

Women's hockey – Duncan kick-starts Euro Championship campaign

Scotland women's head coach Chris Duncan expects a tough challenge for his squad in back-to-back internationals against Wales at Peffermill in Edinburgh this weekend.

The first game is at 2pm on Saturday (8 April) and the second on Sunday, 9 April (10am) and the matches kick-start Scotland's build-up for the as the EuroHockey Championships in Monchengladbach, Germany, in August where Scotland play Group B qualifiers against against England, Germany and Ireland. The Netherlands, Belgium, Spain and Italy meet in Group A.

Scotland are minus several of their leading players against Wales as they are with the Great Britain squad for the Pro League but Duncan does have Jen Eadie who is recovering from injury.

Katie Robertson (The University of Edinburgh) captains Scotland for the first time and there are two vice-captains, Sarah Jamieson (Watsonians) and Eve Pearson (The University of Edinburgh).

The absence of No 1 goalkeeper Amy Gibson allows the coach to give highly-promising Jess Buchanan (Sevenoaks) and Amber Murray, who has been in fine form for The University of

Edinburgh this season in the woman's Premiership, an opportunity of international game time.

And Lunjika Nyirenda, who scored a double for The University of Edinburgh in their Scottish Cup semi-final last weekend, and has been impressive for the students this term, also gets a chance to impress at international level.

Edinburgh-based Duncan said: "Representing Scotland is always a special occasion and to be at home in Scotland for our first competitive outings of the year is really exciting.

"The work the players have put in over the winter period has been exceptional and these matches really are the start of our international summer."

Duncan added: "We have worked hard since the success of our European qualifier last August (in France) to develop some areas that we identified would assist in our development and it will be great to see how far we have progressed against tough opposition in Wales."

The University of Edinburgh provide six representatives with Katie Robertson (pictured in the blue kit playing against Italy last year by *Nigel Duncan*) from Fife the skipper.

SCOTLAND: Amber Murray (goalkeeper), Eve Pearson (vice-captain), Jess Ross. Katie Robertson (capt), Lunjika Nyirenda, Sophie Hinds (The University of Edinburgh); Bronwyn Shields, Fran Lonergan, Millie Steiger (Clydesdale Western); Ellie Wilson, Sarah Jamieson (vice-captain) (Watsonians HC); Heather McEwan (Royal Victory, Belgium), Jennifer Eadie (Wimbledon HC), Jessica Buchanan (goalkeeper) (Sevenoaks HC), Kate Holmes (Western Wildcats). Kerry-Anne Hastings (Durham University), Laura Swanson (Der Club An Der Alster, Germany), Ruth Blaikie (AMVJ, The Netherlands)