

Exciting Scotland squad picked for Commonwealth Games

The squad is captained by Borders-born Olympic bronze medallist Sarah Robertson and is a blend of experience and youth with nine players making their Commonwealth Games debut alongside nine players who played at Gold Coast in Australia four years ago.

Scotland are in Pool B with Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Kenya in Birmingham and Robertson will be playing in her third Commonwealth Games.

The 28-year-old Great Britain squad player said: "Being captain offers a different dynamic for me and it's a huge honour to captain the team at the Commonwealth Games. The group is in a really good place so it's exciting moving into the summer.

"We haven't really seen much of some of the other countries for example, Australia and New Zealand have only been playing each other so it's a bit of an unknown, but we're in a really good group and I think we can cause an upset.

"The squad is a good blend of people who have been there and done it and then some of the players going for the first time still have 50 or 60 caps. So we've got a group who have played together for quite a few years.

The 18-strong squad includes four other Great Britain internationalists, Amy Costello from Edinburgh, Dundonian, Charlotte Watson, Glaswegian, Jenny Eadie and Helensburgh native, Fiona Burnet.

It'll be a first Games experience for talented youngsters Bronwyn Shields, from Glasgow and Ellie Wilson, from Edinburgh plus Eve Pearson from Dunfermline and 20-year-old Pearson

said: "I'm absolutely buzzing. This is huge for me.

"I feel so lucky to be playing alongside all the girls in the team. The first game against South Africa will be my first cap and that's the game that'll be the massive one for me."

Scotland's opening match will also be extra special for Heather McEwan (pictured by **Nigel Duncan**) who was born in South Africa and she said: "Being selected is the best feeling in the world. It's going to be great to be there to win my first cap, but to play that game against South Africa is amazing. I've come a long way and I'm just so excited to be part of it.

"As a team we've really come far in our rebuild, so I'd really like to see us doing really well. It's been part of our change in mind-set from the start, so we're not just going to compete, we're going to try and get a medal."

Scotland women are in tremendous form following victories over Wales in two recent Test series on the back of winning two of the three matches in a series against Ireland in Belfast.

Chris Duncan, head coach of the Scotland women's squad, who is also director of hockey at The Edinburgh Academy, said: "Obviously, the selection period is tough for so many reasons but we have selected an extremely exciting squad.

"There is balance across the squad in terms of different characteristics and personalities which I think really bring things to life. We've picked an amazingly strong squad that allows us to go down to Birmingham and make a great account of ourselves.

"Our expectation is to show our brand of hockey to the world. That's the chance you have when you play on the world stage, which is something we don't get all the time, so we'll go down there with high hopes to show people what we can do. If we focus on process, and do the best we can, then results will

take care of themselves.

“To see other athletes competing, and be in and around the events will be great, but I already feel like there’s a real sense of team. We’ll not just be there as Scottish Hockey, we’re there as Team Scotland, and I know the success of other athletes and teams will really help push us on to try and do something special.”

SCOTLAND: Amy Costello, Eve Pearson, Jessica Ross, Katie Robertson, Louise Campbell (The University of Edinburgh), Amy Gibson (Der Club An Der Alster, Hamburg, Germany), Becky Ward (Western Wildcats), Bronwyn Shields, Millie Steiger (Clydesdale Western), Charlotte Watson (Loughborough University), Ellie Wilson, Sarah Jamieson (Watsonians), Fiona Burnet, Jen Eadie, Nicola Cochrane (Wimbledon), Heather McEwan (Royal Victory, Antwerp, Belgium), Robyn Collins (Surbiton), Sarah Robertson (Hampstead & Westminster). Reserves: Bex Condie (University of Birmingham), Emily Dark (Watsonians), Fiona Semple (Clydesdale Western), Jess Buchanan (Athletic Terrassa, Spain), Laura Swanson (Der Club An Der Alster.)