

Ice hockey – two stars quit Fife for pastures new

Two of Fife Flyers' key players from last season have moved to other clubs, decisions which must disappoint head coach Todd Dutiaume (pictured).

Coventry Blaze, coached by former Fife favourite Danny Stewart, now have 28-year-old Canadian left-wing Evan Bloodoff in their roster after two years at Kirkcaldy.

And highly-rated netminder Shane Owen has put pen to paper for traditional trophy collectors, Belfast Giants.

Bloodoff, a quicksilver winger, has been regularly noted in the Elite League's top offensive statistics.

He played 38 games in his first season at Rosslyn Street and 55 last term, scoring 27 goals in each season and assisting on 29 other strikes.

Bloodoff was undoubtedly a key element in helping Fife lift their first major Elite League silverware, the Gardiner Conference trophy, in the season before last.

Coach Stewart said: "With losing some key guys from last season, it's vital that we replace production and adding a guy like Evan, who has scored over 60 goals the past two seasons, does that.

"He skates well, plays the right way and scores goals in different ways. He's a dirty area guy and can score from anywhere.

"Adding a guy like Evan is important and the fact he's a

veteran, will prove important with a younger group.”

Canadian-born Owen, aged 29 and standing 6ft 2in tall, has enjoyed an extensive career in North America with several ECHL (East Coast Hockey League) and AHL (American Hockey League) clubs as well as playing in Sweden and Poland.

The hugely-popular netminder iced in 60 games for Fife last term and told Belfast’s success-hungry fans in a club podcast: “I am excited to get started in Belfast and play in the Champions League with the Giants.

“I spoke to Adam Keefe (Giants’ coach) and I am looking forward to training camp in August that will set us up well for the season.”

He added: “As long as I put the work in and get prepared to play, I want to go out and give my team a chance to win on every night.

“Having played against the Giants for a number of years I am well aware of how great the city of Belfast is and how passionate the fans are.”