

Fife seek cutting edge when Steelers come calling

Fife Flyers host Sheffield Steelers on Saturday (19.15) with almost the entire Viaplay Elite League separating the sides as the Yorkshire outfit lead the table with 46 points from 29 games, one ahead of former long-time, pace-setters, Guildford Flames, who have played one game less, and two in front of Cardiff Devils who have played 30 games.

Todd Dutiaume's men are in ninth position and desperately need points and a psychological boost as Glasgow Clan, who have propped up the ten-strong table for weeks, are breathing down their necks. Both clubs have played 31 games with Clan now on 17 points, one behind Fife.

Clan entertain seventh-placed Manchester Storm on Saturday, and Storm have 23 points from 28 games, and Flyers have hit a disappointing, mid-season, form slump with only two league wins to their credit.

Worryingly, Fife have only scored 73 goals, the second worst total in the league behind Clan, and let in 114, with only Clan on 116 and Stars on 134 having a worse goals against total.

Sheffield, in contrast, have scored 122 goals and let in 60, the best defensive record in the table, and their American coach Aaron Fox will urge an immediate bounce-back to stay ahead of the chasing pack.

Fife, sponsored by Wolseley, await the arrival of new import, 27-year-old, Canadian-born Kameron Nault, a left-wing from Winnipeg, recruited from Reading Royals of the East Coast Hockey League (ECHL), and Dutiaume said that will be a much needed boost once the 6ft 2in player is injected into the line-up.

So, Saturday's match-up is a huge task for Dutiaume's men who also face Steelers in the Viaplay Challenge Cup and the semi-final dates which have been confirmed. The first-leg is at Kirkcaldy on Wednesday, January 25, with the return at The House of Steel on Wednesday, February 15.

This means that there is a league fixture alteration. Steelers were due to play Dundee Stars at home on Wednesday, February 15 and this game has been re-scheduled for Wednesday, March 15. Tickets already purchased for the Dundee game on February 15 will be valid for the Challenge Cup semi final against Fife.