

PLAYOFF BOUND?

Caps hammer Chicago

By THE CANADIAN PRESS
Could Washington Capitals' new-found success be going to coach Gary Green's head?

It may have been the Capitals' second victory in as many games, but it was just their ninth in 38 starts this season.

"We've been playing much better in these last games," said Green, who took over the Washington bench last month when Danny Bielewicz was sacked. "But we kind of had to keep tightening, tightening that screw. We've got to make that playoff spot. That's our goal, and we're going to make it."

Green praised goaltender Rolfe Boutin's effort in the game, saying: "Take any good hockey club, you have to have good goaltending. When you rely on a good solid effort in between the pipes, that makes a lot of difference."

Elsewhere, Philadelphia Flyers downed Winnipeg Jets 6-2, Pittsburgh Penguins beat Atlanta Flames 4-2 and Edmonton Oilers defeated Vancouver Canucks 5-3.

SCORE SHEET

The Capitals, coming off an 8-2 win Wednesday night in Toronto, took the play to the Black Hawks from the

opening faceoff and got a pair of goals from Mike Stastick 26 seconds apart in the first period. They showed their superiority Friday night.

Chicago cut the lead to one just 1:07 after Kozny's second goal and goal by Bob Murray fired a shot into the upper corner of the net from the right circle at 7:18.

The Black Hawks had a chance to even the score during a power play early in the second, but Murray gave up the puck to Steve Gustafson who skated in alone to beat Hawks netminder Tony Esposito.

Robert Picard and Ryan Walter scored two more goals for Washington before Murray scored his second of the night for the Black Hawks.

Mike Gartner added Washington's sixth goal on a power play at 16:07 of the final period.

Flyers 5 Jets 3
Philadelphia extended its record undefeated streak to 32 games, just one short of the professional sports mark set by Los Angeles Lakers of the National Basketball

Association, before a record crowd of 13,038 at Winnipeg Arena.

Rick MacLeish, Brian Propp, Behn Wilson, Reggie Leach and Bob Kelly each scored for Philadelphia, while Morris Lukowicz, Peter Marsh and Jude Drouin added for Winnipeg.

Penguins 4 Flames 2
Gary McAdam's second-period goal proved to be the winner as Pittsburgh beat Atlanta. Jean Pronovost scored a power play goal close range after taking a pass from Bob MacMillan to give Atlanta a 1-0 lead early in the first period.

But Pittsburgh got Atlanta's 1-0 lead early in the first period.

Steady rebounding by Jim Corsi and a short-handed goal by Wayne Gretzky keyed the Edmonton victory. Corsi recalled last week from Houston of the Central Hockey League when Dave Dryden retired, stopped 37 shots.

Gretzky scored his 19th goal of the season late in the second period during a Vancouver power play, giving Edmonton a 4-1 lead which just barely stood up during the final period when Vancouver showed a brief flurry of activity and got two quick goals early in the period to pull to within one goal.

Sockeyes bomb Caps

By THE CANADIAN PRESS Knights defeated Nanaimo Richmond Sockeyes on-Clippers 7-4 and Kelowna Rockets 7-2. North Vancouver club 16-1 in Barry Belding and Mickey British Columbia Junior Candler led the Sockeyes in Hockey League action Friday North Vancouver with three goals each while Rob Wallace and Brad Hand scored twice.

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Leafs, Rockies swap snipers

TORONTO (CP) — Punch Imlach has never been averse to peddling a front-line player to shake up his troupe. And the man who traded away such Toronto crowd favorites as Dick Duff, Bob Nevin and Frank Mahovlich his first season as general manager of the Maple Leafs added Lanny McDonald to that list Friday when he engineered a four-player swap with Colorado Rockies.

"I'm determined to make these changes if they are going to be beneficial to me," Imlach said. "I'm using the second National Hockey League trade in as many days. The 1972 season, but hasn't been used in a regular rotation."

He had two goals and 11 points in 61 games last year and had one goal and five assists in 16 games used sparingly in 32 games this season.

The move for Hickey will be his second this season. He was among five players acquired by Colorado on Dec. 2 in a trade that sent defenseman Barry Beck to the Toronto Wings and a Quebec winger to Vancouver Canucks would lift the Rockies past the Leafs and into fifth spot.

McDonald and Quenneville were informed of the trade after the two came off the ice following a Leafs practice at Maple Leaf Gardens. Veteran centre Walt Michalski added: "We've just lost the best right winger in hockey. Walt and see what he does for Colorado."

McDonald, who scored 46, 47 and 48 goals in each of the last three seasons, had scored just 10 goals and 30 points in 35 games with Toronto this season. Many observers attributed this lack of offence to the fact his regular centre, captain Darryl Sittler, had been injured and missed several games.

Gator Bowl

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP) — After the Gator Bowl issued North Carolina an invitation, the Tar Heels began wondering if an apology were supposed to issue an apology. When several teams with better records were snubbed by the bowl committees, they pointed at North Carolina's 7-3-1 record and fifth-place finish in the Atlantic Coast Conference.

"We started out real well with victories in South Carolina and Pittsburgh, but we seemed to slump the middle of the season," said North Carolina running back Arnon Lawrence after the Tar Heels' 17-10 victory Friday night over Michigan Wolverines. "This team didn't expect to go to a bowl, so we wanted to make the most of it."

The Tar Heels were the heavy underdogs and took some abuse from the local media during the week heading up to the Gator Bowl. "We didn't think Michigan had any respect for us at all," added Lawrence, a junior who has compiled three 118 yards on 23 carries Friday. "They were saying bad things about the Atlantic Coast Conference."

Lawrence's running and sharp passing by quarterback Matt Kuper, who hit 11 of 17 passes for 101 yards, helped the North Carolina sustain long

Head coaches agree on eve of crucial game

By THE CANADIAN PRESS They may be on opposite sides of the hockey rink, but John McKay and Dick Vermeil agree on what it will be like in the second-round National Football League playoff game between Philadelphia Eagles and Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

"I'll be a low-scoring, tight defensive victory, predicted both head coaches Friday on the eve of their National Conference semi-final.

The only thing they didn't agree on is who will win. Vermeil, who has coached the NFL's top defensive unit to Tall Stadium today and the Eagles bring top-rated special

Pistons snap losing streak

By THE CANADIAN PRESS Richie Adubato had travelled a rough road through his first 26 games as coach of Detroit Pistons.

But the National Basketball Association club finally gave him a breather, snapping an eight-game losing streak with an 114-88 victory Friday night over Denver Nuggets.

"It's one of the few times that we have put together four good straight quarters in a row and can make a big difference," said Adubato, whose record since taking over the team in November is 6-20. The Pistons' victory was highlighted by guard John Long, who hit his first eight field-goal tries. The second-year player went on to score 22 points to lead both teams. Bobby Wilkerson poured in 28 points to top Denver.

Elsewhere, Phoenix Suns downed Kansas City Kings 118-112, New Jersey Nets whipped Indiana Pacers 116-101, New York Knicks blasted Chicago Bulls 120-102, Los Angeles Lakers trounced Boston Celtics 123-100 and Seattle SuperSonics humbled Portland Trail Blazers 128-87.

Suns 118 Kings 112
Paul Westphal scored 31 points. Walter Davis 28 and Truck Robinson 24 as Phoenix tied a team record with its ninth straight victory. The victory was dampened somewhat, however, when the Suns lost Davis with what was tentatively diagnosed as an ankle injury.

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