

Dutiaume must lift his men ahead of cup final

Viaplay Elite League: Fife Flyers 2, Belfast Giants 5; Manchester Storm 6, Glasgow Clan 2; Nottingham Panthers 4, Dundee Stars 2.

Head coach Todd Dutiaume (pictured) takes his Fife Flyers squad to Belfast on Wednesday to face Viaplay Elite League pace-setters Giants in the Challenge Cup Final after losing 5-2 at Kirkcaldy to the same team on Sunday.

The visitors were level at 1-1 after 18 minutes but pulled 4-1 ahead after 32 minutes with three quick goals and they closed out the Scots to complete a four-point weekend having accounted for Glasgow Clan 4-0 in Braehead on Saturday.

Fife, supported by Wolseley, ended the weekend pointless after a defeat at Guildford Flames on Saturday and it was Mark Cooper who opened his and Giants' account after seven minutes on the power play after seven minutes.

It took 11 minutes for Fife to level through Janne Laakkonen with Zack Phillips and Chris Lawrence supplying the ammunition.

Sam Ruopp made it 2-1 for Belfast, sponsored by Stena Line, after 29 minutes and Grant Cooper added a third two minutes later to further deflate the home team and it was 4-1 less than a minute after that when Gabe Best hit the rigging.

Kamerin Nault claimed Fife's second on the power play after 58 minutes with Laakkonen and Janne Kivilahti assisting, too

little too late, and Cooper added his second by scoring on an empty net with 15 seconds left after Fife withdrew their netminder to have six skaters.

Not the best preparation then for Wednesday. Fife did outshoot Giants 19-17 overall but three quick goals in the second period did the damage. Strangely enough, it was three goals in the second period on Saturday which played a major part in Fife losing 4-2 at Guildford.
