That's not National Hockey League hockey."

He neglected to say what it was, but he decided to comment no further. He was the backup goalie and didn't play last night, but, as he said: "It's my turn next."

The Seals, winding down what has been a surprisingly improved season for them, host the Detroit Red Wings Wednesday.

Simmons is hoping the skaters in front of him check more than their offensive stats. Neither team did last night.

"What can I say?" said Wayne Thomas, Toronto's goalie. "The shots came from everywhere."

The Seals rained 17 pucks upon him in the first period, but trailed 1-0 after Jim McKenny scored on a power play in the 18th minute.

The Leafs made it 2-0 in the second period, then the Seals ripped off three straight goals for a 3-2 advantage. The lead changed hands three more times before Toronto's Lanny McDonald lofted a tumbling puck under Gilles Meloche's arm for the final goal less than four minutes from the end.

"A hockey game?" Meloche said in bewilderment. "A 7-7 score is more like a football game. This was stupid. I'd have nothing to do and then

they'd come down the ice and score.

"Thomas got a lot of shots and that's easier. He's in the game all the time," said Meloche.

"I don't need that many shots," said Thomas, who faced 48 altogether. Meloche stopped 18 of the 25 he had to handle.

The shooters were sheepish in their replies. They felt the goaltenders deserved better support.

"We were too offensive," muttered Dennis Maruk, while surveying the game's summary sheet. "We should stick more to defense and try to help our goalie. After the first period we were frustrated when we didn't score."

"We just kept going, going and going and could have cared less who was in the nets, even if it were Ken Dryden," he declared.

Maruk scored twice to reach 26 goals, one short of Ted Hampson's team record for centers. Wayne Merrick was another with two goals, lifting him to the 30 plateau for the first time in his NHL career.

"Kind of a funny game, wasn't it?" he said without laughing. "We'd get a couple of goals and then they'd get a couple back. You're ahead and then you lose the lead five minutes later."

"We just didn't play defensively enough. That goes for Toronto, too," he pointed out. "But when the game is going the way it was, you can't just say, 'Boys, let's straighten up and play defense.' It keeps going the same way."

With the exception of coaches and goalies, the only other person who didn't think much of the game was referee Dave Newell.

Late in the second period as

he followed the play down ice, he tripped over a crack in the ice and slammed into the boards, pulling a shoulder muscle.

The two teams took their intermission break, then played the postponed 2:38 before beginning the third period. Newell was able to return, but in pain.

The play that ultimately hurt came on a Seals' power play when Rick Hampton tried to pass to Dave Gardner, but the puck went off the latter's skate and set up McDonald's goal.

"The fans like to see goals," said Hampton, who had one himself and two assists, "but obviously there were too many against us tonight."

The 8,074 customers at the Arena probably would agree.

FIRST PERIOD	
1-0 Toronto	McKenny (18)
(Sawyer)	18:31
Shots on goal: Seals 17, Tor 9	
Penalties: Vanquette, Tor (hooking) 1:07; Sittler, Tor (high sticking) 14:18; Sabourin, Tor (high sticking) 14:28; Murdoch, Seals (tripping) 16:07.	

SECOND PERIOD	
2-0 Toronto	Turnbull (16)
(McKenny)	2:44
2-1 Seals	Maruk (26)
(MacAdam, Jacobs)	5:15
2-2 Seals	Merrick (29)
(Coburn, Christie)	Maruk (28)
2-3 Seals	(Murdoch, MacAdam)
3-3 Toronto	Thomas (28)
(Sittler, McDonald)	8:30
4-3 Toronto	Williams (16)
(Glenne, Boutelet)	12:10
4-4 Seals	Gardner (18)
(Ahen)	17:36
Shots on goal: Seals 14, Tor 8	
Penalties: Glenne, Tor (hooking) 4:40; Sittler, Tor (interference) 13:30; Sawort, Seals (tripping) 14:30.	

THIRD PERIOD	
4-5 Seals	Hampton (22)
(MacAdam, Maruk)	7:22
5-5 Toronto	Neely (14)
(Went, Ferguson)	7:58
5-6 Seals	Christie (13)
(Murdoch, Hampton)	8:40
5-7 Seals	Merrick (30)
(Gardner, Hampton)	9:50
6-7 Toronto	Neely (15)
(Hampton)	14:22
7-7 Toronto	McDonald (20)
(unassisted)	16:11

SHOTS ON GOAL: Seals 51, Tor 8	
Penalties: Vanquette, Tor (hooking) 1:21; Jacob, Seals (hooking) 4:30; Went, Tor (tripping) interference) 7:30; Williams, Tor (high sticking, unsportsmanlike conduct) 10:08; Pasut, Seals (high sticking) 11:40; Glenne, Tor (tripping) 14:30	
Total shots: Seals 48, Tor 25	
Goalies: Tor, Thomas; Seals, Meloche	

1 SEALS: L. MARUK, SEALS: J. NEELY, TOR: S. MERRICK, SEALS: REFEREE: DAVE NEWELL.

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