

Scots walk EuroHockey qualification tightrope

Five Edinburgh club players have been named in the Scotland women's 18-strong squad for next week's EuroHockey qualifier at Glasgow's National Hockey Centre.

Watsonians trio, Amber Murray, Emily Dark and Sarah Jamieson, are joined by Jessica Ross and Ruth Blaikie, both The University of Edinburgh, and they team up with Olympians, Borders-born Sarah Robertson, Amy Costello from Edinburgh, and Dundee-raised Charlotte Watson.

Glaswegian Jess Buchanan, who was travelling reserve at the Paris Olympics, also returns to the fold, and Robertson, an Olympic bronze medallist in Tokyo four years ago, will captain the squad.

Wales (ranked no 25), Czechia (ranked no 26), Austria (ranked No 32), Croatia (ranked No 55) and Lithuania (ranked No 65) compete in Glasgow along with the hosts and the winner of the knockout tournament will play in next year's A Division of the EuroHockey Championship in Monchengladbach, Germany.

Scotland are the highest ranked team in the tournament, they are No 16 in the world, and they have a bye to the semi-final and will take to the pitch on Saturday 24 August (14.15) to play either Austria or Lithuania.

Chris Duncan, Scotland's head coach, said, "We have been really pleased with the growth of the group over the year. The

performance development in different match play settings, and within training, has been refreshing to see.

“Coupled with this, to see our under 21’s succeed with a gold medal recently in Turkey has energised everybody within the group.”

He added: “The knockout format of this tournament is a challenging one so we need to find our rhythm and commit to our style of play from minute one of our first game. Selection has been tough, because we have so many players who have contributed so well over the past months, and put their hand up to be selected. Ultimately, though, we feel we have a really strong squad who are capable of showing what The Scotland Way is in this tournament.”

Playing at home, said Duncan, is always special, and the chance for the players to run out in front of a packed crowd of family and friends is something all the players are looking forward to.

Tickets are available from:
<https://scottish-hockey.org.uk/womens-eurohockey-championship-qualifier-a/>

SQUAD: Amber Murray, Emily Dark, Sarah Jamieson (Watsonians HC), Amy Costello (Surbiton HC), Bronwyn Shields, Millie Steiger (Clydesdale Western), Charlotte Watson (Beeston HC), Ellie Mackenzie (Loughborough University), Eve Pearson (Grosslottbeker THGC, Germany), Frances Lonergan (Western Wildcats), Heather McEwan (Royal Victory, Belgium), Jennifer Eadie (Wimbledon), Jessica Buchanan (University of Exeter), Jessica Ross, Ruth Blaikie (The University of Edinburgh), Katie Birch (Durham University), Katie Robertson (vice-captain, Reading HC), Sarah Robertson © (Hampstead & Westminster)

PICTURE: Sarah Robertson (centre) in action for Scotland taken by *Nigel Duncan*