

We can challenge for Games medals – Jarvis

Author: Paul Stimpson

Posted On: July 15, 2014



Nick Jarvis talks tactics with Karina Le Fevre at the recent training camp at Lilleshall. Picture by Steve Parkin

England's players have high hopes of being among the medals at the Commonwealth Games – and the plan to make that come to fruition has been two years in the making.

Head Performance Coach Nick Jarvis is the man with the plan, and he said: "Each medal we try to go for is tough but we're looking forward to a successful games.

"The colour of the medals, I think we will know once the competition starts what the opposition are really like, how they are taking the pressure. Everyone will be under pressure and its how you play on the day.

"We need to make sure everyone is prepared so when they go on the table they're in the best possible condition to compete. If we do that we've got a chance, a great chance."

Jarvis and his colleagues Alan Cooke (performance coach) and Jon Pett (team leader) begun the process of preparing the team two years ago.

"It's been a long process," he said. "We started engaging with the players abroad two years ago on a regular basis with Skype calls, telephone calls and the occasional visit, it was the constant communication.

"When we did see them 'in the flesh' as it were we discussed how things were going, what we felt they needed to do to challenge themselves to try to improve their game and we did that on the back to talking to their clubs.

"We discussed things with the club coaches and with the clubs themselves. The clubs in Germany are pretty professional and they have a big input into what's happening and they've got good knowledge, so we tapped into that. I think because of that what we were relaying to the players we could actually be confident that the club was saying the same thing."

The players have come together for training camps in the run-up to the Games, in China and Lilleshall and then in Glasgow in the days before the opening ceremony.

"Everything from now on is just making sure we maintain the concentration levels and the fitness levels and the speed and alertness of the players and just fine-tune their matchplay," said Jarvis.

"You can practise really well and go to a tournament and the wheels fall off because you haven't practised the right things, so we're very keen to make sure of the fine-tuning.

"They will be camps where we practise very hard but they will be a lot more tactical. While they're not on the camp they'll still need to focus and to rest and recuperate but still have a focus of what's going to happen.

"It's got to be in the back of their minds so they've still got that hunger and drive to win the matches."

Getting in the right mindset for a big competition is something all of the players have experienced before, whether at a previous Commonwealths, the Olympics or World Team Championships.

Jarvis believes that experience will stand them in good stead.

"It's a big tournament," he said. "The World Championships and the European Championships and Olympics are recognised as 'bigger' championships but this throws up different things – you're expected to do well.

"You go to a big event and there's lots of good players there, some are ranked higher than our players but the

feeling is that England should do really well. That in itself puts pressure on the players.

"But the whole squad reacted very well to that and were very positive and the pleasing thing was that the squad as a whole were as one."

Although Jarvis himself has never been to a Commonwealth Games, he did travel with the squad to last year's Commonwealth Championships in India.

"The pressure was lifted off us because they were all working together and all supporting each other in every way – off the table, on the table, in training, travelling to India. We became stronger because of that," he said.

"We're trying to recreate that now, the squad is slightly different but the same thing is happening really. We're in a good place, training is really good and I think we're together.

"For me, because of my age and the general life skills you pick up talking to other people, I've managed to talk to lots of different people in different sports.

"The idea of going into a multi-sport competition isn't as daunting as it would have been if I was a lot younger with no experience."

Downloaded From:

<https://newsarchive.tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/we-can-hit-our-games-medals-target-jarvis/>