



■ Olympian Tessa Sanderson with some of the coaches who will be teaching tomorrow's sporting stars

Tessa putting setbacks behind her to groom Olympic stars of future

She is looking forward after quitting 2012 body

Newsprobe by Kay Atwal

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» Despite suffering two setbacks earlier in the year, former Olympic gold medalist Tessa Sanderson is bullish about the future.

The javelin star already has her sights on the 2016 Brazil Olympics and believes they will include competitors from east London.

And to those who know her, her focus on the future will come as no surprise even though it comes just days after the end of her role as director of the Newham Sports Academy in March.

Cuts

She founded the academy four years ago and helped identify and develop as many as 70 potential competitors for the 2012 Games.

Newham Council, which had funded the academy, withdrew financial support for the project as part of public service cuts.

Shortly after Tessa quit the board of the Olympic Park Legacy Company because she did not believe the body was on course to deliver on its promises of a legacy for athletics.

She spoke to the Recorder about her hopes for the young

people of Newham after successfully organising the Newham 10K run and as she begins her new contract with Newham FE College.

She said: "The Tessa Sanderson Foundation will have people at these (Brazil 2016) Games. All we need to do is find the right funding."

GLL has already given them a grant of £5,000 and, more importantly, is allowing them the use of its facilities.

She is excited at the prospect of working with the students and staff at the college which she believes has "fantastic potential".

She said: "We have one year to go until the Olympics and what we have to do is nurture the talent and bring it to a higher level. Newham College has picked up the mantle."

Together with her elite coaches, Tessa will be broadening the scope of the students' objectives by building a sports curriculum for the college.

Tessa has already been working with the college to bring in experts in judo, athletics as well as table tennis.

What also helps is the fact that college principal Denise Brown-Sack is keen on developing a sporting legacy.

Tessa also wants to encourage

students to gain qualifications in sport-related fields to help them find work.

She said: "It's not just about competing, it's about learning as well. Though our coaches will be looking for sporting talent, they will also be looking at other ways of helping them get ahead in the future."

"As for the legacy we are absolutely certain that we have people who will fulfil the legacy. It is not just about 2012 - it's after 2012."

Vision

Though Tessa admits the ending of her contract with Newham Council has put her back, it may in the long-run prove to be the catalyst that has spurred her to develop a longer-term vision for her work.

Behind it all is the motivation to help young people have the kind of experiences and the confidence that have made Tessa the person she is today.

She said: "When I started, I had to beg and borrow and I had to go through the whole process but it has put me in the boardroom, and given me that experience and confidence."

She added: "I know that it will help them to better their lives."

More young people are getting skin cancer

Rates of skin cancer in Britain's young are soaring, according to figures released by Cancer Research UK.

The charity says more than two people under 35 in Britain are diagnosed with malignant melanoma every day - the dead-

liest form of skin cancer.

The figures mean that in London there are more than two 15-34 year-olds diagnosed with the condition every week.

The new figures come as Cancer Research UK launches its SunSmart campaign for 2011.

The charity has revealed a tripling in melanoma rates among 15-34 year olds across Britain since the late 70s when there were 290 cases among this age group. Now more than 900 young Britons are being diagnosed with the disease each year.



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