

Denmark bound GB wrestlers look to make their mark on the world!

Five British wrestlers are heading off to Denmark to take part in the World Wrestling Championships.

The championships take place in the Danish city of Herning, getting underway on Monday, and running until September 27.

Wigan's Mike Grundy, at 74kg, Leon Rattigan from Bristol (96kg), Jatinder Rakhra from Slough (60kg), and Manchester based Krasimir Krastanov (55kg) and Yana Stadnik (48kg) are flying the British flag, with hopes high of at least one medal.

"We have been performing very well in international competitions this year, achieving some very encouraging results, and I hope that will be reflected at the World Championships," said GB Head Coach, Nikolai Korniyev. "All five British wrestlers who are going will be very competitive, and they are certainly not going to make up the numbers.

"But while medals is always nice, this is also about improvement, and measuring that against the best wrestlers in the world. British wrestlers are making very good progress, and I hope to see that in Denmark."

Stadnik, who came to England three and a half years ago, and has now made Manchester her permanent home, is the sister of Andriy Stadnik, a silver medalist at last year's Beijing Olympic Games, and says her ambition is to put another member of the family on the international roll of honour.

"It was wonderful to see my brother do so well at the Olympics last year, and it has given me the incentive to make sure he is not the only member of the family to win medals at such a high level," she said. "I am proud to be representing Britain at a major event, and I really want to be good enough to be part of the GB team at the Olympics in 2012.

Rattigan, Grundy and Rakhra say they are all aiming for a top ten finish, and see the World Championships as another stepping stone to fulfilling their goals of being part of the London 2012 Olympics. Said Rakhra: "We want to prove that British wrestling is making the improvement we believe it is, and obviously this is a big event for us.

"Obviously the London Olympics is a great incentive for all of us, and taking part at the world championships gives us a great idea of where we're at and how far we have to go. It's going to be good experience, and all five of us will be looking to make our mark."



Bulgarian born Krastanov, who came to England four years ago, and in the past three years has been achieving top three placings in major international tournaments throughout Europe.

"I came to England to escape all the politics that was afflicting wrestling in Bulgaria, and I appreciate the opportunities I have been given by British wrestling," he said. "For that reason I want to repay that faith by achieving good results, and by helping raise the standard of the sport in this country.

"We have some very talented wrestlers in our elite squad, such as Mike, Jatinder, Leon and Yana, and I hope I am a positive influence on all of them during competitions, and during our regular training at the academy in Salford."

To follow the championships, go to www.wwc2009.dk. The championships run from the 21st to the 27th of September.