

# Scotland debut caps a great year for soccer starlet Danni

A MAYBOLE teenager has fulfilled one of her dreams this year after being chosen to play football for Scotland.

And the icing on the cake for 15-year-old Danielle Connolly was being part of the winning team at the Annual Tri-nation Tourna-

ment in Northern Ireland. Queen Margaret Academy pupil Danni, said she was "stunned" to find she had been chosen to play for Scotland.

"I didn't think I was good enough on the day of the trials and lots of other girls were trying for the

same position as me, so when I was told I had made the squad, I was over the moon," Danni said.

Before setting off on the four day trip to Bangor, Danni and her team mates got together for a training session and a night out so that they could get to know each other better.

"When we got to Ireland it wasn't all about football," she said. "We spent a fair bit of time shopping and sightseeing as well."

During the tournament, Scotland beat Ireland 4-3 and Wales 4-2 in two hard fought close contests, and winning the coveted International Rosebowl was the first Scottish victory for three years.

A civic reception was held after the final where the trophy and individual caps and medals were presented to the players. Danielle played in all of the games as sweeper, even though she was one of the youngest in the team.

Remembering how she felt, Danni explains: "When I got my first cap I was so excited. I didn't think this would happen yet because I'm quite young, but I was really thrilled to be picked for the team, and it is one of the highlights of my life. I just hope I'm picked for the team again next year as I don't want it to be a one-off."

Midfielder Danni trains a minimum of twice a week, and plays a competitive game most Sundays.

The youngster is a mem-

ber of Caledonia and Paisley Saints, and she also train with Glasgow Youth Development. She said: "Football does take up a lot of my time, but I wouldn't do it if I wasn't happy."

With two older brothers and a dad who referees, football was always a priority in the Connolly household.

"I've always really liked football, ever since I played it at school in America where we lived until four years ago. I can't imagine not ever liking the football, but I still enjoy girlie things like make-up and clothes!"

"I also like swimming, athletics and hanging out with my friends, just like any other teenager, and my family are really supportive of me."

Not all of Danni's dreams have come true, however. Within the next few years, she would love to secure a scholarship to play football in America.

She said: "It would be great if I could play football in the States, and I know you have to work hard if you want to follow your dreams. It takes a lot of practice to get good at the things you enjoy, but if you put your mind to it, anything's possible."



Danni in action for Paisley Saints against Hibernian.



Maybole teenager, Danielle Connolly, was thrilled to get her first Scotland cap this year.



Danni, pictured bottom left, with her Scotland colleagues after winning the International Rosebowl.

## Carrick Amateurs – Maybole's very own team



MAYBOLE have their very own amateur football team once again with the formation of Carrick Amateurs earlier this year. Managed by George Logan and assistant manager George McCulloch, there are also a few local familiar faces in the team as well.