

FROM THE **President's Desk**

Although I have attended virtually all TWIF Championships from 1969, either as competitor, official, or EXCO. member, I must admit that the recent Europeans at Minehead gave me an added insight into what goes on behind the scenes at such events.



Cathal McKeever.

It more or less goes without saying that the actual competition is the focal point and *raison d'être* for championships. However, there is much more than that taking place and I feel sure that not many people are fully aware of the meetings and discussions which take place in tandem with the various competitions. That is, of course, apart from the massive preparation which must be undertaken by the host country in the months and years leading up to the event.

I cannot lavish enough praise upon the relatively small pool of workers who look after the administrative details, late accreditations, etc. in the day or two immediately prior to the competition. The fact is that much of this 11th hour work should not be required but unfortunately it is.

The new weigh-in arrangements which were piloted at Minehead will need to be evaluated but certainly their implementation required much revised planning in the weeks preceding the event and indeed during it.

I have no doubt that the new computer programme will be very helpful but its development is still not complete and much work took place behind the scenes at Minehead to correct some of the relatively minor problems which occurred.

The coming together of so many international representatives also provided an opportunity for meetings to cover important issues. For example, we met with the Italian delegation to discuss the forthcoming Indoor Championships in Faenza as well as Swedish reps to cover the 2008 World Outdoors in Stenungsund, including matters such as weighing arrangements, etc.

An important meeting also took place with club representatives from our former member, Spain. Discussions are currently on-going with their National Association and I'm sure everyone hopes for a favourable conclusion.

There have also been encouraging approaches from Asia regarding further development of their sport and I hope to have more to report on that front in the near future.

ROYAL VISIT TO EC IN MINEHEAD

CONTRIBUTED BY: TONY MARTIN

The Outdoor EC2007 in Minehead England, proved to be a very 'royal' occasion. The England Association, TWIF and indeed all of our sport were honoured with a visit from HRH The Princess Royal.

The organising of her visit was many months in the planning, but we trust that the time spent within the tug of war family on Friday 21ST September was a real 'eye-opener' for The Princess Royal.

Princess Anne is a member of the IOC and also a member of the London 2012 Olympic Committee. However, she had never attended a tug of war Championships before and she was extremely impressed with everything she saw and the pullers and officials she was able to meet on the day. We received a letter of thanks from the Palace, and this contained one very encouraging comment; quote (right):

*HRH, Princess Royal,
 Princess Anne with
 Cathal McKeever,
 President of TWIF
 (right) and Tony Martin,
 Senior Vice President of
 TWIF (left) during the
 EC in Minehead.*

"The Princess Royal no doubt will take her thoughts back to the IOC, and although a minority sport will hopefully raise the profile and perhaps competing in the London 2012 Olympics may be a goal to aspire to."



WADA CODE REVIEW

WADA has published its November online update on the World Anti-Doping Code Review & Consultation. The monthly updates help keep stakeholders abreast of amendments to the Code and is subject to an extensive process. The update is available on www.wada-ama.org

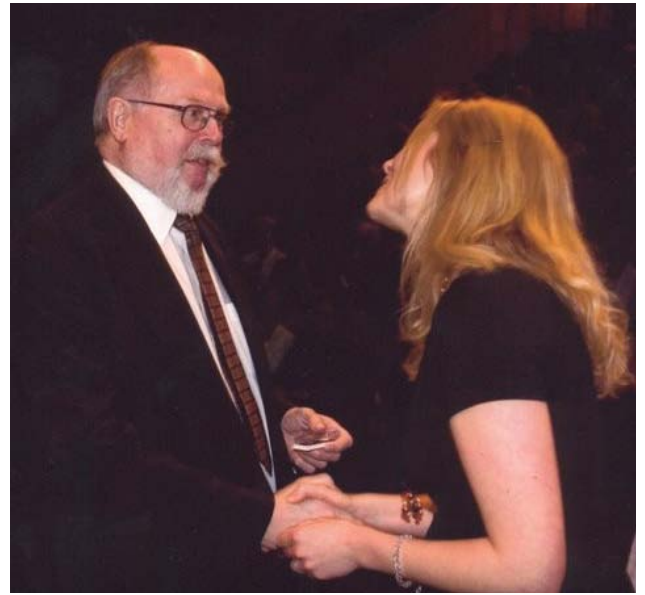
CONTRIBUTED BY: ROSEMARY SMITH

CARL HAGSTROM Honoured in Sweden

Carl-Erik Hagstrom, well known (now retired) international representative for Sweden for many years, has just been honoured by the Swedish Sport Federation (Riksidrottsförbundet) for his years of service to Swedish Tug of War.

Carl received the highest honour of the Swedish Sports Federation, the Gold Riksidrottsförbundets Badge of Merit which was presented to him by the President of the Swedish Sport Federation, Ms Karin Mattsson. This is the first time that an official in the sport of tug of war in Sweden has been honoured in this way, a honour he certainly richly deserved.

The award was given in recognition of the tremendous amount of work that Carl has done for the sport of tug of war in Sweden over many years. He has also



Carl Hagstrom being presented with the Riksidrottsförbundets Badge of Merit by Karin Mattsson, President of the Swedish Sport Association.

done a considerable amount of work in developing the sport in other countries, especially Latvia and Lithuania.

Although now retired as an official, he is still one of Sweden's staunchest supporters and is still to be seen at many competitions. On December 1st '07 he will be celebrating his 80th birthday and we all wish him well and congratulate him on receiving such a distinguished award.

A PICTURE MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE!



Matt Metzger's pick-up truck with its eye catching window sticker.

Although some team members of the Bluewater Tug of War Club do have their team's web address displayed on their vehicles in form of bumper stickers, our web site was only averaging 8 visitors per day.

After installing a full size window sticker (perforated vinyl print which does not restrict the view from inside) on my pick-up truck, we had 78 visitors in the first 2 days.

For the period of over one month, the amount of visitors was monitored and now we are averaging 22 visitors per day. Depending on where I'm driving we can see a direct impact on the numbers of visitors.

County Roads / small cities: 10 – 15 visitors per day

Provincial Highways / mid size cities: 12 – 18 visitors per day

Multi lane highways / large cities: (comparable with Motorway, Autobahn) 35 - 45 visitors per day

A picture really makes a difference and best of all, these visitors probably had no idea about the competitive style of tug of war. I also uploaded the long version of the TWIF Promotion video to YouTube and embedded a link on our web site, I'm very confident to say that most people visiting our web site do also take the time to watch the TWIF video. In the first three weeks this video has been viewed over 450 times.

CONTRIBUTED BY MATT METZGER, BLUEWATER TUG OF WAR CLUB, CANADA



This young couple, Tina and Christer Ohman from Sweden, have between them probably won more international medals than any other couple.

The Golden Couple

CONTRIBUTED BY: ROSEMARY SMITH

Kristina Goransson, affectionately known as Tina, and Christer Ohman live in the little community of Boxholm, which is half way between Stockholm and Gothenburg. They are both members of their local team Bjorke SK which is the most successful team internationally in Sweden. Tina is an Occupational Therapist and travels every day to Linkoping which is 50 kilometres from their home, whilst Christer is a project manager for Ovako, a steel company in Boxholm. As many others have in the past, they met their 'true love' whilst competing in the sport that they both so dearly love and enjoy, tug of war, in 1998 and set up home in Boxholm in 2000.

TINA was born and grew up in Varberg, which is on the west coast of Sweden. She comes from a real tug of war family. Her father, Goran, started in the sport as a puller but for many years now he has been a Grade I Judge. Tina's older sister, Anette and her brother Kent, have also participated in the sport. Kent has also been General Manager and Coach of the Swedish men's teams but at the moment he has a major task as he is responsible for sponsorship for the World Championships in Stenungsund next year.

Tina first started competing as a puller in 1996, firstly with the club Loftadalens DK but since 2000 when she moved to Boxholm, she competes with Bjorke SK. Over the years she has won several medals at the Swedish Championships but her greatest achievement is the gold medals she has won at European and World Championships. Two gold in 2005 at the European Championships in Cento, two gold in the World Championships in Assen

and again this year two gold medals in the European Championships in Minehead. A terrific achievement of which she is rightly very proud. She has also been the secretary of the Swedish Association from 2003 to 2005.

CHRISTER who was born and grew up in Boxholm, started his tug of war career in 1986 and he too has won lots of medals in the Swedish Championships. Christer has been involved in the sport in many different aspects, pulling, coaching, training and promoting the sport. He coached the Swedish youth team at the 2003 European Championship in Assen and the 2004 World Championship in Rochester and on both occasions they won the bronze medal. Like Tina he too has won gold medals at internationals. In 2005 at the European Championships in Cento he won a gold medal in the 680 and 720 weight classes and in Assen he won the Gold medal in the 680 kilos and a silver in the 720 kilo class. At the World Games in Duisberg in 2005, Christer won silver medals in both the 640 and 680 classes which means he has actually won two more international medals than Tina! Tina, not to be beaten reminds him that in the Open Clubs Competitions over the years she has won 7 Gold and 1 Silver. So, she is definitely ahead in the family rankings for medals!

As stated, Christer has over the years done many different jobs for the sport, for the last five years he has spent time promoting the sport to the children in the schools in Boxholm. This has proved to be beneficial to the local club, who now have a lot of young pullers who are the future of our sport. He is a very busy man as he is also responsible for training the ladies teams in Bjorke SK but next year (2008) he will have a more important job as assistant team manager for the Swedish senior men National teams.

Tina and Christer are still both young, fit and very competitive and hopefully they both will be able to compete in both national and international competitions for many years to come and win more medals for Sweden. They both have a lot of knowledge and ideas on how to develop both themselves and the sport of tug of war. Sweden are indeed extremely lucky to have such gifted people in their Association. We wish them luck for their future.

WADA 2008 PROHIBITED LIST

Following its approval by WADA's Executive Committee on 22 September, the 2008 List of Prohibited Substances and Methods is now available.

This list will go into effect on 1 January 2008.

To get a copy of the 2008 list, the 2008 Monitoring Programme and a summary of modifications, please click on the following link:

<http://www.wada-ama.org/en/prohibitedlist.ch2>

twif is a member of



The new man at the Helm CATHAL MCKEEVER

Congress 2007 unanimously elected Cathal McKeever as the new President of TWIF. It was a great honour for a man who has been involved integrally in the sport for over fifty years and now becomes the driving force for the sport of tug of war world wide. The fact that he was elected unopposed is testimony to the high regard in which he is held internationally.

At sixteen years of age Cathal first became involved in the sport of tug of war as a puller at grass roots where he was, and still is, a member of the Bally Hagan Tug of War Club. He pulled both indoor and outdoor tug of war for many, many years. He later went on to become a judge, and in 1980 was successful in becoming a Judge on the International Panel of TWIF Judges. He also coached teams over the years and has undertaken many overseas trips to visit new members and clubs all around the world.

In fact you could say that he is a tug of war 'all rounder', a puller, coach, judge, referee, evaluator and now a first class administrator.

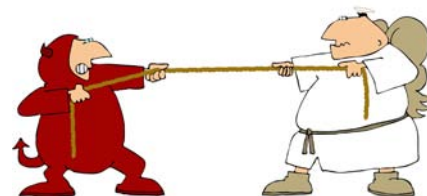
For the last twenty five years Cathal has been the chairman of the Northern Ireland Association and also for fifteen years the Chairman of the United Kingdom Tug of War Commission. Reluctantly he will be stepping down from both these positions now that he is President of TWIF, so that he can concentrate on his presidential duties over the next four years. He has been the Senior Vice President since 1989 so is already aware of what is involved with his new position in the international arena.

In Northern Ireland Cathal has been Chairman of the Armagh Sports Forum in the past and is as proud of where he comes from as the sport he represents. The Armagh Council recently held a Dinner in his honour to celebrate his success and family, friends and pullers were invited to join in the occasion.

In spite of all his commitments and achievements, his dedication to his profession as Road Safety Education Officer with the Department of Education of Northern Ireland, he has never wavered and was recognised for his contribution in this sphere when he was awarded the MBE in 1995.

Recently when interviewed by the local press, Cathal stated that 'the new position carries a lot of responsibility and I must say that I begin the presidency with a high degree of anxiety'. Those of us who know him are however confident that his experience and expertise in the sport has gained him respect world wide. He will no doubt do things his way, but he thoroughly deserves the honour of being the new President of TWIF.

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TWIF MAGAZINE

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