

FROM THE President's Desk

Firstly I wish to thank the vast number of you who sent good wishes during my recent illness. I had a triple heart by-pass operation in mid-November and am now in the process of recovering from that. Recent inspection reports from the hospital indicate that all went well but that a full recovery will take some considerable time yet. In any case your "get well" messages were a big help to me at a time when they were most appreciated.

I followed, with great interest, reports on the **Asian Development Seminar** which took place in Taiwan last November. Glen Johnson and Anton Rabe, assisted by coaches from South Africa and Chinese Taipei, delivered the various sessions, both practical and theoretical. We had hoped for a larger attendance but all reports indicate that the seminar was very successful and well received by all.

My thanks are due to all those who played a part and especially to the Chinese Taipei Tug of War Association which made all the domestic arrangements and took care of all the internal costs for the course.



Cathal McKeever



The participants of the very successful development seminar held during November 2008 in Kaoshiung, Taiwan. Representatives from 4 Asian countries participated enthusiastically and expressed the wish for similar events in the future. Messrs Glen Johnson (Sec General of TWIF), Anton Rabe (Treasurer of TWIF) and Nollie Stofberg (outdoor coach from South Africa) and the indoor coach from Taiwan, presented the various seminar content.

Also in November, Tony Martin represented TWIF at the **Asian Indoor Championships** in Macau. Tony was very impressed by all that took place and by the hospitality offered by the hosts. I have remarked previously that Asia is our fastest growing region and it is my desire to work even more closely with those countries in the future. I feel that it can only be to our mutual advantage.

Our most recent **Executive meeting** took place in January in Northern Ireland. It was a great pleasure to welcome my colleagues to my own country, only the second time that such a meeting has taken place there. A wide range of business was conducted including preparation for the forthcoming World Games and a number of requests for advice and assistance from developing countries.

The next time we all come together will be at Congress in South Africa in early May. All being well, I look forward to seeing you then.

CATHAL MC KEEVER

IMPORTANT TWIF DATES TO REMEMBER

1 - 2 MAY 2009 Annual Congress (Pretoria, South Africa) • **18 - 19 JULY 2009** World Games (Kaoshiung, Taiwan)

17 - 20 SEPT 2009 European Championships (Assen, Netherlands)

25 - 28 FEB 2010 World Indoor Championships (Cesenatico, Italy) • **15 - 18 SEPT 2010** World Outdoor Championships (Pretoria, South Africa)

English Tug of War Association

1958 - 2008

2008 has seen the English Tug of War Association celebrating its 50th anniversary. Being one of the oldest members of TWIF and also a founder member of TWIF, England has made a great contribution to developing tug of war on the international scene.

The English Tug of War Association was founded at a meeting of representatives from 26 sports and tug of war clubs, held at Hawker Aircraft sports club, Kingston on Thames on 25th January 1958. Officers and six representatives were elected to the Tug of War Association committee, with a view to “putting tug of war on the sports map and to create an interest in international Tug of War”, eventually to get tug of war included in the Olympics. Bill Beacher (Met. Police) was elected chairman, Matt Herring (Romford Brewery Sports Club) was elected Hon. General Secretary, and C. Gregory (Newhaw and Woodham Sports Club) was elected as treasurer.

By the middle of 1958, 69 sports and tug of war clubs had joined the Tug of War Association. Only one of those clubs remain in being today namely Wood Treatment Bosley from Cheshire. They have brought great credit to themselves and England, a much respected and well known club on the international scene.



George Hutton was elected vice chairman at the inaugural meeting in 1958, and in 1959 he became chairman, a post he held for 17 years. He was stationed at Kensington Police Station, and had already taken his divisional team to a Met Police championship title at 104 stone, followed by the national 104 stone in 1958. George was exceedingly industrious in promoting the sport of tug of war. Hearing in 1960 that England was staging an athletics match against Sweden at Crystal Palace, he saw Jack Crump (secretary of the Amateur Athletic Association (AAA)) and had tug of war included in the match. From that, sprang the Tug of War International Federation (TWIF) in 1964, seeing the first international competition at the Baltic Games in Malmo, Sweden. England, Sweden, the Netherlands and Denmark took part at this first international event. England staged the first European Championships in 1965 at Crystal Palace in London, which became an annual event from 1968 onwards. South Africa, and later on the

USA affiliated to TWIF, and in 1975, the first world championships were held, being held annually until 1978. With the proliferation of countries worldwide joining TWIF, world and continental championships were then held bi-annually, with tug of war becoming a part of the world games calendar in 1981. The first world indoor championships being held in Spain from 1991.

In England domestically, AAA indoor and outdoor, Inter County Championships, UK indoor and outdoor championships and national leagues all help to swell the fixture lists. Add to the fact that women's, youth and under 23 TWIF championships are staged as well, certainly tug of war (both in England and internation-



A small association
with big dreams . . .



HOVMANTORP DRAGKAMPSKLUBB

Tug of War is an ideal sport for a small group or where a few committed and motivated individuals can reach the top. A remote village in the deep forest of Småland in the very south of Sweden, is home to such a group of committed individuals. A little village called Hovmantorp.

The village has approximately 4000 inhabitants, both young and old. As in the majority of Sweden's small villages, most active young people play football and/or floor ball. However, in Hovmantorp, there is a third and very different activity - Tug-of-War. Hovmantorp Dragkampsklubb (HDK) was founded in 1995 and initially co-operated with the club from a nearby town called Växjö. Recently, HDK decided to go on their own. That was their turning point and since then they have started to experience the sweet taste of successes and are optimistic about their future.

Currently the club has 20 very determined pullers, and among those, 15 are still below the age of 20. HDK's focus on youth tug-of-War in the previous seasons was begun with the aim to achieve good positions in tournaments such as GENSB and the Swedish domestic competitions and championships.

English Tug of War Association CONTINUED
1958 - 2008

ally) has taken enormous strides since the inaugural meeting of January in 1958. There are several England clubs of great distinction who have done well on the outdoor and indoor international scene, but it would take a great deal of time to name them all.

Acknowledgement Much of this information was compiled by Mr. Peter Baker. Peter is a life vice president of the English Tug of War Association, and has served as a very successful chairman and president, as well as being a member of the TWIF Executive. Her has been involved in tug of war since the conception of the English Tug of War Association, and still supports many events in the tug of war calendar. Peter received an award from the International Olympic Committee in 2004 in recognition of his voluntary service and dedication to the tug of war sport.

Even though Hovmantorp is a tiny village, there are many good places to practice, and even compete. They also have the use of a new sports hall which has (as far as can be established) the only indoor sand lane for Tug-of-War practice. It is 40 meters long and a couple of meters wide. This is very useful as it gives HDK the possibility to practice Tug-of-War throughout the winter. This sports hall also offers a gym where the eager young pullers strengthen their bodies over the winter months.

Moreover, the training site during summer is situated in the very centre of Hovmantorp; hence the club is well-known and the growth and support from the village is thereby secured.

The training site is surrounded by the houses of many of the pullers and consequently the unity is extra strong due to the already close relationship between many pullers.

Their short track record is impressive. HDK has not lost a single pull in Sweden's youth class in two years, which is quite astonishing. Also, the club has been to several international competitions such as GENSB where they have achieved excellent results. The youth class in Belgium's Familie Jannsens anniversary competition was won by HDK in 2008.

The team is now starting to focus more and more on senior pulling as the younger pullers mature. A silent aim is to have an essential amount of pullers in South Africa in 2010 - and not only in the youth class.

It can be expected that with the sound foundation that was laid in recent years in this small village in Sweden, that they will shortly be competing with the best in the world. Maybe in the not too distant future the title of world champion could be earned; something which would never happen in a bigger sport such as football.

This shows that Tug-of-War is a sport of opportunities and one where teams can get worldwide exposure - even more so for small communities with the right attitude and a will to succeed.

CONTRIBUTED BY: *Emil Gustavsson, HDK, Sweden*

THE WORLD OF TWIF

CONTRIBUTED BY:
Cathal McKeever

Universality Our membership has continued to grow and currently stands at 54. The cost of international travel allied to the difficulties, in some cases, of obtaining visas restricts some of our member countries from participating in TWIF events. Recent economic problems throughout the world have not helped, although participation levels do not seem to have been adversely affected so far. We are continuing to investigate ways in which costs to participants might be reduced or at least capped.

Image Female participation continues to be significant (approximately 25%). Our new Policy Plan calls for an increase in the number of females taking part at committee level. Indeed more females are already participating at various administrative levels than at any time in the past.

Athletes Commission We have requested our membership to submit names for consideration to serve on an Athletes Commission. These candidates will be put forward and a Commission hopefully established at Congress 2009 in South Africa.

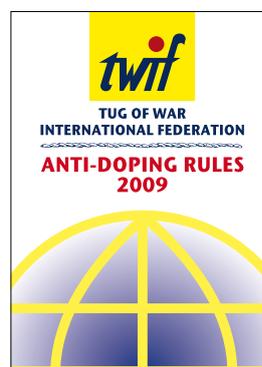
Anti-Doping We are currently in the process of obtaining detailed information from countries which will allow us to set up our "Whereabouts" database and then the "out of competition" programme required of International Federations. A budget for this has been approved by the Executive to assist participating countries at World Games, to comply. Regular contact takes place with WADA and we are close to being code compliant.

Development Our new Policy Plan highlights the further development of our sport at school and junior levels as an important goal. Its significance is being increasingly recognised by various countries. Asia has been our fastest growing region in recent times. Accordingly we held a Development Seminar for Asian countries in Chinese Taipei in November, 2008.

STRICT ANTI-DOPING AT WG

The IWGA and the Kaoshiung Organising Committee for World Games 2009, announced strict anti-doping procedures for this event in July 2009. Two doping control stations will be set up to conduct target and random tests on 260 athletes.

All samples will be collected based on doping control procedures which comply with all applicable international standards and the IWGA anti-doping rules. The samples will be analyzed in a WADA accredited laboratory in Tokyo, Japan. Samples will be shipped to Tokyo via airfreight.





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