

All the Seals need now is a set of miracles

By Ken Miller

The California Golden Seals' game at the Oakland Coliseum Arena ended last night, as usual, with a horn. One long, resonant bong of the funeral gong would have been more appropriate.

Even the blithest optimist, and there haven't even been many of those the past two or three weeks, should now admit that the season is over. Morale couldn't have been too high with a second-period announcement that the Toronto Maple Leafs,

whom the Seals have futilely chased all season, had won again, but it hit a new low as the Seals finished a 2-1 loss to the Minnesota North Stars.

"It'll take a set of miracles for us to make the playoffs now," said California Coach Bill McCreary, who saw his club drop 14 points behind the Leafs with only 16 games to go. "If we'd won tonight, their lead would have stayed at 12, but . . ."

He didn't need to finish. It was almost appropriate for the Seals' chances to end the

way they did. The club has played bad games at home, but for an overall dull, drab, and finally, debilitating effort, they reached a nadir last night.

After a goal by Al MacAdam, Minnesota needed only 16 seconds to tie it up early in the first period on Murray Oliver's score. Less than 11 minutes later, Doug Rombough got the game-winner on a deflection. They could have called it there.

The Seals were all over the ice—literally. When they weren't falling down, missing checks, or firing shots

with all the élan of a drunk in a shooting gallery, they were putting passes on Minnesota sticks, giving the puck up in their own end and committing all the other imaginable blunders.

William Castle couldn't have produced a better horror show.

"In practice there wasn't any indication we would play a game like this," said McCreary. "We came into it with a lethargic attitude and couldn't come out of it. I'd have to say it was a team breakdown in mental attitude."

One of the few Seals who demonstrated that he had probably played the game of hockey before was Brian Lavender, and he could agree with McCreary's assessment.

"It was a letdown, I guess that's what it all boils down to," he said. "We just played with a lack of anticipation. I don't think they outthrustled us, they just put in more goals."

"The turning point was when they got the first goal right back. We weren't able to sit on it and set up our own game plan. But we're

supposed to be ready, to have the mental toughness. I don't know what it was. I don't think there's anybody on the team who's given up on our chances (come on, Brian), and we're just going have to wait and see what Toronto does."

What Toronto does is get five games they've been looking forward to all season, home-and-home sets with the Detroit Red Wings and Washington Capitals and a rematch with Minnesota at Maple Leaf Gardens. After this scheduling dream,

—Turn to Page 30, Col. 4

North Stars embarrass Seals, 3-1

—From Page 47

they'll be thinking magic numbers.

So the Seals are left to think of other things, specifically, 1975-76, be it in Denver or Oakland or wherever.

"What we have to do the rest of the season is stay a closely-knit hockey club," said McCreary. "We have to keep up our individual pride, to maintain team unity."

"We can't look for a Bobby Orr to lead us out of the woodwork. As individuals we aren't effective, only as a team. We have to realize that the rest of the season."

A season, he needn't have added, which virtually ended with a loss against a pathetic team they had every reason to expect to beat.



NEWS
RELEASE

CALIFORNIA GOLDEN SEALS VS. MINNESOTA NORTH STARS
Wednesday, February 26, 1975

SEALS' RECORD: 16-36-11

NORTH STARS' RECORD: 17-36-6

TEAM NOTES

SEALS VS. NORTH STARS--Fourth and final meeting of season with Minnesota. North Stars hold a 2-1-0 season series lead over Seals. Minnesota scored 3-1 and 8-4 wins at Met Center and Seals won 5-3 in Oakland on December 6.

SEALS AT HOME--Seals are 12-9-8 at home including Sunday's 2-2 tie with Los Angeles.

NORTH STARS ON ROAD--Minnesota is 3-22-4 on the road this season.

SEALS' STREAK--California is 3-1-2 in last five games and has a modest three game unbeaten string.

NORTH STARS' NEW FACES--Since their last visit to Oakland the North Stars have made wholesale changes in their lineup: right wing Craig Cameron, left wing Ernie Hicke and center Doug Rombough were obtained from the New York Islanders in separate trades for veterans Jude Drouin and J.P. Parise; center Dean Talafous and defenseman Dwight Bialowas came from Atlanta for veteran Barry Gibbs; left wing Norm Gratton obtained from Buffalo for veteran center Fred Stanfield and defenseman Chris Ahrens and goalie Fern Rivard were called up from New Haven (AHL).

INDIVIDUAL NOTES

SEALS' ROOKIE LEFT WING DAVE HRECHKOSY, with 26 goals, is the leading rookie goal scorer in the NHL. He has six goals in his last six games.



CALIFORNIA GOLDEN SEALS VS. MINNESOTA NORTH STARS
Wednesday, February 26, 1975

SEALS' RECORD: 16-36-11

NORTH STARS' RECORD: 17-37-6

TEAM NOTES

LINEUP ADDITIONS: Add to Minnesota lineup #9 Henry Boucha, Left Wing. Boucha, who sustained an eye injury in a stick swinging incident with Boston's Dave Forbes on January 4, 1975, has been back for four games.

SEALS VS. NORTH STARS--Fourth and final meeting of the season with Minnesota. North Stars hold a 2-1-0 series lead over Seals. Minnesota scored 3-1 and 8-4 wins at Met Center and Seals won 5-3 contest in Oakland on December 6.

SEALS AT HOME--Seals are 12-9-8 at home including Sunday's 2-2 tie with Los Angeles.

NORTH STARS ON ROAD--Minnesota is 3-22-4 on the road this season and 2-1-1 in their last four road contests.

SEALS' STREAK--California is 3-1-2 in last five games and has a modest three game unbeaten string.

SEALS' POWER-PLAY--Seals have converted 37 times in 274 efforts (23 at home and 14 on road). Seals only scored 34 all last year.

SEALS' PENALTY KILLING--Seals have allowed 52 goals in 208 shorthanded situations.

NORTH STARS' POWER-PLAY--Minnesota has scored 34 power-play goals in 227 attempts.

NORTH STARS' PENALTY KILLING--Minnesota has allowed 65 goals in 232 shorthanded situations, second highest in NHL. Washington, with 70 goals; has allowed the most.

NORTH STARS' INJURIES--Defenseman Dennis O'Brien suffered a fractured left thumb last night against Toronto. He will be out of action from a week to 10 days.

INDIVIDUAL NOTES

SEALS' ROOKIE LEFT WING DAVE HRECHKOSY, with 26 goals, is leading the rookie goal scorer in the NHL. Atlanta's Eric Vail, who is in action tonight against Philadelphia, is second with 25 goals.

SEALS' LEFT WING JOHN STEWART needs one more goal to equal his NHL best at 18, set last year with Atlanta.

SEALS' DEFENSEMAN JIM NEILSON has six points in his last five games.

SEALS' ROOKIE CENTER/LEFT WING CHARLIE SIMMER has scored 4 points in his last two games.

SEALS' ROOKIE CENTER LARRY PATEY has five points in last two games.

NORTH STARS' LEFT WING BILL GOLDSWORTHY, with 28 goals, needs two goals to reach the 30-goal mark for the fifth time in his last six seasons with the North Stars.

NORTH STARS' NORM GRATTON has scored 8 goals in 14 games since joining the North Stars.

SEALS' CENTER STAN WEIR is playing in his 200th NHL game tonight.

SEALS' GOALIE GILLES MELOCHE is playing in his 200th game as a Seal tonight.

CALIFORNIA GOLDEN SEALS VS. MINNESOTA NORTH STARS
Wednesday, February 26, 1975

NHL STANDINGS

CLARENCE CAMPBELL CONFERENCE

Lester Patrick Division

	GP	W	L	T	GF	GA	PTS
PHILADELPHIA	60	35	16	9	203	137	79
NY RANGERS	62	30	19	13	250	205	73
NY ISLANDERS	62	26	21	15	202	167	67
ATLANTA	60	24	23	13	167	171	61

Conn Smythe Division

	GP	W	L	T	GF	GA	PTS
VANCOUVER	59	30	23	6	197	178	66
CHICAGO	63	29	27	7	208	189	65
ST. LOUIS	60	23	25	12	199	205	58
MINNESOTA	60	17	37	6	166	257	40
KANSAS CITY	61	14	39	8	146	248	36

LAST NIGHT'S SCORES:

St. Louis	0	at Islanders	3
Chicago	6	at Washington	2
Pittsburgh	4	at Boston	6
Toronto	9	at Minnesota	2

PRINCE OF WALES CONFERENCE

James Norris Division

	GP	W	L	T	GF	GA	PTS
MONTREAL	61	35	10	16	295	177	86
LOS ANGELES	60	33	11	16	209	128	82
PITTSBURGH	61	26	22	13	239	218	65
DETROIT	60	17	33	10	183	247	44
WASHINGTON	63	6	52	5	137	336	17

Charles F. Adams Division

	GP	W	L	T	GF	GA	PTS
BUFFALO	61	38	11	12	269	185	88
BOSTON	62	32	19	11	271	194	75
TORONTO	62	22	29	11	211	240	55
CALIFORNIA	63	16	36	11	170	240	43

GAMES TOMORROW:

Vancouver	at Philadelphia
Detroit	at Boston
Los Angeles	at Buffalo

GAMES TONIGHT:

St. Louis	at Rangers
Philadelphia	at Atlanta
Vancouver	at Montreal
Washington	at Pittsburgh
Los Angeles	at Detroit
Kansas City	at Toronto

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

SEALS

NO.	NAME	POS.	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
18	DAVE HRECHKOSY	LW	55	26	12	38	20
21	STAN WEIR	C	63	15	22	37	12
25	AL MacADAM	RW	63	15	21	36	41
9	LARRY PATEY	C	62	16	18	34	58
17	JOHN STEWART	LW	61	17	16	33	48
7	DAVE GARDNER	C	55	10	17	27	2
12	BUTCH WILLIAMS	RW	46	9	14	23	94
2	RICK HAMPTON	D	61	6	12	18	29
4	BOB STEWART	D	63	5	12	17	89
6	LEN FRIG	D	63	3	12	15	101
15	JIM NEILSON	D	59	2	12	14	54
10	CHARLIE SIMMER	C	19	5	6	11	12
20	MORRIS MOTT	RW	51	3	8	11	8
26	GEORGE PESUT	D	33	0	10	10	65
14	FRANK SPRING	RW	23	3	3	6	6
8	BRIAN LAVENDER	LW	48	1	5	6	36
27	GILLES MELOCHE	G	37	0	5	5	14
19	JIM MOXEY	RW	32	2	2	4	4
30	GARY SIMMONS	G	27	0	1	1	14

MINNESOTA NORTH STARS

NO.	NAME	POS.	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
22	DENNIS HEXTALL	C	60	12	41	53	117
8	BILL GOLDSWORTHY	RW	51	28	24	52	35
7	BLAKE DUNLOP	C	51	9	17	26	8
10	MURRAY OLIVER	C	60	13	12	25	16
9	HENRY BOUCHA	LW	41	12	11	23	23
11	NORM GRATTON	LW	39	11	12	23	4
15	DEAN TALAFOUS	RW/C	41	8	15	23	19
14	ERNIE HICKE	LW	42	10	12	22	67
2	DWIGHT BIALOWAS	D	60	3	18	21	20
12	DOUG ROMBOUGH	C	48	9	10	19	14
3	FRED BARRETT	D	44	3	14	17	53
24	DOUG HICKS	D	60	5	10	15	47
18	DON MARTINEAU	RW	56	6	6	12	42
28	CRAIG CAMERON	RW	57	3	8	11	6
23	LOU NANNE	RW	29	6	4	10	31
5	DENNIS O'BRIEN	D	43	4	4	8	106
20	TOM REID	D	55	1	3	4	76
4	CHRIS AHRENS	D	42	0	2	2	67
35	FERN RIVARD	G	8	0	0	0	2
1	PETE LOPRESTI	G	21	0	0	0	2
30	CESARE MANIAGO	G	36	0	0	0	2

GOALTENDING RECORDS

	GP	GA	SO	MINS	ENG	AVG
30 GARY SIMMONS	27	95	2	1609	1	3.54
	W=9	L=16	T=2			
27 GILLES MELOCHE	37	141	1	2171	3	3.90
	W=7	L=20	T=9			

	GP	GA	SO	MINS	ENG	AVG
35 FERN RIVARD	8	23	0	327	0	4.22
	W=1	L=4	T=0			
1 PETE LOPRESTI	21	85	1	1204	4	4.24
	W=5	L=13	T=2			
30 CESARE MANIAGO	36	144	1	2069	1	4.18
	W=11	L=20	T=4			

