

Ice hockey – Fife slip to back-to-back defeats



Todd Dutiaume, work to do in the close season

Fife Flyers season ended in disappointment when they crashed 8-2 to Nottingham Panthers in the third and fourth place game in the Elite League play-offs at Nottingham.

The Kirkcaldy club went behind to a Jeff Brown strike after four minutes and Jim Jorgensen was set up by Ricards Birzins and Chase Schaber to level less than three minutes later to cheer the big travelling support.

But Nottingham claimed another two goals in just under two minutes at the end of the opening session.

Luke Pither netted after 15min 2sec and Zack Phillips made it 3-1 after 16min 45sec.

Carlo Finucci gave the Kirkcaldy club a chance with a strike after 22 minutes, Shayne Stockton and Charlie Mosey assisting, for 3-2.

But then Nottingham fired five straight goals to take the victory. The blitz started with an Ollie Betteridge unassisted goal after 26 minutes.

Mark Derlago followed-up to make it 5-2 five minutes later and Phillips scored his second just over a minute after that.

Betteridge scored his second after 42 minutes and David Clark unassisted added an eighth with less than three minutes remaining.

So, Fife have recorded back-to-back defeats at Nottingham

against Cardiff Devils, the league champions, who won 4-0 in the play-off semi-final on Saturday in Nottingham.

And 24-hours later a defeat to another of the so-called "big arena boys" in the bronze medal game.

Coach Todd Dutiaume has undoubtedly raised the bar this season by making the play-off semi-finals for the third time and winning the Gardiner Conference title, the club's first major silverware in the Elite League era.

The current squad and the coach staff plus the fans and the Fife town enjoyed winning the Gardiner Conference title.

However, the success-hungry Flyers fans want more and, to do that, the club will have to move up a notch.