

BY EUROPEANS

Canadians left behind

MOSCOW (CP) — The Finnish forwards have a two-on-one break against the Czechs. The Czech defenceman has the angle on the puck-carrying Finn and is shutting him off to the side. Suddenly the Finn spins, zipping a perfect backhand pass across the goalmouth, that his winger instantly slips into the open side of the net.

"I paid my \$9 to see the game, and that one move alone made it worth the price of admission," said Derek Holmes, assistant coach of Canada Selects at the Ixvotva tournament Holmes, a former national team member in the 1960s under Father David Bauer and now Hockey Canada technical director and connoisseur of the European game and its players.

"I really wonder now if we can ever catch up with them again," Holmes said of the Czechs on Sunday as they carted away from the Canadians 10-1 in the opener. But on Monday, a plucky, if not talented, Canadian team held the Swedes scoreless in the first period of their second game in the Luzhinski Palace

until two cycling Swedes stole the puck off the lumbering Canadian defencemen no fewer than three times to score, in the end, a 7-2 win. The Canadian defencemen lacked discipline, observed Ken Dryden between periods of the Sweden game. "It's part of the reason they are here right now and not playing in the NHL. They don't play their position."

Dryden is in town to prepare for his job as hockey commentator for U.S. television in Lake Placid. Four of the teams in this tournament will be their country's Olympic representative, with minor lineup changes.

The Canadians, officially called the Canada Selects, have nine plus 13 professional players, mostly from the farm systems of the NHL.

"You know, I sympathize with these guys, feel sorry for them in a way," Holmes reflected at the team's hotel. "Somewhere along the line they were led to believe they could play pro hockey and be mainly specialists. They could shoot but not skate, or be able to check but not pass. That's what is different about the Europeans. Look at the Finns. They can all skate, shoot and pass. All of them. And now they can check."

Philadelphia Flyer scout Al Davidson, making his first trip to Europe, also is impressed by the calibre of play — with a reservation.

"There's no doubt that a lot of NHL players would not have the skills to play at the international level, but the reverse is true to some extent as well. With the bigger ice surface here, it is very much more a passing game. More like the pick-up hockey at home and freeshooting. But some of the Europeans in the NHL now are having problems because they don't get that good passing."

"The defence is playing much better now," said Smith. "We've cut down the giveaways. Earlier, we had 15 or 16 a game. Now it's down to one or two."

By the time Colorado's Lucien DelDella stole an unwise cross-ice pass and sent a bullet towards Smith that Islanders defenceman Mike McEwen deflected home, the Islanders had the game pretty much in hand.

Bob Bourne cashed in twice in the second period for the Islanders and Mike Bossy sent the game-winner 1:44 into the third period.

Earl Campbell not only has proved he can perform feats on the football field but compares with C. J. Simpson and Jim Brown. He's also all-pro at dishing out praise to his offensive linemen.

Campbell, in his second year in the Houston Oilers' backfield, was named the National Football League's most valuable player by The Associated Press on Tuesday after becoming only the third player in NFL history to win the rushing title his first two years in the league.

Campbell set NFL records for most rushes in a season at 368 and most consecutive 100-yard games in a season with seven. He also tied NFL single-season records with eleven 100-yard games and 19 touchdowns.

Following his rookie season in 1978, Campbell received 28 post-season awards. He's off on another award-winning binge this year but his acceptance speech never has changed. It's always a pat on the back for his offensive line.

"It's kind of like it is with a football star," Campbell explained. "It takes a lot of people working to make him do what he does. That's what the offensive line does for me. I wouldn't be anything without them. They're the ones that make it possible for me to get those yards."

Campbell, behind his blockers, won the NFL rushing title with 1,697 yards on 388 carries in 1978. His two-year total of 3,487 yards. Campbell beat out Chicago's Walter Payton with

faked Montreal goalie Richard Sevigny to the ice and slipped back into the unguarded net.

After the Blues' Jack Brown scored with 6:10 remaining, Lafleur made it 4-3 with four minutes left. Brian Sutter added an insurance goal into an empty Montreal net with 44 seconds left to ease out the scoring.

SAYS TEAM IMPROVING At Utica, N.Y., the Islanders won by only one goal over a last-place team but remained confident.

Smith said the club, after a slow start this season, is starting to come around.

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Habs continue slide with loss to St. Louis

BY THE CANADIAN PRESS New York, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Montreal — Everywhere they go in the National Hockey League these days, Montreal Canadiens are making people happy.

NHL W L T F A P
Montreal 15 12 6 119 156 36
Los Angeles 11 12 129 120 33
Chicago 11 15 125 123 33
Detroit 9 13 7 95 102 25
Boston 13 8 98 107 24

Adams Division
Buffalo 20 6 118 78 43
Boston 19 8 111 87 39
Winnipeg 17 7 124 95 37
Toronto 14 12 3 107 91 31
Washington 12 15 101 111 29

Campbell Conference
Pittsburgh 20 1 81 91 42
Philadelphia 15 12 7 107 102 33
Atlanta 13 13 102 105 28
Islanders 11 13 6 108 105 28
Washington 6 22 5 87 153 17

Smythe Division
Vancouver 12 12 7 107 102 33
Chicago 10 11 84 93 30
Winnipeg 11 17 90 95 31
St. Louis 10 17 5 90 114 25
Colorado 9 18 99 115 31
Edmonton 7 15 7 99 127 21

Since heading out on the road last week, the defending Stanley Cup champions have lost in the four aforementioned cities. They were in Bloomington, Minn. those loyal to the Minnesota North Stars will be hoping the Canadiens continue their December dive.

A 5-2 loss in St. Louis to the Blues on Tuesday night gave Montreal a rare five defeats in succession.

In the night's other game, New York Islanders edged Colorado 3-2.

The Canadiens are losers of their last nine road games and their three games under Claude Fauriol, who took over head-coaching duties after Bernie Geoffrion quit last week.

"It's not the coach," said Montreal right winger Guy Lafleur. "It's up to the players. The coaching wasn't made a bit of difference."

NO LIGHT TOUCH The Canadiens' recent string of ineptness doesn't

Pardee named top coach

NEW YORK (AP) — Jack Pardee, who pulled the apron off draft-poor Washington Redskins to within a whisker of a division championship and was named today the National Football League coach of the year by The Associated Press.

Pardee received 30 of the 84 votes cast by a 1.3-wide panel of sports writers and sports broadcasters, three in each league city. The result of Philadelphia Eagles was a close second with 23 votes.

The Redskins, 8-8 last year and picked by many to fall below .500 this season, rose in 40 seconds of boating Dallas for the National Conference East title before losing to the Cowboys 35-10.

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EVERYTHING GOES!

MVP praises offensive line

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SOCKETS SHUTOUT Caps 11-0

BY THE CANADIAN PRESS Two goalies were left to the mercy of the shooters Tuesday night as Richmond Sockeyes whipped North Vancouver 11-0 in one of three British Columbia Junior Hockey League games.

However, Sockeyes goalie Mike Desjardins was flawless on all 35 shots he handled, while Randy Larsen was overwhelmed by a 70-shot barrage in the 11-0 Richmond victory.

In other games, Chilliwack Colts doubled Abbotsford Flyers 6-3 and Kamloops Rockets handled Merritt Centenials 10-4.

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