

Ten Capital athletes in Scotland hockey squad

Six The University of Edinburgh players and four from Watsonians are included in the 20-strong Scotland squad for a triple-header Test series against Spain in Benalmadena this week as coach Chris Duncan kick-starts his build-up to the EuroHockey qualifiers this summer.

Scotland face Spain, who recently qualified for the Olympics in Paris, on Wednesday, February 14 (10.30am), Thursday, February 15 (17.00), Friday, February 16 (13.00). All local times.

Edinburgh-based Duncan revealed that the squad has been working since September and added: "These games come at a great time as we look to launch into a big year."

The Tartan Hearts play their EuroHockey qualifiers at the Glasgow's National Hockey Centre from August 22 to 25 against Wales, Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic and Lithuania. The tournament winner qualifies for the EuroHockey Championships in 2025.

Duncan said: "Spain have recently sealed their place in Paris at the Olympics so these games will be a great test for us. We are looking forward to giving a number of players their first

taste of competition against opposition of this level after a good block of training and we are also looking to develop some new technical skill sets.”

Scotland travel minus their Great Britain squad members who are preparing Paris 2024, but Duncan said: “This is a great opportunity for others to step up and become leaders within the group. There is a real energy and vibrancy around the group and we are all excited to get out there and kick off 2024 with some positive performances.”

Squad: Amber Murray, Emily Dark, Katherine Holdgate, Sarah Jamieson (Watsonians HC), Ava Wadsworth, Katherine Birch (Durham University), Bronwyn Shields, Millie Steiger (Clydesdale Western), Ellie Mackenzie (Loughborough University), Eve Pearson (Grossflottbeker THGC, Germany), Frances Lonergan (Western Wildcats), Georgia Jones (Berliner HC, Germany), Heather McEwan (Royal Victory, Belgium), Jessica Buchanan (Exeter University), Jessica Ross, Katie Swanson, Lunjika Nyirenda, Ruth Blaikie, Sophie Hinds, Zara Kennedy (The University of Edinburgh)

PICTURE: Heather McEwan on the bawl during Scotland training at Peffermill, The University of Edinburgh Playing Fields.
Picture ***Nigel Duncan***