

Holy TV! Barons end losing streak

FROM WIRE REPORTS

ST. LOUIS (UPI) — Emile Francis calls Dennis Maruk "a pain in the neck," and Maruk will remember Francis's St. Louis Blues as a pain in the lip.

Francis, Blues coach, offered his appraisal of Maruk after Cleveland's leading scorer tallied a goal and an assist and led a flying ice attack to bring the Barons out of their seven-game winless streak with a 5-2 victory last night before a nationally televised audience.

"Every pass they made had eyes in the puck," said Francis. "They didn't give us a chance to get organized in front of our net."

"Emile Francis once made the comment in the newspapers that 'this guy gets knocked down a dozen times and gets up and scores a goal,'" Maruk noted in respect to his role

"I HAVE a great deal of respect for Mr. Francis," Maruk added of the Blues' coach. "I say if the guy thinks that highly

of me why disappoint him? It's not that I have anything against his team. I just try to respond."

The speedy Maruk, Cleveland's leading scorer, had little chance for a spill before sending the Barons ahead to stay.

On an excursion around the St. Louis net he sent a centering pass into the crease. Blues defenseman Rod Seuling rushed to cover and the puck caromed off his skate into the net.

"I'd like to know what his secret is behind the net," Francis remarked wryly, acknowledging Maruk's skills.

"Sure we helped him, but he worked for it," Francis added. "I'll tell you that guy has been a thorn in our side. He's quite a little hockey player. Maybe I should start saying something bad about him."

MARUK HAS less technical and more poignant memories of the game. In the third period, he was on the bleeding end of Bob Gassoff's stick blade and suffered a stinging cut on the inside of his lip.

While Maruk was getting five stitches in his mouth after the game, some of his less sympathetic teammates joked that

Maruk's blood was sufficient to put Gassoff in the penalty box for five minutes instead of the usual two.

But the Barons, who already led 5-1, didn't score on that long power play opportunity. Gilles Meloche stopped 15 of 17 St. Louis shots in the final period and gave up the only goals to Red Berenson and Ted Irvine.

Maruk, Al MacAdam, Ralph Klassen, Bob Girard and Bob Murdoch spread the Cleveland scoring load amongst themselves.

Klassen scored the winning goal at 8:51 of the second period, on a 40-foot shot on a power play. Gassoff again was the offending St. Louis player. He was in the penalty box for a double minor for elbowing and unsportsmanlike conduct.

"We had very good passing," said Cleveland coach Jack Evans. "We played a solid hockey game and checked well. We had some scoring opportunities in front of their net and we didn't give up too many scoring chances ourselves."

THE BARONS suffered through that winless streak while they were worrying about whether the Cleveland franchise

would even finish the season.

"That occupied your thoughts 24 hours a day and you didn't even look at the standings," Evans said. "We knew there were financial problems, but it came as a surprise when they missed payday."

The Barons' financial problems were solved temporarily when the owners of the National Hockey League and the league's players advanced money to the team last week.

Cleveland	1	3	1-5
St. Louis	0	0	2-1

First Period — 1. Cleveland, Maruk 21 MacAdam, .46 Penalty — Gassoff, StL, 7:07

Second Period — 2. Cleveland, MacAdam 17 Maruk, Hampton, 3:04 3. Cleveland, Klassen 9 Merrick, 8:51 4. Cleveland, Girard 6 Kurak, 14:32 Penalties — Gassoff, StL, double minor, 15:06, Stewart, Cle, 16:37

Third Period — 5. St. Louis, Berenson 17 Gassoff, 2:49 6. Cleveland, Murdoch 17 Merrick, Christie, 8:43 7. St. Louis, Irvine 14 Butler, Unger, 16:24 Penalties — LeBeyec, StL, 3:41 Gassoff, StL, Mayer, 8:13, Stewart, Cle, 15:00

Shots on goal — Cleveland 7-10-27 St. Louis 7-8-17-32 Goals — Cleveland, Meloche St. Louis, Johnson A — 15,967