

Cameron praise despite defeat but frustration for Fife

Glasgow Clan's nightmare start to the Elite League ice hockey season continued with defeat No 15, this time after a 4-3 sudden death overtime reverse at Coventry Blaze.

The bottom-markers have three points from nine games in the Premier Sports Elite League, two adrift of second-bottom Fife with both having played nine league games.

Nottingham Panthers are eighth on six points from eight starts and Dundee Stars seventh on seven points from ten fixtures.

Clan coach Malcolm Cameron said he could not be more proud of his injury-hit squad after their defeat in the Midlands. He said: "We came in here six guys down at the start of the game, six imports not playing, and we lose two throughout the game.

"We only had two real defencemen in our line-up for the last 35 minutes of the hockey game. It was a real gutsy, determined effort. They (Coventry) had a lot of shots but a lot of those shots were from way outside and they didn't get second attempts at the net.

"Even the call-up guys we brought have not had a practise with us. They hopped on the bus this morning. They contributed."

Cameron added: "We have had a tough start to our season but, with the goaltending we have now have, we know we have a chance to win every night. An effort like this in the tough

time we have with the injuries and everything can galvanise the team.

“The spirit on the bench was great, you saw guys lying down blocking shots it was amazing to see. When things are not going your way human nature makes you quit sometimes. It is easy to quit and they didn't and they should be commended for that.”

Elsewhere, Jeff Hutchins expressed his disappointment after Fife Flyers were edged by Cardiff Devils in sudden-death overtime but admitted: “I can't fault the effort.”

Fife's associate coach wanted a four-point weekend after the club's 5-3 victory over Coventry Blaze on Saturday and Flyers came close against high-flying Devils, a Brodie Reid slapshot proving decisive in the 4-3 win.

Once again, Fife's highly-rated netminder, Shane Owen, received praise from the opposition and this was a game which the neutral fan must have enjoyed with play from end-to-end.

Fife led 2-1 until Joey Martin netted for the visitors with 56min 57sec on the clock to level at 2-2. Justin Crandall unassisted fired Devils ahead at 58min 38sec only for Mikael Johansson to equalise with 40 seconds left.

Up stepped Reid 32 seconds into sudden death overtime to end the contest and finish off a fine weekend for the men from the Principality who took four points from Scotland in two games following their 5-0 win at Glasgow Clan on Saturday.

Overall, Fife had 52 shots, 37 on goal, against 41 from Devils of which 30 were on target. The home side had seven power play chances and scored on one, Fife's second goal, after 19 minutes to edge them 2-1 ahead.

Hutchins said: “I'd be kidding myself if I said I wasn't disappointed, not with the effort. It is the fine details

which are costing us but, over all the weekend, I thought the work rate was great and a lot of guys stepped-up.

“Lot’s of positives. We were up the entire game (against Cardiff) only to go behind with a minute left. There was a good response and we were hopeful that we would pull back in overtime.”

Cardiff’s head coach, Brodie Dupont, a former New York Rangers draft pick, said he did not get the start he wanted.

The Canadian added: “There was a lot of back and forth and Owen played extremely well. We had to kill a few penalties, obviously a five-on-three was a big kill for us.

“From a fans perspective there was a lot of end-to-end, a lot of goals and a lot of late drama. You know what, we are happy to get the win. It was a little bit stressful but that was fun as a coaching staff but, you know what, I think the players had a lot of fun in that game as well.”

In Guildford, Flames moved four points clear at the top after their 6-3 victory over Dundee Stars. A four-goal, first-period salvo was decisive.

PICTURE: Glasgow v Cardiff action by Al Goold courtesy of Premier Sports Elite League