

Scottish Successes in British Universities Championships

Scottish universities volleyball was well represented at the British Universities Championships Finals in Sheffield in March, with two teams taking part in the Championships and three in the Trophy finals. Volleyball was just one of 26 sports involving 6000 student athletes over 17 venues in Sheffield in the BUCS Championship Finals – Britain's largest sporting event in 2010!

In the Championship, Dundee men and Edinburgh women were Scotland's representatives, with Dundee having won the Scottish Universities League for the first time in their history to give them the opportunity of making the BUCS Finals after the knock-out round. Both teams were assured of finishing in the top eight student teams in Britain, but both had ambitions to finish much higher. However Dundee found frustration the main emotion in their first match, letting a 6-0 and 14-10 lead slip in the final set against Loughborough, finally losing 19-17. Despite displaying great determination and fighting spirit Dundee found the tournament difficult. But despite finishing 8th, the Dundee students finished their best-ever season, having also captured the Scottish Universities Cup.

In the women's Championship, Edinburgh at times resembled a field hospital (!) with ice packs and strappings being used to patch up a squad which was already weakened with two of their key players being unavailable. With this in mind, their final position of 4th was a remarkable achievement and was a credit to the players' determination and versatility and coach Barry McGuigan's tactical juggling. The Edinburgh girls surprised many with their play and challenged all teams on court. With their full squad available there is no doubt they would have been in the frame for a place in the Final.

Scotland's strong showing and standing in the world of student volleyball was emphasised in the Trophy event with all three Scottish teams making their Finals. It was an all-Scottish affair in the women's competition, where last year's Championship runners-up, Dundee, and Glasgow served up a five set thriller. Loud and passionate support from their respective male counterparts made the Final an exciting spectacle, which Dundee just edged 15-11 in the final set. Glasgow men restored some West Coast pride, when they defeated Nottingham 3 – 1 to take the men's trophy back up North.

Overall Scottish Universities volleyball performed creditably in Sheffield and demonstrated that they could more than match their counterparts from south of the border. Continued success at this level is healthy for both the student game and volleyball in general in Scotland. It is hoped that the 2010/2011 season will see another bumper year for Scottish Universities Volleyball.



“Gathering of the Clans” – the players from Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dundee Universities at the British Universities Championships in Sheffield.