

Scots kick-off double header against Northern Ireland in Belfast

The Scotland Women's National Team kick-off a double-header of international friendlies tomorrow as they take on Kenny Shiels' Northern Ireland as a warm-up for their 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup qualification campaign.

The match presents the potential for four players to earn their debut cap including Hibs' star Leah Eddie, Eartha Cummings, Brianna Westrup and Christy Grimshaw who were all called into the squad for the first time.



Photo courtesy of SFA

The fixture also allows a return for Fiorentina player Lana Clelland who is back in the camp for the first time since the 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup.

The Northern Irish side will be full of confidence having recently qualified for a major tournament for the first time. Their qualification for the UEFA Women's EURO 2022 was secured after defeating Ukraine in a play-off in April.

The last time the two sides met was in March 2020 as part of the Pinatar Cup. The match finished 2-1 to Scotland with goals coming from Erin Cuthbert and Abbi Grant.

Clelland said: "It's amazing to be back with the girls. I just can't wait to get out on the pitch with them again as these

friendlies are massive games for us. It's about looking forward to the beginning of our World Cup qualifying campaign, and these are the final preparations for us to prove ourselves. We've had so much positivity over the last few years qualifying for our first World Cup and first UEFA Women's EURO, so we want to do everything we can to be back where we belong – competing in major tournaments.

“It's been a difficult year. Italy is home to me now, but it was hard not being able to come back to Scotland and see family and friends. It was also hard to watch the last EURO qualifying games and not being able to help out, but I'm more determined now more than ever to help the team get that all important qualification. I can't wait to put that blue shirt back on and get out there with this incredible team.

“We're seeing some really young talent come into the team along with more experienced players, which I think is a brilliant blend. The new faces certainly deserve their place. They have shown what they can do at club level, so I look forward to working with them during the camp. I think the younger generation are getting such quality technical training from a young age, so this certainly works at our advantage.

“Our squad play with clubs in so many different countries across the world now, so it's a really exciting time to bring all our experience and knowledge together as a team.”

The game takes place at the Seaview Stadium in Belfast and kicks off at 7pm on Thursday night.