

Percy tells Grange: 'We want the title back'

Western Wildcats' new men's coach Steven Percy has sent out a warning to champions Grange on the eve of the new hockey season: "We want the Premiership title back."

However, the Glasgow combine will have to achieve that target minus top marksman Andrew McConnell who scored over 50 goals last season and has been snapped up by German side Harvestehuder.

Percy said the Auchenhowie combine will now have to balance those goals across the squad this season but, on the plus side, Iain McFadden has been recruited from The University of Edinburgh and Craig Wallace has joined from Uddingston with Cameron Banks being added from Glasgow University.

Percy said: "We've added some additional depth to our squad as well as a few youth recruits. The goal is to win the league but also to be successful within the end-of-season play-offs to achieve the 23/24 EuroHockey League spot.

This season the Scottish Cup and play-off winners travel to Barcelona to face Czech champions Plzen Litice and either Dutch giants Kampong or Bloemendall in this year's EuroHockey League.

Percy added: "The goal is to win a game and be as competitive as possible in the second match."

Reflecting on last year's domestic competition, he said: "The

margin for league success was razor thin, basically the two matches against Grange.

“We know how important each match is and have been training since mid-July to be ready.”

Warm-up matches against Watsonians (a 6-3 win), then a trip to Manchester to face Bowden (a 2-1 defeat) and Brooklands (a 5-1 win), have been undertaken so far and Western faced Clydesdale this weekend as they continue their build-up.

Percy said: “Pre-season has been challenging with some players committed to the Australian League in Perth, but we welcome them back soon as well as some others who have been married and have been on honeymoon. We grow stronger each week.”

FLASHBACK: Western Wildcats v Grange at Auchenhowie. Picture ***Nigel Duncan***