



IBB POLONIA LONDON VC

wins silver in the English Championships!



WATCH
IBB POLONIA VC
EVENTS



Mission: accomplished

Piotr Graban leaves IBB Polonia London

He worked for two seasons in London and in this time won 4 medals in the English Volleyball league. Two victories and two second places; and to this ninth place in the CEV Challenge Cup in 2017 made that year the most successful in IBB Polonia's history. Piotr Graban talks about his adventure and his future plans for 2018/19 working with Andrea Anastasi in Trefl Gdansk.

(Ed): I am sure some people wondered why you went to London. Now you are making your next big step in your career; how do you sum up your time in the UK?

(Piotr Graban) I think each step we take is important; for me self-development is a priority. I learnt a huge amount in England. I had to overcome very challenging and new situations that had never existed in Polish volleyball. I am, as a result, a better coach, a better person and I also speak better English!

(Ed) So now you have a season in Gdansk, next to one of the top coaches in the World: Andrea Anastasi. What are the plans for you and your new team?

(PG) I'm very excited to be returning to my home town, to my home and my loved ones. To be the assistant coach for Andrea is an amazing opportunity to develop yet further before my next step in my career. Our aims will always be the same: to do everything possible. I know all the teams in PlusLiga are strengthening, this depends on team budgets, and I'm sure we too aim to be amongst the best.

(Ed) One of your aims was to develop volleyball in England. Apart from leading IBB Polonia London, you led workshops for coaches. Will you continue with this important work?

(PG) I will do everything possible to share my knowledge. There is a lot of thirst for knowledge

in the UK and it continues to grow the time. The great results of IBB Polonia London show that more and more people are keen to find out from me how to improve the sport. I'm working on a book, that will help coaches to develop their careers.

(Ed): So how has IBB Polonia changed during your two-year tenure?

(PG) When I moved from a fully professional club to a semi-professional club two years ago, the beginning was quite an eye-opener for me. I had to introduce my philosophy step by step; sometimes big changes were needed, at other times small details, but when the changes bore fruit, it became easier to instil yet further change. I consider the biggest change to be the change in attitudes during training sessions, where more professional behaviours of the players were required. I'm really pleased that I leave the team in a much better situation in terms of their approach

to sport. I keep my fingers crossed that the development will continue in the right direction.

(Ed): What changes must be brought into England so that they eventually catch up with Europe?

(PG) The most important issue is to learn from other countries. There are many players, organisations and coaches who could be much better if they could only see how their roles look overseas. I tried to develop the education of volleyball during my time in London; I attempted to awaken the desire to be better. There is a response, albeit smaller than I had anticipated; if the development continues in the same manner then England really has a chance of rapidly moving forward in volleyball.

Piotr Graban: born in 1986; Polish Volleyball Coach. One of the most decorated young coaches in Poland. Graduated from AWFIS Gdansk.



IBB Polonia London

win silver in Championship of England

The finals of the season took place in the weekend of the 5th and 6th May. It was the closing event of the Super 8 being played in the National Volleyball Centre in Kettering.

The players had two matches to play against Team Northumbria and lost the first encounter on Saturday 3:1 (22:25; 25:23; 25:22; 25:20), and on Sunday 3:0 (25:17; 25:18; 25:12). The players

from the North fought tooth and nail won the gold medals. Piotr Graban's charges managed to smile after the winning point as they were awarded the silver medals. The encounter was televised live by BBC Sport's website; the media giant.

IBB Polonia London was unbeatable over the previous two seasons and went home as gold medal winners on both occasions. The desire to beat the best team in England was the inspiration for Team Northumbria, who have a number of top young English players in their ranks. Their performance was spectacular and played exceptionally

well over both legs. On Saturday, the match was incredibly tightly contested, and on Sunday with teams gave everything they had on court, but sadly Graban's players could not stem the flow from the other side of the net.

"Of course I am disappointed, because we have been so dominant over the last two years. I am displeased with the Saturday game, because we should have won that game. We had our chances, but simply didn't take our opportunities that we were presented with. We gave 100%: we really did! This is a good lesson and motivation



for the future. We want to win back the gold medals next season." commented captain Bartosz Kisielawicz.

"Maybe we wanted to win too much. We had our chances on Saturday, but there were a series of mix ups with the score and the referees during the match knocked us out of our rhythm and we never regained our composure. Team Northumbria approached the game on Sunday with total concentration, and showed a level of volleyball that we simply couldn't match: they deserved the win. Big congratulations to them! I would like to thank my team; coaching staff, support staff and of course the fans. They have been fantastic this season. I feel as though we have become World Champions together this season and believe the season has been a success. I am very proud of them all, because everyone worked so hard. We

gave everything of ourselves." commented Head Coach of IBB Polonia London, Piotr Graban.

"I am proud and am happy with the medal. I know we will win the gold medal next year. I want to congratulate the opponents today who became Champions of England." added Club Chairman of IBB Polonia London Bartek Luszc.

As always, the fans of IBB Polonia London were the loudest in the entire arena. They supported with all of their strength and urged their players to even greater action. This was the final effort of the season and there will be time now to draw breath and to make our own conclusions for the season. There is a lot of evidence of how much work has gone into building this team this season and of the changes taking place in our sport in England.

"We finished the season strongly, and consider it as a very successful one. We are right at the

top of the pecking order in English volleyball and have been the top team in the country over the last few years as a total. We focussed a lot of attention in our development of the business side of our club and this has been an enormous success. We are the pioneers of the marketing of volleyball in England and one of our aims is to popularise volleyball in the UK. Our games were broadcast by the very best sports television channel, we sold many shares to investors in our Club, we gained many new sponsors, and this is evidence that on a day to day basis are getting closer to realising the ambitions that we set out at the start of the season." added Chairman of IBB Polonia London, Bartek Luszc.

IBB Polonia London is the five time Champion of England (1985-86, 2010-11, 2012-13, 2015-16, 2016-17).

