

Grange confident despite double injury blow

Grange are unbeaten against Watsonians this season but the newly-crowned Premiership champions are leaving nothing to chance ahead of their Scottish Cup Final clash at Glasgow's National Hockey Centre on Saturday (16.00).

Last weekend's disappointment in losing to Western Wildcats in the play-off final was a major blow and killed hopes of a domestic treble.

Two unnamed players are injured and will not play in Saturday's showpiece but Grange have depth in their squad and remain confident as they accounted for Watsonians 3-0 in last weekend's play-off semi-final.

Previous scorelines between the clubs have been 1-0 and 3-2 but Martin Shepherdson, Grange's team manager, said: "Although we have won all three games we have played against Watsonians this season, all of them have been tight.

"We know they can be difficult to break down but we go into the game feeling confident that if we play to our best we will beat them."

Missing two players through injury, he admitted, was a blow but he added: "We pride ourselves on the depth of our squad so we don't let that affect us."

Watsonians go in against Western Wildcats in the women's Cup Final on Sunday (16.00) and they beat the Auchenhowie club 3-0 in their play-off semi-final last weekend.

Coach Keith Smith and his squad eye a glory treble for the second straight season having already annexed the Premiership and the play-off title and they are outstanding favourites.

The Edinburgh club have gone through the domestic season unbeaten so far but Smith said: "Games against Wildcats are always tough and we need to impose ourselves on the game and be controlled about how we achieve that.

Other men's games being played on Saturday feature The University of Edinburgh 3s playing capital rivals Grange 3s in the men's Reserve Cup Final (10.00) and student's second team face Hillhead 2s in the District Cup Final (12.00).

The Scottish Plate Final features The University of Edinburgh against Dundee Wanderers (14.00) and the District Plate Final is between Erskine Stewart's Melville 2s and Grove Menzieshill 2s (13.00). The men's Reserve Plate Final is between Watsonians 4s and Watsonians 5s (11.00).

On Sunday it is the women who have pride of place also at Glasgow's National Hockey Centre. The University of Edinburgh play The University of Edinburgh 2s in the Scottish Plate Final (14.00) and in the District Cup Final, Shetland play The University of Edinburgh 4s (12.00).

Glasgow University 4s are in action in the District Plate Final against Merlin Gordonians 2s (10.00).

PICTURE: Grange v The University of Edinburgh earlier this season. Picture by **Nigel Duncan**



PICTURE: Watsonians v Western Wildcats at George Watson's College earlier this season. Picture by ***Nigel Duncan***