

EuroHockey – it's gold to add to promotion for Scotland's women

Scotland women, including several players from the Lothians, celebrated winning the gold medal to add to their promotion to the elite of European women's hockey.

A goal from new Great Britain international Charlotte Watson clinched a hard-earned victory over a tough Italian side ranked No 17 in the world, two places above the Scots.

But the home side had several sticky patches in a physical game in which the Italians had a player red carded in the dying minutes.

Earlier, Sarah Jamieson fired Scotland ahead after six minutes. Bex Condie made a darting run into the D before turning and hitting the ball towards goal.

Edinburgh-born Jamieson, who has been playing hockey in Germany for the past two seasons, deflected the ball wide of the despairing dive of the Italian goalkeeper.

The Italians came close to levelling following sloppy play in defence by the home side and goalkeeper Nicola Cochrane, a former Edinburgh University player now with English side Beeston, did will to push a fierce reverse stick shot over the bar.

The visitors were down to ten men when one of their players was carded for a hefty challenge on Lucy Lanigan (Watsonians), but that did not stop them coming forward and they earned

their first penalty corner. They bundled the ball into the net but the officials saw a stick tackle and ruled the goal off.

Scotland then moved upfield and lively Jamieson, a former Inverleith player, powered into the D but her effort was smothered.

The Italians had shown that they had the pace and skill to upset the Scots and forced a number of penalty corners late on.

However, at the other end an infringement saw Scotland awarded a penalty flick but Kate Holmes (Western Wildcats) blasted the ball wide.

The Italian captain Chiana Tididi was red-carded after 56 minutes after previously picking up green and yellow cards.

Seconds later, however, the crowd were relieved when rising star Watson picked up a pass following a darting run from Edinburgh University player Louise Campbell and the 21-year-old accountancy student at Dundee University netted to put Scotland 2-0 ahead with only three minutes left on the clock.

A goal from Italy in the final minute from a penalty corner scored by Eugenia Bianchi put real pressure on coach Jen Wilson and her side but Scotland held out to win their fifth straight match in the event at Glasgow's National Hockey Centre and take the gold medal.

Captain Kaz Cuthbert said: "I'm absolutely ecstatic. We had a goal when we came here, to get promoted and win the tournament.

"We got promotion and Saturday was all about the gold medal. It's important that we continue to develop from this, but we're over the moon to have won this on our own patch."