

## IOC Meeting held in Copenhagen

The TWIF President, Mr Cathal McKeever, recently attended the 121st IOC Session and 13th Olympic Congress from 2nd to 6th of October in Copenhagen as a guest of the International Olympic Commission (IOC). The first Congress was held at the Sorbonne in Paris in 1894, two years prior to the first Games of the modern era. Before Copenhagen the last Congress took place in 1994 and, before that, in Baden-Baden in 1981. It can, therefore, be seen that they are very infrequent events and are of tremendous significance not only to the Olympic movement, but also sport in general. Here follows an extract from his report:

It has been a great honour to be present and to rub shoulders with officials and athletes from all over the world, many of them former Olympic champions. To meet and hear the views of gold medalists such as Kip Keino, Frankie Fredericks, Jean Claude Killy, Alexander Popov, Irina Szewinska and Dick Fosbury (whose new technique when he won the high jump gold medal at Mexico in 1968 revolutionised the event) was a magnificent experience for someone like myself who had followed their careers so keenly.

It is fair to say that not many of them knew much about tug of war, one notable exception being the Princess Royal with whom I spoke one afternoon. She remembered clearly her visit to the European Championships at Minehead back in 2007. Some of them are members of the Olympic Committee which exercised its vote to award the 2016 Games to Brazil.

Many things impressed me about this Congress, not least the sheer magnitude of it. Over 1,250 delegates from all five continents attended and it was staffed by almost 500 volunteers who assisted the Danish Olympic Committee in organising and running the event so efficiently. (Compare this, however, with the near 70,000 volunteers who were involved in the Beijing Games.)

The importance of the Congress was emphasized by the fact that the initial speech on the first morning was given by Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations.

It more or less goes without saying that all of us in tug of war wish to see our sport returned to the Olympic Programme. With that in mind I had a detailed meeting with two senior IOC officials to explore our current position and what we need to do before we can be seriously considered for inclusion in the Summer Games. The Winter Games are not really an issue as they are only for sports which feature predominantly on snow or ice. The bottom line is that we still have a lot to do.

The number of countries we hold as members is no longer a cri-

terion but the number of countries participating at major championships certainly is. All continents should be represented and of course we know that South America is not at all represented in our membership in spite of previous individual contacts. Those two weaknesses, low representation

at championships and universality, as well as relatively low media interest, are issues that we will have to address before we become credible applicants. It was also pointed out that "exhibition/demonstration" sports were no longer recognised by the IOC since 1994. Certainly an International competition would not be acceptable and any event would need to be relatively low key, possibly club in nature, and with the agreement of the Games Organising Committee in the country. That option will be explored.

New sports for inclusion are considered only every four years, the next intake being in 2013 for inclusion in the 2020 Games. There is no application procedure as such but the reports which we submit every four years (the next being due in 2011) are assessed by the IOC Programme Commission. Their recommendation, if any, is then forwarded to the Executive Board who carry out a more detailed assessment and forward their recommendation to the next IOC Session which normally meets annually, unlike the Congress which only convenes once every 14 – 15 years.

We have moved forward significantly on many fronts over recent years but there is a considerable way to go before we can legitimately hope to appear on the programme. The issues I have mentioned earlier in this report will have to be tackled and overcome and that will not be easy. On the positive side we now have a very clear picture of our current position. There is an understanding of our aspirations and I met nobody who is opposed to our eventual re-inclusion.



*Cathal McKeever*

# GENSB 2009

## Penhale, Cornwall

This years GENS B youth international tournament was hosted by England at Penhale Camp, on Holywell Bay, just outside Newquay in Cornwall. Much of the organisation of the event was undertaken by Major Alec Masson and LNR ACF tug of war club. The weather on the day was warm and breezy, and the ground conditions were dry, making for ideal pulling conditions.

The GENS B youth international tournament is an annual event, and each year is hosted by one of the GENS B Countries in rotation (Germany, England, Netherlands, Switzerland, and Belgium). The event provides a low cost weekend of tug of war for junior competitors (male and female), and gives many junior teams the opportunity for international club competition.

This years event saw 41 teams (with 356 competitors) competing on the day. In addition to the teams competing from the five GENS B countries, there were also teams competing from the Republic of Ireland, Sweden, and South Africa, with Wales fielding a club team at the event for the first time. England had seven teams competing at the event – three from LNR ACF, one from Sandhurst TOWC, one from the Cornwall ACF, and also two teams from the London ACF.

The competition was split into four groups (one group of 11 and three groups of 10). There was a good mix of teams competing of all ages and abilities, and the top four teams from each group progressed to the knock-out stages of the competition.

Drostdy from South Africa; Hovmantorps from Sweden; Eschbachtal from Germany; and Mosnang from Switzerland were the teams who progressed to the semi finals.

The first semi final was between Drostdy from South Africa, and Eschbachtal from Germany. This was a good close pull between the two teams, but the South Africans had a much stronger lift, and they progressed to the final by 2 ends to 0. The second semi final was between Mosnang from Switzerland and Hovmantorps DK from Sweden. The Swiss team were technically very good, and it was they who progressed to the final by 2 ends to 0.

The bronze medal pull between Hovmantorps and Eschbachtal saw Hovmantorps put on a strong display, to secure the bronze medal by 2 ends to 0. The final between Drostdy and Mosnang provided a good display of youth tug of war.

Mosnang controlled the pull well to take the first end, but the South African team came to life on the second end, and made things difficult for the Swiss, but it was Mosnang who kept their composure to take the second end and a well deserved gold medal.

At the end of the competition, every participant was presented with a competitors medal, along with all of the judges and recorders. The gold, silver, and bronze medals were then presented to the winning teams by Lady Mary Christina Holborow, the Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall. The GENS B flag was then lowered and presented to Netherlands representative Anja Poorterman by England GENS B representative Vic Ludkin. The 2010 GENS B tournament will be hosted by the Netherlands. The TWA would like to extend their thanks to all who took part, and thank LNR ACF tug of war club and all of the pullers/helpers for staging the championships.

(Right) **The Tug of War Federation of India** recently organised a national level training course for judges, officials and referees in New Delhi. The very successful event was attended by 47 persons. (Contributed by: Gautam Kaul)





**Boley Tug of War club** was formed in the early 70's and has amassed more than 120 national Irish titles in that period of time. While representing Ireland, they competed at all previous world games from Santa Clara in 1981 to Koashiung, Taiwan in 2009. James and Dermot Kehoe (above) have pulled in all of these events.

*Contributed by: Dan McCarthy*



## RESULTS OF THE EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS '09

Weight	Gold	Silver	Bronze	4th
M600K	England	Switzerland	Netherlands	Ireland
M640K	Switzerland	Netherlands	Germany	England
M680K	Ireland	Switzerland	Germany	Netherlands
M720K	Switzerland	Ireland	Netherlands	Sweden
V520K	Sweden	Netherlands	Germany	Switzerland
V560K	Sweden	Netherlands	Switzerland	Lithuania

## RESULTS OF THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS '09

Weight	Gold	Silver	Bronze	4th
J560K	Sweden	S.Africa	Switzerland	Netherlands
U23-600K	Switzerland	Sweden	Germany	England

## RESULTS OPEN CLUBS COMPETITION – ASSEN '09

Weight	Gold	Silver	Bronze	4th
M600k	Engelberg (SWI)	Veenseboys (NED)	Bjorke/Ydre (SWE)	Killylough (IRE)
M640k	Eibergen A (NED)	Boley (IRE)	Mosnang (SWI)	Veenseboys (NED)
M680K	Boley (IRE)	Lakehill (IRE)	Fams Janssens (BEL)	Eibergen A (SWI)
M720K	Valleitrekkers A (NED)	Vorden (NED)	Koapman (NED)	Philippinenburg u.-Thal (GER)
V520K	Stenungsund (SWE)	Loftadelens (SWE)	Waka-Lieli (SWI)	Teerns (NED)
V560K	Vechlust (NED)	Waka-Lieli (SWI)	Selsmas (LTU)	Machtige Meiden (NED)
J560K	Bollen (GER)	Hovmantorp DK (SWE)	S.A.T.F (RSA)	Engelberg (SWI)
U23	Wieden (GER)	Valleitrekkers A (NED)	S.A.T.F (RSA)	Oele (NED)

## THE BOSLEY STONE

**B**osley Wood Treatment Tug of War Club is one of the oldest clubs in the English Tug of War Association having been formed in 1947 just after the second world war. Since then they have had a colourful and successful history. The name of the club has varied over the years and they are now known as Wood Treatment Bosley.

On Sunday 21st June of this year we saw a tribute being made to the past and present Wood Treatment Bosley Tug of War team, in recognition of its successes from the late 1950's onwards.

The club has been recognised by the village of Bosley for its remarkable achievements over the years, and the standards it made in the 1960's and 1970's, with the erection of a commemorative stone on the main A523 road through Bosley in Cheshire. This stone is pictured above. It has an inscription on both sides. The stone was unveiled by Hilary Brown, the ex Bosley Anchor, along with other past and present members of the squad. This was certainly a fitting tribute as it was unveiled on the same weekend that the club achieved its 50th national outdoor tug of war title.

## CHAMPIONSHIP MEDAL TABLE

Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Switzerland	3	2	2
Sweden	3	1	0
Ireland	1	1	0
England	1	0	0
Netherlands	0	3	2
South Africa	0	1	0
Germany	0	0	4

## OPEN CLUBS MEDAL TABLE

Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Netherlands	3	3	1
Germany	2	0	0
Sweden	1	2	1
Ireland	1	2	0
Switzerland	1	1	2
South Africa	0	0	2
Belgium	0	0	1
Lithuania	0	0	1

## TRIBUTE TO BENNY

**Benny Olminkohf** from the Netherlands was a TWIF Judge for almost fifteen years and was also a very valuable member of the Technical Commission. Sadly he died earlier this year at the age of 59. A minutes silence was held at the beginning of the Championships in Assen in memory of Benny. Carl Mackeprang, from Wales, paid this tribute to him at a recent meeting of the TWIF Technical Commission:



"I expect like all of us who knew him, it was very hard to believe the news that he had passed away. The reason for choosing the Technical Commission to have this mentioned is because I took over his position on the Commission in Sweden many years ago. Benny had resigned over something that he had felt strongly over and no amount of trying to get him to change his mind, myself included, worked. This was the course of action he wanted to take.

Also, our various TWIF positions were a bit mirror imaged as he progressed from weigh master and I took over that job. He then went on to be appointed chief judge, and later on I was privileged to take on that position too. It was a great loss to the TWIF panel of judges that he also decided to cut short his judging career due to his other commitments. Here again I tried to get him to have second thoughts, but to no avail.

For me, and I expect other judges in our era, found him a man who was very talented in the tasks he performed in our sport. Plus, he was a person with a wonderful sense of humour and sociable ability. Out of all the stories that I could think about, off and on the tug of war arena, was the instance when at the briefing after I was appointed to the weigh master position to succeed him, he presented me with an alarm clock to make sure I was not late in the mornings!

He also leaves TWIF a legacy in the form of a little maroon briefcase that has been used for many years now to carry the weighing stamps and inks around the world from one TWIF Championships to another.

Thank you Benny for some wonderful memories in our times together." *Carl Mackeprang, Wales.*

## VENUES/DATES FOR 2010

**25-28 February** World Indoor Championship - Cesenatico, Italy

**16-17 April** TWIF Congress & Seminar - London, England

**15-18 September** World Outdoor Championships - Pretoria, South Africa

## TWIF MAGAZINE

This magazine is a publication of the Tug of War International Federation.

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