

# **Brave young Scots cause Ireland real problems**

**Scotland's women's senior hockey side lost 2-1 to Ireland in Belfast but coach Chris Duncan said it was a brilliant performance by his young players. The sides meet again on Monday and Duncan said: "It is really exciting to see so many young players step-up."**

Ireland are ranked No 13 in the world with Scotland at No 17 and Duncan said: "We're playing against a top side here who are ranked very highly in the world and include experienced players.

"Our young players stepped-up really well to the challenge and we're disappointed not to get more from the game but I am so proud of the performance. It is a great developmental experience for the team and we look forward to the final game on Monday."

The Scots created chances from a high press but Ireland broke through just before half-time. They attacked down the left and the ball fizzed across goal for a back post finish.

Scotland came out strongly in the second-half with captain Sarah Jamieson (Watsonians) and South African-born Heather McEwan, who plays in Belgium, leading the line well and causing problems.

Late inclusion Ava Findlay (The University of Edinburgh) proved a thorn in the Irish defence, the youngster asking questions of the home side's back line, while Perth-born Ruth Blaikie, who plays in Holland, and Bronwyn Shields (Clydesdale Western, pictured by **Nigel Duncan**) looking solid in midfield.

Sophie Hinds (The University of Edinburgh) also caught the eye in an exciting team performance which saw the Tartan Hearts enjoy good spells of possession but a momentary lapse of concentration with 15 minutes to go saw Ireland punish the young Scots and move 2-0 ahead following a penalty corner deflection.

Duncan's squad earned a reward for late pressure when they pulled one back, Jamieson winning the ball and she fed Findlay who rolled it back to Jamieson to pick out Georgia Jones (The University of Edinburgh) for the finish. Scotland pressed for another but couldn't find the back of the net.