

Debutant Murray saves Scots

Six players won their first caps but, despite that, Scotland drew 1-1 with Canada, ranked one place above them in the world, and were minutes away from victory.

Ellie Mackenzie, Katie Swanson, Amber Murray, Katherine Holdgate, Zara Kennedy and Rebecca Birch were introduced by coach Chris Duncan and Scotland controlled the game from the outset, setting a high tempo and pressing well.

Sophie Hinds was influential for Scotland as the home side piled on the pressure in the first and second quarters but the visitors limited the opportunities for the home side.

The opening goal came in the second-half from The University of Edinburgh forward Jika Nyirenda, a long pass sending her surging through on goal only to be wiped out by the Canadian goalkeeper. Ice cool Nyirenda took the penalty stroke and sent the ball into the bottom right corner to break the deadlock.

Moments later her clubmate, Ruth Blaikie, almost added a second after a great pass by Emily Dark found Heather McEwan who picked out Blaikie at the far post, but the Canadian goalkeeper, Macia Laplante, blocked.

Canada dug deep in the final quarter and were rewarded with an equaliser, Alexis de Armond sending the ball into the top left corner.

Murray came on between the posts to earn her first cap in the closing minutes and, with an outstretched boot, saved a

Canadian shot in the dying seconds.

Chris Duncan, Scotland's head coach, said: "For a team with six new caps to play and try to deliver our philosophy the way we did is really pleasing. We played with great purpose, especially in the first-half, and created enough chances to win the match.

"We had some big chances early in the second-half, and we'll improve. Yes, it was disappointing to lose a goal because of our own mistake, but the beauty of a series is we'll get to play again and we'll be out to try and get the win."

Game two of a three-match under-21 series between Scotland and Ireland ended 2-2 in a competitive game. It followed a previous 1-1 draw.

Amy Grassom and Lexie MacMillan. scored for the home side.