

McEwan toast of Tartan Hearts with golden goal

Heather McEwan scored after 37 minutes to book Scotland a place back at the pinnacle of European women's hockey after a narrow 2-1 victory against a determined Wales side at rain-soaked Glasgow's National Hockey Centre.

The South African-born striker, who plays club hockey in Belgium, was immediately engulfed by relieved team-mates as the Tartan Hearts came from behind to clinch the valuable win and the gold medal in the European qualifier.

Now the team can concentrate on preparing to meet the elite of the sport in Europe at Munchengladbach in Germany next summer.

For now, the team, and McEwan, can celebrate another achievement as they continue their pathway to develop Scotland as a major hockey-playing nation.

McEwan said she was relieved when the ball hit the backboard and added: "Very excited and really happy that it (the ball) went in. A few moments earlier I got a deflection and the goalkeeper stopped the ball on the line.

"It was (a goal) going to come at some point and I am glad it went in. When we went behind we talked about trusting the process."

She added that the team now have to step-up to face the best and added: "We have a lot of hard work to do."

Earlier, Elizabeth Bingham put Wales ahead after 18 minutes from a penalty stroke but a break down the left, prompted by smart work from hard-working, Charlotte Watson, found Sarah Jamieson and the Watsonians striker slammed the ball home to level only a minute later.

Mention must be made of Scotland's new No 1 goalkeeper, Jess Buchanan, who pulled off several quality saves to keep Wales at bay.



GOAL: Heather McEwan celebrates after firing Scotland to Germany. Picture **Nigel Duncan**