

Scotland women debut in world champs

Scotland will make their debut in the women's World Carp Championships this summer and a six-strong team has been assembled.

Four anglers are based north of the Border, Catherine Robertson, the vice-captain, and Niki Wildman, both from the Glasgow area, plus Margo Robinson from Dumbarton and Lynda Chisholm from Duntocher

Captain Joanne Barlow (pictured with a 17.5lb carp) is Brighton-based and Eleanor Mitchell is from Wokingham, but the team are seeking extra bodies to form the nucleus of a strong squad to build for the future.

Squad training starts in March with the English-based members and the Scots getting together to swap information.

Joanne and Eleanor plan regular trips to Scotland to practice with the rest of the team at a suitable location and the world event, which is held over 72 hours, is at the Linear Complex in Oxfordshire at the end of August.

The squad is looking for sponsorship as they have to fund equipment, training days, travel and entry fees themselves.

The opposition will be strong with France among the favourites along with England. Joanne said: "The French run their squad like a military operation.

"England have been together for some time and are also strong and Wales have a quality team, mixing experienced anglers with new blood.

"Other teams will come from all over Europe including Holland, Russia, Romania, Ukraine and Italy. We are a new team and our

objective is to work together and to fish as hard as we can in this our first major competition.”

Half of the Scotland team have long-time fishing experience and the rest are on a steep learning curve and it is not just the fishing techniques they are brushing up on, it is learning to live around a bivvy.

Joanne said: “It is massively expensive to fish for carp and the girls currently have to fund everything themselves including entry fees to competitions, travel and equipment. Other teams, for example, have sponsorship and also have their fees paid.”

Discounts from many of the big tackle manufacturers helps as well as support from DNA Baits but it all adds up and Joanne said: “Sponsorship from other tackle manufacturers and from Scottish companies would be a massive help.

“This is Scotland’s first time in the world championships and that is surely worth supporting. Overall, we want success for Scotland in the long-term, but we also want to see more women out there fishing.

“We have six girls at the moment and that is the minimum number required for a world championship team. We would love to have more women onboard to help us pick our strongest team.”

If you would like to get involved contact Joanne by emailing her at carpteamscotland@mail.com or via facebook @Carpteamscotland