

Flyers skid to sixth straight league defeat

Viaplay Elite League: Belfast Giants 8, Fife Flyers 0

Injury-hit Fife Flyers were blown away by Belfast Giants inside the first 17 minutes when they fell 5-0 behind and they never recovered from the first session when they were outshot 18-4.

Todd Dutiaume (pictured *by James Assinder* courtesy of Viaplay Elite League), Fife's head coach, felt the squad did not have their heart in it early on and they were ruthlessly punished by the Northern Irish combine who were roared on by over 5,000 fans.

Now the Wolseley-backed team have until Boxing Day at 4pm to re-focus on a bad night at the office and a scoreline which is not the best way to start a busy Festive programme. Their next assignment is a visit to Dundee Stars, a team also struggling for points at the wrong end of the ten-strong league table.

Steve Owre plundered three goals on the night and it began badly when Dumfries-born Bari McKenzie, one of the club's most experienced players, was sent to the sin-bin after 1min 45sec for hooking.

The penalty proved costly as Owre opened his account on the power play after 2min 22sec and the same player claimed No 2 after 3min 11sec before Scott Conway, the leading points gatherer in the league, claimed the third in the eighth minute.

And worst was to come for Fife who iced minus

crooked Christian Hausinger, Lucas Sandstrom and James Spence and without Reece Cochrane who has been ruled out for the Festive period with concussion suffered last Sunday at Nottingham Panthers.

Seth Bafaro, who has been on personal leave, returned to ease the burden, but that did not prevent Owre claiming his third and Belfast's fourth after 11 minutes.

And David Goodwin piled on the agony with a short-handed strike in the 17th minute with Peyton Jones in the penalty box for tripping.

Thankfully, Fife stemmed the tide in the second which was blanked but overall they had been outshot 32-12 in the first 40 minutes.

But Belfast, sponsored by Stena Line, upped the tempo in the final session, claiming another three goals. Ben Lake hit No 6 in the 43rd minute with the same player making the scoreline 7-0 less than two minutes later.

And Gabe Bast completed the scoring with the eighth with less than four minutes left after slick play from Conway in a match in which Fife were outshot 39-21.