

Ice hockey – Ice cool Stadel secures Stars win

Challenge Cup: Group A: Braehead Clan 7, Manchester Storm 5; Group B: Dundee Stars 3, Belfast Giants 2 (after penalty shootout). Exhibition: Fife Flyers 3, Herlev Eagles (Denmark) 1

Riley Stadel secured a confidence-boosting penalty shots victory for Dundee Stars over Belfast Giants to get the new-look Tayside team off to a flyer in the Challenge Cup.

But the much-hyped visitors took Omar Pacha's side to the wire on Saturday and only a late leveller took the game into overtime then penalty shots.

Earlier, under-strength Stars, who are still missing three key players and had not played a pre-season challenge game, and Giants kept things tight as they both looked for their first points of the season.

And it was Giants who broke the deadlock when Glasgow-born Colin Shields, Giants' skipper, slotted the opener on a breakaway following a pass from Steve Saviano.

Canadian-born defenceman Stadel brought Pacha's men level terms with a wrist shot that flew into Jackson Whistle's net but Brendan Connolly put the visitors ahead for a second time with a well-taken finish.

Giants looked to be heading for a valuable road win until Cardiff-born forward Adam Harding was in the right place at the right time to ruin the travelling fans' celebrations.

His equaliser 26 seconds from time set up a tense finish and 21-year-old Stadel had the fans on their feet when he slotted a penalty shot as Giants missed all theirs.

Elsewhere, Ryan Finnerty returned to Glasgow for the first time since he parted company with Braehead Clan and ended up on the losing side in a 12-goal Challenge Cup thriller.

Clan beat Manchester Storm 7-5 after being level at 4-4 before goals from Cameron Burt and Christopher Bjorkland and Adam Brace kept the points in Glasgow.

And at Kirkcaldy, Fife Flyers beat Danish side Harlev Eagles 3-1 in the first of their pre-season challenge double-header.