

EuroHockey – captain ready for Czech challenge

Captain Kaz Cuthbert (pictured) admitted that having Scotland's First Minister in the stands was an inspiration as Scotland demolished Ukraine 7-0 in the opening game of their EuroHockey Championship II campaign at Glasgow's National Hockey Centre.

The Western Wildcats star scored two goals in the game and can't recall the last time she scored a double for Scotland in international play.

Cuthbert is keen to keep her goal scoring going when the Tartan Hearts meet highly-fancied Czech Republic in their second game in the EuroHockey Championships II in Glasgow on Tuesday (18.00).

The hard-working player admitted: "Scoring two goals is few and far between for me and I get very excited."

And the Scotland stalwart, who is a physio in her day job, said the girls were absolutely delighted with the win and added: "We have been building for this all season.

"We recently went to the FIH Hockey Series finals (in Ireland) and we did not perform. We did not put away the teams we were meant to.

"So, to step-up, first game (in the EuroHockey Championship II), put our stamp out there and show what we can do was great.

“There were errors, there is stuff we need to work on but to put seven goals on the board and not concede any is a great marker.”

She admitted that the game-plan was to dominate the first five minutes and Cuthbert said: “In some tournaments recently we have been sticky in the first game. We wanted to set the tone from the start.

“Remember, teams are here because they are good and they are not to be under-rated. There will be spells we have to ride things out but we have to learn how to play through that that and keep pushing for goals.

“It is about making sure practising what we want to do. There is no point sitting off and playing a safe game as we want to play a bold, tight and attacking game.”

Cuthbert was delighted that First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, was in the near-capacity crowd for the fixture and she said: “It was amazing. She is such an ambassador for women’s sport.

“It is fantastic that she was here. She was a big promoter for the women’s football team during the summer so if we can get a bit of that that would be brilliant for the sport in general. The girls were inspired that she was here.”

The Czech Republic opened their campaign with a 2-2 draw against Austria and Cuthbert added: “We’re taking one game at a time as this is tournament hockey. However, we need to make sure we keep moving forward.”