

Capitals fail in brave bid to slay Giants



Photo by Ian Coyle

Edinburgh Capitals' player/coach Michal Dobron was left ruing defensive lapses which cost his bravehearts dear in Sunday's Elite League home clash with Belfast Giants.

The Murrayfield men eventually lost 6-3 to the slick, Northern Irish club but two goals came in 24, third period seconds late-on in an entertaining tussle, and Capitals also let slip two goals in three, nightmare second-period minutes when they switched off.

Earlier, Dobron's men had taken the game to high-flying Giants despite a gruelling, 18-hour bus ride to Cardiff and back on Saturday where Devils won 6-2.

Former Edinburgh netminder Stephen Murphy was busy saving a Matt Tipoff deflection, a slapshot from Ian Schultz, a chance from Taylor MacDougall, a rebound from Yevgeni Fyodorov and a stinging shot from Pavel Vorobyov.

Sadly, a quick transfer following a turnover on Capitals blue line allowed Chris Higgins to convert and open the scoring after eight minutes.

Schultz fired a missile on Murphy which was dealt with and Mason Wilgosh was put through the middle by a superb, defence-splitting pass from Vorobyov but Murphy was in the right place at the right time.

The scoreline stayed the same until the 33rd minute when Mike Forney doubled the visitors' lead after a spell of intense pressure on Capitals rearguard. They were unable to clear the puck and were punished.

Mike D'Orazio pulled one back on the power play after 35min 9sec but Steve Saviano entered his name on the game sheet with No 3 only 44 seconds after that when Capitals were once again

guilty of failing to clear their zone.

Blair Riley made it 4-1 only 41 seconds into the final session when he scored the first of his treble in the first attack made by Giants.

Never-say-die Capitals bounced back and upped the tempo looking for a breakthrough which came courtesy of Dobron after 47 minutes who tipped in.

Then Schultz fired the puck into Murphy's net just over a minute after that to make it 4-3 and fired up home fans who scented something from the game.

Capitals once again took the game to Giants and Murphy stayed ice cool, blocking several shots, before Riley scored his second and Belfast's fifth after 58min 28sec.

And the same player counted again with the clock at 58min 52sec as Capitals wilted after their marathon journey to Wales.

The home side, who were outshot 33-27, ended with zero points from the weekend and in bottom position in the ten-strong table with 13 points from 16 games, two behind Coventry Blaze who have won their last two matches. Coventry have played three more games.