

# Sarah Robertson is Scotland's new hockey captain as part of a new long-term strategy

Olympic bronze medallist Sarah Robertson (pictured by *Duncan Gray* playing for Scotland) has been confirmed as Scotland's new women's hockey captain as the build-up continues towards the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham in July, and the EuroHockey qualifiers in France at the end of August. The Borders-born former University of Edinburgh player, who has 107 caps for Scotland and 62 for Great Britain, now plays for London club, Hampstead & Westminster, and will be joined by vice-captain Katie Robertson (50 caps), a teacher at Dollar Academy, who plays for The University of Edinburgh, and is from Freuchie in Fife.

They are part of a new six-strong player group which has been evolved from a process involving players and staff.

Sarah Robertson and Katie Robertson are joined by Great Britain squad members, Edinburgh-born Amy Costello (The University of Edinburgh) and Fiona Burnet (Wimbledon), who was born in Alexandria, Dunbartonshire, plus Scotland's most experienced player, Dundee-born now Glasgow-based Becky Ward (Western Wildcats) and Eve Pearson (The University of Edinburgh).

The initiative comes as women's head coach Chris Duncan implements a long-term strategy, targeting a place for Scotland women in the world's top ten.

Sarah Robertson said: "I've played over 100 games for Scotland and every time it's a proud moment, but captaining your country is a huge honour and it's not something I ever thought would happen. I've been lucky to play in the squad under some amazing captains and it feels special to be added to that list.

"We've had a lot of progression recently with good wins

against Ireland and Wales. The squad is in an exciting place so I'm looking to help drive that and use my experience to help us keep moving forward.

"It's a huge summer ahead. The Commonwealth Games is pretty much the pinnacle for any Scottish Hockey players' careers, but then we have a huge tournament in France which is arguably more important because it is all about retaining European status.

"Obviously, one of our main aims is to work towards being in the top ten in the world so this summer will be a good start on that journey."

Katie Robertson admitted: "I'm a little shocked to be asked to take on the role. We've been set the target of top ten in the world, and obviously that doesn't happen overnight. There are young players in the squad and with more coming through who are already knocking at the door, so it is exciting to see those new players develop and see what we can do in the next five or six years."

Edinburgh-based coach Duncan, who is also director of hockey at The Edinburgh Academy, said that the new captain and vice-captain would lead the player group and said: "Sarah and Katie embody all the characteristics we would look to see from players in our squad and, critically, they possess a ferocious desire to succeed and help others.

"I have been amazed at their ability to drive standards and push others to constantly better themselves, but also at their empathy and understanding of the best route forward to make us better, not just as hockey players and a team on the pitch, but as a group of people."