

Seals' McCreary admits he won't return as coach

By Ken Miller

A year ago, after the last open net had been missed, the last giveaway in their own end had occurred, and all the other final disasters were over, the California Golden Seals promised in unison that they would be looking forward to this season.

The emotions are still the same. The Seals are still looking ahead to another training camp, but a coach and at least two players acknowledged that their situation would be different.

Bill McCreary, the man who took over for Marshall Johnston behind the bench in late January, confirmed speculation that he would definitely not be returning as coach for 1975-76. And forwards Joey Johnston and Larry Patey, two of the club's three or four most talented skaters, said the rival World Hockey Association might beckon.

"I definitely won't be back," said McCreary in his office last night after the Seals had held the playoff-bound Los Angeles Kings to a 1-1 tie at the Oakland Coliseum Arena. "We are looking at several people as candidates, but we won't discuss specific contracts with anybody until after our situation with the league is resolved May 1."

The situation, of course, is the probable sale of the club by the National Hockey League, the owners since mid-February of last year, to Bay Area businessman Mel Swig. And then, should Swig and his partners, all of whom were among the 5,159



ALL OVER NOW — SEALS EXIT AFTER FINALE

Leaving Arena ice: Gary Simmons (30), Dave Hrechosy

—Examiner photo by Bill Nichols

in attendance at the Arena last night, purchase the franchise, Jack Evans is the likely replacement.

Evans, the coach of Salt Lake City, the Seals' top farm, has seen more than a few of California's games the past two months. He has expressed more than passing interest in helping to lead the Seals out of the wilderness.

But with another bad record in the books, Joey Johnston seems to be willing to go. Or make that: Seems to be eager to go.

"If the price is right, if they stuff my pockets next year," said JJ, who scored all of 14 goals this year, "I'll be back. You only play for the money. I haven't been making what I think I'm worth."

Johnston and Patey are two clients of Alan Eagleson, the Toronto lawyer who heads up the NHL Players' association and is more concerned than most agents about the welfare of his clients. Eagleson is no staunch booster of the WHA, but some of his stable have left before to go to poorer competition but better salaries.

Patey, whose 29th goal last night enabled the Seals to tie the Kings after Tommy Williams had given L.A. a first-period lead, is obviously being courted. Oh, yes.

"I'd like to stay here," said Patey, "but let's face it, money is the primary thing. Right now I'm in the working stages of negotiations. If I sign something soon, I'll be the first to let everybody know."

And the Seals would like to consider themselves the first of "everybody." They'd like to have everybody back — everybody — as they try to do what they promise to do next year after every final game.

FIRST PERIOD

Scoring: 1. Los Angeles, T. Williams 17 (unassisted), 18:06. Penalties: L.A. Corrigan (holding), 12:40. Seals: MacAdam (holding), 12:11. Seals: Huston (tripping), 18:34. L.A. Nevin (checking), 18:43.

SECOND PERIOD

Scoring: 2. Seals, Patey 25 (Chris- tie Holt), 7:25. Penalties: Seals, B. Williams (misconduct), game misconduct, 5:01. L.A., Brown (holding), 12:34. L.A., Maloney (loosening mask), 16:07. Seals, Gardner — (holding), 17:26.

THIRD PERIOD

Scoring: None. Penalties: L.A., Widing (checking), 3:28. L.A., Kanne-gasser (holding), 19:03.

SUMMARY

Los Angeles	1 0 0-1
Seals	0 1 0-1

Shots on goal: Los Angeles on Melniche, 13-11-30; Seals on Vachon, 12-16-4-32.
Referee: Ron Wicks.