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HEADLINE: Martinson in better mood as Koenig sparks inspired Gulls

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BODY:

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. -- This time, it seemed easier. Easier to breathe, easier to score, and easier for the Gulls to sleep last night after polishing off Colorado 3-1 at the World Arena yesterday in front of 4,412.

"I don't know if it was the extra day, or just getting used to the thin air," said Gulls defenseman Samy Nasreddine, who had a goal and two assists. "But we were able to breathe easier, and we were juiced the entire game. Plus, Coach (Steve) Martinson was in a much better mood today after the game."

San Diego's Trevor Koenig was again outstanding in goal, stopping 39 of the 40 shots he faced, including a breakaway late in the second period by Colorado's Zac Boyer.

"Usually, you see a hole and you shoot at that," Boyer said. "Koenig gave me nothing -- not a single hole. I went to fake and still, nothing."

The win for the Gulls (28-10-2) came one day after they lost 6-2 to the Gold Kings (21-14-5), after which Martinson promised changes. But his team responded yesterday.

His first line of Mark Woolf, John Spoltore and Dennis Purdie was on the ice for all three goals. And Nasreddine cashed in on every chance he had.

"This is exactly what I wanted to see from these guys," Martinson said. "We know that if Trevor keeps them to one or two goals, and Woolf's line gets two or three, we're going to be fine. Samy had a big day. But he's also leading the league in plus-minus, so he is a top defenseman. Still, it's good to see him put every scoring chance home out there. That gave us a boost."

The clincher came with 3:10 left in the game when Spoltore got the puck off a face-off and fed it to Nasreddine as Nasreddine charged into Colorado's zone. He went in and put a wrist shot into the net, pushing San Diego's lead to 3-1.

Unlike Saturday's game, which included more than two hours of penalty minutes, this one was relatively clean, with each team having only four power-play chances, and not converting a single time. San Diego did score a short-handed goal in the second period.

Colorado goalie Kirk Daubenspeck was good, stopping 21 of 24 shots, but Koenig was all that, and more.

"Every night, Trevor gives us a chance, no matter what happens," Nasreddine said. "He picked us up again today."

San Diego got on the board first when Nasreddine fed Spoltore with a perfect cross-ice pass going into the Gold Kings' zone.

San Diego took the lead in the second period. Again, Nasreddine set up the goal -- and with the Gulls short-handed. Nasreddine fed Woolf, who scored to make it 2-1 just over seven minutes into the second.

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