

Scotland Under-21s back in action tonight at McDiarmid Park



Scotland Under-21s are back in action tonight and looking to continue their impressive start to the European Championship qualification campaign.

Scot Gemmill's side began their group with a 2-0 win over the Netherlands before losing to England 3-1 and defeating Latvia 2-0.

Scotland are now set to take on the Latvians again before playing Ukraine on Tuesday.

After a year in charge of Scotland Under-21s Scot Gemmill has amassed an impressive squad of players who are featuring regularly for their respective clubs.

Part of that process was giving younger players a chance when he took over as head coach last year when qualification from their group had already been ruled out.

The players have learnt from the experience and it is a decision Gemmill believes has paid dividends for the new campaign.

He said: "We tried to play the younger players last year to give them as much preparation as we could to work towards this campaign.

"It was a big ask for the players who played two tough games against Iceland Macedonia but it was great development.

“We felt giving them that experience and playing them ahead of schedule has allowed them to hit the ground running in the new campaign and we got the rewards with a brilliant performance against the Netherlands.”

With John Souttar, Scott McKenna, Ross McCrorie and Lewis Morgan all starring for their clubs recently, Gemmill feels that first team experience within his squad has brought his side up a level.

He said: “We all agree there is no better way to develop than playing first team football and when you look at the club teams most weeks there are only two or three players in our squad who don’t start.

“The fact the players are pushing themselves to that level gives them much more belief and confidence when it comes to international football. You can see that in their performances for Scotland.”

Despite beating Latvia 2-0 in their last match, Gemmill believes they are a dangerous outfit and knows his side will have to be at their best.

He said: “The score line shows we kept a clean sheet but the first half they could easily have scored. They definitely can hurt us on the counter-attack.

“We are expecting one of their players to drop back from the full squad to the 21s. It’s not only offensively we need to be secure, but defensively too.

“That’s where the maturity of the players will come in and the willingness to do the work to win games.”

Scotland Under-21 squad

Ross Doohan (Celtic) *

Ryan Fulton (Hamilton Academical)

Robby McCrorie (Rangers) **

Jack Ruddy (Wolverhampton Wanderers) ***

Jason Kerr (St Johnstone) ****

Ross McCrorie (Rangers)

Scott McKenna (Aberdeen)

Calvin Miller (Celtic)

Liam Smith (Heart of Midlothian) ****

John Souttar (Heart of Midlothian)

Greg Taylor (Kilmarnock)

Ryan Williamson (Dunfermline Athletic)

Theo Archibald (Brentford)

Chris Cadden (Motherwell)

Allan Campbell (Motherwell)

Greg Docherty (Hamilton Academical)

Kyle Magennis (St. Mirren)

Stephen Mallan (Barnsley)

Lewis Morgan (St Mirren)

Dominic Thomas (Kilmarnock)

Ryan Hardie (Rangers)

Oliver McBurnie (Swansea City)

Scott Wright (Aberdeen)

* on loan to Greenock Morton

** on loan to Berwick Rangers

*** on loan to Oldham Athletic

**** on loan to Queen of the South

***** on loan to St Mirren

UEFA European Under-21 Championship Qualifier

Scotland v Latvia

Friday, 10 November 2017, kick-off 7.30pm

McDiarmid Park, Perth

Streamed live on Scotland National Team YouTube

Admission: £5 Adults, £2 Concessions. Free entry for SSC Members