



A: Yes, he has all of the attributes. He's hungry, he's determined, he's talented and he has got a great coach too. As I said, I took him under my wing but he wasn't meant to go out and start beating me in races!

Q: That's the danger isn't it- you've coached him too well! You've had an incredible track record which includes winning an Olympic Gold medal, a Commonwealth Gold, plus you have been the European Indoor 60m Gold medallist four times beating Linford Christie's record!

A: You just look at your goals and every year offers new challenges. My life has changed a lot as I have now retired from athletics and am still trying to adjust to not being an athlete. But obviously I am still associated with Malcolm Arnold's group (former coach) and they are still my friends so I will continue to support them.

Q: I also understand that you are involved with motivational speaking? Do you find that a useful way of encouraging people to follow in your footsteps?

A: Yes, it does not matter whether it is sport or anything else, things like attitude, planning and preparation, belief and determination are essential if you really want something. It's all about adopting the right approach to achieving your overall goals.

When I started out, yes, I wanted to be an Olympic champion but I didn't know how difficult it would be and as I got more involved and more experienced in the sport I realised that this was not an easily attainable goal. But then I think that how I go about my life, I don't set easy goals. I'm not happy just to do something and just to tick by. I want to try and achieve something with my life and make differences and if I can do that with some of the work I am doing now then that's great.

Q: Wellbeing magazine offers regular advice on therapies and treatments which may be helpful to people. Having been in the sporting world for many years you must have experienced some injuries here and there?

A: Not some, loads!

Q: Have you had any experience of the more alternative types of therapy?

A: Yes definitely. When you're a sports person and you have the Olympic Games coming up and you're having problems, naturally our sport offers treatments but when you are not having success with these you might speak to other athletes who have had success in other ways.

With athletics, you travel the world and different countries have different approaches. I went to see a German doctor and some of his alternative ways were really frowned upon from a Western point of view. He was ridiculed globally but all the best stars were seeing him and getting wonderful results. Now suddenly, science has done a u turn with him and now they want to know more about what he does and he is seen as a bit of a guru. You just want to judge by the results you get.

Q: So you are a strong believer in alternative therapies?

A: Yes definitely, I believe it's what works for you. It's about attitude, if it affects the mind and if you believe you will get a benefit then that's a good thing. For me, when I am out there as an athlete, I've got to believe that I'm going to win. Attitude is so important and I've got to surround myself with the right people and the right training. And that may not be the same for someone else.

When I first started out in sport I had to search in the dark when I got injured. One of my points of call was to speak to the Bath rugby players to see who they used for their treatments but the types of injuries affecting a rugby player can be very different from those affecting a sprinter. Once you get success, the medical part of it becomes so important and you have access to the treatments you need. But when you find people who are good, you stick with them.

The UK School Games are taking place on Thursday 28th August- Sunday 31st August, 2008 in Bath and Bristol.

For more information, please go to www.ukschoolgames.com