

Scotland women face world No 3 Belgium in Euros

Scotland women's hockey squad will face Belgium, England and Spain in Pool B of the EuroHockey Championships next summer.

Edinburgh-based Chris Duncan's squad recently qualified by beating Wales 2-1 in the final and Austria 1-0 in a play-off to make the final in Glasgow and move forward to the prestige event in Monchengladbach.

The full 40-game game schedule will be revealed soon but the championships are over ten days from August 8 to 17 at the HockeyPark which is next to the Borussia Monchengladbach football stadium.

Packed crowds witnessed the last event a year ago at the same venue which will be hosting the competition for the third time with The Netherlands winning the gold medal 12 months ago. Scotland finished seventh.

Early bird ticket are available, including ten-day passes, and hosts Germany, rated No 4 in the world, will face the champions, The Netherlands, currently No 1 in the rankings, in Pool A. This is the first time they have clashed in the group stages since 1991.

Ireland, No 12 in the world, and France, rated No 19, make up the four-strong pool and the French have qualified for the elite event for the first time since 2005.

In Pool B, Olympic semi-finalists, Belgium, the third best

team currently in the world, go in against England, ranked No 7 in the world, and Spain, who are eighth and were beaten by Scotland, ranked No 16, at Monchengladbach last year.

PICTURE: Heather McEwan scores the goal which took Scotland back to Monchengladbach for Europe's top tier women's hockey event. Picture ***Nigel Duncan***