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Tribune Photos by Ben Kinsinger and Chris Kibben

DON O'DONOGHUE'S (11) THIRD-PERIOD GOAL TIES FLYERS, THEN ROOKIE JOE HARDY'S SHOT GOES PAST BERNIE PARENT TO GIVE SEALS A 3-2 WIN WITH 12 SECONDS REMAINING

# Seals Regain 4th Place



HAPPY SEALS MOB JOE HARDY (22) AFTER HIS GAME-WINNING SHOT

By SPENCE CONLEY  
Tribune Sports Writer

Two scrappy rookies, a timely tripping penalty and the simple effectiveness of the straight-bladed hockey stick all helped the Oakland Seals last night to take over fourth place in the National Hockey League's West Division.

Joe Hardy, a lanky French-Canadian centerman who shows precocious brilliance with his play-making, snapped a 15-footer past goalie Bernie Parent with just 12 seconds to play to give his Oakland Seals a stunning 3-2 victory over the Philadelphia Flyers at the Coliseum Arena.

The victory, combined with Pittsburgh's 2-0 shutout of the Minnesota North Stars, jumped the Seals into fourth place by a point, 52-52, and moved them onto the inside

## Hardy Hero In Final 12 Seconds

track in the head-to-head battle with the North Stars for the playoffs.

But it was a win not easily come by.

Hardy and fellow rookie Don O'Donoghue inspired a two-goal rally in the final 3:40 of a battle which appeared very nearly wrapped up by the Philadelphians.

Trailing 2-1 and with just

four minutes to play, O'Donoghue and Hardy performed in the following manner:

Hardy got the puck from Doug Roberts and fed a beauty of a pass to Donnie speeding down right wing with a step on Flyer defenseman Ed Van Impe. He got an opening and let go — tie game at 2-2, 3:40 to go!

"Reggie Fleming was right there for a while," explained O'Donoghue. "He was trying to check me and Joe tipped the puck to me. Fleming almost got his stick on it. I went in and Parent came out a little and gave me the far side of the net. I backhanded it right at the opening. He seemed to get his glove on it, but it went in."

Not long after that, the

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Seals got another break: Bill Sutherland was caught by referee Bruce Hood tripping Bill Hicke as the Seals pressed again in the final minute of play.

Sutherland left the ice at 19:28 and 20 seconds later, Earl Ingarfield, shifting into the clear from behind the Flyer net, targeted a perfect pass to Hardy who took it on a straight-bladed stick and shot all in one motion — a Seal win with 12 seconds to play.

The highly vocal crowd of 5,346 went wild as the Seals had pulled one out of the fire with as thrilling a finish as seen this season at the Arena.

"I'd like to get a couple more like that," said the smiling, curly black-haired Hardy in the dressing room later. "Earl was coming from behind the net and saw me. He made a great pass. I just took it and shot it with no hesitation."

He paused for a moment to tenderly massage his chin, a little painful because of a six-stitch cut in it from being hit by a puck.

"I had some good experience in Providence," he added. "I learned a lot from Dave Creighton (the Reds' coach) and Freddie Glover has given me a lot of confidence here. He has been letting me work on the power play and kill penalties. And I've got my weight up to 182 from the 174 I was at when I started the season here."

He was recalled just before the Minnesota game on Tuesday when Brian Perry was returned to the Reds. He's here while Howie Menard recovers from a bad knee injury.

"Joe is playing very well," commented Glover. "He was good in Minnesota and great against Philadelphia. He makes some super plays with the puck. He thinks. He waits for the hole to open and then makes his plays. He's better at that than some of our more experienced players."

"And did you ever take a look at Hardy's stick? It's got a straight blade. No curve in it at all. That's why he handles the puck so well. He can pass or shoot either way without any problems."

"I'd say that the curved sticks which many of our players use cost us at least four goals last night. You just can't get away a good shot off the back side of a curved stick."

Interestingly, four of the five goals scored in the game were on power plays: Bill Sutherland got the game-opening score, and Earl Ingarfield got that one back, both on first period power plays. Terry Ball put the Flyers ahead in the second on a power play, and Hardy's game-winner was while Oakland had a man advantage.

The Seals, losers of only one of their last nine games, next play St. Louis Friday at the Coliseum while the North Stars visit L.A. Saturday before coming into Oakland for a big one on Sunday.