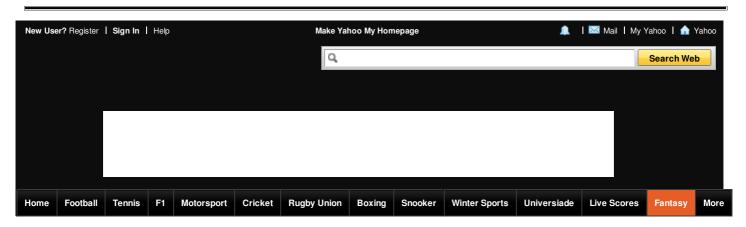


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Sailing - Ainslie admits America's Cup targets need to be met by New Year

He is the most successful sailor in Olympic history but according to Sir Ben Ainslie the Briton now faces his biggest challenge yet on or off the water.

Eurosport - Thu, Dec 26, 2013 12:55 GMT







Eurosport - UNITED STATES, San Francisco : Helmsman Sir Ben Ainslie reacts during a media conference after Oracle Team USA won the 34th America's Cup on September 25, 2013 in San Francisco. AFP

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Ainslie, who has won medals at five consecutive Olympic Games from 1996 to 2012, is currently on a fundraising and support drive to help raise money to launch a British America's Cup challenge. The 36-year-old was a member of Oracle Team USA in this year's America's Cup, masterminding a stunning comeback to beat Emirates Team New Zealand 9-8 in San Francisco. And the four-time Olympic champion is hoping to put a team together to mount a challenge to bring the trophy back to the United Kingdom, where the America's Cup began in 1851. "I'm working very hard on the fundraising right now, it is a crucial part of having a British America's Cup boat," said Ainslie, talking at the UK Coaching Awards, supported by Gillette, which took place at the Montcalm Hotel, Marble Arch in London. "The funds are crucial in building a team, I have had a lot of positive conversations and I'm still very hopeful but we need support and backing. There are dates we need to hit and ultimately by the New Year we need to have met those targets. "We then need to wait and see where, when

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and what boats will be involved in the next America's Cup and decide how we integrate all of our partners. "Obviously it is a lot of money to raise to have a competitive team for the future but we have had a tremendous amount of support from the public. "Coming back from San Francisco, it was amazing to see that, globally, the America's Cup really took hold. I'm

confident of having a very strong British team and I'm confident of having the funding and backing in place but we need to keep working very hard. "The America's Cup is about teamwork and we have an enormous number of fantastic sailors in the UK, who I know could be very successful indeed. "At the moment the America's Cup is not exclusive to nationalities, although predominantly we will have a British boat, we will also bring in people from other countries that can make a real impact to our team. "The America's Cup is my focus right now and my future. I have moved away from the Olympic Games and this is what it's all about me. Sportsbeat 2014

encounter



Premier League - Paper Round: Mourinho puts United on red alert over Mata



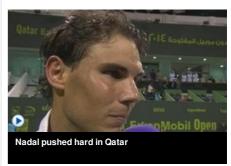








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