

Merrick Jumps Into Seals' Record Book

By **RON McGRATH**

It didn't take long for popular Wayne Merrick to earn a place in the Seals' record book. In fact, in only his 15th game in a California uniform, the Sarnia flash set an all-time club record of six points in one game, notching a hat trick and adding three assists as the Seals rolled over the Washington Capitals, 8-5, last Friday night.

"It was a thrill," admitted the fast-skating center. "I went through three seasons in St. Louis and never got a hat trick. I was beginning to wonder if I ever would get one."

Merrick has been credited with a staggering number of shots in recent games (he had 10 against Kansas City in the Seals' last home tilt) and with a little more luck, might have had four or five goals against the Caps . . . he had that many good chances.

The previous club point-scoring record for one game was held by Gerry Pinder, who had a hat trick and two assists against Detroit on Oct. 24, 1971. Twice this season Seals' forwards have scored four goals

in one game . . . Gary Sabourin turning that rare trick against the Rangers and Dennis Maruk clicking for four against Pittsburgh.

Since joining the Seals in a trade that saw California give up sophomore Larry Patey and a third-round draft choice in 1977 to the Blues, Merrick has registered six goals and ten assists. His goal totals include two game-winners against Vancouver (a 2-1 victory) and against St. Louis (a 5-2 romp).

Combined with the seven goals and eight assists he had with the Blues, Merrick now has a total of 31 points in 34 games, almost a point-a-game clip.

The victory over Washington set other records for the Seals, too. The 51 shots on goal were the most ever for the Seals in their 8½-year history, the previous high being the 49 they fired in a game against Toronto back on Nov. 21, 1970.

The eight-goal output was the high-production mark for the Seals this season, the previous being the seven goals against the New York Rangers on Nov. 7.

And, of course, the Seals, with their sixth road win of the season, equalled the total number of road victories they've scored in the past two years combined.



WAYNE MERRICK . . . always on the move for the Seals. —Photo by Bill Fox



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WAYNE BUSY OFF ICE, TOO — The gang from Sarnia, Ontario was in town Christmas week to play some hockey in California, and Wayne Merrick, Seals' classy center, was the main object of the autograph seekers. Wayne hails from Sarnia and played his minor hockey there. The Great Lakes Airlines Bantams from Sarnia Township played their counterparts from Santa Rosa, California, and even a 3-1 setback for the visitors was not enough to dampen the enthusiasm of the Sarnia delegation. —Photo by Harvey Klein

