

Edinburgh duo aiming high in Canada

Two Edinburgh anglers, Diona Roberts and Lana Taylor, are in Canada preparing for Scotland's debut in the women's world fly fishing championship.

The team is captained by Helen Philp who claimed her third Scottish ladies fly fishing title a few days ago and the Fife bakery shop manager and hopes to add icing on the cake by helping the Tartan team make a big impression on the international stage.

The five-women team jetted to Kamloops near Vancouver early to practice ahead of the world event which runs from September 24 to 30 with the women fishing one river and four stillwaters.

British Columbia rules only allow one fly on the cast making it even more difficult, but Scotland's squad are confident and one member has tied hundreds of flies which will hopefully rise fish.

Roberts, doubles as team manager, and the team also includes Joy Penrose Stupart from Helensburgh and Dierdre Dunbar who is originally from Annan but now lives in England.

The opposition in only the second women's world championships comes from Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, England, The Netherlands, New Zealand South Africa, Sweden and America.

Czech Republic won the inaugural event in Norway and Scotland have elected to go out early to ensure they know the "lie of

the land". They intend to walk the locations and fish similar waters ahead of the event.

Fly choice will be critical and Roberts said: "I've fished in Canada before and we have done our homework. We have experience in the team."

Milnathorp-based Philp has been buoyed by her victory in the Scottish at the 700-acres, Lake of Menteith, Scotland's only natural lake, but the success surprised the angler who landed five fish for 227 cms. Penrose Stupart was second with four fish 50cms behind and Morag Wallace third, also with four fish, only seven cms further back.

Kathleen Shepherd had the longest fish, a 56cm trout, and the best newcomer was Claire McGowan.

Philp, chairperson of the national team, admitted: "I should have had eight fish but played three others and lost them at the net, one of them was a cracker.

"I knew it was going to be tough. It was one of those thundery days with the sky heavy and there was not a breath of wind with the water calm. It was a hard slog and I started at Lochend Bay and had four fish there and then moved to an area called the The Cages and had one there.

"Yes, I was surprised myself at the win and thought I would need eight or nine fish to win but five was enough."

Roberts, who is the Scotland team secretary, has been busy making hundreds of flies in the last few weeks which she hopes will take a trick with the local trout.

No indicators are allowed during the competition but competitors are allowed to drift their boats on the stillwater.

Confident Roberts added: "We have a strong team. Helen is the national champion, Joy was second at the Lake of Menteith,

and Lana was the defending champion and the other members, including myself, were in the top ten.”

PICTURE: Helen Philp after being presented with the Scottish title by Dione Roberts. Picture contributed