

Seals won't call up rookies; vets to face Chicago

By Ken Miller

The California Golden Seals, who, at the very least, are in excellent position to experiment with a 1975-76 lineup, are still going with the Class of 1974-75.

Now that this season may be dismissed as just one more on the road to maturity, the Seals should be bringing up the people from top farm club Salt Lake City they've been raving about, giving exposure to Denis Meloche, Fred Ahern, Bob Murdoch and Gary Holt.

But they still seem dedicated to the old ideal, which, for some arcane reason, remains transfixed. For the past two seasons, the Seals have refused to bring up the minor league talent from Salt Lake City. The rationale is that they do not wish to disrupt the playoff possibilities for the Golden Eagles.

Well. But the Seals aren't going to draw any more fans or attract any more potential buyers for the troubled franchise merely by winning Central League playoffs. Management has always insisted they have need to develop a winning tradition somewhere.

So when the Seals open a sixgame home stand tonight at the Oakland Coliseum Arena against the Chicago Black Hawks, they will not have Denis Meloche and the rest. That is a problem which should be remedied as soon as possible.

What the Seals will have,



BOBBY STEWART G. MELOCHE

is Denis's brother Gilles, who played brilliantly in California's 4-2 loss to Montreal Monday night. The young goaltender, still proving that he is the club's first-stringer, will be making his second straight start.

One Seal who might not start is defenseman Bobby Stewart, hampered by a groin injury and doubtful tonight. Stewart's absence should mean more ice time for George Peat, who has spent more and more time on the bench lately with the return of Mike Christie from ligament surgery last week.

So finally, the Seals are on the verge of having the defense they hoped to have all season. With Len Frig and Jim Neilson performing well, plus Stewart, and the development of Christie and Peat, it seems safe to say that the club will be in no rush to make any moves for blueliners during the off-season.

Or forwards during the final 14 games of this one. Whatever plans the Seals have for the future, they should start previewing them now.