

A double for the Barkers?

Showjumper Paul Barker has the London 2012 Olympics in his sights, just like his father David Barker in 1964 at Tokyo.

Paul, at 28 years old, has his feet firmly on the ground at the family-run 100-acre working farm at Northallerton, North Yorkshire, where his string of horses are based.

But it's not all showjumping for Paul, as he enjoys helping out where possible on the farm, particularly at harvest time, taking his turn working shifts on the tractor to get it finished by morning and helping with the milking.

Paul is the only rider to have won The Young Show Jumper Award at Olympia twice and he is currently ranked 13th in the country; he travels throughout the UK to compete at all the top county shows and abroad, having won grand prix in Lummen, Belgium, and Villamoura, Portugal.

Paul says: "I am completely focused on the London 2012 Olympics. It is every sportsman's ultimate ambition to represent their country at this prestige event, especially on home territory. But I can't do it on my own, and we have built up a strong team of young horses to be ready for 2012."

He adds that he is very much helped by a great team at home and support from various sponsors, which include Blue Chip Feeds, Tally-Ho, Polly Products, Mears Country Clothing, SSG Gloves, Mail and Tail Saddlery, Equinox and Veredus Boots.

