

Feeble Flames Win, 4-3

By Glenn Schwarz
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At this point, nobody should take the California Golden Seals too seriously. Here, have a laugh or two on them.

Coach Garry Young, who has watched the National Hockey League's youngest team win only one of its first eight games, will not be upset. Even he found something to chuckle about last night after the Seals played

miserably in a 4-3 loss to the Western Division's newest expansion team, some group called the Atlanta Flames.

The big smile creased Young's face when he was asked if there was any hope the Seals could get back the guts of their team. You know, all those players who defected to the World Hockey Association.

"I can't get into litigation," said Young, his eyes meeting the reporters' for

the first time. "But I'll say this. You open the doors and I'll drive to get them."

He then shook his head and began to chuckle.

"Oh, at least we've had a laugh," said Young. "You can't lose your sense of humor, you know."

Inside, Young undoubtedly was sobbing. Without players like Gerry Pinder, Bobby Sheehan and Paul Shmyr the Seals might have to struggle to finish ahead of

the Flames, let alone in some place other than last.

What Charles O. Finley's other Oakland team needs, obviously, is Gene Tenace and Rollie Fingers.

"I'm not going to push the panic button," said Young, who before this season's over might be voted the NHL's bravest man of the year.

"We have only two play-

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Young Promises Revival

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ers (Bert Marshall and Gary Croteau) with more than one full year's experience. And there's a lot of pressure on us because we haven't been winning. But I'm going to keep working and working until we click."

Last night the clicks were few and far between.

Seals' rookie Pete Laframboise spoiled an otherwise restful evening for another first year man, Atlanta goalie Dan Bouchard, by scoring two goals. The first cut the Atlanta lead to 3-2, the second to the final margin.

"Laframboise showed some goodness," said Young, praising him in his own way.

There was little else to applaud. The Seals saw Keith McCreary pop in two power play goals on Marv Edwards, but they were so hesitant to pull the trigger on Bouchard one would have thought it was the reincarnate Terry Sawchuck in the Atlanta nets. They took only 23 shots on Bouchard, four in the final period.

The crowd of 1998, believed to be an all-time low for the Oakland Arena, should have been summoned to the locker room for post-match relief.

"Like I said before," Young promised, "we'll have this club in playoff position by Christmas."

Nobody had the heart to ask which year.