

Seals Win Fight But Lose Game

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Sometimes it takes a little battle or two to get the adrenalin flowing and lift an athletic team off its collective rump.

Last night California's Golden Seals seemed to be dreaming of a White Christmas for two periods of an alleged hockey game with the Los Angeles Kings before one of the smallest crowds, 1796, ever to watch a National Hockey League game.

Then, just 23 seconds into the final period, Seals defenseman Bob Stewart squared off with King Don Kozak and whipped the Los Angelino from here to there.

Generally hockey fights are tugging and hauling affairs, but this time the boys squared off in the approved Marquis of Queensberry manner.

Two Penalties

When it was over, Kozak had taken a pretty bad whipping and both were penalized for five minutes.

It seemed to arouse the sleepy Seals and they scored three goals in that final period.

Hilliard Graves, who was being roughed along the boards by Bill Lesuk. But, alas, not even a fight broke out as Lesuk wanted no part of Stewart.

Before the second period had ended Bernier had gotten his hat trick on a goal at 3:45 and another just a second before the period ended when he bulled past McAneeley and shoved goalie Marv Edwards right into the nets.

Again the slow-motion Seals got only six shots on goal. However, they did draw three penalties from myopic referee Lloyd Gilmour.

Bernier Again

After the battle the Seals started skating and Walt McKechnie scored his 10th goal before Bernier closed out his unbelievable evening with his fourth goal at 7:54 of the wild final period.

Craig Patrick and Reggie Leach also scored as the Seals got off 18 shots, four more than they totalled in the first two periods.

Unfortunately, L.A. had a one man gang on its side. His name was Serge Bernier and, mustache flowing, he scored four goals in a row for the Kings, who won the game 5-3, after it looked as though they were going to duplicate their 5-0 shutout over California in the opening game of the season.

Bernier Stopped

Ted McAneeley finally figured out how to stop Bernier midway through the final period. He picked a fight and both were banished from the ice for five minutes.

The Seals were skating so lethargically in the first two periods that one could only wonder if they had loaded up on their Christmas vittles yesterday afternoon instead of today.

They were going through the motions like in a dream world, more like sonambulists than hockey players.

It was just like the start of the season all over again in the initial canto as Bernier, never known as a scoring ace, scored at 12:56. During this period the Seals only got six shots at goalie Grogatien Vachon.

Graves Saved

Just as the period drew to a close there was a brief flurry of action as Stewart came to the rescue of little

Whitey Widing scored the final King tally on a break-away.

Capt. Bert Marshall was back on the ice for a couple of shifts after being hospitalized with a back injury.

The Seals will play three games next week, happily none with their nemeses from Smogville. They fly up to Vancouver for an afternoon contest with the Vancouver Canucks tomorrow then it is back to the Arena for a Wednesday meeting with the Philadelphia Flyers and a Friday engagement with the only team in the league with a worse record than California's, the New York Islanders.

FIRST PERIOD

SCORING — 1. Los Angeles, Bernier 8 (Brown, Lemieux) 12:56.

PENALTIES — McAneeley (S) 2:21; Komadoski (LA), 7:25; Bernier (LA) 16:5.

SHOTS ON GOAL — Seals 6, Los Angeles 8.

SECOND PERIOD

SCORING — 2. Los Angeles, Bernier 9 (Backstrom) 3:45, 3. Los Angeles, Bernier 10 (Komadoski) 19:59.

PENALTIES — Smith (S) 3:56; Messer (S) 7:35; Stewart (S) 9:47.

SHOTS ON GOAL — Seals 6, Los Angeles 11.

THIRD PERIOD

SCORING — 4. Seals McKechnie 10 (Patrick - Laframboise) 6:24; 5. Los Angeles, Bernier 11 (un) 7:34; 6. Seals, Patrick 8 (J. Johnston - Mages) 11:48; 7. Seals, Leach 9 (Gilbertson-J. Johnston) 13:41; 8. Widing 7 (Corrigan) 15:19.

PENALTIES — Stewart, (S) and Kozak (LA), majors, 23; Komadoski (LA) 8:11; Bernier, (LA), McAneeley (S), majors, 12:23, Smith (S) 17:06.

SHOTS ON GOAL — Seals 18, Los Angeles 7.

TOTAL SHOTS — Seals 28, Los Angeles 26.

GOALIES — Seals, M. Edwards; Los Angeles, Vachon.

ATTENDANCE — 1796.

REFEREE — Lloyd Gilmour.