

Field hockey – Scottish champions have high ambitions



Kelburne star Josh Cairns in action last season against Edinburgh University. Picture Nigel Duncan Media

Scottish field hockey champions Bromac Kelburne on Friday open their campaign to progress to the knockout 16 in Europe's top club competition for only the third time in their history.

The Paisley side won the Scottish Division One title for the 13th straight year last season, edging Edinburgh side Grange on a dramatic final day.

It's the ninth time that the Scots have qualified for the EuroHockey League and they open their Pool D games in Barcelona against Spanish cracks Club Egara and follow-up against French runners-up St Germain on Saturday.

Club Egara were edged by Athletic Terrassa for their national title and they are looking to reach the knockout phase for the seventh time.

Saint Germain qualified for the last eight ten years ago and boast Blaise Rogeau, Francois Goyet, Guillaume Deront and Hugo Genestet who were key players in the French side that contested the World League semi-final in Johannesburg.

Meanwhile, Kelburne impressed in Round One 12 months ago, beating Dinamo Kazan 3-1 and pushing Athletic Terrassa all the way before losing 3-2 and Scottish fans hope Kelburne can progress from Round One this year to qualify for the knockout 16 of the tournament next March.

The on-going political situation in Barcelona is being

monitored closely and the organisers advise travellers to take normal precautions, avoid all demonstrations and follow the advice of the local authorities.

A spokesman said: "At this stage, the Euro Hockey League and European Hockey Federation does not have any advice to suggest that the situation will have an impact on Round One in Barcelona."