

Flyers facing Giants and a Storm this weekend

**Premier Sports Elite League:
Saturday: Fife Flyers v Belfast
Giants (19.15), Dundee Stars v
Guildford Flames (19.00), Glasgow
Clan v Manchester Storm (19.00).**

Todd Dutiaume faces a big weekend at home to Belfast Giants on Saturday (19.15) and away to Manchester Storm on Sunday (17.30) and Fife Flyers' head coach is looking to continue the form shown last weekend.

The Canadian felt his men showed a lot of good things in beating Coventry Blaze 5-3 at The Fife Ice Arena on Saturday but losing 4-3 in sudden death overtime to Cardiff Devils after holding a lead until late-on.

Dutiaume (pictured in his office by *Nigel Duncan*) said: "Against Cardiff it reiterated to this group that you have to be sharp for 60 minutes not 56 minutes or 57 minutes, but 60 minutes. The fact that we competed with that team all night long gives us a lot of heart going into these games.

"We can compete with anybody in the league and we have set the bar and we expect that standard on a weekly basis."

He said: "We saw a lot of positive things last weekend but little things are costing us. Fast forward to Sunday, we turn the puck over at our offensive blue line and it ends up in the back of our net. Little things make a huge difference (at this level) and the guys are well aware of that. Everybody makes

mistakes, but we need to cut down on the ones we are making.”

New Canadian defenceman, 22-year-old Seth Bafaro, has impressed since joining and Dutiaume said: “Considering he jumped right in less than 48 hours before, he had a quick practice with us and we put him in against one of the league leaders (Cardiff Devils), we were pretty happy with what he achieved over the weekend.

“Remember, he is young and it is his first year as a professional and he has a wealth of experience to call on with his team-mates. Our initial look is that he will fit it really well.

“We are pleased with him playing a simple, effective game. It’s a jump up from the Western Hockey League, but we have been here before and being here (at Flyers) gives him an opportunity to jump into the pro game.”

Dutiaume confirmed that Bafaro’s entire focus is on becoming a professional ice hockey player and added: “This is a great spot for a young player to come and develop.

“We’ve done that over the years with other players and we’re pleased to have him. We think he will fit in just fine.”

He added: “The biggest thing for us is to stay healthy. When we are healthy we are generally fine. It’s a steep learning curve in this league and guys know that it is imperative that they go out there and put in the effort.

“When they do that in front of a Fife crowd, irresptive of the result, the crowd responds. The guys know the standard that is expected here now.”

The big push, he agreed, was to win on Saturday to set the team up for Sunday. He added: Everybody in the league seems to be formidable and we have two tough games. We’re here, we then go into a small Manchester building and we do not have too

much rest as we are all the way down to Cardiff on Wednesday. The guys are up for it and looking forward to it.”