

Arena Hockey Outdraws S.F.

By ED SCHOENFELD

Hockey in Oakland's new Coliseum Arena is drawing 28 per cent more people than it ever did in the Cow Palace.

Thirteen games have been played by the Seals in the gleaming all-glass Arena, and the fan response after a corresponding number of dates is 21,219 beyond their peak season in San Francisco.

The Seals drew 45,219 to their first 13 games last year in the Cow Palace, their fourth season there.

The 13-game count in Oakland is 75,407, Coliseum, Inc. reports today.

In contrast, the first year the Seals played 13 games across the bay they drew

47,744.

The Seals' best start in the Cow Palace was in 1963-64 when 53,488 turned up for the first 13 games. The figure dropped to 37,365 after 13 games the next season.

Two Oakland games this year drew more than 8,500, and three others topped 6,200.

The average gate here has been 5,800.

"I'm very encouraged," says George Fleharty, who as president of the Seals is the man who called the shot to move from San Francisco to Oakland.

"I wouldn't be surprised if we wind up doing two to one over last year," he said.

The hockey club leader

pointed out the Seals have not yet fully developed their program for home attendance.

Fleharty explained the Seals staged a strong and successful season ticket campaign, and are supplementing it with a campaign of group sales.

"I think this program will take full affect after the first of next month," he said, "and we will show even a greater spread as compared to last year.

"Winning some games will also help a great deal," Fleharty added.

The Seals have 23 more games in Oakland this season. The home campaign runs through March 31.