

'I will give historic medals to my mum'

COMMONWEALTH GAMES

DAVID Morgan's mum will be having to make room for yet more medals following her son's unprecedented achievement at the Commonwealth Games yesterday.

The Cambridge weightlifter picked up a silver treble in the under-77kg class as he became the first sportsman to stand on the podium at six Games.

And there is only one place the medals, won in the snatch, clean and jerk and overall events, are going -- and that is his mother's mantelpiece.

"It's a very long mantelpiece!" Morgan joked, referring to the collection of seven golds and two silvers he had won in previous Commonwealth Games.

The 37-year-old personal trainer has become something of a legend in the sport having won his first medal -- a gold -- in the lightweight category at Brisbane 20 years ago, aged just 17.

He then added a further gold as a light-heavyweight in 1986, before his finest hour came in Auckland 12 years ago when he made a clean sweep of the golds in the snatch, clean and jerk and combined events.

Two further middleweight golds came in the snatch and overall plus silver in the clean and jerk in 1994, with Morgan also taking silver in the under-77kg snatch in Kuala Lumpur four years ago.

He had to settle for three runners-up spots yesterday behind Australian Damian Brown in the snatch and Satheesha Rai of India in the clean and jerk and overall, but proved he was still at the top of his game despite his advancing years.

Morgan said: "I came here thinking I would win a medal in the snatch because I wanted to be the first competitor to win medals at six different games. Anything else was a bonus, so I'm over the moon.

"I was surprised that Damian started at such a high weight (175kg) in the clean and jerk. I wouldn't have wanted to win the clean and jerk and overall silver medals in this way but I'm not complaining.

"I just thought 'I've got a silver and two bronzes' and then he failed all three lifts. He had a bad day but it happens to the best of us."

To prove how much of an inspiration Morgan has been to other lifters, Paul Coffa, coach of overall bronze medallist Renos Doweiya of Nauru, said: "Renos is only 18 and to be lifting at the same level as David Morgan is fantastic for him."

But Morgan said he would be unlikely to take part in a seventh Commonwealth Games in Melbourne in 2006, despite claiming he would retire after each Games since 1990.



David Morgan

"I would be 42 if I competed in Melbourne and sport is changing," he said. "I get up for work at five and then train, rest, go back to work and then train again.

"Many of the athletes don't have to do anything but eat, sleep and train. If they had to work full-time as well you would see the difference."

Brother Tony, who won a snatch bronze in Kuala Lumpur, entertained a crowd packed with followers from Cambridge by sticking his tongue out while lifting and dancing off the stage after lifts, as he came sixth overall and in the clean and jerk and 10th in the snatch.

But, like David, he said he was considering taking a break from top-level weightlifting.

He said: "I don't know if I'm going to compete again but you always feel like that after a big competition. You never say never at the end of the day though."