Italy last test for Scotland women ahead of Commonwealth Games

Scotland women play Italy in a three-match Test series as they continue final preparations for the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham at the end of July.

Italy visit Peffermill, Edinburgh, on Sunday 3 July (3:30pm), Monday 4 July (7pm), and Tuesday 5 July (6:30pm). Entry to the matches is free.

Chris Duncan, head coach of the Scotland women's team, said: "We are excited by the opportunity to host Italy and Scotland has enjoyed some really good battles with them over the past three years.

"They play a style of hockey which is different to ones we have faced in our recent matches (against Wales and Ireland and the Great Britain Development Squad).

"Overall, the players have worked tirelessly over the past six months and, as we enter our final preparation phase for the Commonwealth Games and then the EuroHockey qualifiers, after what was a tough selection period, we are looking forward to competing against excellent opposition.

"To play at home is always a great experience for the players and especially given that this is our last competitive match before we travel to Birmingham in July."

Duncan, who is also director of hockey at The Edinburgh Academy, added that in this phase of the programme the squad are focussing on tweaking minor details to maximise performance levels.

He added: "We have been working hard to bring more consistency

and fluidity to some aspects of our game and it'll be great to have this tested by Italy.

"Outside that, we are working to nail down some of our best player combinations to enable us to play at our best for an entire 60 minutes."

For the record, Scotland are in women's Pool B with Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Kenya in Birmingham.

Scotland then play for a place at the top table of European hockey when they face Austria, France and Switzerland at the EuroHockey qualifiers in Dunkirk from August 24 to 27.

PICTURE: action from the recent Scotland v Great Britain match at Peffermill *by Nigel Duncan*