

This is my report on my experience at the European Games June 2019 in Minsk, Belarus.

This was my multi sports event, so it was a very special experience for me personally.

Multi-sport events are very different from the regular badminton competitions as you are living in an athletes village with hundreds of other athletes from different sports, everyone is eating in the same place and completely taken away from the public. You have big opening and closing ceremonies with thousands of people coming to celebrate the start and end of the games. There is an extra motivation to do well as everyone is there supporting you.

In our opening match of the group we had to play against the number 1 seeds and Olympic bronze medalist from GB. This was always going to be a big ask but I think we managed to play at our highest level, pushing them closely for large parts of the game.

In our second match we played against an Estonian pair, we knew going into this match that it was a potential banana skin but if we played well we would be able to get the win. Which we managed to do, setting up a final match in the group against France with the winner progressing to the Final 8.

We knew we were underdogs going into this match but if we played well we would have a good chance.

We started well in this match but the French then changed tactics and we struggled to adapt quick enough and let them get too much of a lead.

We finished top 12 in Europe earning us valuable points towards Olympic qualification but we couldn't help but feel with a better a draw we were definitely capable of more, having already beaten 4 of the quarter finalist this season but that is just the way it goes.

All in all it was an invaluable experience, which I can take a lot from going forward.

All of this wouldn't have been possible without the help of the Ad Astra Academy. They have given me endless support to help ensure I can reach my full potential in both my sporting and academic careers. Through the use of the physio team I have been able to ensure my body recovers in the best possible way, as well as meeting with the nutritionist to keep my diet in shape.

I'd like to say a special thanks to Ann, Darina and the rest of the staff in the Academy who work endlessly to make sure we avail of the best possible services and support.

