



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

The tug of war sport is a pre-eminently a team sport. I don't know how many times I have written this phrase to explain the essence of the tug of war sport. And it is entirely true; there are very few sport disciplines where performance is so clearly based on the team power as in the tug of war sport. The eight men boat crew in rowing probably is the closest comparison to a tug of war team.

The essence of teamwork is predominant in the pursuit of victory in tug of war. The same teamwork is required in the organisation of the tug of war sport. I am sure I have said that also many times, but it seems necessary to remind ourselves from time to time to this vital aspect. The coming year is an important year for national teams, as they have to qualify in the coming World Championships in Glasgow, GBR (indoor) and Rochester, USA (outdoor) for the World Games 2005 in Duisburg, Germany. We have to ensure that everything is done to give the teams the best opportunities to prepare for their top performance.

TWIF as an organisation has to prepare for the future challenge of expanding the tug of war sport on a global level, where Junior tug of war proved to be a key element. The future success of TWIF will indeed be a team effort. To pursue the comparison with the eight men boat crew further; to achieve success the coxswain needs to steer the boat on the right course. The same guidance is needed in TWIF to keep our work on the right track. The coach of a tug of war team leads the pullers to success as he and the pullers have a collective goal; the victory for the team. The unity of coaches and pullers has made the tug of war sport a team sport par excellence. The oneness of the management and members will shape our efforts to tackle the challenges of the future into TWIF teamwork par excellence.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy and successful New Year.

President TWIF
CO KOREN



Co Koren, President TWIF

WC INDOOR 2004

BIGGEST EVER IN SCOTLAND

As I write it seems incredible to me that it is already November and that the World Indoor Championships 2004 are only four months away. I can remember clearly putting our bid together some two years ago and more vividly still standing at STOWA's AGM making the proposal that the Championships should come to Scotland before that.

Even though we are rushing headlong towards the biggest event in STOWA's history, there is no feeling of panic, at least not yet. I find it amazing at how much our little committee has achieved already and that plans are in place for that which still has to be done. The Championships will soon be here and many of you will want to know more, so I will try and address some of these.

What does Glasgow have in store for our tug of war fraternity in February 2004?



Glasgow is Scotland's biggest city. It has a fine heritage and history and since the industrial age began, has been at the centre of Scotland's successes and failures. The wealth of the city was founded on tobacco, linen and cotton but Glasgow is perhaps best known throughout the world for its shipbuilding. The city sits astride the River Clyde, and the river has seen the launch of some of the most famous vessels afloat, most notably the Queen Elizabeth and later the QE2. Glasgow was proud of its ships and in Scotland the phrase "Clyde built" is synonymous with something of quality and of enduring nature.

The shipyards are almost all gone now and modern Glasgow has become one of the most cosmopolitan cities in Europe. Communities from all over the world sit side by side giving Glasgow a rich and diverse selection of shops, restaurants and bars in and around the city centre. I hope you will have time to enjoy some of these.

STOWA has been working closely with the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Valley Tourist Board and the staff at the main office will

be happy to assist if anyone wants to go on an excursion. There will be literature in and around the official hotels and you will find that Glasgow has much to offer in terms of museums, galleries, breweries and distilleries.

All in all I am sure you will find the City of Glasgow a friendly and welcoming host.

What about the Championship itself?

When you arrive in Scotland there will be the opportunity to have transport pick you up from your arrival point and take you to your accommodation. It is STOWA's intention that all accreditation details would be dealt with before your arrival at your hotel, giving everyone a quicker check-in.

The official accommodation for the Championship is all within walking distance of the venue. The accommodation is in several hotels of varying sizes but all of the same high standard. STOWA will try and place teams in the same hotel but this may not be possible in every case. My advice here is book early! What I will remind everyone of is that Glasgow has a temperate climate, and in February that will mean it will be cold and most probably wet.

The control for the Championship is at the Kelvin Park Lorne Hotel. This is only 5 minutes from the venue. All of the briefings, weigh-ins, etc will take place here. Furthermore all of the officials will be housed here for the duration. There will be a set of test scales in the hotel and also at the venue itself. The Kelvin Park Lorne will also play host to many of the social activities arranged and will have a "Puller's Bar" for competitor's exclusive use.

We are extremely fortunate to have a venue of the stature of the Kelvin Hall International Arena for our event. It has a rich history of hosting world championships, including boxing, curling, gymnastics, volleyball, badminton and athletics. It will now be able to add tug of war to that illustrious list. The staff at the Kelvin Hall are delighted to have tug of war and will be working closely with STOWA to make this a Championship to remember.

Will it work?

I have asked myself that self-same question many times. I know that the STOWA committee is working hard to ensure that it works. I know that we have a great city and a fantastic venue. I also know that the athletes attending are at least as good. Glasgow and Scotland doesn't know much about tug of war yet but I am confident that we can all put on a competition that will showcase all that is good about our sport. Maybe then Scotland and perhaps the rest of the world will sit up and take notice.

I, and all at STOWA, look forward to seeing you all in February and at the end perhaps we will look back on a World Indoor Championship which was truly Clyde built.

Contributed by:

Craig Mitchell, Press Officer,
Scottish Tug Of War Association



EC 2003

A GREAT SUCCESS IN HOLLAND



MEDAL RANKING EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP 2003

		GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
1	Netherlands	2	1	1
1	Switzerland	2	1	1
3	Sweden	1	1	3
4	England	1	1	1
5	Germany	1	1	-
6	Ireland	-	2	1



GERMANY WINS A GOLD MEDAL

A German team won a gold medal for the very first time in the history of the 'Deutscher Rasenkraftsport- und Tauzieh-Verband (DRTV) at the European championships, Netherlands. The national 640 kilo team achieved this success at ASSEN in the Netherlands in the very last competition of the European Championship on September 21st, 2003. The winning team comprised pullers from three German clubs, 'Tauziehreunde Böllen', 'Sportfreunde Goldscheuer' and 'Landjugend Neckar-Bergstrasse'. The team manager was Kurt Rosa who is also a TWIF judge and the coach was Walter Freter, both from Goldscheuer Club.

THE OLD MAN AND THE KID

The stories on the origin of the tug of war sport go back into the hazy times of ancient mystic ceremonies and cults.

Whether or not we can investigate all stories, that much is for sure; the contest of testing each others strength on the rope goes back a far way into the history of mankind. The first public appearance of tug of war as part of the athletic sport was in 1900 at the first Olympic Games in Paris, France. In the Olympic period of the tug of war sport, Sweden and Great Britain were the top teams; both won two gold medals in the period from 1900 to 1920.

The gold medal won in 1912 during the Olympic Games in Stockholm is best remembered by the public in Sweden. The Swedish team, made up by six strong men from the Stockholm Police, one man from the Gothenburg Police and an exceptionally strong fisherman from Sandhamn in the Stockholm archipelago brought the Swedish public in Stockholm in ecstasy, as it was the first gold medal won by Sweden in a team sport. We all know the sad ending of the Olympic period when in 1920 the tug of war sport was taken off the Olympic programme to "bring about a reduction in the number of participants of the Games".

The deletion of tug of war from the Olympics was a set back but not the end of the tug of war sport. In particular in Sweden the sport continued on club level. Therefore it was Sweden that took the step to form the first national tug of war association. In June 1933 Messrs Hammat, Ström, Karlson and Elm, a couple of tug of war men from Stockholm, took the initiative to form a national tug of war association. Their idea became reality on 27th September 1933 when the Svenska Dragkampförbundet was formed. Great Britain formed their national association in 1958 followed by the Netherlands in 1959.

The initiative to found the International Tug of War federation (TWIF) was taken in 1960 by the legendary George Hutton, from the British Association and Tage Andersson, from the Swedish Association. In the first years of the TWIF Championships, Sweden and Great Britain were again each others' rivals. The teams from Britain participated in TWIF as England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, giving them an excellent opportunity to have international matches with neighboring teams.

Sweden did not have nearby neighbors to compete with, so that might have been the reason for another Swedish initiative in tug of war. In 1993 when it was still difficult to travel to the former Eastern block countries,



Mr. Malm and Mr. Hågström went across the Baltic Sea to meet teams in Latvia to introduce the competitive tug of war. With the assistance of Sweden, the Latvian Tug of War Association was formed and joined TWIF. As a novice country Latvian teams under the guiding force of Mr. Ainars Zablovskis learned very quickly and are now in the top ranking at TWIF Championships. In the Junior category they are currently even the holder of the World title. Not only did they learn the tug of war technique, they also learned from their Swedish teacher how to promote the sport to their neighbors. Thanks to the initiative and assistance from Latvia and in particular the support from Mrs. Lilita Mukina, Lithuania joined TWIF last year as the thirtieth member association.

This year the "old man" Sweden celebrated its 70th anniversary while on the other side of the Baltic Sea, the "new kid" Latvia celebrated its 10th anniversary. Both associations organised an international jubilee competition where amongst other international teams, Swedish and Latvian teams tested each other strengths; they are now good rivals of each other. At the jubilee tournament in Ventspils, one of the main seaports in Latvia, the Latvian association showed again their learning experience from their mentor Sweden, as they had invited a team from Belarus to participate. Now the "old man and the kid" are joining forces to assist and coach Belarus into forming a national tug of war association.

So the old man is still young and the kid has grown-up.

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TWIF MAGAZINE

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