

Edinburgh newcomers in Wildcats sights while Watsonians women are short-benched

FIXTURES: Premiership: Saturday: men: Edinburgh University v Kelburne (Peffermill), Erskine Stewart's Melville v Western Wildcats (Inverleith), FMGM Monarchs v Clydesdale (Dalnacraig, 13.30), Hillhead v Dunfermline Carnegie (Upper Windyedge), Inverleith v Grange (The Mary Erskine School), Uddingston v Watsonians (Uddingston).

Sunday: Watsonians v Erskine Stewart's Melville (Peffermill), Western Wildcats v Hillhead (Auchenhowie); Kelburne v Inverleith (Glasgow National Hockey Centre), Clydesdale v Edinburgh University (Titwood), Grange v Uddingston (no venue given)

Premiership: Saturday: women: Dundee Wanderers v Hillhead (Dalnacraig, 15.30), Edinburgh University v Gordonians (Peffermill), GHK v Uddingston (Old Anniesland), Glasgow University v Clydesdale Western (Glasgow National Hockey Centre), Inverleith v Western Wildcats (The Mary Erskine School), Watsonians v Grange Edinburgh Ladies (Peffermill).

Sunday: Uddingston v Edinburgh University (Uddingston), Western Wildcats v Watsonians (Auchenhowie, 15.30), Grange Edinburgh Ladies v GHK (Edinburgh Academy), Clydesdale v Dundee Wanderers (Titwood), Gordonians v Glasgow University (Countesswells).

Western Wildcats romped to a 7-1 victory over Uddingston in their opening game of their defence of the men's Premiership title, and they go in against newly-promoted Erskine Stewart's Melville in Edinburgh on Saturday.

The newcomers lost 6-2 at Dunfermline Carnegie last weekend and will need to lift their game considerably to compete with the men from Auchenhowie.

Grange, runners-up last season, travel to face Inverleith looking to keep pace with Western following their 5-0 victory over city rivals Watsonians last week.

Inverleith lost 3-0 at Edinburgh University and could find it tough against a Grange outfit desperate to re-gain the title.

Edinburgh University host Kelburne and the men from the West of Scotland opened their campaign with an encouraging 5-1 victory over Premiership newcomers, FMGM Monarchs, at the Glasgow National Hockey Centre.

Champions Watsonians, fresh from their 11-goal demolition of Uddingston in Lanarkshire (picture by **Nigel Duncan**), host Grange and coach Keith Smith confirmed that Nikki Stobie and Sarah Mackay are injured and Mairi Drummond and Nicola Skrastin are unavailable.

He said: "We played Grange recently in a pre-season game and they proved that night that they'll be tough opposition this season. They're well-organised and have recruited well so we can't afford to be complacent."

Watsonians are also on duty on Sunday at Western Wildcats and Smith said: "Games against Wildcats are always difficult so our mentality and how we approach that tie, especially given it will be our second match of the weekend, will be an important factor."

Clydesdale Western, who are expected to challenge for the tile, are at newcomers Glasgow University looking to add to their points tally after a 1-0 win at Hillhead last Saturday.