

Field hockey – Scots win promotion but Russia make them sweat



Cammy Fraser (white shirt) scored a vital goal for Scotland as they clinched promotion. Picture by Nigel Duncan Media

EuroHockey Championship II (men): semi-final: Wales 4, France 3; Scotland 4, Russia 3 (in Glasgow)

Scotland players celebrated as they claimed a place in the top tier of European field hockey for the first time since 2005 thanks to a nerve-jangling win over Russia in Glasgow.

The Scots led 4-0 going into the last ten minutes but Russia bounced back with three goals in nine, nightmare minutes.

And it was a massive relief for Scotland's players and coaching staff when the final whistle sounded to confirm the 4-3 result.

Scotland now play Wales in Saturday's final of the EuroHockey Championship II but the pressure is of having claimed promotion.

It was stalemate after the first quarter but Scotland dominated the second.

They piled pressure on the Russian side who relied mainly on breakaways.

Dutch-based striker Kenny Bain came close after a fine pass from former Great Britain squad member Gordon McIntyre.

And it was Bain, a former Kelburne star, who broke the

deadlock after 29 minutes.

He fired home following a penalty corner award, finding the top right hand corner of the net and giving the Russian goalkeeper no chance.

Ben Cosgrove, whose home town is in Northern Ireland but he is a dentistry student at the University of Dundee, netted seven minutes later, slotting home from close range.

And Grange skipper Cammy Fraser made it 3-0 after 45 minutes, swatting the ball home from high above his head after a rebound from the Russian goalkeeper.

Scotland captain Chris Grassick, a former Inverleith player, worked some of his magic at the top of the circle to hold off Russian defenders before his Surbiton team-mate Alan Forsyth flicked the ball over the Russian goalkeeper for No 4 with 11 minutes remaining.

The Russians gained heart from a goal from Semen Matkovskiy following a penalty corner and one minute later.

Scotland defender William Marshall then blundered to hand the Russians a second five minutes after that, Pavel Plesetskii netting.

The Russians pulled their goalkeeper to have 11 players and the move paid off with a third goal from Nikolay Komarov one minute from time from a penalty corner but coach Derek Forsyth's team held out.