



- › Aquatics
- › Athletics
- › Badminton
- › Boxing
- › Cycling
- › Gymnastics
- › Hockey
- › Judo
- › Lawn Bowls
- › Netball
- › Rugby 7s
- › Shooting
- › Squash
- › Table Tennis
- › Triathlon
- › Weightlifting
- › Wrestling

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You are in: [Sports](#) > [Weightlifting](#) > [Features](#) > Display

Dave Morgan – lifting the standard

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Paul McNally talks to the Commonwealth Games veteran on the possibility of him appearing at his sixth Games.

When an athlete reaches the peak of their performance they're generally happy about being selected for a major sporting tournament such as the Commonwealth Games. For Dave Morgan though, once was never going to be enough. Or twice. Or even three times, for Manchester 2002 will be Morgan's sixth Commonwealth Games.

Astonishing as it is Welshman Morgan's first appearance on this stage was in Brisbane back in 1982 where he pulled off a shock win on his debut.

"1982 definitely holds the greatest memories because nobody expected me to win. I've always liked the idea of being the underdog and coming out on top."

It's fair to say that Dave has been pretty much on top since he became a world-class weightlifter at the age of 17 but we wanted to know what had driven him to such success at an early age.

"At the age of nine I was very interested in comic book heroes. I was particularly interested in strength and impressed with muscular physiques. Charles Atlas used to advertise his famous "Dynamic tension" bodybuilding course in the Marvel comic books that I bought each week. I used the course with some success, but in 1975 Arnold Schwarzenegger burst onto the scene in a film called "Pumping Iron" At that point I realised that free weights were a much more effective way to build my body, so I began pumping iron too. After a few months I became more interested in strength than size, and decided that I would like to compete in the Olympics and Commonwealth Games one day. Olympic weightlifting was the obvious choice."

He continues, "In 1979 I won the British schools



Dave Morgan is in training mode for the Games

championships. In the three years that followed I began training twice per day (before and after school) then, in 1982, I won my first Games and the rest is history, apart from the last chapter that ends in 2002."



Morgan breaking the world record in training during 2000

It's obvious to even the casual observer that, as well as requiring obvious physical strength, weightlifting is very much a mind game. Morgan believes that if you have the knowledge of what you want you also need a belief that you can attain it. With that in mind the 37 year-old is heading for Manchester with the

intention of winning gold.

"There are nine medals available three gold, three silver and three bronze. I would like to think that one of the gold medals has my name on it. I am training as hard as I can, but I have to work full time so it's a very fine balance. Many of the athletes that I am competing against will be much younger and will training full time."

Having already publicly stated he's no intention of pushing his way into the squad for the Athens Olympics this will be Dave Morgan's last major competition, with commentating experience behind him already on cable channel Eurosport, media could be one route he'll take but won't he miss the competition?

"I have some investments in a new chain of music bars and I'm setting up an interactive personal training site which is due to be launched later this year. I love training and keeping fit though, so I will always workout."

And as for his main rivals for those three golds, "I know what I have to do to get a gold medal. All my attention will be directed towards my own goals. I cannot control other people's performances so I only focus on my own. To my other competitors – train hard and may the best man win!"

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