

Women Primed for FISU World Universiade Summer Games

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By: Rachel Tiffen

Canterbury soccer guns Michelle Cooper, Trudi Coleman, Emma McDonald and Stephanie White are determined to foot it with the best at the World Student Games in South Korea in August.

It will be the debut appearance for the New Zealand Universities women's team at the games.

The Kiwi side is one of 11 competing teams and will take on Japan and Mexico in the first round.

White, who was selected for the New Zealand women's development squad last year, was thrilled to be taking part in an international tournament of such a high calibre.

"There are no opportunities like this in New Zealand," she said.

Coleman, who has played in the university team for the last two years, was counting down the days until the trip.

"It will be awesome to play international teams with such varied styles and to see how our team competes at that level."

Coach **Macky Singh** was confident his team would beat Mexico to get through to the quarter-finals. "It is the strongest team I have put together in the last six years."

Singh said he had a good base of players with international experience.

Twelve of the squad were in the team that toured Malaysia and Singapore last year and three of those also took part in the Australian tour the year before.

Singh said the players had been warned to be wary of Sars.

"Korea is not really under any serious threat though," he said.

Singh said University Sport New Zealand had indicated it would monitor the seriousness of the situation on a daily basis.

The other countries entered in the games are South Korea, Canada, Ireland, France, Germany, China, South Africa, and Taiwan.

Singh picked South Korea and China as the tournament favourites, based on their performances at the last games.

A five-day training camp for the team will kick off on July 7 in Christchurch, which will include a friendly match against the Canterbury women's team at English Park on July 8.