



Gavin Evans: England and GB role is an honour

Author: Paul Stimpson

Posted On: October 31, 2019

Gavin Evans leads England into the ZEN-NOH ITTF Team World Cup aiming for a medal on what is the first step of a journey which everyone hopes will lead to Team GB qualifying for the Tokyo Olympics.

England are one of the 12 nations to gather in the Japanese capital next week for a competition which is the test event for next summer's Games.

A good performance there will act as a springboard for the top players to switch to Team GB mode for the Olympic qualifying tournament in Portugal in January.

And although they are ranked in the third tier of the countries involved, Evans believes there is no reason they cannot repeat their medal achievement at the last edition of the Team World Cup in London last year.

Among the potential opponents for the squad of Liam Pitchford, Sam Walker, Paul Drinkhall and Tom Jarvis are China, Germany and hosts Japan, who beat England in the 2018 semi-finals.

Evans said: "The objective at the Team World Cup is to do as well as we possibly can. We'll be number three in our group, but that doesn't necessarily mean that we can't do some really good things.

"We are first going to try to get through our group and then look to medal and that will stand us in really good stead to have some good confidence and qualify for the Olympic Games."

Evans is thrilled to [take the reins on secondment from Grantham College](#), initially until the end of January but with an option to continue to the end of the Olympics, should Team GB qualify. The position is funded by UK Sport's Aspiration Fund.

He said: "I'm delighted to be asked to be the men's captain for the GB squad leading up to the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

"It's something that's a real honour and I'm ever so pleased to be working with such a great group of men as

well. I think we've got a great opportunity to do some really, really good things.

"I know the lads well, I know what their individual needs are. I can bring structure, knowledge of the game and the support and direction they will need.

"This team can be brilliant. Over the last two years they have performed on really big stages and got medals in World Championships and did really well in Rio and I think that it can only get better.

"The main thing is the lads have to perform well individually, altogether at the same time – that's the big thing.

"If we can get them all performing and reaching their peak at the right time then there's no reason why we can't win medals in World Championships again and at Olympic Games."

The Team World Cup starts next Wednesday. The full line-up of qualifying nations in the men's tournament is: China (Asia champions), Nigeria (Africa champions), Germany (Europe champions), Brazil (Pan Am champions), Australia (Oceania champions), Japan (hosts), USA (Pan Am runners-up), South Korea (WTTC 2018), Sweden (WTTC 2018), England (WTTC 2018), Austria (WTTC 2018), Chinese Taipei (WTTC 2018).

Downloaded From:

<https://newsarchive.tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/gavin-evans-england-and-gb-role-is-an-honour/>