

Promising youngster

MacAdam: Seals' almost invisible man



AL MACADAM
Almost invisible

By JOE DeLOACH

Al MacAdam is one of those athletes that you really never notice.

On the ice, the 23-year-old left winger of the California Seals is pretty hard to distinguish from other players. It's not that MacAdam doesn't do a competent job, because he does. But his skating motion is so smooth that he almost gets lost during the fury of the game.

"I'm the type of player that nobody notices," says MacAdam, who is now in his second full season with the Seals. "I just want to be known as a quiet individual on and off the ice. I'm not as flamboyant as some of the other players on our team like 'The Wrecker' (teammate Dave Hrechkosy)."

There is no disputing MacAdam's quiescent personality, but as a hockey player, he is one of the most talented and durable of the young Seals. Acquired last year from Philadelphia as part of the Reggie Leach trade, MacAdam scored 18 goals and was one of three Seals' players to perform in all 80 games of the season.

"I was satisfied with my performance last year," says MacAdam, "but it could have been better, too. This year I feel great. I'm

more comfortable and confident on the ice. I know the other players' moves and they know mine. That's going to make a big difference."

MacAdam, a Dublin resident during the season, has started fast this year by scoring six goals, three of which have come when the team has been playing shorthanded. In the season's second game, heregistered his first-ever National Hockey League three-goal hat trick.

"I really don't know why I'm off to such a good start," he says, "because I'm usually a slow starter. I had a good training camp, but I was a little worried because my wife was having a baby and I wasn't with her."

At 6-0 and 185 pounds, MacAdam isn't the type of player that tries to out-muscle an opponent. He'd rather finesse the opposition than to be physical.

"We don't have any super stars on this team so we all have to work hard," says MacAdam. "When a couple of players let down, it will be tough for us to win. We need a complete effort from everybody."

As a rookie with the Seals last year, MacAdam scored 43 points (18 goals and 25 assists) to rank fourth on the team. He possess an accurate shot and is a good stick handler.

"I have set some personal goals for myself this year," he says, "but I'm not the type of game who talks about them. I look for us to make the playoffs because all of the players are a year older now. Toronto has lost some of their veterans, and that will help us, too."

MacAdam was considered to be one of the top prospects in the Philadelphia organization when he came to the Seals. Is he glad he left the Stanley Cup champions for an inexperienced team like California?

"At first I wasn't sure how I felt," he recalls. "I felt uncomfortable last year on and off the ice. I know more people here now and I feel more at ease. With the new owners, this is a first class organization."

The Seals need to develop players like MacAdam if they are going to become competitive in the NHL. The team has started in the right direction, but the season has a long way to go.

"We have to get every point we can early in the year," says MacAdam. "Once you get to February, every game seems to be tough. This is the time of year where a young team like ours can sneak up on somebody."