

Ice hockey – Khristich prepares for Capitals debut



Dmitri Khristich prepares for his first game in charge at Edinburgh Capitals

Edinburgh Capitals new head coach Dmitri Khristich told fans that his players will play with their heart in their opening pre-season clash with Canadian tourists, the University of Manitoba Bisons, on Tuesday (face-off 7.30pm).

The former National Hockey League star will not have his full complement of foreign players because of red-tape hold-ups.

Around nine of his Canadian and Russian stars will ice, however, along with Capitals crop of home-grown talent.

And the under-strength squad could find it tough as the tourists beat Belfast Giants 6-4 in Northern Ireland on Saturday and lost 7-6 after sudden death overtime in a re-match on Sunday at the same venue.

Capitals' new coach, who arrived on Saturday, has a wealth of big time experience having iced with National Hockey League clubs including Washington Capitals, Los Angeles Kings, Boston Bruins and Toronto Maple Leafs.

The 48-year-old, Ukraine-born ex-right wing said: "We've only had one practice but the guys are here because they want to be here. They will play with real heart and will give it everything as they have a job to do."

Fans will also see a number of local players making their debuts.

They include young prospects including Duncan Speirs and the

Robertson brothers, Caly and Aaron.

Callum Boyd also makes his comeback after a year with Braehead Clan.

Meanwhile, Capitals have confirmed a Meet and Greet event on Monday, September 4 at The Grosvenor Maybury Casino.

The cost is £10 for a three-course meal with at least one or two Capitals players at every table.

And the evening includes either a learn to play training session or socialising with fellow fans.

Elsewhere, Glasgow's Braehead Clan, who play Bisons on Thursday in Glasgow (face-off 7.30pm), have confirmed the signing of former National Hockey League (NHL) forward Ryan Potulny.

The 32-year-old arrives following a spell at ECH Linz of Austria and he said: "I bring experience and I'll be the sort of player that will be there for them if they need answers.

The American centre has played over 100 games in the NHL with Edmonton Oilers, Philadelphia Flyers, Chicago Blackhawks and Ottawa Senators plus 500 appearances in the American Hockey League.

Clan head coach John Tripp sees Potulny as a crucial piece of the puzzle and reckons he has the potential to be a top player in his team.

He said: "He's a game changer for us. His quality has served him well throughout his career and you just need to see what he's done and where's he played to understand just what he brings."