

# Heat a factor as Tartan Hearts prepare for Cup campaign

Scotland's women hockey squad were due to touch down in Chile today after a 14-hour, overnight flight from London ahead of their FIH Nations Cup campaign.

Heat could be a major factor as the girls trained at The University of Edinburgh's Peffermill Playing Fields last weekend with the thermometer hovering around 1C and Edinburgh-based coach, Chris Duncan, expects game-time heat to be in the mid-30s.

The squad, he said, are in an really good place after two "great" days of training and he said: "We are all excited about the opportunities that await us our here in Chile.

"We have a really exciting team and have a few days to adapt to our surroundings and sharpen up before we begin on Sunday."

Their first opponents in Chile's capital, Santiago (population over 6.1 million), which sits in a valley surrounded by the snow-capped Andes, are Ireland and Duncan said: "It is quite an odd feeling to travel 7,500 miles and play Ireland in our first game, but we know they will provide a really tough challenge. We want to get started."

The head coach added: "It was 1c as we trained over the weekend and we are expecting game-time heat to be in the

mid-30s. Yes, the jump is pretty significant, but the sports science staff have done a brilliant job developing a plan for heat and the players have bought in majorly with their preparation over the last three weeks.

“So, while we know it will be hot, we’ve done all we can prior to travel to assist in adapting quickly.”

Scotland’s other B pool games are against Korea and New Zealand and the Tartan Hearts are the bottom ranked side in the tournament. New Zealand are No 10 in the world, and Korea No 15, one place ahead of the Scots.

Pool A features Canada, the hosts, Japan and the United States. Canada are ranked no 17, Japan No 11 and USA No 13, and Chile No 14.

New Zealand open the event against Korea on Sunday at 18.00 and the Scots are on the field at 20.00. They play Korea on Tuesday (18.00) and New Zealand on Thursday (18.00) with the classification games starting on Friday.

PICTURE: Scotland’s squad during one of their final training sessions at Peffermill. Picture from Scottish Hockey