

Pens Will Take A Tie

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OAKLAND — Because of the way Ron Schock's knee is shaped, the Penguins pulled out a 4-4 tie with the California Seals last night.

The Penguins pulled goaltender Michel Plasse with 1:11 left and minors called on Pierre Larouche and the Seals' Fred Ahern. After several Penguins made fine plays to keep the puck in the Seals' zone, Jean Pronovost made another, then, with only 15 seconds left, fired a shot to the left of California goaltender Gary Simmons.

But en route to the goal, it hit Schock's knee and dropped across the line to Simmons' right.

"What a freak thing!" said Simmons of the tying goal. "I had the first shot

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(Pronovost's) lined up, but then it hit a knee and I'm out of it."

But, though Schock may tap his lucky knee, he reminds that the Seals had some good bounces, too.

"California was a pretty lucky that Simon Nolet hit two posts," Schock said.

Lucky, because it doesn't happen too often.

"I don't ever remember hitting two posts in one game," said Nolet, the 24-year-old veteran. "I remember hitting one and later getting a goal, but never two."

If either had gone in, the Penguins might have tucked away an early win against the stubborn Seals.

"This was our weakest game on the three-game West Coast swing," said Penguin Coach Ken Schinkel. "So I guess a tie isn't so bad. Not often do you get five out of six points on a swing like this."

Schinkel said his whole team, with the possible exception of Schock, Nolet and Vic Hadfield (who scored the first goal) looked sluggish.

"We were two lines apart all night," Schinkel said. "The forwards were all the way down at one end, and the defensemen were down at the other."

The young Seals, meanwhile, were running around in bunches, stacking players in front of their goal. Simmons saw a lot of his teammates' knees and legs block shots.

"We are unable to hold a lead," lamented Seal Coach Jack Evans. "You can't fault anyone on our team, everybody played hard. But we just kept making mistakes."

The Seals scored two early third-period goals to take a 3-2 lead, and instead of whittling away the time with some checking, they tried to press their advantage.

But pretty soon the Penguins were bringing the puck up the ice on a three-on-two and defenseman Colin Campbell was scoring on Schock's rebound.

Such things are bound to make Evans feel old; he just hopes it ages his players, too. The line that played against Schock's included Dennis Maruk, Bob Murdoch and Al MacAdam, who are 20, 22 and 23. Schock, Nolet and Hadfield, who have 14 goals in their last nine games, are 22, 24 and 25.

Dave Gardner, a 20-year-old, was a thorn in the Penguins' side with a goal and two assists, but he was on the ice when Larouche stole the puck at mid ice and passed to Rick Kehoe.

Kehoe then slipped a pass into Stan Gilbertson alone, but Simmons blocked Gilbertson's stuff try and Kehoe plucked the puck out of the crease.

The Penguins' four goals maintained their place as the fourth highest scoring team in the National Hockey League, but Evans noticed a difference in the Schinkel Penguins.

"This Pittsburgh team is playing well," Evans said. "Under (Marc) Boileau, they let you score nine if they could score 10. Now they are playing a checking game."