

# Montserrat stars as Italy test Games-bound Scots

The learning process continues for Scotland women and their coach Chris Duncan as the Commonwealth Games loom at the end of this month, and time is running out.

The squad have one more competitive outing to piece things together and that is at Peffermill in Edinburgh on Tuesday (6.30pm) in the third and final game against Italy.

Fiona Semple played the get out of jail card on Monday night in game two after Scotland won the opener 3-0 at the same venue on Sunday before a healthy crowd.

She netted the game-tying goal as Scotland women came from behind against a spirited Italian side to draw 1-1 at the end of regulation time and they kept their cool to win 3-1 on running penalties, Heather McEwan, Sarah Jamieson and captain Sarah Robertson scoring.

Coach Duncan said going behind was a good lesson in a game which they had dominated and he added: "We need to be calmer in the final third and take advantage of possession and penetrations into the D."

He was spot on as Scotland, ranked No 18 in the world, one place ahead of the new-look Italian squad, should have been ahead had they capitalised on their possession in the Italian half, their final pass letting them down despite a number of penetrations into the Italian D.

And they were punished when the hard-running visitors struck, five minutes into the second-half, Liza Giacomotti slotting home.

Scotland upped their tempo and were the better team once they

went behind, but they missed a number of chances and faced an Italian goalkeeper on top form, Sofia Montserrat producing several quality stops, including one low down to her right from a penalty stroke taken by Watsonians star Jamieson.

However, Semple was in the right place at the right time to prod the ball home to equalise following a penalty corner award with 13 minutes left and the Clydesdale Western player admitted she did not see the ball until the last second.

Glasgow-born Semple raised her right arm to celebrate and said: "Italy came out strongly, and they are a fast, physical and aggressive team, but we had chances and tended to rush our final ball.

"We spoke about it at half-time and then created a number of chances in the second-half. The ball came to me through a ruck of players. I just put my stick down on it and it went in."

The 30-year-old believes the Scots have learned a lot from the two games and added: "We now have to put that into practice when we play the Italian side again on Tuesday."

The game pushes-off at 6.30pm at Peffermill and admission is free to Scotland's last competitive outing before they travel to the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham at the end of this month.

Test: Scotland 1, Italy 1 (Scotland win 3-1 on running penalties) (at Peffermill, Edinburgh)

PICTURE: Katie Robertson, Scotland's vice-captain, shoots in Monday's clash with Italy. Picture by **Nigel Duncan**