

Flyers between Rok and a hard place

Fife Flyers entertain fifth-placed Guildford Flames in the Elite League at The Fife Ice Arena on Saturday (19.15) and head coach, Tom Coolen, admitted: “We are in a dogfight here.”

That’s after Nottingham Panthers’ netminder Rok Stojanovic backstopped the Midlands side to a single goal victory in midweek which keeps their play-off hopes alive and puts Fife under real pressure to secure a slot in the top eight.

The red-hot netminder dealt with 29 shots on the night while 24 were fired in the opposite direction at Shane Owen in Fife’s net. He also had a fine game.

The puck got through once and the game-winner came after 46min 27sec through an unassisted strike from Otto Nieminen.

It was a savage blow to Fife who slip to eighth spot in the ten-strong table having accumulated 47 points from 50 games with only four remaining.

Dundee Stars thrashed Glasgow Clan at Braehead on Friday, winning 5-1 to move to seventh with 47 points from 50 games, Coventry Blaze are sixth with 47 points from 49 fixtures and Glasgow Clan have slipped to ninth and out of the play-off mix on 47 points from 50 starts.

Nottingham prop up the table with 43 points from 50 games

while Guildford have 54 points from their 50 games and are out of sight.

Looking back at the Nottingham disappointment, Coolen said: "There were times when we played the way we wanted to play but they have got talent on that team.

"We are not going to show up and beat Nottingham, but, looking at the game, we hit the post twice and that could have been the game right there.

"We had chances but our power did not execute the way it has executed the last month. All in all, it was anybody's game out there."

He added: "I did not think we played poorly but we did not execute on our power play when we could have capitalised. Five-on-five we put some pressure on them at times, but we are not just going to blow them over."

The Canadian described it as a competitive hockey game and he added: "I do not believe we got any breaks but it was not due to any lack of effort on our team. We did not finish, we did not get enough guys to the net or get enough traffic in there.

"Not getting two points means we have 11 (points) out of 14 and we have four games to go. We will be giving it our best shot."

PICTURE: Fife at Guildford earlier this season courtesy of the Elite League and taken by **John Uwins**