



Get Set Hangout with Jonnie Peacock

SCU: Hello and welcome to the latest in our series of Get Set hangouts, today we're in a celebratory mood as we discuss the highlights from Rio. Our Google Hangouts give the Get Set community the chance to meet brilliant athletes and amazing sport teams on team GB and Paralympics GB and other special guests to find out more about the real world of sports. It is our first hangout after the Rio games, and schools from across the UK have been rushing to send their questions to today's special gold medallist guest.

Our guest today is double-Paralympic 100 meter champion Jonnie Peacock. And sprinting into the spotlight with a gold medal from London 2012, John repeated his success during the games in Rio by retaining his 100 meter gold medal, finishing a whole quarter of a second ahead of the silver medallist. Jonnie also managed to set a new Paralympic record, Jonnie that's pretty good going! How are you today?

JONNIE: It wasn't quite as good as I hope for, I wasn't quite as fast as I had gone that day but I'm happy. I'm good today thank you, how are you?

SCU: Not too bad at all. I would say it was pretty darn good. We have some really nice questions, we've asked schools to think about your highlights there in Rio and also to think about life as an athlete and to send those questions in. Let's start with a question from Year 3 at Thameside Primary School. It says; how did you feel before you went to compete at the games and how did you feel when you won the gold?

JONNIE: Good question. I think before I was a little bit nervous in the build-up. I wasn't too sure, I didn't know what was going to happen. I knew I was in good form, good shape and good enough to run fast but I didn't know how fast. But then obviously when I went and did it, it was purely I couldn't believe it. It was just amazing, there's no better feeling in the world.

SCU: Yes I can imagine you being elated. It's also interesting you felt nervous before and started to question yourself a little bit, I'm sure a lot of them feel the same.

JONNIE: Yes, you can question yourself sometimes but you've just got to enjoy it, you know enjoy what you're doing and make the most of it. For something like that for me, I know when it's over I just wanted to enjoy it while it last.

SCU: I think that's great advice. If we move now to Kingsdale Foundation School in Year 10, and they said; do you think there's something that sets you apart from others that allowed you to be so successful, and if so what is it?



JONNIE: I guess some of it comes down to genetics, to a degree, but I guess a lot of it, the biggest part of it, is just the support system that we have around us here. I've got an amazing coach, two coaches actually. I work with a coach Dan Perth in America who writes my programme, and then a coach in the UK who runs all my technical side of things, like the shapes I hit when I run. And then British athletics who support us with all the medical support like physio and things like that. So I've just got the best support system, around me and we're very lucky in this country to have that kind of a system. I think that's why we got so many medals in the Olympics and Paralympics.

SCU: Yes, great support to help you get there. Next we go to School 21 who are from Startford in London, it's Year 10. They want to know; what do you consider to be your weaknesses?

JONNIE: My weaknesses, I don't know. Not running during long runs and training probably, it's not my fault I was not designed to run far. When I do my longer distance running I kind of only do a few of them, because I just don't have much endurance, so that's definitely a weak part.

SCU: Is that quite a big part of your training, do you have to do that quite often?

JONNIE: Yes I normally kind of will be sick after the sessions just because of how hard I've worked. So going into a session knowing that you're probably going to be sick for days is not fun.

SCU: I can imagine, but please be us to the end. Let's move to the Hurlingham Academy which is in London, and they said; do you have any advice for anyone at school who's hoping to become an athlete? I'm sure there's lots of people in the Get Set community who enjoy sporting and are think of becoming an athlete, what would your advice be to them?

JONNIE: Yes, it's really about enjoying it. I think that the sport will take you however far it will, sometimes you might only make up one level and it will be an achievement, others will be international. So it's complete different for everybody, but the main thing you need to do is enjoy it because you do have to put in some hard work sometimes. But I love every second of it, and if you love doing something it makes doing it so much easier and so much more enjoyable, and you will always perform so much better than if you were almost resenting the fact that you have to go and do all this training to get the results. So find something that you love and just do it, even if it's just two or three times a week, just get out and get involved and make sure you love what you do.

SCU: That's fantastic, find something that you enjoy and are passionate about and go for that. Basildon Academy in fact a whole school competition, and this a question that came out of that; if you were to become anything else other than an athlete, what would it be and why?



JONNIE: I don't know, I was probably going to be a mechanic perhaps. I loved cars growing up, my mom's own car I used to just take it apart and put it back together. So I would probably been a mechanic if it wasn't for this, actually I worked with cars for a few years too. So yeah, I would say mechanic.

SCU: Mechanic is the best. We have a question from Pristine School which in Sussex, and they ask; what are your aspirations for the future?

JONNIE: As an athlete you have these long term and short term goals. So we have obviously the Paralympics which is our long term goal, so every four years. That's kind of the farthest I will look ahead to the future really. The longest I'm looking to now is probably Tokyo in 2020. That's kind of a possible goal, so that's really the longest that I look forward to. I'd love to go and become triple, obviously that's a dream because you never know what's going to happen but I'm very happy with my double. You never know what's going to happen but you just live your life each year on year. So next year we have the world's championships.

In terms of my whole life aspirations, I don't know, probably just enjoy it while it still lasts and live my life with each bridge as you come to it. So we'll see what turns up and we'll deal with that.

SCU: Fantastic. And in fact this question from Towers School and Sixth Form Centre in Kennington, is sort of the other end of the question. They've asked; what age were you when you were inspired to compete at Paralympic games? So when did you first think about competing?

JONNIE: I think I didn't take up running until quite late. I took up running when I was about 16 years old, and I trained for about 3 months before I did my first competition. So I suppose that's not too late to start, some people assume that you always have to start when you're five years old but you don't have to, it's never too late for anybody. Honestly I never knew that I would be good at sprinting, I just gave it a go one day. I tried a lot of other different sports and I think that's it. I know you might look at a sport and think, I'd like to give that a go but I don't think I'll be very good at it, honestly you don't know, you could surprise yourself.

SCU: Absolutely, if you don't give it a chance you'll never know.

JONNIE: Exactly.

SCU: So we're going to go to School 21, and they've asked; have you ever encountered problems or challenges that might affected you becoming a Paralympics champion, and how did you overcome these problems?



JONNIE: Yes, I think everyone faces problems and issues throughout their lives in general, it's all on perception on how big that is to you. For me I've had lots of problems due to injuries for example, you know if training is going really well and then all of a sudden you get injured, you can't run for three to four weeks and that's quite hard and when it's your whole sport you feel you've missed out on four weeks training it's quite hard. I suppose to get over that is I guess leaning on my support system, leaning on my coach and saying, "okay what's plan B, what can we do? I know we can't run, but can we get on the bike?" Okay, we can get on the bike and I'll do that over the next three weeks.

Sometimes I think the best thing to do in life when it throws you something is just to say, "Okay, but how can I make the best out of this situation?" I think so many people are very quick to look at the negative and focus on the negative, but once the negative has happened just put it on the side, you can't think about it anymore. Just get on with it and see how you can make the most out of it, how can you get around it.

SCU: Brilliant. Moving on to the last question now, which is from Year 10 School 21 again. If you were an animal what would you be and how would you describe yourself in one word? Two questions there, first off if you were an animal what would you be?

JONNIE: I'd probably either be a dog or a bird.

SCU: And why?

JONNIE: I'd be a dog just because it seems like the easiest life in the world, speaking of which one is just running around right now. It just seems like an easy life; sleep all day, play when they want to and eat when they want to. The other thing is to be a bird just because you can fly, I'm sure everyone would love to fly, that will be a pretty cool experience.

SCU: And if you had to pick one word to describe yourself what would that be?

JONNIE: Too many words, I don't know. That's a very difficult one, I think if everyone asks themselves one question it's always one of the hardest things to think about.

SCU: If other people were to use one word to describe you, how would you like other people to describe you in one word?

JONNIE: I'm like people to think happy, or positive. Just happy would probably be the best one. Content, happy, let's just go with happy.

SCU: Happy, and I think that goes into what you said before, that you found something that you're really passionate about and you really enjoy doing and that's really helped you on your path to achieve all you wanted to achieve. So happy is a very good word.



JONNIE: yes, I think you definitely have to enjoy what you do. Obviously that's my sport, but it's juts down to everything. I think if you enjoy it makes your whole life so much easier as a whole when you can love your sport or whatever activity it is, life just improves.

SCU: Absolutely. That's about all we have time for today, so I just want to say a really massive thank you to everybody that's sent in their questions, and of course a huge thank you to Jonnie Peacock. Thank you Jonnie.

JONNIE: Thanks for having me. Max for those brilliant answers.

SCU: Fantastic. If you're watching this hangout back at our website at www.getset.co.uk, you can find out how you live the Olympic and Paralympic values by taking part in our values awards. These awards reward and recognise young people for understanding and enacting values, and you can get started today by checking out our new interactive values quiz. I'll give you a head start by telling you that the Olympic values are excellence, friendship and respect. The Paralympic values are determination, inspiration, courage and equality. You can also still take part in our 'road to Rio' challenge, and get active by virtually travelling the distance from London to Rio.

If you'd like to be involved in our next hangout, email us at getset@getset.co.uk. Thank you very much for joining and goodbye from all of us!

JONNIE: Thank you!