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24 June 2013

PRESS RELEASE

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SCOTLAND U16 & U17 versus NORTH U21 22nd and 23rd June 2013 – Milngavie

A tremendously successful weekend of hockey for a young North U21 squad against well drilled and determined Scotland sides provided the backdrop for **3 wins** and **a draw** for the North squad.

In a different format to the usual weekend of hockey organised for the North U21 squad, Scotland Hockey requested we play two games per day at the meeting arranged in Milngavie, north of Glasgow. The team were to play the Scotland U16 side selected to play in the three Nations tournament; and, to play an U17 development squad seeking to regain their U18 places.

North squad was selected from previous training sessions held at Lancaster University. Head coach, Craig Togher commented: "We knew we had something in the squad this year. This was probably the youngest squad we have selected so they were closely matched to the Scotland age groups"

Scotland U16 - 0 v North U21 - 1

The first game against Scotland U16 was a fast end to end game. Chloe Tyler for North was strong in defence assisted by new players Cath Foy and Alice Williamson who both showed composure beyond their years. Captain Rosie Atkinson, maintained the discipline of the team which resulted in a perfectly executed shot to the top corner of the goal from the top of the 'D' by forward Whitney Savage to end a strong penetrative run from a free hit.

North soaked up much of the pressure from a well-drilled Scotland team but they could not breakdown the mid-field where Beth Walker-Smith controlled the game allowing forwards Sioned Davies, Lauren Burrell and Kate Harris to exploit weaknesses in the Scotland mid-field and defence.

Scotland U17 – 1 v North U21 – 3

A thrilling game of hockey developed with a powerful Scotland U17 side trying to dominate mid-field. Young players from North showed their determination with Claire & Jayne Wallace demonstrating command and composure often breaking out of congested areas freeing up players such as Laura Thompson to feed the forwards.

Goals came again from Whitney Savage, Stephanie Teece from a short corner, and Chloe Tyler from a penalty stroke.

Scotland U16 – 2 v North U21 – 2

Following defeat the previous day, Scotland came out determined to take this game. Taking the lead part way through the first half, Captain Rosie Atkinson asked her players to step up their game resulting in deep penetrating runs from Steph Butterworth; superbly accurate penetrating passes from Kate Harris and determined running from Cath Foy forced the error to create a penalty corner. Georgina Read took a fabulous deflection from a well driven Kate Harris attempt on goal which was stopped illegally on the line by Scotland creating the Penalty Stroke which Chloe Tyler stepped up to equalise the scores to make it 1 – 1.

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Scotland crept ahead early in the second half. But North U21 were undeterred and kept to the task in hand maintaining their composure and shape throughout which paid off as Beth Walker-Smith scored to make it 2 - 2 after Cath Foy's brilliant pass to Whitney Savage on the base line who then pulled it back to Walker-Smith who controlled and slotted home for North to draw equal in the closing minute of the game.

Scotland U17 – 0 v North U21 – 1

In the final game of the weekend, North fielded the youngest players in the squad supported by one or two of the older players. New players to the squad Tilly Dyos-Szolkowska and Alex Addison performed with skill and precision executing decisive tackling to frustrate the Scotland mid-field.

On a break created by Kate Harris, North were able to over-load Scotland in the last few minutes of the game resulting in Laura Thompson taking a well struck ball from within the 'D' to the bottom right corner of the goal.

Head Coach for Scotland U16, Bill Robson said, "These games were exceptionally valuable to our girls as we go next weekend to play in an U16 3 Nations Tournament, with Ireland and Wales and the standard of the games was perfect preparation for this. At the U16 age group I believe it essential that the players are tested against bigger stronger older girls who are good hockey players and who play a disciplined and effective game. Your team gave us that"

North Head Coach Craig Togher summed up the weekend by saying "I am extremely proud of the squad. They are young but they showed excellent skills and a determination to win throughout all the games. Our squad were on top of the game at the final whistle on each occasion. They trained and played for each other. They performed in what was asked of them. They maintained their discipline throughout the weekend and the results speak for themselves. We have some exciting young players who we hope will go far in future games."