

Young Warns No Jobs on Seals Are Safe

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This may come as a surprise, considering the Seals finished last the past season, but the local club has improved itself in the last two weeks to the point where it will have protection problems in a series of drafts next week.

Garry Young, the team's director of hockey, agrees that other clubs, including the expansion franchises in Kansas City and Washington, are ogling his roster.

"There will be some surprises when you see who I protect," promised Young last night. "This club didn't have competition for positions, but that's over now. No one can be complacent."

Young wouldn't elaborate, but his remarks aren't difficult to decipher. Many veterans have become expendable in his rebuilding program and others may get the boot when the protection list must be filed next Sunday night.

The National Hockey League will hold its intra-league draft next Monday and the Seals, as a consequence of their ineptitude last season, have the first pick. If a veteran defenseman is available, Young will take him.

"We hope to pick up one

player who can make our team in that draft," said the director. "As we try to build the team we keep looking over our shoulder at Buffalo, Toronto and Boston and each player we add is with that in mind."

The Seals will be in a four-team division with Buffalo, Toronto and Boston next season. Three of the four will make the playoffs, according to the NHL formula.

The protection problems for Monday, when he can protect 18 skaters and two goalies, are tough, but not impossible. Because it's an expansion year, the Seals could lose only one player in the intra-league draft.

Tuesday is a different story.

Young can protect only 15 and two and will wind up losing three players in the expansion draft.

From previous statements by the director and club President Munson Campbell, it's known that defensemen Len Frig and Mike Christie and forwards Larry Wright and Al MacAdam will be protected.

Defensemen Bob Stewart and Ted McAneeley are sure to be on the list with forwards Joey Johnston, Hil Graves, Stan Weir, Ron Huston, Walt McKechnie and Craig Patrick.

From the minors, Wayne King and Dave Hrechkosy were the most impressive and deserve to be protected.

Add up the previous names and you get 14. That means

Young would be able to protect only one more player from the following: Rick Kessel, Morris Mott, Terry Murray, Pete Laframboise, Stan Gilbertson, Gary Croteau, Gary Coalter, Del Hall, Lyle Bradley.

The Seals do not have to protect amateurs or first-year pros, but there is a possibility they will lose a goalie, possibly veteran Marv Edwards.

Washington and K.C. may pick two goalies each, but they are expected to go for youngsters, so the Seals may get off free.

The final day of drafting in Montreal includes the inter-league and reverse portions. The NHL teams get a chance at the minor league rosters, then the farm clubs can pick from the majors' outcasts.

Young's problem here will

be to cement his contract with goalie Gary Simmons, already signed off the Western Hockey League Phoenix team which since has become a World Hockey franchise.

Conceivably, Washington, which has the first pick, could draft Simmons, so Young will have to float a deal to keep the goaltender.

"I do have problems," agreed Young.