



Tin-Tin 'super-excited' about Team GB debut

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Tin-Tin Ho admits she is “super-excited” to be pulling on the Team GB kit for the first time at the European Games.

The 20-year-old medical student finished her university exams just over a week ago but is looking forward to a test of a different kind in Minsk.

She will perform in the women’s singles, alongside team-mate Charlotte Carey of Wales, who is also in Team GB colours for the first time.

Ho said: “It feels really cool to be representing Team GB. The kit is so comfortable and nice. It’s my first time representing Team GB and I’m super excited.

“It’s really cool to be in the squad with Charlotte. I see her quite a lot at Opens and we’ve shared Air B&Bs. I’ve played doubles with her too, so we’re already a good team, I feel.”

Carey said: “It’s a great honour to be representing Team GB. Obviously I’ve played for Wales many times but it’s something else, the next step, to play for Great Britain.

“It’s good to play with Tin-Tin. We’re good friends, we’ve played a lot together. I’ve known her for so many years, it should be fun to play alongside her.”

The Games, which run from June 21 to 30, provide a qualifying pathway to the Tokyo 2020 Olympics – the top three athletes in the men’s and women’s singles, plus the gold medal-winning teams, will all earn an automatic place at the Olympics.

Ho, 20, added: “It will be quite tough, I’m just going to go and enjoy it and play each match as it is without thinking too much about Tokyo, and to try and get as much experience as I can.”

Ho and Carey have been training with their team-mates – Liam Pitchford, Paul Drinkhall and Sam Walker complete the GB squad – at the University of Nottingham this week.

Ho said: "I finished my exams last week. It doesn't feel like I've been training for a week full-on but it's going well.

"It's quite normal training but we're doing a lot of counting in our exercises, which makes it more like match-play. I've been doing quite a lot of that in my training this year, to get my mentality better. We've also been doing a lot of serve and return.

"At the weekend I joined the England Youth Squad and they did a lot of footwork and movement, and that gave me a good base again."

Carey said: "I've been preparing all season in Sweden really, but this camp is pretty intense training, a lot of matches, more specific things towards the matches rather than just footwork and fitness.

"I'm doing a lot of psychology work and a lot of fitness beforehand and now just trying to keep up with a lot of physio and stretching."

The players have also been working on their mental approach, and Ho added: "I'm trying to do the right things mentally when I'm on the table and before the tournament I will watch some players I could potentially play and have a think about what I need to do."

Ho is receiving support this year from the Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme (TASS), a Sport England-funded partnership which helps athletes in education – aged 16-plus – to get the very best from their sporting and academic careers without having to choose between the two.

She said: "I'm really enjoying studying. The work is difficult and often quite intense but I love the challenge. Mentally switching between my university work and table tennis can be tough and trying to play as many tournaments as possible – at the same time as attending all of my lectures – is a challenge. But I try to keep on top of both.

"The support I receive from TASS is invaluable. I've had some excellent lifestyle advice at a time when things are changing fast for me as an athlete and a student. The TASS specialists help me stay sane!"

Ho's exam results are due during her time in Minsk, but she said: "I just want to pass so I don't have to do them again over the summer! I'm not that nervous – there's nothing I can do about them now."

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