

Rugby Preview – Scotland Women v Italy Women



Scotland Women head coach, Jules Maxton, has reshuffled her squad for their game against the Azurri at Campo del Parco Urbano, Santa Maria Capua Vetere, on Sunday (23 February 2014).

Despite losing to England in the last round of the competition, Maxton, is optimistic that her squad can take the positives from that game and cultivate them against the Italians this weekend.

Maxton, said: “Instead of looking at what our opposition has to offer, we’re focussing on developing our own game and maturing as a team.

“We were pleased with some of our play against England. At times we looked extremely dangerous against a strong outfit, yet we just lacked that ability to be clinical when in a good position, as well as the ability to compete for the full 80 minutes.

“If we can get our set piece to function to its full potential, then I have no doubt that we can do some serious damage to our opposition.”

Karen Dunbar and Emily Irving of Watsonians and Ayr respectively, have been named in the 23-person squad, with the possibility of making their Scotland debut.

Maxton, continued: “We’re giving some other girls a chance this weekend, we feel this is the right time for them to come into the squad and show us what they can do.

“Emily has been on the periphery for a while now, so we look

forward to giving her a shot. She's a really exciting prospect and she has a great future ahead of her on the international stage.

"Karen is another player who we've been looking at all this season. She's a good front-row option and we hope that we can utilise her in the setpiece against the Italians.

Melrose utility forward, Lana Skeldon, has been named on the bench with the possibility of gaining her second cap. Skeldon, debuted for Scotland in their 33-10 win against the Netherlands in 2011, and hasn't appeared for the national team since. Her inclusion in the squad, promotes Lindsey Smith to the starting XV, with both Sarah Quick and Nikki McLeod not named in the travelling squad.

Emma Wassell, will make her first start for Scotland after strong performances off the bench against Ireland and England, as Katy Green has been given the nod ahead of Megan Gaffney, who will not feature in this game.

Scotland squad:

15. Steph Johnston (Worcester)

14. Annabel Sergeant (Richmond)

13. Gillian Inglis (Melrose)

12. Laura Steven (Murrayfield Wanderers)

11. Katy Green (Darlington Mowden Park Sharks)

10. Lisa Martin (Murrayfield Wanderers)

9. Louise Dalgliesh (RHC Cougars)

1. Heather Lockhart (Hillhead-Jordanhill)

2. Lindsey Smith (Hillhead-Jordanhill)
3. Tracy Balmer (Worcester) CAPTAIN
4. Deborah McCormack (Richmond)
5. Emma Wassell (Murrayfield Wanderers)
6. Ruth Slaven (Murrayfield Wanderers)
7. Tess Forsberg (Richmond)
8. Anna Stodter (Loughborough University)

16. Lana Skeldon (Melrose)
17. Lisa Robertson (Murrayfield Wanderers)
18. Karen Dunbar (Watsonians)
19. Jade Konkel (Hillhead-Jordanhill)
20. Rachael Cook (Murrayfield Wanderers)
21. Sarah Law (Murrayfield Wanderers)
22. Tanya Griffith (RHC Cougars)
23. Emily Irving (Ayr)