



Avalanche 2, Sharks 0

Roy the lone constant in Avs' win

By NICK WALTER THE GAZETTE

DENVER It wasn't the regular, festive Colorado Avalanche game feel at the Pepsi Center on Thursday.

War in Iraq, coupled with the hangover from this week's blizzard that forced the one-day postponement of the matchup with the San Jose Sharks, dampened much of the enthusiasm. Even some of the arena's lights went out twice before the game began.

One thing was normal, however. Avalanche goalie Patrick Roy's success against San Jose.

Roy made 29 saves as Colorado won 2-0. In his career against San Jose, Roy has a record of 24-6-4, with six shutouts.

"I was real well-rested with no practice yesterday and nothing this morning," Roy said. "I was abit surprised. Sometimes when I don't practice in the morning or the day of the game, I don't move as well."

Roy moved just fine, taking cat-like stabs at pucks that came at him from every direction. The Avalanche killed off two power plays, including two 5 on 3 opportunities.

"We had no practice to get here and then no practice in Colorado Springs because our equipment was here, so it has been kind of a funky trip," San Jose coach Ron Wilson said. "We are a little banged up and we have a lot of young guys in the lineup. They are getting a real taste of what life in the NHL can be like."

Just as Colorado defenseman Bates Battaglia is getting a taste of what playing with the Avalanche can be like.

Battaglia, acquired from Carolina in exchange for Radim Vrbata on March 11, scored a power-play goal in the first period that was his first as a member of the Avalanche.

Steve Reinprecht and Martin Skoula passed the puck twice across the ice before it landed on the stick of Battaglia, who stuck a point-blank shot past goalie Mikka Kiprusoff.

"Goals haven't been coming quite so easy for me this year," said Battaglia, who had his first power-play goal of the season. "I am just trying to put whatever I can out there."

Season ticket renewal incentive: The Avalanche also unveiled a two-year renewal incentive for all renewing season ticket holders.

The renewed accounts can invoke the two-year renewal incentive on their season tickets, which will include the smallest margin of price increase in the history of the franchise for the 2003-04, at 5 percent, and a price freeze for 2004-05.

Accounts electing to pass on the offer will see a price increase for the following season, the Avalanche's 10 th anniversary in Denver. Those seainticket accounts committing to a nonrefundable 100 dollar-per-seat deposit will not see any price increase.

The deadline for renewals is April 18. The option is only available to full-season ticket holders and is not applicable to the 14-game plans.