

EuroHockey

Siobhan Madeley caught up with Pablo Amat – or “Pol” as he is better known in hockey, the WorldHockey player of the year!

S: So Pol, firstly thank you very much for agreeing to speak to your fans in Europe. Also many congratulations on your award, which is very deserved! How did you feel when you heard the good news?

P: I couldn't believe. It was a special moment. I felt so happy. Also I think that it was an award to recognize a great moment of Spanish Hockey Team and probably for my trajectory. Also I thought about all the people who help me to get to here; my family, my wife, teammates, coaches, staffs, clubs, etc.

S: Do you feel that the award will change the way you play, or put you under pressure to perform?

P: I don't think so. I have to play hockey like always. My role and responsibilities don't change.

S: I'm sure your teammates tease you when you miss a pass or get tackled?

P: Yes, sometimes. Tease exactly like you said. It's funny.

S: Do you think that this award is important to the players? An acknowledgement of their efforts and sacrifices given to hockey?

P: I think that this award is special and different. It's a part of a dream of any player. Always I say that I have to share that with my teammates because normally you can win or you can have more possibilities to win if your team play well and win tournaments. Without my teammates nothing will be possible. Hockey is a sport of team and you play to win with your teammates and share the success with them. This is the most important.

S: You were very young when you were first capped for Spain, can you remember how you felt?

P: Yes, I remember. I was excited and I remember that I was nervous. Firstly because it was my first match and then because I had only 3 matches and three weeks to convince my coach that I was ready to play an Olympic Tournament being only 17 years old. Finally everything was perfect because I went to the Olympic Games (Atlanta) and we won the silver medal.



European Hockey Federation

Avenue des Arts 1-2, 1210 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: +32 2 217 05 64 Fax: +32 2 219 06 37
email: info@eurohockey.org www.eurohockey.org



AZPETROL



S: You have played in many matches now for Spain – how many caps do you have?

P: 258 caps

S: Wow! That is a lot of caps. Apart from your first one do you have any special memories of a single match or maybe a tournament?

P: There are three or four special moments but maybe an individual moment was when we win the golden medal during the European Cup in Leipzig 2005. I remember that we were down 2-1 against Holland 1'30 minute to the end of the match. This last minute and a half were exciting because we scored 3 goals and I had a lot of lucky because I scored the victory goals...

S: You have a European Cup title and 2 silver Olympic Medals, are there still some accolades in hockey that you would like to achieve?

P: I would like to achieve a golden medal in the next World Cup.

S: You have played under the guidance of Maurits Hendriks for some years now, and now he has moved on, do you think things will change with the new coach and will you adapt to the new style?

S: I think that Maurits was a really good coach for us. With him we got good results and regularity. The things will change but not too much because the new coach, Dani Martin, was the assistant coach of Maurits for 6 years and also all the players know him and also he knows us. Of course it will change but I think that we will adapt well. The most important thing is that the team and the new coach are motivated, ambitious, work hard and believe in us. I feel that will be a great new stage.

S: You have enjoyed two seasons of EHL with Egara, whilst you must be disappointed not to be in the finals, tell me about your experience at EHL?

P: EHL is a different and exciting tournament. The format, the preparation, and the media ... everything is different and great. As you said we didn't reach the finals. I think that we played well but in the key moment we were unfortunate and of course it was an important deception for us, but we will try again next year.

S: And what about the new rules that were introduced in EHL, what do you think about them?

P: I think that we have to be prepared for changes. With these new rules the hockey is really very fast but I think that we have to wait to see will they improve the game. My first impression its ok, but I think that hockey will not change too much.

S: So your fans want to know how did you become so good at hockey? How many hours do you have to train?

P: I started playing hockey when I was 5 years old in Club Egara!!!! Only by working hard you can get something important. During the regular season we train three or four times a week, 2 hours. With the Spanish team its different, we train much more. Normally, we train during all the summer and one month more in December or January.

S: And do you have a particular skill that you have developed – The Pol Amat move???

P: No, I don't have any particular skill, I work hard at doing all the basic things really well.

S: What advice can you give to the young players out there, how can they improve?

P: I think that the most important thing is to work hard and love the thing that you are doing.

S: So when you are away from hockey, which I am sure is a rare thing! What do you like to do?

P: Honestly, I like stay with my friends, my wife, my family and play another sports. All the simple things in life, but important ones, no?

S: Indeed, we sometimes forget the simple things! I have no doubt that you have made many friends throughout your time in hockey, is it easy to keep these friendships?

P: Off course, yes, I have made many friends. You make friends because some of us are playing with national teams for a lot of years. Also the hockey is changing and a lot of players move to another teams.

S: Pol, thanks so much for taking the time to chat to us, we know you have a busy schedule! And thinking ahead to the future, I know you are nowhere near ready to finish playing, but have you considered what you might do when you stop?

P: I don't know!!!! I will take a decision when arrive the moment because I don't know how I will feel. We will see.....