



Baggaley primed for world title defence

Author: Paul Stimpson

Posted On: January 19, 2016

Andrew Baggaley has been working hard to make sure he is in the best shape to defend his World Championship of Ping Pong crown this weekend.

The 32-year-old England ace beat Germany's Alexander Flemming in a five-set thriller at Alexandra Palace to win the title last year.

And he said: "I can't believe how the last year has gone so fast, but I can't wait. It's only a few days to go and I'm raring to go and looking forward to it.

"Obviously, I'm a contender – I proved that last year, but I've got to go game by game. It's a gruelling competition and it's a case of winning my first match in the groups, take it step by step and lift the gears in the big matches when I need to play to my best, like I showed last year."

Baggaley really had to dig deep to win the title in front of the Sky TV cameras, and not just in the final, which he won 15-13, 15-10, 12-15, 10-15, 15-12.

"I was 1-0 down in the last 16, quarter-finals and semi-finals and looking in trouble, but managed to win, and then a fitting final," he said. "There were so many stories in that game, being 2-0 up and then he came back to 2-2. He was a couple of points up in the decider and it swung from side to side and it was a really emotional feeling to win that.

"It's an official world title, and that's a cool thing, and especially being in England. It was a unique moment for me."

Baggaley's preparation has included both technical and physical work. He said: "I included the table tennis practice with the sandpaper practice initially, but I've done about a month now practising like I would normally, except with a sandpaper bat.

"You need to be physically strong too and I've been training hard in the gym. Even though the game is slower, it doesn't mean you move slower. In fact, I try to move faster and play an aggressive style. It's hard because it's extremely hot in the venue and the rallies are a lot longer.

"But I've put in the time training, so I'm ready for the challenge."

As well as Baggaley, a trio of British players who reached last year's quarter-finals will feature again at Ally Pally – England's Chris Doran and Andrew Rushton and Scotland's Gavin Rumgay.

Downloaded From:

<https://newsarchive.tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/baggaley-primed-for-world-title-defence/>