

Injury crisis eases

MK Lightning have received a double boost ahead of a busy Christmas period.

Ales Perez returned for Lightning following six long weeks on the sidelines and Greg Randell is set make his comeback this weekend.

Both players picked up their injuries back in October against Romford Raiders, the side Lightning beat 2-1 at the weekend.

Although player-coach Nick Poole admitted Perez looked a little rusty he was glad to see the import back on the ice: "Ales coming back was a massive boost to the side. You could see he was a little rusty, after five weeks out it was good to see him get 60 minutes under his belt and he should be back to full fitness in no time," he said.

Speaking of Randell's possible return he added: "We are hopeful Greg will be able to play this weekend.

"They are both key members of our squad and it's a great to have them back.

"We've been a little inconstant recently, since the injuries, I think that shows the strength of the league more than anything. If you lose a few vital members other teams will catch you."

But news on Poole is not so good, as he is set to continue his spell on the injury bench while he recovers from a torn hamstring.

"I will be out for another couple of weeks, there's no pain, I'm walking fine but with a hamstring injury you can't rush back.

"I'm old and I'm tired, I need the break. I also love the coaching side of my job so although it's a little frustrating, I'm still working with the team."

Poole was an onlooker during his side's win over Romford on Saturday, and believes the close score line was a little flattering to the visitors.

"It was closer than it should have been, we out shot them and outplayed them but are sharpness in front of goal wasn't



Above: Gary Clarke fires in a shot against Romford Raiders



Left: Romford's defence under pressure

what it should have been and could have cost us."

Romford were fired into a surprising lead five minutes into the first period but fans favourite Adam Carr was at hand to pull Lightning back six minutes later.

A quiet second half saw the scores remain at 1-1 despite Lightning looking the brighter side. The winner finally came midway through the final period with Toni Alasaarela blasting the puck into the net.

The win leaves MK in fourth place, eight

points behind league leaders Guildford, and Poole is looking at the next few months as the time to push on up the table.

"Christmas is always a tough time and the next six weeks that will be important. The league will start to take some shape and we need to get the results to stay right up there.

■ ON Saturday Lightning host Chelmsford Chieftains for their 7pm face-off before they head to Sheffield Scimitars on Sunday where face-off is at 5.15pm.