Goals by Sittler, McDonald give Leafs 5-5 tie with Seals

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OAKLAND — Toronto Maple Leafs scored twice in the third period to gain a 5-5 tie with California Golden Seals in a National Hockey League game here last night.

The point for the tie kept Leafs up with New York Rangers, who tied Detroit, for third place in the Eastern Division with 50 points.

Leafs led 3-2 after the first period but Seals scored three goals in the middle period while California goaltender Gilles Maloche turned aside 16 shots.

Toronto's Darryl Sittler scored on a 25-foot shot from the left side at 5:59 of the third period to bring Leafs within a goal, 5-4, and Lanny McDonald batted in a rebound five minutes later for the tying goal.

California went with its third line of Rick Kessell, Morris Mott and Stan Gilbertson nearly half the game, because of injuries, and they responded with three goals. However, they were on the ice for three against including the two Leafs got in the third period.

Toronto leads the all-time series 22-9-5 but the Seals still hold an 8-7-3 advantage in Oakland.

Leafs outshot Seals 43-26 and had a 14-8 advantage in the third period.

Leafs scored first when Inge Hammarstrom shot from the faceoff circle to Meloche's left. The goalie seemingly had the puck stopped with his stick, but was unable to keep it out of the net.

Meloche was starting his first game in seven weeks after suffering cut tendons in his stickhand. The goal came while Seals defenceman Ted McAneeley was in the penalty box for high-sticking.

Seals bounced back after Rick Kessell stole the puck from Leafs' Rick Kehoe at the Toronto blueline and passed to Stan Gilbertson. The California left wing deked Jim McKenny and backhanded the puck under netminder Doug Favell for his eighth goal.

The Seals made it 2-1 midway in the period. The goal was set up with two Leafs, Errol Thompson and McKenny, in the penalty box. The former's penalty had expired by a second when Marshall Johnston took a pass from Ivan Boldirev and fired a 20-foot shot past Favell.

Dave Keon split California defenders McAneeley and Terry Murray and beat Meloche on breakaway to even the score 2-2.

In the last minute Leafs' McDonald streaked in on right wing and forced the puck off Meloche's stick and into the net for a 3-2 lead.

With one second left Boldirev came within a whisker of making it 3-3, but hit the far goalpost. Leafs outshot Seals, 13-6.

Hardest shot of the period came off Thompson's stick. The puck struck Meloche in the right shoulder and play was halted for two minutes before the goalie was ready to play.

Kessell put the Seals into a 3-3 tie in the second period with Leafs' Paul Henderson in the penalty box for holding Reg Leach. The Seals' reserve centre got his second goal of the season after cutting through the crease and beating Favell on the stick side.

The same Seals line struck again 1½ minutes later. Patrick already had replaced Morris Mott on a line change and blasted a high shot at Favell, who knocked the puck down to his feet. Gilbertson barged in and poked the puck between the goaltender's legs for his second goal and a 4-3 California lead.

California took a 5-3 advantage with its third goal of the period on a play that so incensed Favell that his arguing resulted in a 10-minute misconduct.

Joey Johnston broke through Leafs' defence for a point-blank shot that Favell tried to clear to the left side. Johnston turned completely around after shooting and as his momentum carried him past the net, the puck deflected off the back of his skate blade for his 17th goal.