

## Kayaker Brabants keen to row on

By Ollie Williams

**Olympic kayaking champion Tim Brabants wants to develop his rowing skills after swapping sports to take part in the Pairs Head competition in London.**

Brabants and Olympic sculler Alan Campbell finished sixth in the rowing time trial on the Thames on Saturday.

"I wanted to do this as a challenge, we beat established crews who've trained together for years," said Brabants.

"I'll definitely carry on doing a bit of rowing. I like the feel of a rowing boat, the way it moves."

There is traditionally some rivalry between the sports, but Brabants - winner of the kayak single 1,000m event in Beijing - insisted his sixth place finish, out of 380 entries, was "no disrespect" to other rowers.

"I was under no illusions that I'd necessarily be any good," he told BBC Sport.

"But physiologically I'm fit and I'm strong, so if I can get the technique, and I'm in a boat with the country's best sculler, there's no reason why I shouldn't go fast."

**You'd have to completely apply yourself for the next two and a half years and it still might not happen - it wouldn't go down well with my medical career**

Tim Brabants on the prospect of rowing at London 2012

However, a solid performance in his debut event has not persuaded Brabants to switch to rowing for London 2012.

"When you're good at one sport you want to be good at every sport, and you know

in reality you can't be - the improvement could never happen quick enough," he said.

"You'd have to completely apply yourself now for the next two and a half years to try to make it onto the team for qualifying, and it still might not happen. It really wouldn't go down very well with my medical career.

"But I'm enjoying the new sport, the new challenge and a change of scenery."

Coleraine-born Campbell, 25, agreed to partner 31-year-old Brabants in a double scull after the two discussed it over lunch in Beijing.

"We'd only been out in a boat together four times," said Brabants, who also won bronze in the shorter 500m kayaking event in China.

"I was a bit worried that going into it [other rowers] might think I was taking the mick a little bit.

"My stroke isn't as long as his, and my finishes aren't as long, so he must have had to shorten his stroke.

"But we worked well together. It's one of those things - you finish sixth and you think that's a good result, but you still want to win."

Simon Hislop and Adam Freeman-Pask, of Imperial College, London, won the event in a time of 11 minutes 44 seconds, 14 seconds ahead of Brabants and Campbell.

Brabants finished five seconds outside the time of his rowing mentor of the last month Mike Hennessy - a member of the lightweight four at Athens 2004 - and has now set his sights on November's Fours Head competition.

"There's some talk that I might be able to get into a quad for that," he said.

"It's very unlikely I'll be lucky enough to get into a decent quad, they'd have to be pretty foolish to want to row with me.

"The Fours Head will be even more serious and the guys wouldn't want a complete amateur in there."

Brabants also plans to introduce Campbell to kayaking by way of return.

"I'll certainly take him out on the water, he's keen to have a go in a K2 (kayak double) - probably when the weather's a bit warmer and I don't mind taking a swim," he said, referring to the instability of racing kayaks.

"In a double scull it's easier to keep the boat upright, but in a kayak, it's so

narrow, you don't have the same leverage to keep the boat upright."

Story from BBC SPORT:

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/sport1/hi/olympic\\_games/7667844.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/sport1/hi/olympic_games/7667844.stm)

Published: 2008/10/13 15:06:45 GMT

© BBC MMVIII