

Helshan spearheads squad's Italian job

Author: Paul Stimpson

Posted On: July 08, 2014



The England Juniors squad, from left, Danny Lawrence, Sam Mabey, Matt Stanforth (coach), Adam Harrison, Helshan Weereasinghe. Picture by Steve Parkin

Helshan Weerasinghe is relishing leading the England squad into battle as they fly out for the European Youth Championships tomorrow.

The 17-year-old from Tonbridge spearheads the team alongside fellow Juniors Danny Lawrence, Sam Mabey and Adam Harrison and Cadet duo Tom Jarvis and Luke Savill.

And he said: "It will be a good experience for the team and I'll be expected to lead them a little bit and show them the way.

"This is my fifth Europeans, so I'll see a lot of familiar faces and I'm hoping to have some good battles. I've beaten some of them before and come out on the wrong end of others.

"From a team point of view, we'll be looking to do well to stay in the top division for next year. Individually, it depends on the draw, but I'm aiming to pressure the top players."

The Championships take place in Riva Del Garda, Italy, between July 11th and 20th.



England Cadets Tom Jarvis (centre) and Luke Savill with coach Paul Whiting

The players prepared for the event by joining England's Commonwealth Games squad at Lilleshall for a training camp, which included both practice time and sports science input.

Here is what they had to say about the experience and the challenge awaiting them in Italy.

Adam Harrison: "I'm very happy to be selected and I'm looking forward to competing against the best players in Europe. I can see what I have to do to improve and I can compare what I'm doing against them.

"It's a good challenge and I think we've got a good chance of staying in the top 16."

Tom Jarvis: "I'm aiming for a medal. I'm seeded to get to the quarter-finals, so I need a few good wins to get me there, but I think it's definitely possible if I play my best.

"Now I've played more opens I know the opposition and what I've got to do."

Danny Lawrence: "The camp's been good – it's been good to have a few little things that we wouldn't have normally. We've talked about focus and concentration, had a bit of physio and been given our own exercises to do."

Sam Mabey: "I'm really excited and looking forward to competing. Everybody's playing well and the camp has helped a lot because we've all been working together."

Luke Savill: "I'm expecting good quality matches. It's the same competition I played last year but I'll try to do better than last year.

"Being at the camp and going to events like this helps to improve you as a player and socially. It helps you mature."

By Paul Stimpson (July 8th, 2014)

Downloaded From:

<https://newsarchive.tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/helshan-spearheads-squads-italian-job/>