

Bankier to partner Blair at the European Championships

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Scotland today named their team for the European Team and Individual Badminton Championships in Herning, Denmark, from April 12-20.

The Scots will take a 10-strong squad to Herning, Denmark, as they look to improve on their ninth place two years ago in the Dutch town of Den Bosch, as well as aiming to achieve as much success as the women's team managed in February with their fourth place in the European qualifying round of the Uber Cup.

Scotland will also chase medals in the individual events where the best chance rests with Imogen Bankier in partnership with England's Robert Blair in the mixed doubles.

The big blow for Scotland is the loss of Emma Mason with a leg injury. The selectors have yet to announce whether or not she will be replaced.

Scotland will face Russia (10am) and holders Denmark (6pm) on April 12 and Estonia (2pm) on April 13 in the group stages and the squad for the team event is:

Men: Andrew Bowman (Bellshill, 30 caps), Watson Briggs (Renfrew, 16), David Gilmour (Bothwell, 45), Craig Goddard (East Kilbride, 26) and Gordon Thomson (Glasgow, 13). Reserve: Thomas Bethell (Livingston, 5).

Women: Imogen Bankier (Glasgow, 24 caps), Jillie Cooper (Edinburgh, 7), Susan Hughes (Glasgow, 65), Linda Sloan (Glasgow, 13)

Manager: Christine Black

Coach: Dan Travers

Coach Dan Travers said: "It is a blow losing Emma but our squad has a lot of experience now and that performance in the Uber Cup has given the whole squad a big lift. We are looking to improve on our ninth place last time."

The squad will stay on in Herning for the Individual tournament (April 16-20) with one significant difference. Glasgow's Bankier is being allowed to team up with Edinburgh-born former Scotland internationalist Blair in a mixed doubles partnership which has already brought them the Bank of Scotland Centenary International title in November as well as a quarter-final spot at the Yonex All England Championships two weeks ago. The pair will be strong contenders for a medal.

Individual events:

Men's Singles: Craig Goddard, Gordon Thomson.

Women's singles: Susan Hughes, Linda Sloan.

Men's doubles: Andrew Bowman & David Gilmour, Thomas Bethell & Watson Briggs.

Women's doubles: Imogen Bankier & another, Jillie Cooper & Linda Sloan

Mixed doubles: Robert Blair (England) & Imogen Bankier, Watson Briggs & Jillie Cooper.