

Euro clashes for Fife and Dundee ahead of Elite season

Fife Flyers and arch rivals Dundee Stars clash pre-season and the clubs will also face European opposition in the build-up to the face-off of the Elite League.

The Scottish clubs square-up on September 9 at Kirkcaldy (19.15) and almost 24-hours later at Dundee Ice Arena (17.00).

Fife welcome much-decorated Dutch side Tilburg Trappers on September 16 (19.15) and then entertain Romanian side ASC Corona Brasov on September 17 (17.15).

Stars host Barasov on September 16 (19.00) and Tilburg Trappers (17.00) the following night.

Brasov is a medieval town packed full of churches and cathedrals, including Bran Castle, made famous by Bram Stoker's Dracula novel.

Wolves have won four Romanian League Championships, two Erste League Championships, five Romanian play-off championships and have twice made the final of Erste League Championships.

Wolves have had a number of ex-Stars at the club, including goaltender Ladislav Kudrna, defensemen Cody Carlson, Rory Rawlyk, Craig Cescon and forward, Mikael Lidhammar and also include former Flyers stars Chase Schaber, Evan Stoflet and Carlo Finucci.

Former Dundee Star, Connor Sills, spent time with Brasov last

season but also iced with our other preseason opponents Tilburg Trappers, where he began the campaign before making the switch to Romania.

Trappers have been crowned Dutch League Champions on 14 occasions and Dutch play-off champions 15 times.

Ex-Stars forwards, Kevin Bruijsten, Jay Latulippe, Scott Kirton and Bobby Chaumont, who also iced with Fife, have all played for Tilburg, as well as other former Flyers such as Brett Bulmer and Kyle Just.

Meanwhile, Todd Dutiaume (pictured) admitted that stepping down from the role as head coach of Fife Flyers had been one of the most difficult decisions in his hockey career.

The Canadian-born playcaller and his associate coach, Jeff Hutchins, have both quit the Kirkcaldy ice hockey club.'

The move comes after two disappointing Elite League seasons but the Fife outfit did make the final of the Challenge Cup before being well beaten by Belfast Giants.

Dutiaume has been involved with Flyers for 25 years and said: "After much consideration, and with the support of my family, I have come to the decision to move on from my role as head coach of the Fife Flyers.

"This has been one of the most difficult decisions in my hockey career to make. It has been an honour and privilege to have been involved with the oldest UK ice hockey club. Over the past 25 years, I have worked and played alongside terrific players and even better people."

He added: "The Fife Flyers fans are incredible and I would like to thank them for their support over the years as a player and a coach. I want to thank the directors for all their unwavering support over the years.

"Thanks to all of the management and staff that work hard to

make the Fife Ice Arena a great place to be. The old barn is a special place to me and I hope to be able to continue to support the Fife Flyers as they grow, both on and off the ice.’’

Dutiaume joined Flyers when the club was in the British National League during the 1998-1999 season and became a player/coach in 2005. He took on full-time head coach duties in 2014 and led the 2017/2018 squad to win the Gardiner Conference trophy.

Hutchins joined the organisation in 2016 as assistant coach and director of player development. Over the last seven seasons, the Edinburgh-based former Great Britain international has played a major role in the recruiting process. Hutchins will now be spending time with his family.

Tom Muir, Flyers’ director, said: ‘‘Both Todd and Jeff have served the team well. Together, they have provided the team with great leadership and we cannot thank them enough for their dedication to the club.

“We have two crucial roles to appoint and very big shoes to fill. We want to ensure we bring in the right staff to lead the team to success in 2023/24. Flyers expect to have an announcement regarding a new coaching staff in the coming weeks and look forward to sharing confirmed player announcements in due course.”