

Porty stars making waves in title push

Picture: NEAL RAYNER

PORTOBELLO Water Polo Club head for Lancaster this weekend determined to build on their best-ever start to a British League Division One campaign.

The Capital outfit go into action against Lancaster and Manchester looking to consolidate success in the opening round of matches when they posted a rare victory over Rotherham (15-9) before toppling reigning champions Bristol 10-4 and finally edging out leading London team Penguins 10-9.

Coach Alan Anderson says a number of factors have helped Portobello get off to a flyer, including providing six players – Neilson Rutherford, Fraser Rutherford, James Scobie, Keith Anderson, Ed Grundy and Dave Armstrong – to the Scotland team who won a triangular event also involving Ireland and Wales which preceded club league action.

Says Anderson: “There was an intensity about the two close Scotland wins that



SPLASH HIT: James Scobie enjoyed success with Scotland before the club season began

helped our players, while we have also been joined by Bojan Donevski, a Macedonian goalkeeper who is studying

in Edinburgh, as well as Danielle de Vecchus, a schoolboy who has moved from Italy to Broughton High for a final

year with experience of playing at a high level.”

In May last year, the Herald and Post reported a major

youth initiative was under way at the club.

These efforts are now bearing fruit with the likes of John McDonald, Rory Gallagher and Douglas Leslie starting to figure in line-ups.

Coach Anderson, who has helped the side rise through four divisions of the British League in a decade to reach the elite group, adds: “The league format has changed so that a split will take place, leaving the top five from eight teams to battle it out for the title.

“Reaching the top five is our immediate goal and even one win this weekend would virtually guarantee that.

“In the past we have taken beatings from Lancaster and Manchester, so it is a real opportunity to find out where we are at.

“Last season was regarded as a bit of an achievement in that we fulfilled a target of finishing in the top seven to retain our First Division place.

“Hopefully this season will be even better.”