FROM THE PRESIDENT’S DESK

The 50th birthday celebrations are well and truly behind us and although the pleasant memories will be with us for a long time to come we can now begin to look forward to the next decade.

In April, 2011, I had the pleasure of attending the Annual SportAccord Conference in London on behalf of TWIF and had several pre-arranged meetings which were very useful and relevant to our sport.

I met WORLD GAMES officials from Colombia and was able to discuss the detail of our participation in the Games of 2013 in Cali. This followed on from the visit which our Secretary General, Glen Johnson, made to Cali last August in his capacity as Technical Delegate. It is reassuring to know that the host organisation is working hard to ensure that we have a superb event in 2013. It was also a good opportunity to discuss my proposed visit later this summer when I hope to conduct a development course for their officials and athletes. Our former President, Co Koren, also attended the event and was honoured by World Games as well as being awarded the post of Hon. Vice President for services to the organisation. Our congratulations to Co.

I then had a most useful meeting with Mr. Simonelli who is a senior official with the World Anti-Doping Agency based in Montreal. He was later able to confirm that TWIF is now recognised as being fully compliant with the WADA code. The deadline for such compliance is November 2011 and it is a great relief that this milestone has been reached as our IOC recognition and World Games participation depend upon it. It should, however, be noted that we will have to increase our out of competition testing with effect from next year. My thanks are due to Tony Martin and Birute Miseckaitė for the work they have done in that field.

I had a face to face meeting with two IOC officials regarding our future within the Olympic movement. They expressed great satisfaction with our current development programme and encouraged us to continue our efforts, particularly in South America where we fall very short in the area of universality. It is expected that in September 2013 a decision will be taken to decrease the number of core Olympic sports from 26 to 25. It follows that only one new sport will be admitted. In the past few weeks I have returned an IOC questionnaire which will, with others, be considered over the next year. It has to be said that we are up against several sports whose numbers and world profile are much greater than ours at present. We have a lot of catching up to do in those areas and until that happens we are still outsiders. Later this year we expect to receive guidance on how we, as a recognised sport, may be allowed to use the Olympic symbol for non commercial purposes. That would, indeed, be a very positive development.
FEEDBACK FROM THE AGM

1. NEW EXECUTIVE ELECTED Messrs Cathal McKeever (President), Tony Martin (Senior Vice President), Glen Johnson (Secretary General) and Anton Rabe (Treasurer) were re-elected by acclamation at Congress. Ms Maaike Hoornstra has been elected as Vice President - see separate article on her election and background on page 3 and 4.

2. WEIGH-IN PROCEDURE The individual weigh-in procedure piloted at the 2010 World Championships held in Pretoria, South Africa in September 2010, was adopted by Congress for all future events.

3. ROPE POSITION Anchor – rule 13: The following rule change has been adopted for medical reasons: At the commencement of a pull, the rope is allowed to be placed below the level of the protective belt but within contact with the belt during the pull will not constitute a lock because of safety considerations. Note: A deliberate lock of the rope prior to or during the competition will still be an infringement.

4. CHANGE OF PULL-OFF PROCEDURE: In future at the semi-final stage the 1st in the group will pull against the 4th placed team and the 2nd in the group will pull against the 3rd placed team.

5. NEW MEMBERS: Apart from Poland being accepted as a new member, Columbia, the first country from South America, has been accepted as TWIF member. A development course and seminar will be held shortly to assist them with the further development of the sport in their country.

WEIGH IN PROCEDURE AND REGULATIONS

6.4.1 Weighing and stamping

1. All athletes first collect accreditation.

2. All potential pullers must weigh within a pre-determined time schedule.

3. An accreditation download will be carried out listing all athletes from a particular country. Accessible only by the controller and the appointed representative of a particular country.

4. The athlete will weigh on an individual scale. The number of scales to be determined by the organizers and TWIF. Only one weigh in on the official scales.

5. After weighing the athletes, the weight will be recorded in an Excel spreadsheet, and also hand written on the downloaded Excel file as a back up.

6. The athlete will be given his or her certified weight. The athlete can then give his or her weight to the coach of the team.

7. Open Clubs entries:
   • The coach of a particular club entering in the TWIF clubs competition will bring a completed weigh list to control at a predetermined time. The weigh list shall contain the name, accreditation number and the weight of each puller, totaling the adequate weight of a particular weight class. Eight pullers, coach and trainer only.
   • A coach may change any and all pullers prior to and up until stamping, as long as the maximum weight for that particular weight class is not exceeded. Changes must be reported to control by the coach 30 minutes before stamping begins.

8. National team weigh in:
   • The coach of a national team may choose any pullers that are listed and weighed from the downloaded Excel file from his/her country.
   • A coach may change any or all pullers prior to and up until stamping, as long as the maximum weight for that particular weight class is not exceeded. Changes must be reported to control by the coach 30 minutes before stamping begins.

9. The coach of a particular national team will present a completed weigh certificate to control at a predetermined time schedule.

10 Control shall enter teams in a draw for a particular weigh class, after checking the weight & accreditation numbers against the completed Excel downloaded list.

11 Scanners/Bar code readers at designated area(s) to control substitutions, and team weight checks throughout the competitions.

The TWIF President Mr Cathal McKeever welcomes Romania as the latest member of TWIF. The Romanian representative is Ms Alina Popa.
Four members of the TWIF Executive were re-elected at the recent TWIF Congress for a new 4 year term. Here (from ltr) is Messrs Glen Johnson, (Secretary General - 7th term), Cathal McKeever (President - 6th term), Tony Martin (Senior Vice President - 4th term) and Anton Rabe (Treasurer - 5th term). The previous Vice-President, Patrick van den Heuvel, was not available for re-election and was replaced by Ms Maaike Hoornstra (see page 4), the first lady ever to be elected to the TWIF Executive. With her election she became only the 20th person to have served over the past 50 years on the TWIF Executive.

The 2011 TWIF Congress and Seminar were held on 6 and 7 May 2011 in Appenzell, Switzerland. A total of 21 countries were represented.

A number of ladies took part at the recent TWIF Congress in one capacity or another. On the photo with Mr Cathal McKeever, is from ltr Stefania Ganzini (Italy), Rosemary Smith (Wales), Aukje van Raaij (Netherlands), Mr McKeever, Dina Chen (Chinese Taipei), Lilita Mukina (Latvia), Zhang Na (China), Alina Popa (Romania) and Tiny Langeveldt (Netherlands). Absent were Birute Zachariene, the TWIF Doping Officer.

This 1934 photograph shows the Exeter Women’s Rope Pulling Team. From left to right the members are (first row) Mrs. Freddie Zunker, Mrs. Walter Richards, Katheriube Zentner, Lena Buol and Florence Voegeli; (second row) Edna Marty, Alma Babler, Katie Schrepfer, Ida Voegeli and Mrs. Earle McChire; (third row) Elsie Richards, Mrs. Herman Schupbach and Mrs. Johan Schilt. (Belleville Area Historical Society).

PHOTO COURTESY OF LARRY HEINDEL (USA).
PROFILE OF MAAIKE HORNSTRA

New TWIF Vice President (2011-2015). Maaike is from the Teerns club from the North of the Netherlands.

I started training Tug of War in 1983 after being asked to do so by some friends. After one training session, I already had to pull a competition because there was lack of girls. That's the way it started and it will never end.

Tug of War is in my heart since the very beginning and since I pulled my first World Championship in Stans in 1985 (first WC for ladies), I was totally hooked to the power of the competition, the battle at the field but also the friendship between a lot of people from all over the world. Since then I decided I would give a lot of my sportlife and time to this sport and I still do. Since 1990 I have always pulled for the Dutch ladies indoor and outdoor national team. To date I have pulled 45 times for the Dutch National Team and came home with 45 medals - I am very proud of these results.

I have participated in all the World Games since 1993, the moment indoor Tug of War for women was introduced at that level. The World Games is very special to be part of it and it shows us at what level our sport is. In 2010 I also participated in the first mixed competition for national teams. So I did it all.

After 2006 I quit and thought it was enough, but I started again in 2008 and in 2009 and 2010 I was in the national team again. After the WC in Pretoria 2010 I decided to bring the sport to a lower level, because of problems with my body and I did. I slowly bring my pulling career to an end but will still stay active in our sport.

I have been a judge since 1987, first at third level for a long time and now at second level, which suits me very well. Since 1989 I am active in the board for the Dutch Tug of War. First, as a secretary in the Technical Commission in our district, later on as secretary for the district and since about 1999 in the National Board. I also have been part of the Dutch Athlete’s Committee when we got money from our government for our sport. Due to study I quit working for the board between 2002 and 2007 and since then I am back on the board of the district as treasurer and also in the National board. Since 2008 I am looking after the indoor teams who are participating at the World Indoor Championships by booking accommodation and take care of a lot of things during the WC.

I would like to thank all the countries that voted for me at the recent TWIF congress. I hope I will not disappoint them. I will do my best for the good for our sport and the development of it. I am aware that I am the first woman in the TWIF Exco since 1960, which makes me proud, but not smug.

Beside Tug of War, there is more in my life. I love travelling in nature (hiking, biking, canoeing and camping) and I love running and hope to do that again at competition level. For 10 years I have done adventure races all over the world with my partner and two other guys. Adventure racing is tough but if you are fit, you can make it very far with running, biking, hiking, kayaking, swimming and other disciplines. For this you need a very good mental state and I have always loved it, though it was very tough sometimes! You have to be a good team player to finish a race with your team and that is what I also hope to be in the TWIF Exco.
TWIF SEMINAR MAY 2011

The TWIF Seminar for 2011 was held in conjunction with Congress in Appenzell Switzerland. The Seminar was composed of two presentations:

- TWIF Anti Doping Administrator, Ms Birute Zachariene gave an in depth presentation on Anti Doping Administration and Management System. This was very well received with numerous questions being asked. A copy of this Power Point presentation is available from Birute. Please contact: biruse@gmail.com

- TWIF Secretary General, Mr Glen Johnson and TWIF IT Specialist Mr Bruce Schuman, gave a presentation on Glen & Bruce conducted an overview on the use of the electronic competition programme and scoring system. A copy of this presentation can be obtained from Mr Glen Johnson. Please contact: twif@t6b.com

PROFILE OF TWIF DOPING CONTROL OFFICER

Stamping out drug use is perhaps the biggest challenge in sport today. In September 2009 during the European Championships in the Netherlands, TWIF appointed Birute Misękaite (now Zachariene) from Lithuania as their new Anti Doping Administrator.

Birute first became involved in tug of war when Giedrius Grybaukas, the secretary general of the Lithuanian Tug of War Federation asked her to help him with tug of war competitions. First of all she had to learn about the sport of tug of war, but after a few practical lessons in 2004, Birute became both a judge and timekeeper recorder.

In 2008 her Federation sent her on the TWIF Timekeeper Recorders Course in Sweden which resulted in her becoming a qualified International Timekeeper Recorder.

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When TWIF advertised for an anti doping administrator, Birute thought she would apply for it, as this was an interesting sphere for her as she was studying for a PhD in sport science at the Lithuanian Academy of Physical Education. Since her appointment, Birute has been working as the anti-doping administrator for the last two years and is thoroughly enjoying her work. She finds the people she meets from around the world always pleasant and helpful.

Birute expressed her appreciation and thanks to all the International Representatives, coaches and athletes for their co-operation and especially Tony and Sue Martin who were always available for consultation and guidance in the early months.

HARRY HARBORD

A legend in the Welsh Tug of War Association recently died on his 92nd birthday, 12th April 2011. He was the last of the Honorary Vice Presidents of TWIF. Harry coached club and Welsh teams since 1965 and judged at various levels, also internationally before the TWIF Judges panel was formed, since 1967. He continued to judge until very recently! He served as the Welsh International representative from 1979 to 1987 and as Welsh President from 1989 to 2011. He also served on the TWIF Technical Commission between 1982 and 1988.
The Asian Development Course was staged in two parts: Judging and Administration and Coaching and Training.

Glen Johnson carried out the Judging and Administration and Mr. John Webb, Coach from England carried out the Coaching and Training. There were 160 participants from China, Poland, Macau, Vietnam, Hong Kong, and Mongolia.

The President of the Chinese Tug of War Association and the President of the University greeted everyone.

John discussed the development of the athletes as well as the health issues and diets of the athletes. At the end of the classroom presentation certificates of participation were given to those participants from abroad.

Following the basics of indoor tug of war there was a four-team competition, which was enjoyed by all.

Above right: the judges and right a group picture of the participants.
The Tug of War Association of England are currently finalising their preparations to host the 2011 TWIF European Outdoor Championships, which takes place from 22-25 September in Minehead, Somerset. They previously hosted a successful European Championships there in 2007 which included a visit from Her Royal Highness, Princess Anne.

Whilst Minehead will be the host town, this time the venue will be within Butlins, rather than at Minehead Football ground. This will mean that the official accommodation and the competition area will all be provided on one site, which will remove travel cost and time between the accommodation and the competition area. The World Junior and Under 23 championships will also be hosted as part of the event in addition to the mixed 4+4 600 kilos which will be staged at a European Championships for the very first time.

Teams can complete their accreditation forms, open club entry forms and book accommodation and airport transfers by visiting the event web site at www.ec2011tow.co.uk.

**EUROPEAN OUTDOOR Minehead, England**

**TWIF DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR Delhi, India**

TWIF conducted a very successful development seminar in Delhi, India over the period 9 to 14 December 2010. It was attended by 46 pullers, judges and recorder, plus 8 TWFI officials. This included five people from Sri Lanka and Nepal. A follow-up seminar for the region is being planned for sometime in the future. The delegation consisted of Anton Rabe (leader) and Marius Smit, both from South Africa and Chien-Wen (Vincent) Chen and Wen Chen, both from Taiwan.

The course covered rules and basic judging, recording, coaching (indoor and outdoor), training equipment and techniques, team preparation for participation, team selection and various practical session. The basics of event organisation, administration and communication were also covered.

**TWIF JUDGES COURSE Iran**

Iran, one of the newer member countries of TWIF held a judges course during 2010 which was conducted by Ali Akbari, their international representative who is also a TWIF judge. The course was over a period of three days with an examination at the end. Out of the 50 candidates 45 were successful.