

FROM THE **President's Desk**

Several months have passed since the last magazine and much seems to have happened in that time. Back in February we had the World Indoor Championships at Faenza in Italy which saw some excellent competition at all weight classes, both 'open' and 'closed' categories. I formed the impression that the standard of pulling has improved and certainly no single country dominated as has been the case previously. It was pleasing to see such a wide-spread distribution of medals as it tends to provide encouragement



to all those who reach the podium. Italy may not be one of our longest serving members but TWIF has now had three Championships there, with a further one to come in two years time.



More recently we have had the World Outdoor championships in Sweden. Unfortunately I was unable to attend for health reasons, the first TWIF championship I have missed since

1968. Reports indicate that it was an excellent event. It was also an occasion which celebrated 75 years in the life of the Swedish association, a remarkable landmark by any standards. Sweden stands proud as having by far the longest established Association in the world of tug of war. It was therefore appropriate that Swedish teams should achieve such a high degree of success.

In my last article I referred to the possibility of development in Asia. I can now say that we have arranged a training seminar in Taiwan which will take place on 15th and 16 November, 2008 at Kaohsiung City. All our Asian members have already been notified and we are hoping for a good attendance. Asia is our fastest growing region and there is a responsibility on the TWIF side to assist in whatever way possible.

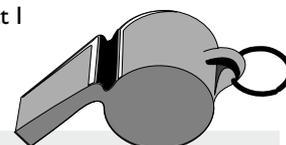
In early December I delivered the keynote speech at an international conference in Taiwan. This was well attended and it was an excellent opportunity to meet delegates from other Asian countries. I also took the opportunity to meet with officials from the Chinese Taipei Association and arrange details of the Seminar referred to above.

After leaving Chinese Taipei I flew to China where I spent almost a week at the industrial city of Anshan, in the north east of that vast country. Four days of the trip were devoted to providing a training course for the Chinese Association during which I covered aspects of indoor training, judging, as well as administration, and did some practical work with their national squad which was preparing for the forthcoming World Championships.

It was an intensive tour but one that I found very satisfying and enjoyable.



Cathal McKeever,



 **MEDAL RANKINGS**
WORLD OUTDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS
SWEDEN

Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
Sweden	4	1	2	7
Switzerland	2	4	2	8
Netherlands	1	2	2	5
South Africa	1	-	-	1
England	-	1	-	1
Northern Ireland	-	-	1	1
Germany	-	-	1	1



The World Games 2009 Kaohsiung

WORLD GAMES 2009 QUALIFYING COUNTRIES

Countries qualified for participation in the World Games 2009 in Kaohsiung, Chinese Taipei in the recent World Outdoor Championships held in Sweden (men 640 & 680 weight classes) and the World Indoor Championships held in Italy in February 2008 (women 520).

MENS 640 OUTDOOR

1. SWITZERLAND
2. GREAT BRITAIN (England)
3. GERMANY
4. IRELAND
5. NETHERLANDS
6. SWEDEN

In the event that England cannot participate Scotland will take its place.

7. RESERVE: South Africa

MENS 680 OUTDOOR

1. NETHERLANDS
2. SWITZERLAND
3. SWEDEN
4. LATVIA
5. GREAT BRITAIN (England)
6. GERMANY

In the event that England cannot participate Scotland will take its place.

7. RESERVE: Ireland

WOMENS 520 INDOOR

1. CHINESE TAIPEI
2. CHINA
3. JAPAN
4. GREAT BRITAIN (England)
5. NETHERLANDS
6. UKRAINE

In the event that England cannot participate Scotland will take its place.

7. RESERVE: South Africa



SA YOUTH GOLD

Congratulations to the Youth team from South Africa that won the Gold Medal in the Closed Championship in Sweden in September 2008.

Young people and the digital revolution

The President of the IOC, Mr Jacques Rogge, has set some clear priorities for the Olympic movement. "I believe that, first of all, we need to address our responsibility to better engage with young people and to combat inactivity and obesity. I am also eager for us to fully embrace the digital revolution, which affects the way the world experiences the Olympic Games, whether via the internet or on mobile phones.

New ways of engaging and involving as many people as possible in the debate are reflected in the virtual Olympic Congress website – www.2009congress.olympic.org/en – which has been live throughout 2008. This has been successfully used to solicit contributions under five themes: Athletes, Olympic Games, Structure of the Olympic Movement, Olympism and Youth and The Digital Revolution".

EXTRACT FROM IOC PRESS COMMUNIQUÉ

A puller on the Exco!

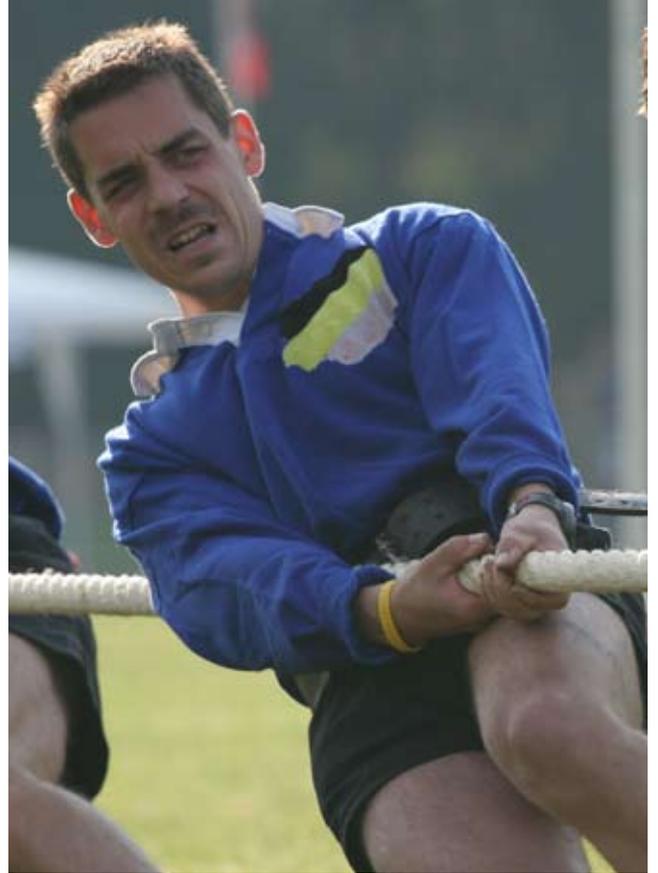
Patrick van den Heuvel is first and foremost a 28 year old tug of war puller from Belgium who works as a Process and Systems Technician for Janssen Pharmaceuticals, which is a part of the world famous Johnson and Johnson Group. At congress in Sweden last April, Patrick was elected as a member of the TWIF Executive.

Patrick started in tug of war at the age of fifteen with KLJ Merksplas a Youth Association which not only do sport but many other activities as well. Gradually the lads became more competitive and in 1998 they changed their name to TTV De Berketrekkers who have and still compete internationally. Patrick competed for the very first time internationally at the World Championships in the Netherlands when he was a member of the Belgium Youth team. At the European Championships in Jersey 1997 he took home a bronze medal from the Open Clubs Competition. In 1998 at the World Championships at Rochester USA he was a member of the winning youth teams from Fam. Janssens and the national team of Belgium. In 1999 Patrick joined TTV De Galliërs and has won many medals at their Nationals and also represented Belgium internationally. Patrick was so keen on his sport that when his club decided in 2006 to slow down for a year he joined a club from the Netherlands, TTV Jagersrust, also a very competitive Club.

2006 was a disastrous year for Patrick as he was diagnosed with testicular Cancer but being the fighter that he is, that did not hold him back, he only missed two training sessions. He fought cancer as if it was a tug of war pull that he needed and must win and gladly he did. So again he was back in the national team in the 560 kilo weight at the 2006 World Championships in the Netherlands. He loves and lives for his sport and gives it his all. He is the trainer of his club De Galliërs and in his spare time he has gained a Trainers Diploma for all sports. To keep fit he regularly goes running or rides his bike.

Patrick became the President of the Belgium Federation in 2004 the same year that he became their International Representative. At the last Congress he was elected onto the TWIF Executive and we can be guaranteed that he will do his utmost to serve us all in that position. He enjoys the challenge not of only working for his Association but for TWIF.

He is married to Christel, who is a TWIF Judge and they have a young son called Ruben. What are Patrick's ambitions? To keep pulling for as long as he can. What are his dreams? He would love to pull in the Belgium 560 kilo team alongside his son Ruben. He would love to pull at the Olympic Games! Will his dreams ever become reality? We really hope so!



GENSB from strength to strength

Initially started for the informal promotion of the Tug of War Sport for the children in the 5 GENSB countries, more and more countries are attending the annual event. The GENSB competition - acronym for Germany, England, Netherlands, Switzerland and Belgium - are now attended by countries such as Sweden, Latvia and Ireland. Even South Africa has participated in some of the events.

The event has now been running for more than 10 years and grown out to a tournament of 50 teams. This year the event took place in Germany in the town of Reilingen. According to all reports it was a great success with more than 500 boys and girls that had to be accommodated and fed.

The GENSB rules are simple: you can participate from the year you reach the age of 12 until the year you reach the age of 18. You can start with a team from 7 pullers going on to 10 pullers in one team as long as the team does not go over the weight of 560 kg. In this year's event, Eschbachtal from Germany was too strong for Sins and Mosnang from Switzerland.

TWIF has now also approached the GENSB countries to explore the possibilities of linking the informal event to also double as a venue for a World U18 championship. Talks are ongoing with the view of finding a feasible solution for implementation in 2009.

CONTRIBUTED BY: PATRICK VAN DEN HEUVEL

One of tug of war's greatest ambassadors

Over the years many people in our sport will have met **Leo Collins** from Northern Ireland at some time or another. Leo first became involved in tug of war in 1968 as a young lad, when he worked at the Department of Agriculture and was spotted by a gentleman called Joe Mckeever (Cathal's father) who also worked there and as a result he joined the Ballyhagan Tug of War Club. From that day he has pulled tug of war, not only outdoor but indoor as well. Over the years he has pulled for several clubs, Ballyhagan, Kilfarmers, Ballycrummy, Drumcoo and Richhill. Approximately 5 years ago he formed his own club along with his good friend and long term pulling partner Patrick Kernan and the club was aptly called Leo's Boys after their icon.



Leo Collins.

In the late seventies and eighties Leo travelled with the Ballyhagan team to South Africa, USA, Spain, Germany, Sweden, Holland, Switzerland and Italy, as well as the home countries, competing at international level. He thoroughly enjoys the sport of tug of war and takes it very seriously, he believes a good healthy diet is very important and still manages to maintain his weight. He is a non-smoker and non drinker.

Over the many years Leo's greatest tug of war treasures, apart from the hundreds of trophies he has won, are the people he has met and the friends he has made all over the world. He keeps in touch with people he met from his very first overseas trip as far back as 1975. Leo has a great memory for names of pullers and the places that he has visited. In 2006 he celebrated his sixtieth birthday and pullers from as far away as the United States of America travelled to Northern Ireland to join him in celebrating his prestigious birthday. Leo's Boys went to the USA in June of this year to join in with the USA Association in celebrating their formation 30 years ago.

He has also achieved local acknowledgement of his contribution to the sport of tug of war in 2002 when his life-long contribution to his chosen sport was acknowledged formally by Armagh

City and District Council with over 300 people being there to see him receive the award. He has and will continue to be a great ambassador for the sport of tug of war both on and off the rope.

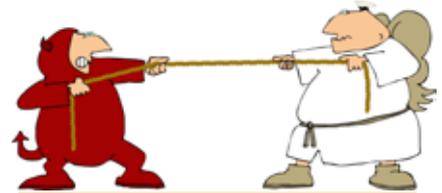
CONTRIBUTED BY:
ROSEMARY SMITH



NEW WADA CODE EFFECTIVE 1 JANUARY 2009

A copy of the code is now available for downloading and printing at <http://www.wada-ama.org/en/dynamic.ch2?pageCategory.id=735>. The revised Code is based on an extensive review and consultation with all stakeholders and takes into account the experience that WADA and stakeholders have had since the initial implementation of the Code in 2004. The result is a stronger Code that is both firm and fair that serves as an effective and practical tool in the fight against doping in sport. All TWIF members have received copies of the code. Additional copies may be ordered by contacting code@wada-ama.org.

(Please note that there is a printing and shipping fee.)



TWIF MAGAZINE

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