

Seals Gain Respect

Closed Out in Boston

By JOHN PORTER

The Seals went out of the playoffs with a bang, not a whimper.

They still have eight games to play, but are effectively removed from playoff consideration. Even if the Seals win their remaining matches and Toronto loses the rest, the Maple Leafs would be a point ahead in the Adams Division.

Toronto didn't play yesterday. It wasn't necessary as the Seals lost a close one, 4-2, to the Boston Bruins.

The 14,261 fans in Boston Garden saw the Bruins take an early lead, but this was one game the Seals weren't hung out to dry. They nearly knocked the Bruins into the Charles River.

The Bruins' last goal—the second-by Wayne Cashman—rolled into

an empty net in the last minute. Pittsburgh also collected a freebie at the end of its 4-2 win over the Seals Saturday night.

"Another one-goal loss," muttered Wayne Merrick in frustration. Of the Seals' 38 losses this season, 23 have been one-goal games, including the empty-net matches.

"What's the point of Boston trying to test us like that?" asked Seals captain Bob Stewart, referring to the second period that had three fights and 56 penalty minutes. "We handled it and I think we gain respect for it with guys like Al (MacAdam) and Mike (Christie), who are two of the best fighters in the league."

Continued Page 31, Col. 1

Seals Eliminated From Playoffs

Cont. from 1st Sports Page

Winning fights can be costly. Stewart got into a tussle with Terry O'Reilly and suffered a possible broken finger on his left hand.

If Stewart can't play against Buffalo at the Arena Wednesday, the Seals will be down to three defensemen and swingman George Pesut. Len Frig is scheduled for knee surgery tomorrow.

"We're thin on defense," agreed coach Jack Evans. "We'll just have to wait and see."

Evans didn't realize until after the game that the loss mathematically eliminated his team.

"We've increased our win percentage from .200 to .300," said the coach. "Those other Seals teams (in the last four seasons) were out of the playoffs long before we were."

Goalie Gary Simmons, who was kicking himself for deflecting in Boston's first goal and misplaying their next two scores, foresees more than respectability for the Seals.

"We're just two or three players from being the team to beat in our division," he said. "Last year if we had given up two quickie goals like that," he said, snapping his fingers, "they'd bomb me with 50 shots."

The shots last night were even, 31-all.

Bob Murdoch scored his 17th for the Seals on a power

play, taking Al MacAdam's pass from behind the net to cut Boston's lead to 2-1.

An untimely line change gave the Bruins a goal in the second period, but Fred Ahern, who grew up in South Boston, whisked in his 14th in the last period. It may have been the first time ever that a Seal was cheered for scoring on the road.

"We've proved a lot this year," said Simmons. "Nobody laughs at us anymore."

FIRST PERIOD	
0 1 Boston	Cashman (22)
	(Sheppard) 1-40
0 2 Boston	Smith (43)
	(Gibson, Howard) 9-32
1 2 Seals	Murdoch (17)
	(MacAdam, Gardner) 12-49
Shots on goal: Seals 12, Boston 16	
Penalties: Stewart, Seals (fighting) 7:30; Hodpe, Seals (interference) 8:46; Buerk, Boston (high-sticking) 14:28	
SECOND PERIOD	
1 3 Boston	Buerk (24)
	(Hodge, Smith) 1-02
Shots on goal: Seals 11, Boston 7	
Penalties: MacAdam, Seals (fighting) 4:14; Stewart, Seals (fighting) 4:14; Smith, Boston (game misconduct) 4:14; Savard, Boston (fighting) 4:14; O'Reilly, Boston (fighting) 4:14; O'Reilly, Boston (fighting) 9:35; Christie, Seals (fighting) 9:36; Zanussi, Boston (rough-play) 9:36; Schmautz, Boston (rough-play) 11:46; Girard, Seals (rough-play) 11:49; Schmautz, Boston (rough-play and fighting minor, served by Cashman, fighting) 18:37; Hammon, Seals (fighting) 18:37; Warcoffe, Boston (out-of-play conduct) 18:57.	
THIRD PERIOD	
2 3 Seals	Ahern (14)
	(unassisted) 14-42
2 4 Boston	Cashman (23)
	(Ruelle) 19-32
Shots on goal: Boston 14, Seals 7	
Penalties: Jacobs, Seals (hooking) 9:43	
Total shots: Seals 31, Boston 31	
Goalies: Seals, Simmons; Boston, Gilbert	
3 stars: 1, Gilbert, Boston; 2, Biles, head, Boston; 3, Buerk, Boston	
Referee: Byron Lewis	
APR 14, 261	