

Team Mouat embark on world championship campaign



Team Mouat
British Mens Curling team

Pics Alan Peebles

British Curling's Hammy McMillan (jnr) is looking to follow in his father's footsteps by beating the Canadians on their own ice when the Pioneer Hi-Bred World Men's Curling Championships get underway in Lethbr ridge, Canada today.

Team Mouat's lead is the only member of the team competing in his third World Championships and he is hoping that Canada will provide a happy hunting ground as it did for McMillan senior, who was crowned World Champion in Saint John in 1999.

“I think the game has changed considerably since then, many more nations have come on and are playing at a very high level and some would say it is a harder event to win now,” said McMillan jnr, who works as a Curling Development Officer when he is not competing.

“Last year was our first Worlds together as a team and it was amazing to be part of that event hosted in Las Vegas and to come away with bronze. As it was our team’s debut, we were a bit under the radar, however we all went out there to medal and that is our strength.

“This will be our first World Champs in Canada and it will be even better with an Alberta team representing Canada in Alberta – the crowds will be huge with great home support for Team Koe, but for us as a team the big crowds really help us,” he said.

After winning bronze at their first World Championships, Mouat’s men struck gold in the same year at their first European Championships in Tallinn last November when they beat World Champions Sweden to that title. As the first Scottish men’s team to win a Grand Slam, the rink have consistently proven their form at the highest level of the game and for skip Bruce Mouat, they have their sights set on claiming more silverware.

“We have more of a target on our backs this year than last, but that is not always a bad thing as it can work for us too and can intimidate teams before they even step on the ice, so it is an exciting prospect for us now being a well-known team.

“We now know what to expect and have been working very hard to ensure we are in better shape this time around and know we might have to take a few knocks throughout the week, but our first goal is to make the play-offs. Then we need to play at our best in the knock-out stages and we want to go a few steps better this year, to be able to call ourselves World

Champions,”

Mouat said. “There are some very good teams in the line-up and we have a good record against most of them and it will come down to who is playing best on the day and we hope to be the team ruining the party,” he added.

His quartet is joined by Ross Whyte as alternate, who was also their fifth man when they won their European title.

Thirteen teams will be taking part in the event, including USA’s Olympic Champions Team Shuster, Sweden’s Olympic silver medallists Team Edin – who are defending their title this week – and perennial favourites Canada, skipped by two time World Champion Kevin Koe.

TEAM MOUAT: Bruce Mouat, born Edinburgh, lives Edinburgh, age 24 Grant Hardie, born Dumfries, lives Glasgow, age 27 Bobby Lammie, born Dumfries, lives Glasgow, age 22 Hammy McMillan, born Stranraer, lives Glasgow, age 26 Ross Whyte (Alternate), born York, lives Stirling, age 20