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## Andrew Triggs-Hodge takes steps towards London 2012

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Champion rower Andrew Triggs-Hodge reckons the time for lapping up the plaudits is over as he begins the long journey to a second Olympic gold by becoming a nobody again.

The 29-year-old former Oxford Blue helped the men's coxless four crew - including clubmate Tom James - to Beijing gold to make up for the disappointment of finishing ninth in the men's eight at the 2004 Games.

He is one of Team GBs 47 medalists who have spent the last two months in a whirlwind of public appearances, including a victory parade in central London and a Royal reception with the Queen.

Rowing golds don't generally come in ones - Sir Steve Redgrave has five and Sir Matthew Pinsent four - but Triggs-Hodge, who was in action for his club at the Head of the River Fours last week, admits it will be tough to repeat the feat.

"You have got to take some time to enjoy what you have achieved, but I am starting to get back in to training and it is time to put the medal back in the box," he said.

"I have to prove myself again and remember there are a lot of new guys out there who all want to be better than me. That is the big motivation. Once the Games are over you are back to being nobody again.

"You can't afford to take too much time off. Rowing is not something you can just pick up again after a two year break. The miles on the water have to be put in the tank.

"I know I'm going to have to work bloody hard just to get back in the boat and am looking forward to that challenge."

Triggs-Hodge, who joined Molesey Boat Club in 2000, has taken over as skipper at Graburn Way for the coming season and is now based in the town having moved from his former Chiswick home.

Molesey has had its fair share of Olympians in the past, but few have rarely been homegrown with most joining having already enjoyed success on the international stage or at university.

And Yorkshire-born Triggs-Hodge is determined that will change as London 2012 comes firmly in to view.

"What we've done in the past is inherit good rowers and have pushed them on into the national squads, but that must change if we are to raise the profile of the club in the community," he added.

"We are trying to concentrate on attracting people from the local area around the 17-year-old age group. If we can do that we could see some homegrown talent to shout about."

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