

Flyers sign temporary cover and Clan move into third

Vitālijs Pavlovs has arrived in Kirkcaldy to join Fife Flyers as injury cover for crooked Canadian Ben Haverchuk but the club's PR team could not confirm if the player will make his debut against Coventry Blaze at Kirkcaldy on Saturday (face-off 19.15).

The 34-year-old Latvian-born forward comes to Fife with a wealth of experience having iced in 281 Kontinental Hockey League (KHL) games with Dynamo Riga, 78 games in the East Coast Hockey League with the Colorado Eagles and most recently 55 Polska Hokej Liga games and 58 Slovakian Extraliga games with JKH GKS Jastrzębie, HK Dukla Michalovce and HC 19 Humenné respectively.

The 6ft 4in player has also made 154 appearances for the Latvian National team at various levels crossing paths with current Fife Flyers head coach Tom Coolen during his tenure as assistant coach of the Latvian National Team between 2012-2014.

Coolen said: "Vitālijs is a big, experienced center. He has played in the highest levels of competition, the Olympic Games, World Championships, KHL and most recently the Slovak Extraliga where he logged key minutes over the last two seasons.

"He plays a two-way game and can be used in all situations."

Elsewhere, Glasgow Clan surged up to third in the Elite League standings after a solid 3-1 home win over Belfast Giants at Braehead, *writes Craig Anderson.*

Clan captain, Dyson Stevenson, had an early chance to score when Mike Pelech fed him the puck out in front, but the

chancer was cut out by the stick of a Belfast defenceman.

Belfast, sponsored by Stena Line, would open the scoring shortly after though as Johnny Curran put the visitors ahead in the opening two minutes with a backhanded shot from a wide right.

Quinn Preston later struck the pipe for the Giants as his shot snuck through Antti Karjalainen's pads.

Jordan Cownie came close to bagging the equaliser for Clan when he broke in on goal after being setup by a smart backhanded pass from Matt Barry, but he couldn't beat Tyler Beskorowany.

Kohei Sato pulled off an impressive shot after jostling with Reece Kelly through the Clan zone, but his shot dragged just wide of the target.

Clan, sponsored by Aspray Glasgow West, pulled level before the end of the period thanks to a rocket from Jake Bolton at the blue line which sailed into the top corner.

There were a flurry of chances early in the second period from Gary Haden and Stevenson for the Clan, but neither could find the back of the net.

It was Luke Lynch though who gave the Clan the lead when he controversially sent the puck past Beskorowany after it deflected off his skate.

In the third period, the Giants dominated the chances with Sato leading the way for the Teal side.

Belfast's #81 tested Clan's defence consistently on the final 20 minutes, including a huge chance in the final minutes when he was found free at the backdoor, but his effort sailed over the bar.

Curran also came close to putting the Giants back level as he

smashed the puck from between the dots and forced Karjalainen to make an impressive catcher save.

Reece Kelly would eventually kill off the Giants' hopes as he launched the puck from his own end and saw it roll into the empty net to secure the win.

PICTURE: **Al Goold** captured this image in Friday's game at Braehead between Clan and Giants. Courtesy of the Elite League