

GULLS CELEBRATE FANS WITH 6-1 WIN OVER REIGN

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Sam Carrick became the first Gull to record 30 goals in a season and set a new club record for single-season points as San Diego downed Ontario 6-1 at Pechanga Arena. San Diego closed out their 12-game season series with the win, owning a 8-3-0-1 record against Ontario in 2018-19. Carrick's three points set a new single-season club record for points (30-29=59), previously set by Brandon Montour and Chris Mueller in 2015-16.

"It boosts moral. We know that we can win as a team, it doesn't matter who is in the lineup," said Carrick. "We just have such a deep group here. Depending on what happens with the lineup changes in the next few days here, it doesn't really matter. We've had such a high-character group here."

San Diego received contributions from throughout the lineup, including a two-point night from Chase De Leo (1G/1A), and goals from Corey Tropp, Luke Gazdic and Justin Kloos.

"It's hard to explain, seeing him on a daily basis, how professional he is and the person he is," said Gulls forward Luke Gazdic about teammate Sam Carrick. "He's three years younger than me and I look up to him. I'm looking to him for leadership and guidance. Playing with him is just a bonus. It's easy. Get the puck deep, go make a hit, make sure you get to the net and have your stick on the ice, just like I did, because a lot of times you're going to get rewarded."

With his first career shorthanded goal and an assist, De Leo extended his point streak to eight games (3-9=12), tying his career-high

previously set this season on Feb. 1-16 (7-4=11). Gulls netminder Kevin Boyle stopped 34-of-35 shots to secure his 24th win of the season. He is 19-7-1 in his last 28 games.

“Kevin was excellent,” said Gulls head coach Dallas Eakins. “We’ve been talking to Kevin a lot about being the guy, being a big game player and he certainly delivered tonight.”

San Diego wasted no time jumping out to an early lead, courtesy of some hard work by Corey Tropp. After Tropp chipped the puck behind the Ontario net, goaltender Peter Budaj tried to collect it and make a pass to one of his defensemen. However, Tropp stole the puck away and beat everyone to the front of the net, scoring on a wraparound to give the Gulls a 1-0 lead just 1:33 into the game. The veteran winger has netted 10 goals against the Reign in his Gulls career, leading San Diego in all-time goals against Ontario.

After Luke Gazdic finished a hit on a forecheck, the Gulls gained possession of the puck in the Ontario zone. Carrick made a no-look backhand pass from the corner of the rink to the slot where Gazdic redirected it past Budaj’s glove, doubling the Gulls’ lead exactly one minute after the opening score. Gazdic had missed 24 games due to injury before recently returning to the lineup.

Carrick’s assist on the goal extended his assist streak to four games (1-4=5) and marked multiple notable milestones. With the helper, Carrick tied the single-season club record for points (57) set by Brandon Montour and Chris Mueller in 2015-16. In addition, he surpassed his single-season career high of 28 assists and tied Brandon Montour (64) for third on the all-time Gulls assist list.

Before the opening frame was over, Carrick eclipsed the record that he had just tied with his 29th goal and 58th point of the season.

Defenseman Andy Welinski broke into the Ontario zone, stole the puck and passed to Carrick who had as much time as he needed to find a spot to score. With 3:26 left in the period, he put the puck past Budaj and into the net.

The second period picked up right where the first left off, with San Diego on the attack. After Justin Kloos and Kiefer Sherwood created a turnover on the forecheck, Sherwood took the puck up the right wing wall before spinning and firing a shot on goal. The shot deflected off Chase De Leo and directly to Kloos, waiting alone on the back door. He quickly snapped the puck past Budaj, extending the Gulls lead to 4-0 just 3:56 into the middle frame. Sherwood now has 3-2=5 points in his last five games after picking up an assist on the goal.

The Gulls went on the penalty kill after being flagged for a two many men on the ice minor. Just as the penalty was winding down, De Leo stole the puck and beat multiple Ontario defenders to give himself a shorthanded breakaway. A quick deke opened up Budaj pads and De Leo beat him five-hole for their fifth unanswered score.

Ontario got on the board with a goal by Austin Strand as a long wrist shot snuck through traffic in front of the net and past Boyle, cutting the San Diego lead to 5-1 with 15:41 left in the third period.

It didn't take long for the Gulls to answer as it took just 3:16 for Carrick to add his second goal and third point of the night. The play began as Carrick took a pass from Ben Street in the neutral zone before splitting two Ontario defenseman for a one-on-one chance with the goalie. Carrick added his second goal and third point of the night, giving San Diego six goals against their California rival. Street added his second assist of the night, his fourth point (1G/3A) over that past two games.

The Gulls will conclude their 2018-19 home schedule on Wednesday, Apr. 10 vs. San Jose (7 p.m.) before putting the finishing touches on the regular season with a back-to-back matchup at the Tucson Roadrunners on Friday, Apr. 12 (7:05 p.m. PT) and Saturday, Apr. 13 (7:05 p.m. PT).