

Scotland lift game to beat plucky development girls

Challenge: Scotland 4, Great Britain Development Squad 1; Scotland 2, Great Britain Development Squad 2 (both at Peffermill, Edinburgh).

Coach Chris Duncan asked his Commonwealth Games-bound squad to lift their game to extend their impressive recent unbeaten run and they did just that with a 4-1 victory over a hard-working Great Britain Development Squad at Peffermill. Edinburgh.

The Tartan Hearts were held to a 2-2 draw by the talented development team on Saturday at the same venue, going ahead twice only to be pegged back by late goals in each half.

Duncan was critical of that performance but said it was a really pleasing weekend as it gave his squad a chance to play against a different kind of opposition.

It is only 46 days until the opening of the Games and Duncan's squad play South Africa, ranked No 16 in the world, two places higher than Scotland, in their Games opener on July 29, and he admitted to being frustrated at the 2-2 draw on Saturday.

But the Edinburgh-based playcaller, who is also director of hockey at The Edinburgh Academy, admitted: "It was good to turn it into a 4-1 win 24-hours later and to finish the weekend on a high note."

That took their unbeaten run to ten games in which they have recorded eight wins and the coach said that the visitors did really well, pushing Scotland hard.

Duncan's only disappointment was a suspected broken nose suffered in the second-half by University of Edinburgh player Eve Pearson and the initial diagnosis is that the injury may

take six weeks to heal.

Reflecting on the game, the visitors took the game to their hosts early on, opening up Scotland's rearguard and creating chances, but they were made to pay for passing them up when Great Britain squad player Amy Costello (University of Edinburgh) opened Scotland's account following their first penalty corner with five minutes gone.

Louise Campbell (University of Edinburgh), just back from injury, netted No 2, steering the ball home from the middle of the circle after the GB goalkeeper had parried a fierce shot.

Five minutes into the second quarter it was 3-0 when Heather HcEwan, a recent addition, who plays in Belgium for Royal Victory, netted following another penalty corner but the plucky visitors pulled one back from a field goal from Millie Giglio, whose mother is from the Argentine, three minutes later.

The development team took a lift from that point but, early in the third, Borders-born Olympian Sarah Robertson, Scotland's captain, and a player with London-based Hampstead & Westminster, steadied nerves, prodding the ball home from close range to make it 4-1.

On Saturday, Amy Costello from a penalty corner and then Fiona Burnet scored for the home side with Liv Hamilton and Becky Manton counting for the visitors.

PICTURE: Action from Sunday as Scotland take the ball away from the danger area. Picture by **Nigel Duncan**